



NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuall

The media representation of the crime of witchcraft
in early modern Germany:
an examination of non-periodical news-sheets and
pamphlets, 1533-1669.

by

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*This work is dedicated to the memory of the two
inspirational women who raised me*

my mother

Sinéad Warfield

(1966-2007)

&

my grandmother

Nuala Warfield

(1944-2006)

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Introduction

During the witchcraft persecutions in early modern Germany a number of reports detailing the heinous crimes of the witches, and their ‘deserved’ punishment, were published. These reports were printed as both broadsides and pamphlets. An umbrella term that can be used to describe both types of documents is *Hexenzeitungen*¹, or ‘witch-reports’. The primary objective of this thesis is to discover how witchcraft was represented in these *Hexenzeitungen* from 1533-1669 and to ascertain what role these reports played in constructing and disseminating the cumulative concept of witchcraft. In order to do this, a total of sixty-one reports pertaining to witchcraft will be considered. The thesis aims to show how the cumulative concept of witchcraft was ‘mediated’ through these sources. In order to do so it will trace the development of six key concepts: the witch’s pact with the Devil; the notion of sex with the Devil; harmful magic (*maleficium*); weather magic; witches’ gatherings and flight. The project endeavours to highlight that the *Hexenzeitungen* were responsible for communicating these concepts to a wide audience. A secondary objective of this thesis is to ascertain how the treatment of witchcraft in this medium related to the wider discourse of witchcraft. Was the transmission of ideas from one discourse to another fluid? Were there points of intersection? In addition, the thesis will investigate the veracity of the reports. Were they true representations of trials that took place? By conducting a systematic investigation into how the crime of witchcraft was communicated through this medium, this project identifies patterns and trends that will further our understanding of contemporary belief in, and fear of, witches in early modern Germany.

Between the years 1400 and 1800 scholars estimate about 50,000 legal death penalties were issued for the crime of witchcraft.² Over half of those executions, some 25,000, took place in the Holy Roman Empire within the boundaries of present-day Germany.³ For this reason Germany has become historically recognised

¹ The term was coined by Wolfgang Behringer in his article ‘Witchcraft and the Media’ in Majorie E. Plummer and Robin Barnes (eds), *Ideas and cultural margins in early modern Germany* (Surrey, 2009), pp 217-39.

² Brian Levack puts the figure at around 60,000, Wolfgang Behringer estimates 50,000, while Merry E. Wiesner suggests between 50,000 and 100,000 were executed. See Brian Levack *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe* (2nd ed., Essex, 1995), p. 22; Wolfgang Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts: a global history* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 156; and Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and gender in early modern Europe* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 2000), p. 265.

³ Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 149.

as the ‘heartland of the witchcraze’.⁴ Although Germany executed more witches than any other country in Europe, it is important to note that it also had a much larger population. Behringer estimates that the population was around 16,000,000 making ratio of execution for witchcraft *per capita* 640.⁵ It has been estimated that the total number of persons who were actually tried for witchcraft in Europe did not greatly exceed 100,000 during this period.⁶ The majority of those executed were women-around 75-85 per cent.⁷ There was a significant increase in the incidence of witch hunting in Germany in the fifteenth century. However, this was followed by a decline in the number of persecutions in the first half of the sixteenth century during the Reformation.⁸ From the 1560s witchcraft persecutions began to rise significantly, reaching a dramatic peak in the 1580s and 1590s.⁹ A large number of persecutions also took place in the 1610s, 1620s and 1630s.¹⁰ These trials captured the attention of the early modern media, and authors began to print reports about the witch-craze sweeping across Germany. Despite many historians noting the existence and importance of such reports, particularly in recent years,¹¹ there has still been no systematic and comprehensive study investigating the nature and content of these sources.

⁴ Erik Midelfort, ‘Heartland of the Witchcraze: Central and Northern Europe’ in *History Today*, xxi, no. 2 (1981), pp 27-31.

⁵ Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 150.

⁶ Brian Levack, *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe* (2nd ed., Essex, 1995), p. 22. Previously there had been theories purporting of upward of 9,000,000 witch trials. This figure was first incorrectly calculated by Gottfried Christian Voigt (1740-91) and then cited by others. For a full discussion on the myth of 9,000,000 witches see Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Neun Millionen Hexen. Entstehung, Tradition und Kritik eines populären Mythos’ in *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, xlix (1998), pp 664-85.

⁷ There is little variation in figures that are cited by scholars. For example, Wiesner places the figure for women at between 75 and 85 per cent, while Lyndal Roper suggests between 75 and 80 per cent were women. See Wiesner, *Women and gender*, p. 265; Lyndal Roper, *Witch craze: terror and fantasy in Baroque Germany* (Bury St Edmunds, 2004), p. 18.

⁸ Roper, *Witch craze*, pp 16-7.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Numerous authors recognise the importance of the reports in communicating and constructing witchcraft beliefs. Wolfgang Behringer addresses the important role the media played in constructing witchcraft in his article: ‘Witchcraft and the Media’ in Majorie E. Plummer and Robin Barnes (eds), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany* (Surrey, 2009), pp 217-39; Charles Zika also highlights the importance of the news in his work *The appearance of witchcraft: print and visual culture in sixteenth-century Europe* (Oxon, 2007). See also Robert Walinski-Kiehl ‘Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630’ in *Reformation*, vi (2002), pp 49-74; Harald Sipek, ‘Neue Zeitung’ - Marginalien zur Flugblatt- und Flugschriftenpublizistik’ in Harald Siebenmorgen (ed.) *Hexen und Hexenverfolgung im deutschen Südwesten* (2 vols, Karlsruhe, 1994), ii, 85-92. Rita Voltmer ‘Exkurs: Vermittlung und Kommunikation – Hexerei in den Medien’ in *Hexen: Mythos und Wirklichkeit* printed by the Historisches Museum der Pfalz (Munich, 2009), pp 212-4.

By the early fifteenth century it has been argued that a ‘cumulative concept’ or composite notion of witchcraft had formed.¹² An array of individual concepts associated with witchcraft and sorcery gradually merged together over the course of the late fourteenth century and early fifteenth century. It is generally agreed that the construction of this cumulative concept helped pave the way towards mass persecution of witches in Europe.¹³ Five main concepts forged together to create this elaborated concept of witchcraft:

- 1 the Devil’s Pact (and apostasy)
- 2 a sexual relationship with the Devil
- 3 the possibility of aerial flight to
- 4 the witches’ sabbath to worship the Devil
- 5 maleficent magic¹⁴

The main aim of this thesis is to discover how each of the individual concepts of witchcraft, specified above, was treated in the media. In doing so, the thesis will ascertain how the cumulative concept was proliferated by the *Hexenzeitungen* and determine whether there was a difference between the demonological witchcraft discourse and discourse found in the news reports. Brian Levack points out that it is difficult to determine whether the trials themselves or the large body of literature on witchcraft was more important in the development and transmission of ‘learned witch beliefs’.¹⁵ However, he argues that as the stereotype of the witch became more firmly established, literature became the main vehicle for transmitting knowledge about the crime.¹⁶ Although Levack is referring to demonological literature, this thesis argues that the news reports printed about witchcraft crimes played an equally important role in the transmission of these concepts.

The investigation of communications and media and its affect on social and cultural trends in the early modern period is still a recent development in historical

¹² Levack, *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe*, p. 51. Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria: popular magic, religious zealotry and reason of state in early modern Europe*, translated by J.C. Grayson and David Lederer (Cambridge, 1997), p.13. It is striking that although many historians refer to the ‘cumulative concept’ the term did not have its own entry in Richard M. Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition* (4 vols, Santa Barbara, 2006). That said the idea of the cumulative concept and its essential components were discussed in some detail in two other entries: Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Laws on Witchcraft, Early Modern’ in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 636 and Rita Voltmer ‘Witch Hunts’ in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iv, 1211.

¹³ Behringer, ‘Laws on Witchcraft, Early Modern’ in Robert M. Golden, *Encyclopedia of witchcraft the western tradition* (4 vols, Santa Barbara, 2006), iii, 636.

¹⁴ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p.14.

¹⁵ Levack, *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe*, p. 53.

¹⁶ Ibid.

studies. Historians of the early modern period have begun to realise that media, such as popular pamphlets and news-sheets, can give us a valuable insight into popular belief and culture. Robert Scribner was the first to highlight the importance of propaganda and how visual evidence can be used to reveal underlying social norms, belief and culture in his study of reformation pamphlets: *For the sake of simple folk*.¹⁷ In the last decade the idea that this approach could also be applied to the pamphlets and broadsheets printed about the witch-hunts has taken root, with historians such as Wolfgang Behringer,¹⁸ Marion Gibson¹⁹ and Joy Wiltenberg²⁰ pioneering in the area. In 2002, Robert Walinski-Kiehl argued that the relevance of witchcraft pamphlets has possibly been neglected too long by historians as a result of being viewed from the narrow perspective of entertainment literature.²¹ He concluded that our understanding of Germany's witchcraft-persecutions would be enhanced further if historians 'shift some of their attention away from legal records and start to focus more clearly on literary sources such as printed propaganda.'²² This is the precise aim of this thesis.

The sources for this project consist of two major types of documents: broadsheets, *Flugblättern*; and pamphlets, *Flugschriften*. Formally, a broadsheet consists of a single sheet that is usually illustrated with a woodcut. It has a title, followed by a woodcut, followed by a short text describing the story of the witch or witches. A pamphlet is longer, with four or more pages, sometimes with an illustration on the title page.

The increase of pamphlets and images of witchcraft from the 1490s was directly related to the rise of the printing trade. Print was only established as a new medium for cultural communication in the 1470s and, in time, this led to a formation of a powerful new 'cultural alliance' between printers and artists.²³ Prior to the advent of the printing press, handwritten news-bulletins, or *avvisi* had become a

¹⁷ Robert Scribner, *For the sake of simple folk: popular propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge, 1981).

¹⁸ Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media' in Majorie E. Plummer and Robin Barnes (eds), *Ideas and cultural margins in early modern Germany* (Surrey, 2009), pp 217-39.

¹⁹ Marion Gibson, *Reading witchcraft: stories of early English witches* (London, 1999) and *Early modern witches: witchcraft cases in contemporary writing* (London, 2000).

²⁰ Joy Wiltenburg, *Disorderly women and female power: in the street literature of early modern England and Germany* (Virginia, 1992), for her treatment of witches see pp 238-50.

²¹ Robert Walinski-Kiehl 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630' in *Reformation*, vi (2002), p. 73.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 74.

²³ Charles Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft: print and visual culture in sixteenth-century Europe* (Oxon, 2007), p 5.

well-established commercial practice, with firms producing handwritten reports which were distributed to subscribers.²⁴ In the words of Andrew Pettegree: ‘It was not long before printers began to recognise the potential of a wider audience for such news bulletins, now in printed, pamphlet form and freely available to any that chose to purchase them.’²⁵ These non-periodical news reports became known as *Neue Zeitungen*.²⁶ It is important to note that there were significant differences between *avvisi* (which continued to be transmitted alongside printed reports) and the new news reports. For example unlike the *avvisi*, which were circulated among a more select clientele, *Neue Zeitungen* aimed at majority readership.²⁷ Another major difference that set the two formats apart was the fact that news pamphlets usually contained just one news item, whereas *avvisi* compiled short news items.²⁸ It is notable that this contemporary news discourse was fundamentally aided by the postal network, established in the sixteenth century.²⁹ This new network of communication inflated news, just as the invention of the electric telegraph or the internet greatly expanded our knowledge of worldwide catastrophes.³⁰

The new genre of *Neue Zeitungen* told stories of all kinds of strange and striking topical events to satisfy the inquisitive appetite of the growing reading public. Topics covered included reports of gruesome murders and executions, abnormal births, celestial apparitions and, of course, witchcraft.³¹ Publishers and printers quickly inserted witchcraft into the news-sheet, and as the number of witch trials increased, more and more pamphlets and broadsheets reported the terrible crimes of witchcraft, along with the cruel punishments meted out by the authorities. In fact the graph below shows how the publication of *Hexenzeitungen* peaked at the same time as the witch persecutions themselves began to increase dramatically.

²⁴ Andrew Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance* (Cornwall, 2012), p. 134.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 134

²⁶ The genre of ‘*Neue Zeitungen*’ have been explored in various publications: Paul Roth, *Die neuen Zeitungen in Deutschland im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1914); Karl Schottenloher, *Flugblatt und Zeitung: ein Wegweiser durch das gedruckte Tagesschriftum* (Berlin, 1922). The nature of illustrated broadsheets has more recently been examined in Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling, *Das illustrierte Flugblatt der frühen Neuzeit: Traditionen, Wirkungen, Kontexte* (Stuttgart, 2008).

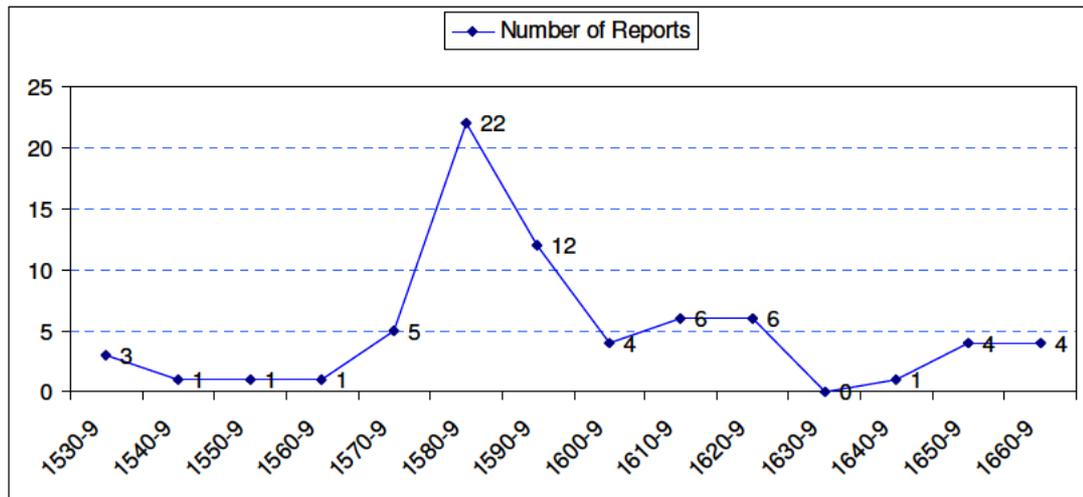
²⁷ Carmen Espejo, ‘European Communication Networks in the Early Modern Age’ in *Media History*, xvii, no. 2 (2011), p. 191.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Behringer, ‘Witchcraft in the Media’, p. 235.

³⁰ *Ibid.* Also see Wolfgang Behringer’s articles: ‘Introduction: Communication in Historiography’ in *German History*, xxiv, no. 3 (2006), pp 325-32, and ‘Communications Revolutions: A Historiographical Concept’ in *German History*, xxiv, no. 3 (2006), pp 333-74.

³¹ Walinski-Kiehl, ‘Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630’, p. 51.



Graph showing the number of *Hexenzeitungen* printed per decade based on reports found from 1530-1669. Source: Appendix A.

Charles Zika believes that witch-trials were used in order to fuel the new print market for sensationalistic journalism.³² The headlines were often lurid, beginning with literary hooks such as ‘a terrible story’, ‘a never before heard account’ or ‘an incredible tale.’³³

It is important to ask who the potential audience for these publications was. Wiltenburg has argued that the audience for this type of literature was quite broad and could extend to people of humble status.³⁴ A contemporary account from Augsburg names both journeymen and students as groups who bought these reports.³⁵ There has been no comprehensive study of literacy in early modern Germany, but it has been estimated the literacy rates may have been around 30 per cent for Augsburg, and similar figures have been proposed for Nuremberg and the Franconian hinterland.³⁶ The price of news pamphlets and small tracts ranged from 3 to 6 pfennigs in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, while shorter song pamphlets may have been cheaper.³⁷ Broadsides appear to have been more expensive than pamphlets and could sell for up to 20 pfennigs at the close of the fifteenth century.³⁸ However the prices decreased in the sixteenth century as the price of paper

³² Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 179.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Joy Wiltenburg, *Crime and culture in early modern Germany* (Virginia, 2012), p. 11.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Hans-Jörg Künast, “*Getruckt zu Augsburg*” (Tübingen, 1997), p. 13.

³⁷ Wiltenburg, *Disorderly women*, p. 35.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

declined.³⁹ The daily wage of a master mason or carpenter in the early sixteenth century was about 24 pfennig, while a day labourer would earn about 60 pfennigs a week.⁴⁰ Thus, the reports, while affordable were still not considerably cheap. Therefore, as Wiltenburg points out, one must not assume that consumers were solely concentrated at the lower end of the social spectrum.⁴¹ For example, elites were also in the audience, such as the Pastor Johann Wick of Zurich.⁴² In addition to this, Wiltenburg has discovered that some crime reports were also used as educational material.⁴³

But did these stories or narratives have any effect on people's belief in witches? This question is impossible to answer, but what one can ascertain from looking at the reports are the ideas the media disseminated, or sought to disseminate. Elizabeth Eisenstein, the renowned scholar of the printing press and its cultural implications, believes that the effects of print on the witch-hunts are reduced too often to the 'mere multiplication of evidence' and then dismissed as too trivial for the rapid growth of the witch craze.⁴⁴ Although Eisenstein was discussing the general increase in the output of demonological and scholarly witchcraft treatises, surely the increase and indeed the development of witchcraft broadsheets and pamphlets are also worthy of note. These news reports were far more accessible to a broader audience, both literate and illiterate. Helmut Graser and B. Ann Tlusty have noted that one did not have to be literate oneself in order to be part of a written culture: 'Scholars of early modern Europe have identified many bridges that existed between literate, semi-literate, and illiterate society, and many points at which oral and written culture intermingled'.⁴⁵ This present thesis argues that the *Hexenzeitungen* often presented a point of intersection between oral and written

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Wiltenburg, *Crime and culture*, p. 11.

⁴² For more information on Johann Jakob Wick's interest in reports see Wiltenburg, *Crime and culture*, pp 106-10. For a discussion of Wick's interest in witchcraft cf. Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, pp 194-209.

⁴³ Wiltenburg, *Crime and culture*, p. 19.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The printing press as an agent of change: communications and cultural transformations in early modern Europe, Volumes I and II* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 433.

⁴⁵ Helmut Graser and B. Ann Tlusty, 'Layers of Literacy in a Sixteenth-Century Case of Fraud' in Majorie E. Plummer and Robin Barnes (eds), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany* (Surrey, 2009), p. 31.

culture.⁴⁶ Almost half of the reports utilized images that communicated the story to those who could not read. In addition to this, many authors wrote their reports to be sung to certain well known melodies so that they could easily be transmitted orally. They were therefore read, and heard, by the general public and thereby potential accusers and witnesses. Thus, it can be argued that while the demonological treatises influenced the clergy and judicial officers, it was the news reports that communicated the fear of witchcraft to the broader public. Therefore, an investigation into how these reports treated witchcraft, that is the concepts and ideas they chose to include and propagate, will serve to broaden our understanding of the persecutions.

Furthermore, according to Peter Burke, the sources that we use to study popular culture are highly problematic as they are rarely produced by the craftsmen and peasants whose attitudes and values we are trying to reconstruct. Therefore, as early modern historians we are not approaching them directly, but through ‘mediators’.⁴⁷ The pamphlets and broadsheets relating to witchcraft, offer us a new insight into the understanding of witchcraft in the early modern period, as their authors’ reports and narratives ‘mediate between us and the people we are trying to reach’.⁴⁸ Also because the authors of the pamphlets were most likely in touch with both ‘learned’ and ‘popular’ culture, the *Hexenzeitungen* provide us with an interesting *bricolage* of both ‘learned’ and ‘popular’ perceptions of witchcraft. The boundaries between ‘learned’ and ‘popular’ understandings of witchcraft were fluid and this research demonstrates how sometimes demonological anecdotes or theories made their way into the media, and how, similarly, stories from news reports sometimes served as examples for demonological works. Far from being purely ‘sensationalistic’ these sources are important ‘cultural agents’ which will allow us to further unravel the mysterious web of witchcraft belief in early modern Germany.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ David Lederer has similarly found that an interplay of oral and written culture was also evident in contemporary miracle books. See David Lederer, ‘Constructing a Wonder: The Influence of Popular Culture on Miracle Books’, forthcoming article.

⁴⁷ Peter Burke, *Popular culture in early modern Europe* (London, 1978), pp 67-8.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 68.

⁴⁹ Joy Wiltenburg, ‘True Crime: The origins of modern sensationalism’ in *The American Historical Review*, cix, no. 5 (2004), p. 1379.

Moving on to the methodology, this study aims to provide a systematic and comprehensive study of the representation of the crime of witchcraft in the news reports from 1533-1669. In order to do so, it analyses the content of media reports thematically, tracing the development of the cumulative concept of witchcraft in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

This required the collation of as many witchcraft reports as possible. Both broadsheets and pamphlets were considered. The criteria for selection were simple. Firstly to be selected, a report had to feature the crime of witchcraft. Secondly, and most importantly, the report also had to be relaying ‘news’ of the crime. For example, there were numerous pamphlets that debated the reality and explained the nature of witchcraft throughout this period; however, these pamphlets were not included in this present study as they were not news reports, but rather witchcraft treatises. The reports that met the criteria for consideration by this thesis were then transcribed and translated. These reports, all of which were written in *Frühneuhochdeutsch*, were translated into English. All translations from the *Hexenzeitungen* used in the thesis have been undertaken originally as part of this thesis, unless it is otherwise stated. Any quotations are given in English and the original text can be found in the footnotes.

The analysis of the documents focused on tracing the development of six concepts throughout the reports: the witches’ pact with the Devil; the notion of sex with the Devil; *maleficium* (harmful magic); weather magic; witches’ assemblies or sabbaths; and flight. This method of analysis was chosen as it allows one to clearly decipher how the major concepts that formed the cumulative concept of witchcraft were developed in the reports. This approach also makes it possible to track how certain concepts changed over time, and distinguish which ideas were most popular, or indeed, unpopular in the reports. The project then examines how these concepts were treated in a number of important demonologies and other contemporary art and literature in order to ascertain the similarities and differences, as well as points of intersection, between various discourses. This is important as *Hexenzeitungen* were only one element of a complex system of communications. In the words of Behringer: ‘The interaction among local audiences responding to public executions, correspondence networks, news prints, international demonology, and sermons

created in the later sixteenth century an unprecedented “extended mediaization” with many forms of feedback.’⁵⁰

In terms of source material, this project located seventy *Neue Zeitungen* that reported on the crime of witchcraft, dating from 1533-1669 (See Appendix A). Sixty-one of these were transcribed, translated and analysed directly for this thesis. In terms of format, fifteen of these reports were published as broadsheets, while forty-six were pamphlets. Regarding dates of publication, forty of the reports were printed in the sixteenth century, and twenty-one date from the seventeenth century. There was a massive increase in the publication of witch news reports in the 1580s and 1590s (see graph on p. 6). This applies for other crime reports as well and there appears to have been a general increase in crime publications around this period.⁵¹ Non-periodical reports about witches continued to be printed, albeit in fewer numbers, during the seventeenth century, alongside new periodical reports.⁵² This research has focused solely on non-periodical reports, and thus, a detailed investigation into the reporting of witchcraft crimes in the periodical press could be a future avenue of research.⁵³

Unfortunately most of the *Hexenzeitungen* that were analysed were written anonymously, and the authors of almost 90 per cent of the reports are unknown. However, over two-thirds of the reports contain the name of the printer and the place of publication. Thus, while impossible to investigate most authors, one can investigate the printer and try to find out what other works they printed at the time in order to uncover any prominent themes, or political/religious bias. Christopher Reske’s *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutsch Sprachgebiet* (Wiesbaden, 2007) was a useful resource for this task. Also, Nikolaus Schreiber of Cologne- one of the most prominent printers of *Hexenzeitungen* - is the subject of a

⁵⁰ Behringer, ‘Witchcraft in the Media’, p. 235.

⁵¹ Wiltenburg notes a large upswing in crime publication in the 1570s and 1580s, see Wiltenburg, *Crime and culture*, p. 12.

⁵² For a discussion of how the two genres coexisted cf. Carmen Espejo, ‘European Communication Networks in the Early Modern Age’ in *Media History*, xvii, no. 2 (2011), pp 190-1 and Thomas Schröder ‘The origins of the German Press’ in Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron (eds), *The politics of information in early modern Europe* (London, 2001), pp 129-30.

⁵³ Behringer has already begun to examine how this new medium treated witchcraft. From his research he concluded that the periodical newspapers usually did not report about local trials in order to avoid censorship. Furthermore he found that while the reports show no criticism of witch beliefs they also do not show support for the trials, therefore, he suggests that the periodical reports had no visible short-term impact on perceptions of witchcraft. See Behringer, ‘Witchcraft in the Media’, pp 231-2.

monograph. Schreiber was an avid printer of *Neue Zeitungen* and his life and work have been examined by Doris Stoll.⁵⁴

The reports were printed in 28 various cities. For example one or two reports were printed at Erfurt, Wesel, Frankfurt am Main, Dresden, Dillhofen, Hof and Bamberg. The largest amount of witchcraft news reports were printed in Augsburg (10 reports), Cologne (6 reports), Nuremberg (4 reports), and Strasbourg (4 reports). This is not surprising as all four of those cities were prominent players in the early modern print market.

Both broadsheets and pamphlets were printed with the intent of being sold, and therefore the contents can be assumed to have been attractive to the contemporary audience. There is little information as to how big individual print runs were. However, the historian Andrew Pettegree found that, in 1566, a travelling pedlar in the eastern Netherlands ran off 1,000 copies of a sheet with three popular songs for one guilder.⁵⁵ Some reports were reprinted a second time, or copied by other authors, highlighting their popularity. Many pamphlets were written in rhyme, to allow the recipients to sing the contents to well known melodies. Almost half of the *Hexenzeitungen* that were assessed were written in this manner, with the most popular melody by far being ‘Kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes sohn’ (‘Come unto me says the son of God’) which was cited as the melody for at least eight different reports.⁵⁶ The use of a religious melody helped audiences remember the story, and pass it on. It is noteworthy that the most popular melody for the *Hexenzeitungen* was this religious hymn. Joy Wiltenberg posits that such spiritual songs were most closely associated with the crime genre in this period, and that these songs had the potential to remind audiences of previous crimes.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the street merchants that sold the reports, known in German as *Zeitungssänger* or *Gassensänger*, often sang the ballads they were offering for sale.⁵⁸ As for the author’s sources it has been partially assumed that much of the content contained in reports was derived from the

⁵⁴ Doris Stoll, *Die Kölner Presse im 16. Jahrhundert: Nikolaus Schreibers ‘Neue Zeitungen aus Cöllen’* (Wiesbaden, 1991).

⁵⁵ Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance*, p. 136.

⁵⁶ This song was cited as the melody for eight different news reports; twice in 1576 and then once in 1581, 1583, 1596, 1626, 1628 and 1647.

⁵⁷ Wiltenberg, *Crime and culture*, p. 91. See also Tom Cheesman’s work on the history of itinerant ballad sellers and ‘shocking ballads’: *The shocking ballad picture show: German popular literature and cultural history* (Oxford, 1994).

⁵⁸ Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance*, p. 136.

judicial ritual of reading out the prisoner's confession prior to public execution.⁵⁹ However, this thesis will prove that this was not always the case, as some authors' reports borrowed heavily from other sources; sometimes from other reports and in other instances from demonological literature (see chapter five).

Some of the reports alluded to locally known persecutions, and this probably provided them with an air of authenticity among the general public. Such reports also served to reaffirm the official narrative that had been put forward by the authorities.⁶⁰ However, there were also reports that featured accounts of persecutions in neighbouring territories. It is evident that some local authorities believed the publication of such reports to be dangerous. For example in 1627 a report printed in Nuremberg (a city that did not execute any witches prior to 1659⁶¹) about the witch persecutions in Franconia, Bamberg and Würzburg, known as the *Druten Zeitung*,⁶² was censored and all prints were confiscated by the city council.⁶³

The body of text both in the broadsheet and the pamphlet usually covered the same basic items. They identified and communicated some of the main points contained in confession of the witch(es), such as how they made the pact with the Devil, or what kind of harm they caused, and provided information about the witches' gathering. While different authors focused on different aspects of witchcraft, almost every report ended with a description of the execution of the witch or witches. This was usually followed by some sort of religious exhortation.

The layout obviously created certain differences between broadsheets and pamphlets. Due to the predominance of the woodcut in the broadsheet, which was usually the same size (if not larger) than the area of text, the image played a key role. Low levels of literacy also led authors and printers to use pictures as a means of spreading ideas. Therefore it is vital to study what the images were suggesting. Wolfgang Schild states that generally the crimes and punishment of the witches were

⁵⁹ Wallinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630', p. 72.

⁶⁰ Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the devil: witchcraft, sexuality and religion in early modern Europe* (London, 1994), p. 205.

⁶¹ Wolfgang Behringer, 'Nuremberg, Imperial Free City' in Richard M. Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 841.

⁶² *Druten Zeitung / Verlauff / was sich hin und wider im Franckenland / Bamberg vnd Würzburg mit den Unholden / vnd denen so sich auß Her vnd Geltgetz muhtwillig dem Teuffel ergeben / denckwürdiges zugetragen / auch wie sie zuletzt ihren lohn empfangen haben.* (Schmalkalden, 1627).

⁶³ Wallinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630', pp 65-9.

displayed in the pictures, and then the meaning was explained through the text.⁶⁴ This statement, however, is *very* general, as some crimes, particularly any act of *maleficium* (harmful magic, ie. laming, crippling, blinding etc.), were rarely represented in the accompanying images (see chapter two).

By the seventeenth century, broadsheets began to utilise an alphabetic key, so that the text corresponded to specific images, allowing the viewer to ‘locate every horror.’⁶⁵ This layout created a sequential narrative that cast the terror of the witch story in visual form: from their first meeting with the Devil to their final place of execution.⁶⁶ The importance of the visual representation of the witches’ deeds cannot be understated, as Charles Zika explains: ‘Visual images helped embody the witch; they helped make her more immediate, recognisable and credible. Through visual images the witch could easily become universal and also stereotypical.’⁶⁷

The fact that many of the sources contain both text and image, leads to what has been called a three dimensional relationship: image-viewer-text:⁶⁸ ‘A viewer could move from image to text and back again, the text could explain aspects of the image, present information not included in it, or clarify the significance of the image on several levels.’⁶⁹ For this reason image and text merit examination both individually and collectively. Images from the *Hexenzeitungen* are included and discussed throughout the thesis where the image corresponds to the concept being discussed. Almost half of the reports contained an image. Of the sixty-one reports that were analysed for this project twenty-seven contained an image or images. Owing to considerations of length, this thesis could not include a detailed chapter focusing on the role of the images in the reports. However this is undoubtedly an area in which further investigation can be pursued.⁷⁰ Other contemporary works of

⁶⁴ Wolfgang Schild, ‘Hexen-Bilder’ in Gunther Franz and Franz Irsigler (eds), *Methoden und Konzept der historischen Hexenforschung* (Trier, 1998), p. 363. Most images almost always included a representation of the punishment meted out by the authorities. This is in keeping with representations of other crimes in broadsheets, see Karl Härter, ‘Criminalbilder: Verbrechen, Justiz, und Strafe in illustrierten Einblattgedrucken der Frühen Neuzeit’ in Karl Härter, Gerhard Sälter and Eva Wiebel (eds), *Repräsentationen von Kriminalität und öffentlicher Sicherheit: Bilder, Vorstellungen und Diskurse vom 16. zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main, 2010), pp 25-88.

⁶⁵ Lyndal Roper, ‘Witchcraft and the western imagination’ in *Royal Historical Society*, xvi (2006), p. 118.

⁶⁶ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 120.

⁶⁷ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 2.

⁶⁸ Scribner, *For the sake of simple folk: popular propaganda for the German Reformation*, xxviii.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ The author of this thesis has begun to examine the role images played in the reports and presented the preliminary findings for the reports from the sixteenth century in a paper titled: ‘Witchcraft and woodcuts: an exploration of the use of images in the *Hexenzeitungen*’ at the Frühe Neuzeit

art have also been considered for this study, particularly for chapter four. For example works by Albrecht Dürer and Hans Baldung Grien relating to witchcraft have been examined. Due to the large amount of visual representations of witchcraft from this period, this thesis was not able to consider each and every witchcraft image from this period, but rather chose a select few that were deemed relevant for the purposes of this dissertation. In any event, considerable research has already been carried out on the visual representation of witchcraft in the sixteenth century by Charles Zika.⁷¹

In order to locate the *Hexenzeitungen* within the broader witchcraft discourse of the period, this thesis has also examined some key demonological works. One of the most well-known witchcraft publications the *Malleus Maleficarum* was consulted for this project. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of the Witches) was first published in the autumn of 1486 in the imperial city of Speyer and is the first comprehensive handbook for witch-hunters. Originally the text was believed to have been co-authored by Jacob Sprenger and Heinrich Kramer. However the issue of Sprenger's role in the authorship of the *Malleus* continues to be a much disputed topic in modern scholarship. Christopher Mackay maintains that Sprenger did indeed author part of the work,⁷² while Wolfgang Behringer and Günther Jerouschek argue that Kramer falsely attributed the work to Sprenger.⁷³ However, Mackay does concede that Kramer was probably the main author of part two and three of the work,⁷⁴ and as this thesis refers mostly to the questions addressed in these parts of the *Malleus*, Kramer will be cited as the author throughout the dissertation. A total of twenty-eight editions of the work appeared over the course of nearly two centuries.⁷⁵ The work described the crime of witchcraft in lurid detail, and also gave lay judges and inquisitors detailed information on how one should conduct a witchcraft trial. Mackay states that the editions can be divided into two periods. The first period shows frequent reprints from the time of the original edition until 1523. However

Interdisziplinär Sixth International Conference: 'Visual Acuity and the Arts of Communication in Early Modern Germany' which took place at Duke University, March 2012.

⁷¹ Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft* (Oxon, 2007).

⁷² Christopher Mackay, 'Introduction' in Institoris, Heinrich and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, edited and translated by Christopher Mackay (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006), i, 103-20.

⁷³ Wolfgang Behringer and Günther Jerouschek 'Das Verfasserproblem' in *Heinrich Kramer (Institoris) Der Hexenhammer*, translated and edited by Wolfgang Behringer, Günther Jerouschek and Werner Tschacher (Munich, 2000), pp 31-7.

⁷⁴ Christopher Mackay, 'Introduction' in Institoris, Heinrich and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, edited and translated by Christopher Mackay (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006), i, 119-20.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 170.

there was then a lull in interest and the next edition printed in Germany was not until 1580 when it was printed in Frankfurt am Main.⁷⁶ The pattern of printing in the second period was different. The timing of these editions corresponded to the most intensive periods of witch-hunting in Europe. However, the *Malleus* was no longer printed as a stand alone text but rather at the first work in an extensive series of treatises on witchcraft that appeared in multi-volume omnibus editions.⁷⁷ These editions of the *Malleus* were printed at the same time as many of the *Hexenzeitungen* and therefore an understanding of the concept of witchcraft put forward in the *Malleus* is necessary to discover whether the work had any influence on the news reports. Interestingly, the *Malleus* was never translated fully into any vernacular language during the period of witch persecutions.

Another major work examined for this project is Ulrich Molitor's *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*,⁷⁸ which was printed in 1489. Unlike the *Malleus*, Molitor's text was almost immediately translated into German.⁷⁹ In this work, Molitor responded to Kramer by providing an alternative interpretation of the relationship between God, the Devil, and witches. Molitor's is the earliest illustrated book about witches in the German language.⁸⁰ Initially commissioned by Archduke Sigismund of Austria following investigations into witchcraft in his territory, like the *Malleus*, the work was reprinted frequently, with thirty-nine editions being printed from 1489 to 1669.⁸¹ The treatise was written in the form of a dialogue, in a scholastic question and answer session between three participants: Archduke Sigismund, Ulrich Molitor himself, and Conrad Schatz Chief Magistrate of Constance. Wolfgang Behringer notes that Molitor's exclusion of theologians from his discourse is important as it meant that, in his view, Dominicans or inquisitors should have nothing at all to do with legal affairs.⁸² Ultimately, the participants always reach a reasonable conclusion, repeating the traditional view of the Catholic Church that only God

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 171.

⁷⁸ Ulrich Molitor, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus Teutonice vnholden vel hexen* (Reutlingen, 1489). It should be noted and although *laniis* was the term used in the original Latin editions, modern historiography refers to the work as both *De laniis* and *De lamiis*. Molitor's treatise will hereafter be cited as *De laniis*.

⁷⁹ Molitor, *Won den unholden oder hexen* printed by Johann Zainer (Constentz, 1489?).

⁸⁰ Jane P. Davidson, *The witch in Northern European art, 1470 – 1750* (Freren, 1987) p. 14.

⁸¹ Natalie Kwan provides an informative overview of these various editions. See Natalie Kwan, 'Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor's *De lamiis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669' in *German History* xxx, no. 4 (Dec. 2012), pp 493-527.

⁸² Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts: a global history*, p. 76.

could be responsible for many things that were deemed as ‘sorcery’ and thus on the whole the text promoted a sceptical attitude towards witchcraft. However, the woodcuts produced for Molitor’s text are historically significant. In contrast to the text, the woodcuts depicted the crimes of witches as though they were reality. Therefore, while the text argued that crimes such as weather magic and flight were not possible, the associated images conveyed a conflicting message. The images from Molitor’s work have been credited as having a considerable effect on the visual language of witchcraft⁸³ and, therefore, the images from various editions of Molitor will be referred to throughout the thesis, and their influence on the woodcuts in the *Hexenzeitungen* is considered.

The latter sixteenth century witnessed a major increase in the publication of witchcraft treatises. As there has already been significant scholarship on the nature these works,⁸⁴ the author chose to examine a selection of relevant publications from this latter period. One of the major works that appears to have had an influence on the *Hexenzeitungen* is Jean Bodin’s *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris, 1580). Bodin’s work was published at the same time that the news reports about witchcraft began to increase significantly. The book was highly influential and became a text for the legal profession, and it was possibly cited more often than the *Malleus Maleficarum* for judicial practice in witchcraft trials.⁸⁵ Jean Bodin (1529/30-1596) was one of the major political theorists of the sixteenth century, as well as a lawyer, economist, natural philosopher and historian. His most significant work was *Les Six livres de la République* (1576) offered an analysis of political power. Bodin was at the height of his literary reputation when he decided to publish a work on witchcraft. *De la démonomanie des sorciers* underwent at least twenty-three editions and was translated from its original French into German, Italian and Latin.⁸⁶ It was rapidly

⁸³ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 18. Also see Kwan, ‘Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor’s *De lamiis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669’, pp 493-527.

⁸⁴ Stuart Clark provides a very comprehensive discussion and analysis of many of the works printed in this period in his work *Thinking with Demons* (Oxford, 1997).

⁸⁵ Rune Hagen, ‘Bodin, Jean’, in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, i, 129-30.

⁸⁶ Jonathan L. Pearl, ‘Introduction’ in Randy A. Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin on the demonomania of witches* (Toronto, 1995), p. 9.

translated into German by Johann Fischart in 1581⁸⁷ and was reprinted in German at least another two times.⁸⁸

All three of these texts, by Kramer, Molitor, and Bodin, feature frequently throughout the following chapters. The *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* has also been examined as it influenced the discourse on the pact with the Devil (see chapter one). Other works from the sixteenth century examined here, albeit in less detail, include: Johann Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1563), Peter Binsfeld's *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (1589) and Nicolas Rémy's *Daemonolatria* (1595). From the seventeenth century the main works consulted were Martin Del Rio's *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (1599/1600); Pierre De Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (1612); and Francesco Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608).

Scholars have always been sceptical about the veracity of media reports. Therefore it is vital to examine the *Hexenzeitungen* with caution. In order to understand the construction of the pamphlets and broadsheets more fully, case studies are employed to evaluate the role of fact and fiction in the broadsheets or pamphlets (see chapter five). This was done by trying to locate where the authors acquired their 'facts'. As part of this investigation corresponding trial manuscripts and Punishment Book entries, where available, were examined. In particular the *Urgichtensammlung* (trial records) of the *Stadtarchiv Augsburg* were utilised as they contained corresponding manuscripts for cases reported in the *Hexenzeitungen* printed in Augsburg by Elias Wellhöffer and Andreas Aperger (see chapter five). All punishments meted out by the local authority were recorded in the *Strafbuch des Rats* (the Council Punishment Book), therefore making it a useful source to corroborate the media reports.

Turning to the secondary literature, this study is indebted to many other authors' works on the history of witchcraft, communications, print culture, and crime. It would be impossible to study the *Hexenzeitungen* had it not been for the extensive amount of research carried out on the history of witch persecutions in early modern Europe. Witchcraft has been, and continues to be, a popular field of study.

⁸⁷ Jean Bodin, *De Daemonomania magorum: Vom Außgelassnen Wütigen Teuffelsheer der Besessenen* translated by Johann Fischart (Strasbourg, 1581).

⁸⁸ Jean Bodin, *De Magorum Daemonomania*, printed by Bernhard Jobin (Strasbourg, 1586) and Jean Bodin, *De Magorum Daemonomania*, printed by Bernhard Jobin (Strasbourg, 1591).

Currently, there appears to be a growing interest in the role the media had to play in the witch-hunts. In fact, in 2012, the subject of the annual *Arbeitskreis Interdisziplinäre Hexenforschung* (AKIH-Research Group for Interdisciplinary Witchcraft Studies) conference was ‘Hexerei in den Medien: Konstruktion, Transfer, Rezeption’ (Witchcraft in the media: construction, transfer, reception). This interest has been sparked by a number of articles printed in recent years, chief among them Wolfgang Behringer’s article ‘Witchcraft in the Media’ which was printed in a *Festschrift* for Erik Midelfort in 2008.⁸⁹ Behringer has long been interested in the nature of the news reports. In fact, in 1984 he wrote an article examining the authenticity of a witch report from 1590 titled: ‘Hexenverfolgungen im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Publizistik. Die „Erweytterte Unholden Zeyttung“ von 1590’.⁹⁰ In his more recent article, ‘Witchcraft and the Media’, Behringer argues that witchcraft was, at least in part, constructed through new media.⁹¹ Indeed it was in this article that Behringer coined the term *Hexenzeitungen*, a term which has been borrowed by this study. His article examines the reportage of witchcraft in a variety of media: pamphlets and broadsheets; periodical news reports; and magazines. He explores a number of broadsheets and pamphlets and examines the transfer of narratives between different sources through space (literally how they cropped up in different places) and time. Behringer claims that the *Hexenzeitungen* peaked in the 1620s. However, the present study has found contradictory evidence which suggest that most reports were printed not in the 1620s but the 1580s. Unlike the present thesis, Behringer also examined the periodical press and magazines. Interestingly, he found that that the opinionated articles that were expected in magazines helped deconstruct the stereotype of the witch.⁹²

The historical significance of witchcraft news reports, and the need for a systematic study of witchcraft pamphlets was first noted in 2002 by Robert Walinski-Kiehl in his article ‘Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630.’⁹³ Harald Sipek also wrote briefly about witchcraft in the *Neue Zeitungen* in 1994 in his ‘Neue Zeitung’ - Marginalien zur Flugblatt- und

⁸⁹ Behringer ‘Witchcraft and the Media’, pp 217-39.

⁹⁰ Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Hexenverfolgungen im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Publizistik. Die „Erweytterte Unholden Zeyttung“ von 1590’ in *Oberbayerisches Archiv*, cix (1984), pp 346-54.

⁹¹ Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Witchcraft in the Media’, p. 219.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 236.

⁹³ Robert Walinski-Kiehl ‘Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630’, pp 49-74.

Flugschriftenpublizistik.⁹⁴ Intriguingly, both authors claimed that there are 120 witchcraft broadsheets and pamphlets existing from this period,⁹⁵ however neither author provided a comprehensive listing of such documents, nor any other evidential basis for such a figure. This thesis has located as many reports as possible over the duration of this project and has found a total of seventy. Thus, this figure cited by first by Sipek, and then by Walinski-Kiehl, is questionable and requires further evidence.

Discussion of witch news reports has also featured in other works. For example Charles Zika considers the role of the news reports in constructing the image of witchcraft in the sixteenth century in his work *The appearance of witchcraft*.⁹⁶ Indeed, his investigation into the development of the visual language of witchcraft during the sixteenth century and, more specifically, his chapter on images of witchcraft in the news helped the author more clearly understand the iconography of witchcraft in the period.⁹⁷ That said, Zika does not provide a detailed analysis of the texts in these reports, and his main focus remains set on the images. Joy Wiltenburg also conducted a comparative study of a number of reports on witchcraft printed in Germany and England in order to ascertain how the representation of the crime of witchcraft related to the depiction of women and crime.⁹⁸ While interesting, Wiltenburg's discussion of witchcraft is fairly limited as she only considers a small number of witch reports. Compared to the current available literature this present research endeavours to provide a more detailed and comprehensive, textual and visual, analysis of *Hexenzeitungen* in early modern Germany.

As to the layout of the thesis, chapters one to four trace the development of key concepts, while chapter five examines the reality of the reports. The first four chapters are laid out in a particular order so as to reflect the contemporary understanding of witchcraft. The chapter breakdown can be summarised as follows:

⁹⁴ Harald Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung' - Marginalien zur Flugblatt- und Flugschriftenpublizistik' in Harald Siebenmorgen (ed.) *Hexen und Hexenverfolgung im deutschen Südwesten* (2 vols, Karlsruhe, 1994), ii, 85-92.

⁹⁵ Robert Walinski-Kiehl 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630', p. 54; Harald Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung' - Marginalien zur Flugblatt- und Flugschriftenpublizistik', p. 86.

⁹⁶ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*.

⁹⁷ Ibid. Chapter 7: 'Reporting the News and Reading the Signs', pp 179-209.

⁹⁸ Wiltenburg, *Disorderly women*, chapter 9 'Women and Crime: a Return to the Family', witchcraft is discussed specifically pp 238-50.

Chapter 1	a) Pact with the Devil b) Sexual relations with the Devil
Chapter 2	c) <i>Maleficium</i> (harmful magic)
Chapter 3	d) Weather magic
Chapter 4	e) Witches' assemblies or sabbaths. f) Flight.

As contemporaries believed that the pact with the Devil was fundamentally necessary for any act of witchcraft, this will be the topic of chapter one. The idea that all magic required a diabolical pact gradually developed from the writing of Saint Augustine until it reached fruition in the fifteenth century. The chapter explores the origin of belief in the pact with the Devil. It will also look at the idea of sex with the Devil. From the late fifteenth century witches were also considered to have a physical relationship with the 'Evil Spirit'. Indeed, the *Malleus Maleficarum* even stipulated that sex with the Devil was a key step in consolidating the demonic pact. This chapter demonstrates how, in the *Hexenzeitungen*, female pacts with the Devil were almost always interlinked with the idea of sex with the Devil. In addition, it examines how pact-seduction narratives (stories of how the witch came to join with the Devil) were represented in the reports, and discusses how these narratives varied according to gender.

Once the pact had been consolidated it was generally believed that witches could practice *maleficium* (harmful magic) with the help of their demon-lover. Thus the reportage of harmful magic is the theme of chapter two. In this chapter titled 'Contemptible Crimes and Monstrous Misdeeds', different types of harmful magic are investigated. This chapter examines what kinds of harm the witches were said to be causing in the reports, such as laming, blinding and killing. It also looks at how the witches were purported to cause such *maleficium*, assessing what types of ingredients and methods reports suggested witches were using. The reasons/motives behind witches attacking individuals were sometimes included in *Hexenzeitungen*. Such narratives are significant as they help uncover how witchcraft was imagined, and therefore narratives that included such motives will be discussed. One of the major crimes of witches reported in the media was infanticide. For this reason the chapter will consider how, and why, *maleficium* and infanticide became intertwined during this period. For the most part witches were purported to kill infants to make

harmful salves. This belief undoubtedly contributed to the development of the myth of the midwife-witch, a stereotype that was, as the chapter will show, widely propagated in reports.

Following this, chapter three inspects the idea of weather magic. Although weather magic is technically an extension of *maleficium*, the author decided to designate an entire chapter to weather magic in the media for two reasons. Firstly, because it was the most common crime referred to in the *Hexenzeitungen* in the sixteenth century. Secondly, while most *maleficium* that is discussed in chapter two focuses on witches acting individually to attack other individuals, the idea of weather magic presents us with a very different perspective on witchcraft. Through weather magic witches harmed not only individuals but entire communities. The chapter considers the reportage of weather magic in the context of the Little Ice Age, and shows how news reports played a significant part in disseminating the idea that the deteriorating conditions that contemporaries experienced were being caused by witches. What is more, witches were increasingly reported as creating weather magic together, and thus, narratives of weather magic partially helped formulate the belief in witches' acting collectively.

Chapter four examines this collective activity of witches, exploring the concepts of the witches' sabbath and witches' alleged flights to such meetings. Following the analysis of the news reports it became evident that the idea of witches' flight was only alluded to in the reports in reference to attending the witches' gathering. The treatment of two significant concepts in the one chapter, while logical, does make this section longer than the other chapters. However this approach offers an interesting insight into how flight and the sabbath were connected during the period. The chapter explores how representations of the witches' gathering in the reports differed to demonological descriptions of the sabbath. It analyses how the meetings were imagined, visually and textually, in *Hexenzeitungen*, looking at important themes such as dancing, feasting, and flying. It was the belief in the sabbath that enabled the large persecutions that took place in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Therefore it is imperative to examine how the news reports disseminated the idea of witches acting collectively, particularly as the reports had the potential to lend a semblance of reality to these gatherings.

Indeed, it is important to recognise that the *Hexenzeitungen* presented the crime of witchcraft as an actuality to their readers with most reports claiming to be ‘truthful’ (*warhafftige*) and ‘new’ (*neue*) accounts of events that really happened. Chapter five provides an investigation into the authenticity of the reports by examining a number of particular cases in detail from both the sixteenth and seventeenth century. It examines if reports were as ‘truthful’ (in the sense that they reported ‘true’ facts pertaining to actual trials) as many titles suggested. The chapter tries to uncover where the information contained in the reports originated. In other words, where did the authors find their ‘facts’? This research reveals the complex relationship between fact and fiction in the reports, and highlights how witchcraft narratives were transmitted from one medium to another.

The aim of this work is to provide a systematic investigation into how witchcraft beliefs were propagated, and indeed developed, by the contemporary *Hexenzeitungen* from 1533-1669. The thesis argues that printed reports played an important role in the development and transmission of some of the key witchcraft concepts. It has been suggested that the media do not merely report facts, but also define and shape their subjects, which in turn are reshaped by their consumers according to local taste or custom.⁹⁹ During the following chapters it will become clear that certain concepts that were not important in many demonologies were highlighted much more frequently in the *Hexenzeitungen*, while some concepts were equally important and evident in both discourses. The news reports examined here provide historians with an important social dialogue and provide ‘mediations’ of the contemporary experience of witchcraft.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Behringer, ‘Witchcraft in the Media’, p. 218.

¹⁰⁰ Joad Raymond argues that the idea of *popular print culture* is a useful one, stating that it is not the individual, cheap, printed texts, but rather ‘the social dialogue, and the mediations of experience, that these objects facilitated.’ Joad Raymond ‘Introduction: The Origins of Popular Print Culture’ in *The Oxford history of popular print culture. Volume 1: Cheap print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), p. 12.

CHAPTER 1

Doing the Devil's will: The Pact with the Devil

'...they renounce their belief in Christ Jesus, all the holy sacraments and the whole Christian religion and after the vile Devil's charge, they give themselves completely in body and soul to the Devil. For this reason they should be sentenced to death.'¹

(Reinhard Lutz, 1571)

By the sixteenth century the idea that witches made a pact with the Devil was one of the core elements of the cumulative concept of witchcraft.² Witches were said to have renounced God and all things holy before committing themselves in both body and soul to the 'Evil Spirit'. This chapter will investigate how this physical and spiritual relationship with the Devil was represented in the *Hexenzeitungen*. Particular attention will be paid to the 'pact-seduction narrative', that is, stories of how the witch came to join with the 'Evil Spirit' in the first place and how their contract was consolidated. The idea that humans could enter into an alliance with the Devil had its origins long before the period of intensive witchcraft persecution. Thus, to provide a backdrop, the chapter will begin with an exploration the origins of this concept from Augustine's discussion of 'an untrustworthy and treacherous partnership established by this disastrous alliance of men and devils'³ at the end of the fourth century, to the more elaborated description of how witches joined with the Devil in the *Malleus Maleficarum* of 1486. Following this there will be a comprehensive analysis of how the demonic pact and sex with the Devil were treated in the reports.

This chapter will also investigate whether the *Hexenzeitungen*'s portrayal of this relationship was influenced by the earlier demonological discourse or other contemporary texts. The pamphlets provide us with an insight into the popular perception of the Devil's pact. The pact with the Devil came to be seen as the focal crime of the witchcraft providing the basis for all of the witches' other crimes. For this reason, contemporaries believed this spiritual crime deserved the utmost

¹ Reinhard Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeitung / Von Gottlosen Hexen / Auch Ketzerischen und Teuffels Weibern / die zu Schettstadt / deß H. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung rc. sindt verbrennt worden* (S.l., 1571): 'Zu dem sich verläugnen des Glaubens an Christum Jesum / aller heiligen Sacrament vnd der ganzen Christlichen Religion / vnd nach schändtlicher Teuffelsverpflichtung ganz vnnd gar mit Leib vnnd Seel dem Teuffel ergeben / Darumb sollen sie zum todt verurtheilt.'

² Behringer, 'Laws on Witchcraft, Early Modern' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 636.

³ *Saint Augustine on Christian teaching*, ed. and trans. R.P.H. Green (Oxford, 1997), p. 51.

punishment. The witches' engagement with the Devil was both spiritual and physical. Not only did witches supposedly devote their soul to the Devil, but they were accused of, and confessed to having fleshly intercourse with him as if he were a real man. Therefore it is useful to explore how authors of the *Hexenzeitungen* described the witches' relationship with the Devil. Did the concept of this pact with, or sex with, the Devil change over time? In order to highlight the cultural exchange of ideas of witchcraft between learned and popular forms of literature, I will also discuss the effects contemporary publications had on each other. For example, Jean Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers* of 1580, and the first publication of the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* in 1587, evidently shaped the discussion of the diabolical pact in the *Hexenzeitungen* in the last decades of the sixteenth century. Similarly Martín Del Rio and Maria Francesco Guazzo's influence can be seen in the *Hexenzeitungen* of the seventeenth century. Lastly, one cannot study the corporeality of demons, without studying visual images, and interestingly there are a number of woodcuts depicting women getting up close and personal with their demon lovers.

Origin of belief in Demonic Pacts and Sex with Devils

Belief in the possibility of demonic pacts and the concept of sex with the Devil did not appear overnight. It was commonly believed and understood from scripture (through the book of Revelation) during the medieval period, that Satan commanded a host of subordinate demons on earth.⁴ The book of Genesis also led many to believe that spirits, or 'the sons of God'⁵ had intercourse with women, leading in turn to a new race of giants. St. Augustine (354-430), bishop of Hippo Regius in North Africa, commented on the relationship between humans and demons at the end of the fourth century in his *De Doctrina Christiana* stating that any kind of alliance between men and devils should be avoided (but in prohibiting such alliances he simultaneously demonstrated his belief that it was possible for such alliances to exist): 'So all the specialists in this kind of futile and harmful superstition, and the contracts, as it were, of an untrustworthy and treacherous partnership established by

⁴ *The new Oxford annotated Bible: new revised standard version* (3rd Edition, Oxford, 2007), Revelation 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Genesis 6:4.

this disastrous alliance of men and devils, must be totally rejected and avoided by the Christian.’⁶

Augustine was one of the most influential and original of the Latin Church fathers. However, Jörg Haustein argues that when one considers Augustine’s position in the history of witchcraft, a distinction must be made between Augustine himself and his subsequent influence on theology.⁷ This is because Augustine never had to deal with the issues that led to witchcraft prosecutions in the later period, but despite this, later theologians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and even the authors of the *Malleus* in the fifteenth century, cited Augustine as proof that humans entered into a pact with the Devil. Furthermore Augustine’s discussion of women being able to conceive children with the half-god Pan and ‘Sylvans’ became a standard reference for defending the reality of sex with the Devil.⁸ Subsequent authors used Augustine’s theories and conclusions to serve their own ends, and elaborated them further creating embellished ideas of the pact with Satan. Although the basic concept of a contractual alliance between humans and demons may have had its foundation in the works of Augustine, the systemised ideology of the pact with the Devil was not fully developed until much later:

Before the work of the scholastic philosophers and systematic theologians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, the role of demons in the affairs of men and women was part of a variegated and inconsistent folk- and clerical lore in which demonic activities ranged from horrific and utterly diabolical to mere impishness and mischievousness, often betraying a whimsical humor. In the increasingly systematic thought of Aquinas and his contemporaries, however, this folklore became complex and rigorous ecclesiastical doctrine.⁹

Before we progress any further, it is vital that one understands that the pact with the Devil and sex with the Devil, are two separate concepts.¹⁰ However throughout the course of this research it has become apparent that although the two ideas evolved at first separately, by the turn of the fifteenth century sex with the Devil was believed to be an essential component for a woman entering into, and consolidating the pact with the Devil. Therefore this chapter will look at the history of both concepts and

⁶ *Saint Augustine on Christian teaching*, p. 51.

⁷ Jörg Haustein, ‘Augustine, St.’, in *Encyclopedia for witchcraft: the western tradition*, i, 68-9.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Alan Kors and Edward Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700: A documentary history* (Revised ed., Pennsylvania, 2001), p.7.

¹⁰ See David Lederer, ‘Pact with the Devil’ and Walter Stephens ‘Sexual Activity, Diabolic’ two separate entries in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*. For Lederer see iii, 867-9, for Stephens see, iv, 1024-6.

explore how they began to merge together both before the publication of the *Hexenzeitungen* and in the *Hexenzeitungen* themselves.

The belief that a human being could make a pact with the Devil did not become widespread in western Europe until the ninth century, when various legends about such pacts were translated into Latin, for example the legend of St. Theophilus.¹¹ Theophilus is supposed to have learned from a Jewish sorcerer how to make a pact with the Devil by renouncing God and giving a written document to the 'Evil One'. However, Theophilus claimed he never stopped praying to the Virgin Mary and later on when Theophilus regretted having made the pact, he was able to rid himself of the pact by praying to the Virgin Mary.¹² He was subsequently forgiven. It is interesting to note that Theophilus needed an intermediary, and that the one he used was a Jew, as it is evidence that anti-Semitism was inherent in early diabolical belief structures.¹³ Such legends helped to popularise and disseminate the idea that a person could make an agreement resembling a legal contract with the Devil by promising their soul to the Devil in exchange for wealth or power.¹⁴ However, the connection between magic and the demonic pact was to become much closer in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At that time, the translation of many Islamic and Greek books of magic led to a dramatic increase in the practice of ritual magic, and this magic was frequently referred to as necromancy.¹⁵ These forms of magic were practiced mainly at the courts of European monarchs. The magician, or necromancer, would summon up demons to acquire forbidden knowledge by citing certain formulas, trying to entrap the demon. This new type of magic was quickly attacked and condemned by scholastic theologians, and was especially scrutinized by the famous scholastic, St. Thomas Aquinas.

The magicians believed that they were in control and command of the Devil; however the scholastics argued that demons did not do anything without demanding something in return and ultimately concluded that all magicians therefore made pacts with the Devil:

The key to the scholastic response to this challenge was the logical argument that demons did not provide services with demanding something in return. The very

¹¹ Levack, *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe*, p. 35.

¹² For more information on the legend of Theophilus, see Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 172, or Valerie I. J. Flint, *The rise of magic in early medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1991), pp 344-7.

¹³ David Lederer, 'Pact with the Devil' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 867-9.

¹⁴ Levack, *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe*, p. 35.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

practices of the magicians suggested that this was so, since they often offered demons either reverence or some sort of physical object, such as a chicken or their own blood, in order to lure them into their service. The conclusion that the scholastics were able to draw from all this was that virtually all magicians made pacts with the Devil.¹⁶

Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-1274) played a very important role in the development of this argument and essentially Aquinas' arguments about the compact made between humans and demons (which relied heavily on Augustine) and his theory on how demons could have sex, and, indeed, impregnate women formed the back-bone of later demonologists' arguments when they were discussing the Devil's pact or copulation with demons.¹⁷ Therefore it is worthwhile to take a closer look at Thomas Aquinas.

Thomas was a Dominican and professor of theology at the University of Paris and elsewhere from 1256. He wrote extensively on theological issues, his main works include a *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* (a standard textbook for theology in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries), *Summa contra gentiles* and *Summa Theologiae*. These texts together provided a 'great philosophical system' and later became the foundation of much Catholic thought, and it was from Aquinas, that the argument about pacts involving both magicians and later witches derived much of its theological authority.¹⁸ Thomas argued, in his commentary on book two, distinction seven, question three, article two, of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, that it was not permitted to Christians to seek the aid and advice of demons. He cited Deuteronomy 18: 10-12, that God commands that all *incantatores et maleficos* be killed, and also quoted Augustine, who said that all divinations should be avoided.¹⁹ He believed that people who asked from demons that which should only be asked of God sinned gravely. In *The 'Summa Theologica'* Part one, Question 114, on the assaults of demons, Thomas quoted Augustine directly: 'As Augustine says: when magicians do what holy men do, they do it for a different end and by a different right. The former do it for their own glory, the latter for the glory of God: the former, by certain private compacts: the latter by the evident assistance

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ The authors of the *Malleus Maleficarum* frequently referred to the works of Thomas Aquinas, whom they called the *doctor sanctus* (the saintly doctor). See Christopher Mackay, 'General Introduction' in Institoris, Heinrich and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, edited and translated by Christopher S. Mackay (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006), i, 167.

¹⁸ Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 87.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 89.

and command of God'.²⁰ He believed that divination was a form of superstition, and in Question 95, 'Of Superstition and divination', he discusses this in eight articles. In the second article, 'On Whether divination is a species of superstition?' he stated that:

I answer that, as stated above (A. I : QQ. [92], 94.) superstition denotes undue divine worship. Now a thing pertains to the worship of God in two ways: in one way, it is something offered to God: as a sacrifice, an oblation, or something of the kind: in another way, it is something divine that is assumed, as stated above with regard to an oath (Q. [89], A. [4], ad 2). Wherefore superstition includes not only idolatrous sacrifices offered to demons, but also recourse to the help of demons for the purpose of doing or knowing something. But all divination results from the demon's operation, either because the demons are expressly invoked that the future may be made known or because the demons thrust themselves into futile searchings of the future, in order to entangle men's minds with vain conceits.²¹

He also responded to the contemporary argument that divination did not seem to pertain to undue worship (Objection 2²²), saying that: 'This kind of divination pertains to the worship of the demons, inasmuch as one enters into a compact, tacit or express, with demons.'²³ In the fourth article on 'Whether divination practised by invoking demons is unlawful?' Thomas clearly states that it is 'altogether unlawful' for two reasons:

The first is gathered from the principle of divination, which is a compact made expressly with a demon by the very fact of invoking him. This is altogether unlawful; wherefore it is written against certain persons (Isa.28: 15): "You have said: We have entered into a league with death, and we have made a covenant with hell." And still more grievous would it be if sacrifice were offered or reverence paid to the demon invoked.²⁴

All in all, Thomas believed that all communication with demons required a pact, which constituted apostasy from the true faith, and this pact could be 'tacit' or 'express'. An express or explicit pact was when the magician actually summoned the demon and offered them something, while a tacit or implicit pact was the result of any practice of magic, as any magic could only be the result of some reciprocal relationship between the Devil and the magician.²⁵ Thus magicians were seen as doubly guilty of both apostasy and heresy.

²⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *The 'Summa Theologica'* translated by Fathers of the English Dominican province (1947), First Part, Question 114 available online on Sacred Texts (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/aquinas/summa/index.htm>) (6 Jan. 2012).

²¹ Ibid., Second Part of the Second Part, Question 95, Second Article.

²² Ibid. Second Part of the Second Part, Question 95, Second Article, Objection 2.

²³ Ibid., Second Part of the Second Part, Question 95, Second Article Reply Obj. 2.

²⁴ Ibid., Second Part of the Second Part, Question 95, Fourth Article.

²⁵ Levack, *The witch-hunt in early modern Europe*, p. 37.

However, Thomas did not only discuss the pact with the Devil, he also formulated a doctrine (borrowing from Augustine) of how incubi and succubi could have sex and reproduce with humans when discussing the issue ‘Of the Angels in Comparison with Bodies’ (Question 51).²⁶ In the third article of this question he asks ‘Whether the angels exercise functions of life in the bodies assumed?’ To beget offspring, was considered a function of life, and therefore attracted Thomas’ attention. He denied that demons/angels could beget children themselves, but believed that they could have intercourse with humans. He argued that any child born from this intercourse was from the seed of a man and not of a demon. He explained how this was possible as a result of demons stealing men’s sperm. He deduced that the demons firstly had sex with men in the form of a succubus to collect sperm and then afterward had sex with women in the form of an incubus:

Still if some are occasionally begotten from demons, it is not from seed of such demons, nor from their assumed bodies, but from the seed of men taken for the purpose; as when the demon assumes first the form of a woman, and afterwards of a man ; just they take the seed of other things for other generating purposes, as Augustine says (De Trin. iii), so that the person born is not the child of a demon, but of the man.²⁷

Although Aquinas argued that the demons could not beget children, his scholastic logic implied that ‘real’ sexual intercourse could take place between demons and humans. Future demonologists found Aquinas’ explanation useful and frequently referred to the *Summa Theologica* as proof of demonic copulation. Overall Thomas Aquinas’ ideas about the pact with the Devil and demonic copulation were to have fatal consequences in the future.²⁸ His belief that all magic was the result of a demonic pact ultimately meant that the simple sorcery of the peasants and lower classes could also be understood as resulting from a pact with the Devil. The linking of witchcraft to heresy and apostasy also meant that papal inquisitors could try magicians, and later, witches.

By the 1320s the concept of the pact with the Devil had developed further, and the Catholic Church, under the control of Pope John XXII (ruled 1316-1334), began directing its inquisitors to proceed against the sorcerers: ‘the infectors of God’s flock.’²⁹ In a letter from the Cardinal of Santa Sabina to the inquisitors of

²⁶ Aquinas, *The ‘Summa Theologica’*, First Part, Question 51.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Question 51, Third article, Reply to Objection 6.

²⁸ Jörg Haustein, ‘Aquinas, St Thomas’ in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, i, 53-4.

²⁹ William, Cardinal of Santa Sabina, letter 22 August 1320, to the inquisitors of Carcassonne and Toulouse, in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700*, p. 119.

Carcassonne and Toulouse, one can see that the pact now also included the abuse of the sacraments of the church, such as baptism, confirmation and particularly the Eucharist.³⁰ It is interesting to note, that the sorcerers referred to in the letter are male. The cardinal stated that he was stipulating the desires of the pope. Pope John XXII (who was educated by the Dominican order in France and, therefore, likely to have been influenced by the works of Aquinas)³¹ feared magical assaults from his enemies, and therefore was gravely concerned about sorcery and demonic invocations.³² The pope himself issued a papal bull, *Super illius specula*, in 1326, calling for the excommunication of sorcerers:

Grievingly we observe... that many who are Christians in name only... sacrifice to demons, adore them, make or have made images, rings, mirrors, phials, or other things for magic purposes, and bind themselves to demons. They ask and receive responses from them and to fulfil their most depraved lusts ask them for aid. Binding themselves to the most shameful slavery for the most shameful of things, they ally themselves with death and make a pact with hell. By their means a most pestilential disease, besides growing stronger and increasingly serious, grievously infests the flock of Christ throughout the world.
... We hereby promulgate the sentence of excommunication upon all and singular who against our most charitable warnings and orders presume to engage in these things, and we desire that they incur this sentence ipso facto.³³

It was also in the 1320s that the first trial for crimes that can be defined as witchcraft, in the sense that it incorporated both a pact with, and carnal knowledge of, the Devil, took place: the trial of Alice Kyteler in Ireland in 1324. Dame Alice Kyteler, from Kilkenny, was accused and convicted of *maleficium* and demonic copulation by the tribunal of the bishop of Ossary, Richard Ledrede. It was one of the earliest trials to link sorcery with heresy, to treat the defendants as members of an organised group and to accuse a woman of having acquired sorcery by means of sex with a Devil.³⁴ The bishop of Ossary was personally appointed by none other than Pope John XXII. The charges made against Dame Alice and her accomplices were serious, they were said to have denied the Christian faith, and the body of Christ. They were accused of not going to mass and of making sacrifices to Demons and seeking by their sorcery advice and responses from demons.³⁵ They had supposedly used special powders and

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ This would have been around the same time that Thomas Aquinas, also a Dominican, was working as Professor of Theology in Paris.

³² For further information on Pope John XXII see Michael D. Bailey, 'John XXII, Pope' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, ii, 597.

³³ 'Pope John XXII, The Decretal *Super illius specula* (1326),' translation from Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, pp 119-120.

³⁴ John Bradley, 'Kyteler, Alice' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 613.

³⁵ St. John D. Seymour B.D., *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology* (New York, 1973), pp 27-9.

ointments to harm people.³⁶ Dame Alice herself was accused of having sex with ‘a certain demon’ in exchange for money:

The said dame had a certain demon an incubus, named Son of Art, who had carnal knowledge of her, and from whom she admitted that she had received all her wealth. This incubus made its appearance under various forms, sometimes as a cat, or a as a hairy black dog, or in the likeness of a negro, accompanied by two others who were larger and taller than he, and of whom one carried an iron rod.³⁷

The trial of Dame Alice Kyteler highlights that by the early fourteenth century the concepts of the pact with the Devil and demonic copulation had begun to merge. However, ideas about magic and demons continued to evolve throughout the latter half of the fourteenth century, with the Spanish Dominican inquisitor Nicholau Eymeric writing about magicians and diviners and heresy in his *Directorium inquisitorum* of 1376, and the publication of the condemnation of sorcery from the University of Paris in 1398.

Nicholau Eymeric’s ideas on witchcraft are important as his work which was created as a handbook for inquisitors became a highly influential and widely used text.³⁸ In fact, part three of the *Malleus Maleficarum* was mostly derived from Eymeric’s work.³⁹ He believed and concluded that some magicians and diviners were heretics ‘who show the honor of *latria* or *dulia* to the demons’,⁴⁰ and therefore they should be punished according to the laws pertaining to heretics; this included the use of torture. If guilty of *latria* [form of adoration that is only to be shown to God] ‘then they are to be considered by the judgement of the church not as magicians, but as heretics’, if they recant and abjure heresy they are to be imprisoned, if they do not repent: ‘they are to be relinquished to the secular arm, and punished by the ultimate torture according to all the canonical sanctions which judge other heretics’.⁴¹ The theology faculty of the University of Paris’ condemnation of sorcery in 1398 was also significant, as it continued the linking of elaborate magical practices with unlearned practices of diabolical sorcery for private and shameful ends.⁴²

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

³⁸ Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 121.

³⁹ Christopher Mackay, ‘General Introduction’ in Institoris, Heinrich and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, edited and translated by Christopher S. Mackay (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006), i, 153.

⁴⁰ ‘Nicholau Eymeric, The *Directorium inquisitorum* (1376)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 122.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 124.

⁴² ‘The Theology Faculty of the University of Paris Condemns Sorcery (1398)’, *ibid.*, p. 131.

By the fifteenth century the idea that a pact was necessary for any kind of magic had become almost standard theological dogma. The notion that these magicians or sorcerers served the Devil as a sect was also beginning to take hold. In 1437, Pope Eugenius IV wrote a letter to all inquisitors concerning heretical depravity in which he claimed that the Prince of Darkness was making many people ‘members of his sect’.⁴³ He stated that many people ‘sacrifice to demons, adore them, seek out and accept responses from them, do homage to them, and make with them a written agreement or another kind of pact through which, by a single word, touch, or sign, they may perform whatever evil deeds or sorcery they wish and be transported to or away from wherever they wish.’⁴⁴ Around the same time, Johannes Nider⁴⁵ wrote about witchcraft in his *Formicarius* (1435-38). The *Formicarius* (*The Ant Colony*) was a long treatise on theology and moral and ecclesiastical reform. Nider was born in Swabia, and entered the Dominican Order after 1402. He was a supporter of church reform and attended the Council of Constance in 1426/27-29. He served as prior of the convent of Basel and was involved in the Council of Basel from 1431-34 before becoming professor of theology and subsequently dean of the theological faculty of the University of Vienna. As such, his work offers the perspective of a member of the university-educated, reform minded clerical elite.⁴⁶

It was in the fifth book of his *Formicarius* that Nider dealt with witchcraft. Nider’s treatment of witchcraft is noteworthy as he did not only interpret earlier sources but also made use of contemporary experience. He was informed on the nature of witches by a judge, a monk, and an inquisitor. The judge was the Bernese patrician Peter von Greyerz who had worked as a judge in the Simme Valley from 1392-1407. The monk, called Benedict, offered Nider information he had acquired from his previous activity in ‘the peripheral world of sleight of hand tricks’⁴⁷ and necromancy, while the inquisitor, from Autun, shared his experience of trying witches. This inquisitor told Nider that the witches gathered in a certain place, and when their deeds were done they saw the demon visibly appear in the form of a man. The disciples of the Devil, the inquisitor said, ‘would deny Christianity, would never

⁴³ ‘Pope Eugenius IV, A letter to all inquisitors of heretical depravity, 1437’, *ibid.*, p.154.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ For more information on Nider, see Michael Bailey’s work *Battling demons: witchcraft, heresy and reform in the late middle ages* (Pennsylvania, 2003).

⁴⁶ Michael Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania, 2003), p. 30-1.

⁴⁷ Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 155.

adore the Eucharist, and would secretly trample on the cross.’⁴⁸ Walter Stephens argues that this shows that the practice of witchcraft was increasingly imagined as a ‘countersacramental’ interaction with demons.⁴⁹ Indeed, Nider shows how witchcraft only became possible as a result of two countersacramental transgressions, avoiding the Eucharist and stamping on the crucifix. There is logic behind both of these actions, by not adoring the Eucharist the witch withdraws faith from it and forfeits the Christianising effects that periodic communion maintains; furthermore, by trampling on the crucifix the witch counteracts its benefits as a tool of counterdemonism.⁵⁰ Nider’s treatise also incorporated detailed descriptions of individual trials which judge Peter of Bern had first-hand knowledge.⁵¹ One of the accounts included the story of one witch’s seduction by Satan:

Moreover, this same method was more clearly described by another young witch who had been captured and burned, although in the end (so I believe) he was truly penitent.... For the aforesaid young man, brought to trial in Bern with his wife and placed in a separate tower from her, said, ‘If I can obtain forgiveness for my sins, I will freely disclose all that I know about witchcraft The order’ he said, ‘in which I was seduced is this. First, on the Lord’s Day, before the holy water is consecrated, the future disciple, along with the masters, must enter directly into the church. Then he must do homage to the *magisterulus*, that is, to the little master. For thus and not otherwise they call the demon. Finally he drinks from the bottle mentioned above [the bottle was full of a liquid fluid made from boiled babies], by which act instantly he feels himself to have received within himself images of our arts, and to retain the principal rites of this sect. In this way I was seduced.’⁵²

In this description, we can see that the witches were now viewed as an organised sect with the *magisterulus* as their leader. In order to become a witch one had to reject the

⁴⁸ Translation from Bailey, *Battling Demons*, p. 43. Original Latin: ‘...cui discipulus necessario dare habebat fidem de abnegando Christianismo, de Eucharistia nunquam adoranda, et de calcando super crucem ubi latenter valeret’. Johannes Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, pp 350-1.

⁴⁹ Walter Stephens, *Demon lovers: witchcraft, sex and the crisis of belief* (Chicago, 2002), p. 197.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ It is important to note here that accounts of trials given by Peter of Bern have been called into question and that historians such as Andreas Blauert and Michael D. Bailey believe that, based on historical evidence, the accounts do not really represent testimony given to that judge in the first decades of the 1400s. ‘Either Peter of Bern had misremembered events that happened many years previously or Nider reinterpreted Peter’s accounts in the light of current ideas as he wrote.’ See Bailey, *Battling Demons* pp 54-8.

⁵² Translation from Bailey, *Battling Demons*, pp 42-3. Original Latin: ‘Modum autem eundem alius iuuenis maleficis captus, & incineratus, tandem licet (vt credo) verè poenitens, distinctius referavit ... in Bernensium namque iudicio captus dictus iuuenis cum uxore, & ab eadem in distinctam turrim repositus dixit. Si meorum facinorum venium consequi possem, omnia quae de maleficijs scio, libens patefacerem... Ordo, inquit, talis est, quo etiam seductus sum. Oportet primo, dominica die, antequam aqua benedicta consecratur, ecclesiam introire mox futurum discipulum cum magistris, & ibidem abnegare coram eis Christum, eius fidem, baptisma & vniuersalem ecclesiam; deinde homagium praestare magisterulo, id est, paruo magistro, ita enim daemonem & non aliter vocant, postremo de vtre bibit supradicto, : quo facto statim se in interioribus sentit imagines nostrae artis concipere, & retinere, ac principales ritus huius sectae. In hunc modum seductus sum’ in Johannes Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, pp 351-2.

Christian faith and worship the Devil. Nider's work also represents the merging of elite and common sorcery, as he drew no distinction between ritual magic (necromancy) and more popular forms of sorcery as practiced by many different kinds of people across Europe.⁵³ This merging of ideas, and the belief that simple *maleficium*, or magic, was essentially the same as necromancy, was common in the fifteenth century, and eventually simple *maleficium* was transformed into 'satanic witchcraft'.⁵⁴

The idea that women were more susceptible to evil, and the Devil, was also founded in this period, with Nider being the first clerical authority to argue that more women than men were inclined to witchcraft.⁵⁵ In his *Preceptorium divine legis* he addressed this issue directly asking 'why it appears that women often are found [involved] in superstition and witchcraft in a greater number than men.'⁵⁶ Nider argued that women were more inclined to witchcraft for three reasons: they were weaker in the faith which meant they were more likely to be deceived by the Devil; they were physically weaker, thus making them more likely to have visions and delusions; and, lastly, they were more talkative than men, meaning that they could quickly spread the evil arts among each other.⁵⁷ However, it was not until the publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum* that witchcraft became especially associated with women.

The 1430s also saw the publication of the anonymous *Errores Gazoriorum* (1437) and Claude Tholosan's *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37) both of which dealt expressly with the pact with the Devil. The *Errores Gazoriorum* which was written by an anonymous inquisitor claimed that new members of the Devil's sect had to swear faith and pay homage to the Devil. The author described how the Devil made a deed with the witch's blood:

Further, according to the confession of Johannes de Stipulis and other members of the sect now burned, when a new member enters the sect and has sworn this faith and paid homage, the devil pricks his left hand with an instrument and draws blood from it, with which he writes a certain writing on a deed, which he then keeps, and many have seen this, as many have testified to.⁵⁸

⁵³ Bailey, *Battling demons*, pp 40-1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41. See also Michael Bailey, 'From Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Later Middle Ages' in *Speculum* lxxv, no. 4 (2001), pp 960-90.

⁵⁵ Bailey, *Battling demons*, p. 49.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ 'The *Errores Gazoriorum* (1437)' in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 162.

The anonymous author also claimed that many joined ‘this damned society’ because they delighted in the venereal act and wanted to indulge in their sexual passions ‘at will’.⁵⁹ This is the first case where we have the suggestion of witches joining with the Devil, purely out of sexual lust, and also one of the first times that a ‘deed’ written in blood is a required part of the pact. Claude Tholosan’s work also elaborated on the idea of witches being involved with demons stating that witches knelt before the Devil and kissed him in the form of a man and of different animals.⁶⁰ Tholosan was a lay magistrate in the Brianconnais and his text on witchcraft is one of the first by a secular author. However, despite being a secular judge, his account of the demonic pact corresponded closely to that of contemporary religious authors such as Nider:

Further at the instigation of their master, these people swear that those who enter their sect deny God, who they call the *Prophet*; they put a vase into which the devil has pissed in the middle of a circle they have drawn on the ground, and then they drink from this and bow so that they will completely withdraw from the faith of Christ. Then they raise their hands or some other thing and swear to renounce the laws of God and their faith, no longer believing in the articles of faith of the sacraments of the church. Then they turn their naked asses to heaven, in order to show their scorn for God, drawing a cross on the ground, spitting on it and treading it underfoot, as it is said, in contempt of God....⁶¹

This proves that by the mid-fifteenth century, both religious and secular authorities believed that in order for witches to join with the Devil, they had to formally renounce God and the Catholic Church. Both Nider and Tholosan mentioned the need for witches to scorn God and abuse the sacraments; in particular, the crucifix, or the sign of the cross, which was trampled upon in both texts. They also claim that witches had to drink something in order to receive their power. Nider said that they drink a potion made from boiled children, while Tholosan stated that they drank the Devil’s own urine. However, the concept that one must have sex with the Devil in order to complete or reify the pact had not come to fruition. This idea really only came to fore with the publication of the next text that will be discussed: the *Malleus Maleficarum*.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* of 1486 was special because it combined all of the pre-existing concepts of witchcraft in a new way. The Dominican author Heinrich Kramer drew on the vast amount of witchcraft literature available by the late

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ ‘Claude Tholosan: *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 164.

⁶¹ Ibid.

fifteenth century in order to support their case for ‘the hammer of [female] witches’, and it is in this text, that sex with the devil became inextricably linked to the diabolical pact. It was also in this text, that the idea, first proposed by Nider, that women were more susceptible to the Devil’s cunning was further elaborated, and essentially put forward as an established fact, with Kramer going as far as to say that ‘for intelligent men it appears to be reasonably unsurprising that more women than men are found to be tainted with the Heresy of Sorceresses. Hence and consequently, it should be called the Heresy not of Sorcerers but of Sorceresses, to name it after the predominant element.’⁶² Kramer believed that women were more easily led by the Evil One for a number of reasons: firstly, because ‘they are prone to believing’; secondly, because by nature they were more easily impressed upon; thirdly, because they ‘have loose tongues’; and as a result of their lack of physical strength, they ‘readily seek to avenge themselves, through acts of sorcery’.⁶³ In a nutshell Kramer thought women were gullible, impressionable, weak, gossipers. Furthermore, Kramer argued that women were more carnal than men and therefore they cavorted with demons in order to satisfy their ‘insatiable lust’.⁶⁴ Kramer’s argument is very similar to Nider’s; however, Kramer saw woman’s carnality as her main flaw as it ultimately led her to the Devil’s door to satisfy her sexual needs. Kramer believed that the witches of his time were different to those of the past, and even admitted that there was no proof for ‘carnal acts’ with demons before 1400 ‘because the historical record nowhere discusses / what experience has now taught us’.⁶⁵ He stated that belief in ‘all this’ (demonic sex) was based entirely on the testimony of the witches themselves or the reports of trustworthy witnesses and that what made these witches different from those in the past was that they devoted themselves to the Devil freely for physical pleasure:

As for the present proposition, which asserts that present-day sorceresses are tainted with filthy acts of the Devil of this sort, it is not so much our pronouncement that advocates this as the testimony of experience given by the sorceresses themselves, who have rendered all these things believable, no longer subordinating themselves to a wretched form of slavery against their will as has hitherto been the case, but doing so of their own accord for physical pleasure (a most foul thing).⁶⁶

⁶² Christopher Mackay (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 170.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 307.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 308.

Therefore it is not surprising that Kramer included demonic intercourse as one of the key steps in the breaching of the faith when entering into a pact with a demon.

In book one, question two, Kramer argues (like many others previously) that to achieve any effect of sorcery a sorcerer must always co-operate with a demon.⁶⁷ He refuted the opinion that witches should not be punished by contending that they were ‘instruments possessing souls and acting freely’.⁶⁸ He maintained that the witches joined with the Devil of their own free will:

Granted they are no longer at liberty after they make the explicit agreement with the demons, because, as we have learned from the confessions of these women (I am speaking of womenfolk burned for very many acts of sorcery) they are compelled to work with them if they wish to escape the scourging at the hand of demons. Nonetheless, they remain bound by the initial avowal in which they willingly subordinated themselves to demons.⁶⁹

It was this ‘explicit agreement’ that made the heresy of sorcerers different to other heresies, according to Kramer. He claimed that heresy of sorcerers used agreements that were not merely expressed but ‘ratified as treaties’ and for this reason they were incredibly evil and insulted God in every way.⁷⁰

Kramer continued on to outline the four practices that witches used to breach the faith. Firstly they renounced the Catholic faith in whole or in part with a sacrilegious speech. Secondly they devoted themselves in body and soul to the Devil. Thirdly they offered unbaptised babies to the Devil and, fourthly, they engaged in the Devil’s ‘filthy deeds’ through carnal acts with incubus and succubus demons. These four practices were to become popular concepts throughout the sixteenth century, as will be shown later in this chapter in the exploration of the *Hexenzeitungen*. Kramer argued that such things had to be true because the women themselves confessed to such things, and what’s more the ‘Apostolic See has established through its Bull’⁷¹ that such acts take place. He also argued that the inquisitors could not cease to conduct inquisitions into witchcraft without ‘the loss of our own salvation’.⁷²

Thus far it has been established that *Malleus Maleficarum* purported that demonic pacts were in fact real and that women were more likely to enter them. It

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 112.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p 113.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp 119-120.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 120.

⁷² Ibid.

has also been shown that Kramer professed that carnal lust was the main reason that women subordinated themselves to the Devil. Kramer based these conclusions on the work of previous clerics, such as Augustine, Aquinas, and the more recent Nider. He maintained Aquinas' theory on how demons could beget humans in Question Three of Part One, stating that 'demons can receive seeds from some people and pour them into others'.⁷³ He argued that the reason that demons had sex with humans was not for the sake of pleasure but that they did so 'in order to taint the soul and body of those under or on whom they lie'.⁷⁴ Much later in the text, he also stated that the Devil preferred to have sex at sacred times of the year as this would offend God more and therefore God would allow the Devil more power.⁷⁵

Kramer's text is filled with stories of witches, and a few of these stories include an account of how particular witches entered into a pact with, and slept with, the Devil. It is interesting to note (given Kramer's views on women) that the first account of somebody committing a carnal act with the Devil is, in fact, about a man. Kramer told a story about a man from Ravensburg who was 'importuned to commit the carnal act by the devil in the shape of a woman'.⁷⁶ However the man, being worried when the Devil refused to stop, ate salt, and the Devil disappeared.⁷⁷ Salt was considered useful in counterdemonism. Curiously the *Malleus* also contained a section on how one could protect themselves from incubus demons; one could protect oneself through sacramental confession, making the sign of the cross, or by reciting the Hail Mary, to name but a few ways.⁷⁸ It is interesting that the man was saved, whereas the stories about women have less than happy endings. For example, a woman from Gübwiller in Basel is also mentioned in the text who was burnt to ashes after having had a relationship with an incubus demon for six years.⁷⁹ However, Kramer noted, that as the woman was burnt after six years she was saved as she had only promised to be dedicated wholly to the Devil after seven years.⁸⁰

On reading the text, it becomes apparent that Kramer was more interested in the idea of women luring other women into breaching the faith, rather than believing

⁷³ Ibid., p 123, and pp 128-9.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 311.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 263.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 413.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 292.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

that the Devil did it himself directly. This is interesting as in most of the *Hexenzeitungen* the Devil approaches the woman himself. Kramer cited examples of women who led other women astray. One such story is about a maiden from Strasbourg, who was lured by an old woman. However the maiden escapes temptation by protecting herself with the sign of the cross.⁸¹ He also told the story of an old female bath-keeper who was led astray by an old woman too, but it is the story of her companion's journey to the dark side that more closely resembles the later 'seduction' narrative which became popularised in the sixteenth century:

This companion came across a demon in the appearance of a man on the road, while she was intending to visit her boyfriend to fornicate. She was recognized by the incubus demon and he asked whether she recognized him. When she stated that she did not recognize him at all, he answered, 'I am a demon, and if you wish, I will always be ready for your desire, and I won't abandon you in any dire straits.' She agreed to this, and for the next 18 years until the end of her life, she dedicated herself to the filthy acts of the Devil, (with a complete renunciation of the Faith).⁸²

The *Malleus* became a printing success with twelve Latin editions printed in Germany and France between 1486 and 1523.⁸³ While it did not necessarily lead to immediate widespread persecutions, it did make contemporaries more conscious of the crime of witchcraft and probably made witchcraft more credible. Levack argues that the cumulative concept of witchcraft did not command instinctive and immediate belief, either among the learned or the illiterate: 'People had to be *told* that witches *could* and *did* perform the various acts of which they were accused.'⁸⁴ The *Malleus* was a significant tool in this educative process. It *told* people how witches *could* and *did* enter into a diabolical pact and that they *could* and *did* engage in carnal activities with demons. The text became the authority on witchcraft until the publication of Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* almost a hundred years later. However, before moving on to the examination of the concepts of diabolical pact and sex with the Devil in the *Hexenzeitungen* there is one final source that requires discussion

In 1489, another famous publication on witchcraft came to the press, Ulrich Molitor's *De Lamiis et Phitonicis Mulieribus*,⁸⁵ later translated into German as *Von*

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 278.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 74.

⁸⁴ Levack, *The witch hunt in early modern Europe*, p. 55.

⁸⁵ Ulrich Molitor, [Latin version] *De lamiis et phitonicis mulieribus Teutonice vnholden vel hexen* (Reutlingen, 1489) printed by Johann Otmar, available in the digital collections of Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel (<http://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=inkunabeln/179-2-quod-2>) (1 Oct. 2009).

Hexen vnd Vnholden.⁸⁶ In this work Molitor responded to Kramer by providing an alternative interpretation of the relationship between God, the Devil, and witches. Molitor's work is the earliest illustrated book about witches in the German language.⁸⁷ Like the *Malleus* the work was reprinted frequently, however unlike the *Malleus* it was printed in both Latin and the vernacular.⁸⁸ The work was commissioned by the Count of Tyrol following investigations into witchcraft in his territory.

In 1485 Archduke Sigismund, the Count of Tyrol, crossed paths with Heinrich Kramer, when the latter began an extensive investigation into witchcraft in the area around Innsbruck. Kramer investigated at least fifty women and two men, which led to the arrest and trial of seven women.⁸⁹ However the local bishop, Bishop Golser, the Bishop of Brixen, intervened and insisted on the involvement of a secular magistrate. The magistrate dismissed the charges and ultimately Kramer was charged with abuse of office and commanded to leave Tyrol by the Archduke himself.⁹⁰ Although Sigismund remained relatively removed from the proceedings, the experience led him to commission Molitor, a practicing lawyer and professor of law, to clarify the issues for him in a treatise on witchcraft.⁹¹ The treatise was written in the form of a dialogue, in a scholastic style question and answer session, between three participants, Archduke Sigismund, Ulrich Molitor himself and Conrad Schatz, Chief Magistrate of Constance.

In the text, Molitor took a slightly different approach to demonic copulation. It is noteworthy that this work contained the first image of a witch embracing a Devil in the form of a man. Molitor's book quickly became popular and was printed again in the same year and shortly after in German. Jane P. Davidson stated in her work on witchcraft and art that the illustrations in Molitor's work were repeated with virtually

⁸⁶ Ulrich Molitor, [German version] *Von Hexen und Unholden*, translated into German by Conrad Lautenbach (Strasbourg, 1575) available online at the Digitale Bijzondere Collecties, Universiteit Utrecht (<http://objects.library.uu.nl/reader/resolver.php?obj=001997562&type=2>) (2 January 2012). It was decided to use this German translation for this thesis as it was printed around the same period as many of the *Hexenzeitungen* that I will be investigating, thus it was the most contemporary vernacular translation of Molitor during the latter half of the sixteenth century.

⁸⁷ Jane P. Davidson, *The witch in Northern European art, 1470 – 1750* (Freren, 1987), p. 14.

⁸⁸ Natalie Kwan provides an informative overview of the various editions of Molitor's text. See Natalie Kwan, 'Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor's *De lamiis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669' in *German History* xxx, no. 4 (Dec. 2012), pp 493-527.

⁸⁹ Edmund M. Kern, 'Innsbruck', in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, ii, 552-3.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Edward Bever, 'Molitor, Ulrich (1442-1508)', in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 776.

no changes from edition to edition.⁹² However, on a closer examination, this is not the case, as there were a number of different woodcuts portraying the Devil embracing a witch used in various editions of the work.⁹³ For example, three woodcuts, which all date back to 1489 editions, show slightly different interpretations of the same scene.

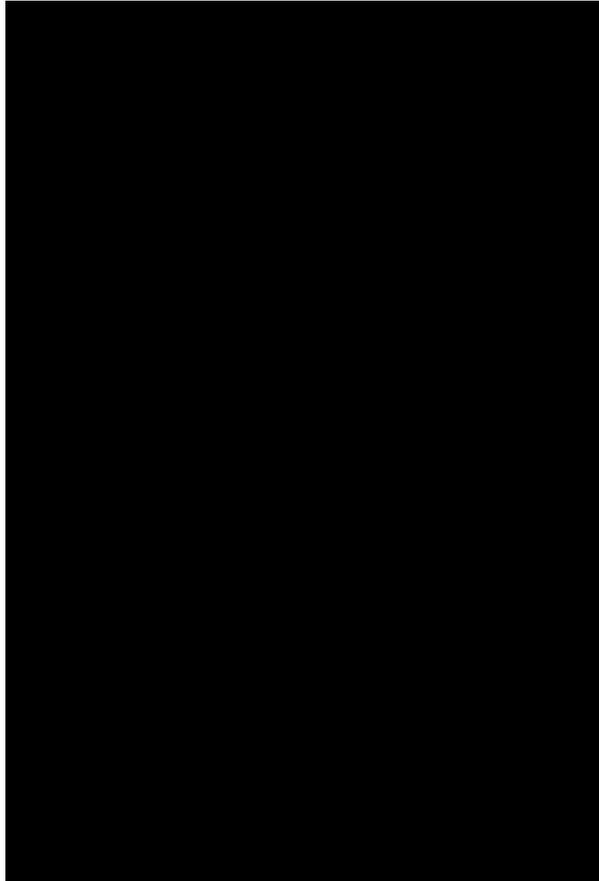


Figure 1.1 Witch and Devil embracing, woodcut, in Ulrich Molitoris, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Otmar, (Reutlingen, 1489), available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek (<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/179-2-quod-2/start.htm>) (2 Jan. 2013).

The most well-known woodcut is probably the one included in the Latin editions printed by Johann Otmar and Johann Prüss (figure 1.1). In this image we can clearly see a woman embracing a Devil or demon. The Devil has claws for feet, a tail, and a deformed mouth with fang like teeth. Charles Zika argues that this gave the Devil an ‘especially lecherous appearance.’⁹⁴ The woman holds onto the Devil’s arm, while

⁹² Davidson, *The witch in Northern European art*, p. 15.

⁹³ Kwan has also noted that the images were not ‘static conveyors of meaning’ and that a wide range of stylistic variations existed for one set of images. Kwan, ‘Witches and Woodcuts: Ulrich Molitor’s *De laniis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669’, p. 506.

⁹⁴ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 23.

he places his strange clawed hand around her waist, pulling her close to him. The woman, or witch, looks young and attractive and one can make out details of her body through her dress, particularly the shape of her breasts. She is wearing a headdress which indicates that she is married.⁹⁵ Therefore the image shows both diabolical seduction and adultery at the same time.⁹⁶

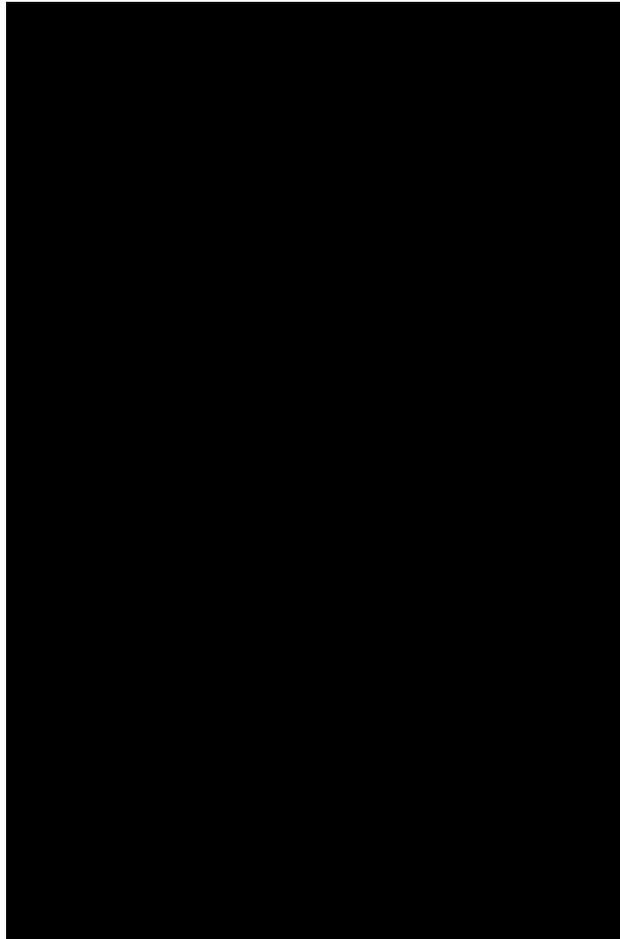


Figure 1.2 Witch and Devil embracing, woodcut, in Ulrich Molitor, *Won den unholden oder hexen* printed by Johann Zainer (Constentz, 1489?), available online on the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (http://daten.digital-e-sammlungen.de/~db/0003/bsb00033852/image_28) (2 Jan. 2013).

Another variation of this image was used in a German edition of Molitor's treatise (figure 1.2). This image also shows the Devil and a woman embracing in a countryside setting. The woodcut is slightly more detailed and less crude than the previous one (figure 1.1). The Devil is shown wearing a hunting hat with a feather in it. The idea that the Devil appeared as a well dressed man with a feather in his hat was to become popular in the later sixteenth century. He is well dressed, wearing a slit style tunic. However, a tail swishes behind his back, emerging from beneath his

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

clothes. Furthermore, the Devil is depicted with hooved feet and donkey's ears. He holds on to the witch tightly, in a close embrace, and suggestively places his hand on her breast. The woman shows no sign of fear and holds on to the Devil's arm. She is dressed well, she also wears a headdress (indicating she is married), and in no way looks like a hag. In fact, she is also young and pretty. Another alternative version of this scene (Figure 1.3), a woodcut originally used in 1489 and then subsequently used by Cornelis de Zierikzee, is different again. This image more closely resembles the Otmar/Prüss woodcut (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.3. Witch and Devil embracing, woodcut in Ulrich Molitoris *De lanijs et phitonicis mulieribus ad illustrissimum principem dominu[m] Sigismundu[m] archiducem austrie tractatus pulcherrimus* printed by Cornelis de Zierikzee (Cologne, c. 1500), available online on Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek (http://ora-web.swkk.de/digimo_online/digimo.entry?source=digimo.Digitalisat_anzeigen&a_id=5043) (2 Jan. 2013).

The copy that is included here (figure 1.3) is a colour version from c. 1497-99.⁹⁷ The scene is again set in the country side with a castle in the background. The woman again wears a headdress and stands close to the Devil. The woman here looks slightly older. The Devil is shown dressed in red, with a matching red hat. From underneath the hat we can see that he has long blond hair. His legs are yellow and our eyes drawn down to his rather large clawed feet. The woman and the Devil appear to be gazing into one another's eyes, however unlike the other two woodcuts they are standing further apart.

In all of the woodcuts the woman is presented as a real person. She is feminine and attractive. Furthermore, all of the artists set the embrace in a rural landscape. This, Davidson argues, shows us that horrid physiognomy and unusual settings were not needed to make the obvious point that witches existed.⁹⁸ Through examining these images it becomes clear that before the turn of the sixteenth century there were common visual characteristics associated with the Devil. They all depict him having strange feet, with either hooves or claws instead of feet. He appears in the form of a man who is well dressed, and usually wears a hat. In two of the three images he is also shown with a tail. The illustrations were an important part of Molitor's work, and this is shown by the fact that nearly all editions of the book contain the six illustrations, albeit, sometimes with modifications as demonstrated above. The images were just as important as the pronouncements of the author, and presented the reader with facts. The embrace that is so clearly portrayed in all of these woodcuts signified sexual liaison, and according to Zika, they can be therefore seen as being a very early visual representation of the diabolical pact.⁹⁹ These woodcuts affirmed the sexual relations between the witch and Devil, and offered a much clearer message than the text it was set against. The woodcuts were usually located at the beginning of one of two dialogues dealing with sex and the Devil, namely dialogue six, which questioned whether the Devil could appear in the form of a person and sleep with women, or dialogue seven which asked whether children

⁹⁷ There is a handwritten note above the image of the witch and the Devil which reads 'Die schönen hertzelieben' ('the beautiful dear lovers'.) Kwan attributes these annotations to a Protestant reader whose 'caustic humor suggests that he was reading *De lamiis* as a Catholic text, full of lies and superstition.' See Kwan 'Witches and Woodcuts: Ulrich Molitor's *De lamiis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669', p. 516.

⁹⁸ Davidson, *The witch in Northern European art*, p. 16.

⁹⁹ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 22.

could be born from the Devil's fornication with women. But what did the text have to say about sex with the Devil?

Molitor raised the issue of whether humans could have sex with demons, firstly in dialogue six where the three participants discuss if the Devil can appear in the form of a human and have sex with women, and then in dialogue seven and twelve where they discuss whether procreating with demons is possible. The work was written in the form of a conversation between three people, Archduke Sigismund, Ulrich Molitor himself, and Conrad Schatz, Chief Magistrate of Constance. Throughout the text, Archduke Sigismund plays the role of wise arbiter. Conrad, a devout believer in witches and the need to persecute them tries to explain and convince Sigismund about the reality of witches. The character of Molitor, on the other hand, is portrayed as a sceptic of most beliefs about witches. Dialogue six opens with Conrad claiming that the Devil could appear in the form of person. He referred to stories from the *Golden Legend* particularly to the legend of Saint Martin, and Saint Anthony as proof. In the legend of Saint Martin, the Devil appeared to Martin in the likeness of a man, he then tried to trick Saint Martin into thinking he was Christ, but he failed and then left leaving behind a stench. Saint Anthony is also said to have met the Devil of fornication in the form of a little child who was all black. Conrad also referred to scripture citing Matthew 4¹⁰⁰ as evidence that the Satan could take the form of a person. Sigismund, then challenged Conrad by asking 'What do you think about the other question, namely if the Devil may practice lust and fornication with such women?'¹⁰¹ Conrad responded by saying that the women themselves confessed to such, declaring themselves that they had courted and copulated with the Devil. However, this did not convince sceptical Sigismund who retorted that the women who said such things were delusional. Conrad disagreed and pointed out how they still insisted strongly on such confessions, even on their way to the place of execution with nothing but death before them, however he agreed to give more 'credible accounts' (*glaubwürdige historien*).¹⁰² Conrad then proceeded to tell the story of Saint Bernard and to reference St. Augustine, claiming that: 'It is a common saying and many people have themselves experienced or heard from those

¹⁰⁰ Matthew 4:1-11 tells the story of how Jesus himself was tempted by the Devil.

¹⁰¹ Ulrich Molitor, [German version] *Von Hexen und Unholden*, translated into German by Conrad Lautenbach (Strasbourg, 1575), p. 25. Sigismund: 'Was haltstu aber von der andern frag / nemlich / ob die Teuffel mit solchen weibern vnkeuschen / vnd bülschafft treiben mögen?'

¹⁰² Ibid.

who have experienced, that the Devil and evil spirits, that one calls Incubi, oftentimes severely afflict women, desiring them to fornicate and to also sleep with them.’¹⁰³ With this, it was concluded that women and demons could sleep together, but one very important question remained—could such intercourse produce children?

‘Whether children can also be born from the Devil’s fornication with women?’¹⁰⁴ was the title of dialogue seven. Once again, Conrad referred to common opinion, stating that it was common belief that children could be begotten by such fornication. Such children were often called castaways (*Verworffene kinder*) or changelings (*Wächselbelg*). Conrad continued on citing the fable of Melusina as proof that such changelings could exist. However, Sigismund denied that the fable was adequate proof, saying that ‘This fable has no founding and appears quite unbelievable.’¹⁰⁵ Conrad persisted to defend his argument that changelings were possible, citing more fables, such as that of Merlin and the Swan Knight. No conclusion is put forward at the end of the dialogue and it is left to be discussed further in dialogue twelve: ‘If the Devil can have sex with women in human form and if children can be born from such intercourse.’¹⁰⁶

In this dialogue the character of Molitor takes the lead position, stating that nobody can be found that has been born of a spirit and a woman, excepting Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁷ He refuted the idea that any children could be begotten in this way, and argued that women who thought that they were pregnant with, or had given birth to, a child sired by the Devil were deceived into believing so by none other than the Devil himself. Ultimately Molitor argued that the Devil could not reproduce, but that he deceived certain women into believing they are pregnant and then, if God allowed, he stole a child from somebody else and hoodwinked the witch into thinking it was her own.¹⁰⁸ He claimed that unbaptised babies were especially vulnerable. When Molitor was subsequently asked by Sigismund if he thought that it

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp 25-6, Conrad: ‘Es ist ein gemeine sag / vnd habens vil leuth in eigener person erfahren / oder jhr von denen / die selbs erfahren / gehört / das die Teuffel vnd böse Geister / die man Incubos nennet / den weibern offtermals hart zügesetzt / jhren zür bülschafft begeret / vnd sie auch beschlaffen haben.’

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 26: ‘Dialogus VII. Ob auch auß des Teuffels beyschlaff mit den weibern mögen kinder geboren werden?’

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., Sigismund: ‘Diese fable hat gar keinen grund / vnd scheint ganz vngleublich.’

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 57: ‘Dialgous XII. Ob der Teuffel in menschlicher gestalt die weiber bülen könne / vnd ob auß sollichem beyschlaff kinder mögen geborn werden?’

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

was possible for the Devil to impregnate a woman by first sleeping with a man in the form of a woman to collect semen, he replied that he believed it to be impossible. All in all, Molitor concurred with Kramer that sex with the Devil in human form was genuinely possible, but refuted the possibility of children being born from such intercourse. The work provided a very complex discussion of the issues which each participant following a different line of argument. Overall Molitor's work did not significantly alter the pre-existing concepts of the diabolical pact or sex with the Devil; however its inclusion of an image of a woman embracing a Devil did have a long-term impact on the visual representation of sex with devil which can be seen in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

The idea that magic required a pact with Devil evolved over a long period of time and it can be argued that it took even longer before the concept of demonic copulation became part of the cumulative concept of witchcraft. Furthermore, it was not until the publication of the *Malleus* that the two concepts truly became interlinked. The inclusion of the diabolical pact in inquisitorial handbooks such as the *Directorium inquistorium* by Eymeric, and in particular, the notorious *Malleus Maleficarum*, ensured that when witchcraft persecution began to escalate in the sixteenth century, those in charge of trying and interrogating the accused witches knew what the crime of witchcraft entailed: namely, sex with devils and a diabolical pact. Accordingly many interrogators asked leading questions about the diabolical pact, and such questions along with the use of torture resulted in many people confessing that they had entered into a pact with the Devil, oftentimes consolidating the pact through sexual intercourse. In addition to this, popular legends about magicians and devils, such as that of Theophilus and others, meant the diabolical pact was an established part of contemporary folklore. The accused witches were readily able to draw from these folkloric tales, which meant that the final confession at times could incorporate both folkloric elements and demonological theories.¹⁰⁹ But what was the perception of pact in the *Hexenzeitungen*? The following section will examine how this spiritual and physical relationship with the Devil was represented in the reports. As *Hexenzeitungen* were printed throughout the period of witch-hunting they potentially played an important role in spreading the news that

¹⁰⁹ Robin Briggs, *Witches and neighbours* (London, 1996), p. 31.

witches *could* and *did* enter into a diabolical pact and that they could also engage in fleshly intercourse with the Devil himself.

The Diabolical Pact and Sex with Devils in the Hexenzeitungen

In regional studies on witchcraft persecutions historians have found that the pact-seduction narrative was fairly consistent. Lyndal Roper found that the seduction narrative that the witches of Marchtal confessed to in the 1580s and 1590s were ‘numbingly formulaic’ and ‘virtually interchangeable’.¹¹⁰ Similarly Johannes Dillinger in his comparative study of witch persecutions in Trier and Swabian Austria concluded that the pact-seduction narrative followed a fixed pattern that was rarely broken, but that after the pact-seduction narrative, the confessions in both regions lost their consistency as unfolding stories.¹¹¹ This formulaic narrative can be summarised as follows:

- a) Accused meets Devil for the first time when in need.
- b) He usually appeared in form of a strange man.
- c) The Devil inquired as to what was upsetting the accused.
- d) The accused tells the Devil about their problems.
- e) The Devil promises assistance if they devote themselves to him.
- f) The accused has sex with the Devil/makes pact with Devil¹¹²

In this narrative the confessions operated within the realm of popular story-telling, as the idea of a sudden appearance of a stranger who offered material assistance to the protagonist in their hour of need, who was later revealed to be a friendly spirit or fairy, was a contemporary trope of folk-stories.¹¹³ By constructing the narrative in such a way, utilising traditional narrative structures, it rendered the story believable.¹¹⁴ There is generally a consensus that the ‘pact-seduction’ narrative did

¹¹⁰ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 85.

¹¹¹ Johannes Dillinger, *“Evil people”: a comparative study of witch hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier*, translated by Laura Stokes (Virginia, 2009), pp 44-7.

¹¹² It is noteworthy that gender discrepancy in this final step. As will be shown in this chapter, women normally consolidated the pact through sexual intercourse, however it appears that, at least in the *Hexenzeitungen*, the same did not always apply to men.

¹¹³ Dillinger, *“Evil People”*, p. 44.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

not change significantly over time, but it can be argued that the witchcraft trials themselves, and the books and pamphlets to which they gave rise to, helped to generate or modify content over time.¹¹⁵ Was this ‘formulaic’ narrative evident in the *Hexenzeitungen* or did the ‘seduction narrative’ change over time?

The first mention of a woman entering into a relationship with the Devil in a witch report is in 1533. A young woman from Schiltach, who was accused having burned the town down with the help of the Devil, is reported to having been with the Devil for eighteen years.¹¹⁶ In another report, printed in the same year, she is said to have confessed to disowning God, Mary the mother of God, and God’s world. Furthermore, the author reported how she received the holy sacrament, the Eucharist, on Holy Thursday in Obernfeld, but directly thereafter rode to Schiltach on an oven fork to meet with the Devil.¹¹⁷ He noted that the holy sacrament had not hindered her (*‘hab nichts darauff gehalten’*).¹¹⁸ Hans Harter has argued that this report was possibly written by a local priest, Johannes Schwarz.¹¹⁹ The idea that a witch could leave the church and go straight to the Devil was outrageous, and highlighted that an outward display of devotion to God did not mean anything. What is more difficult to understand, however, is why a priest would claim that the holy sacrament was ineffective? The earlier demonologists, particularly Kramer, believed that witches could still attend church, but it would not make them holy, in fact they were often given special dishonourable tasks to perform during mass:

What is more, the sorceresses assert that they can never have peace except during Divine Service when they are present in church. For this reason, they enter more quickly and depart more slowly, although they must by the demon’s instructions, observe certain other awful ceremonial rites † like spitting on the ground at the time of the Elevation, or uttering most unspeakable thoughts with or without words, like ‘I wish you were in such-and-such or such-and-such place.’¹²⁰

Christopher Mackay notes that this offers a convenient explanation for why supposed sorceresses act with apparently notable piety, thereby ‘not only can

¹¹⁵ Briggs, *Witches and neighbours*, p. 31.

¹¹⁶ *Ein erschrocklich geschicht Vom Tewfel und einer unholden*, printed by Stefen Hamer (Nuremberg, 1533).

¹¹⁷ *Ein erschrocklich Warhafftige History wie es yetz auff den Gründonnerstag im Kintzgertal zü Schiltach im dreyunddreissigsten jar / der listig Teüfel die frumen leüt daselbs / mit falschen worten/ pfeiffen / allerey gesang / rc. Betrogen / zü lest die Statt gar verderbt / und verbrent hat findestu gründlich in disem büchlin getruckt ston. M. D. XXXiii.* (S.l., 1533).

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Hans Harter, *Der Teufel von Schiltach* (Schiltach, 2005), p. 12.

¹²⁰ Christopher Mackay, (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum* (Cambridge, 2009), pp 312-3.

irreverence mark out someone as a sorceress but so can devout behaviour'.¹²¹ However, the report does not disclose how she met the Devil for the first time. Similarly the next report we have of a witch having a relationship with the Devil, in 1555, did not include the 'pact-seduction narrative' either. The report from 1555, entitled 'A terrible history, which happened in Derneburg in the county of Reinsteyn, in Harz in 1555 of three sorceresses and two men' disclosed very little information as to why the women were burnt apart from a sentence referring to Gröbische's confession: that she had courted the Devil for eleven years ('*das sie Aylff jar mit dem Teüffel gebület habe...*').¹²² There was very little description of intercourse with the Devil in these early reports, even the pact with the Devil was not directly alluded to. It was only in 1563, after a witch panic in Wiesensteig that the more elaborate description of the pact with the Devil made it through the press.

In 1563, a report was printed on 'The true and horrifying deeds of the sixty-three witches and sorceresses that were sentenced to be burned in Wisenstaig'.¹²³ This is the first known Reformation era witch panic, with sixty-three witches being burned at the stake over a one year period.¹²⁴ The author opened his report with a description of how the witches joined forces with the Devil:

'Firstly they, together one and all, apostatised God, our Holy Father, our Saviour and Almighty Spirit, Jesus Christ, disowned his godly majesty and agreed to such an extent with the abominable Satan that they performed unchaste acts with him in all places as if he were a real man.'¹²⁵

Not only did the witches deny God, but they also submitted and devoted themselves to the Devil, promising him obedience and servitude.¹²⁶ They pledged to him that they would do all in their power not to desist from harming and corrupting humans.¹²⁷ The fact that the author placed this information at the beginning of the

¹²¹ Ibid., footnote 169, p. 312.

¹²² *Ein erschreckliche geschicht/ so zu Derneburg in der Graffschafft Reinsteyn/ am Harz gelegen / von dreyen Zauberin [...]*, printed by Georg Merckel (Nuremberg, 1555).

¹²³ *Warhafftige vnnnd Erschrecklich Thatten vn handlungen der LXIII. Hexen vnnnd Vnholden so zu Wisentag / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seint*, printed by Friedrich Gutknecht (S.l., 1563).

¹²⁴ Erik Midelfort, *Witch-hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562-1684: the social and intellectual foundations* (Stanford, 1972), p. 88.

¹²⁵ *Warhafftige vnnnd Erschreckliche Thatten vnd handlungen der Lxiii. Hexen vnnnd Unholden / so zu Wisenstaig / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seindt*: 'Erstlich seyen sy allesamt vnnnd sonders / vonn Gott vnserm hymlichen Vatter / ainigem Erlöser vnd Säligmacher / Jhesu Christo abgefallen / sein Göttliche maigestad verlaugnet / vnnnd sich mit dem Laidigen Sathan dermassen verainbard / das sy an allen Orthen vnd Enden / mit Jmme / wie mit ainem Naturlichen Man / werck der vnkeuschait volbracht haben.'

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

report, before discussing the crimes of simple *maleficium* is revealing; as it shows that the idea that witches had to enter into a pact before they could practice *maleficium* was taking hold. The practices of breaching the faith are similar to those put forward in the *Malleus*, in that, that witches had to renounce their faith in God, devote themselves to the Evil Spirit, and engage in his filthy deeds performing ‘unchaste’ acts. However the report only gave a general outline of how they consolidated the pact with no real detailed individual seduction narratives.

The first *Hexenzeitung* to include individual pact-seduction narratives was published in 1571, ‘A truthful report of godless witches, also heretical and Devil’s women, who were burnt on the 22 September 1570 in Schlettstadt, the imperial city in Alsace, because of their heinous commitment to the Devil’.¹²⁸ The report was about four women who were sentenced to be burned at the stake for witchcraft.¹²⁹ It was written by a preacher in Schlettstadt (today Sélestat), Reinhard Lutz.¹³⁰ Lutz’s religious confession has caused some historical debate, with some historians considering him Catholic,¹³¹ and others referring to him as Protestant.¹³² While parts of Alsace converted to Lutheranism, the imperial free city of Sélestat was one of the few free cities that did not convert. Either way, there is evidence that Lutz was familiar with Luther, as he cited a number of passages from Martin Luther’s *Colloquia Oder Tischreden* in the opening pages of his report. Lutz’s references to Luther undoubtedly led to confusion surrounding his confession, both now and

¹²⁸ Reinhard Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen / Auch ketzerischen vnd Teuffels Weibern/ die zu Schlettstadt / deß h. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung / rc. sindt verbrennt worden.* (S.l., 1571). Lutz’s work was also later printed in the Abraham Sawr (ed.), *Theatrum de Veneficis* (Frankfurt, 1586). which was a folio volume produced by the Frankfurt publisher Nicolaus Basse, the work contained seventeen treatises by different authors.

¹²⁹ There have also been local studies on the witch burning at Sélestat in 1570, and Jean Pons has found evidence in the local archives that witches were in fact burned in the second half of 1570. The records simply state the costs incurred by the questioning, food and burning of the body of the witch by the executioner. See Jean Pons, ‘Le tragique destin des sorcières de Sélestat’ in *Annuaire des amis de la bibliothèque humaniste de Sélestat* (1998), p. 58. Unfortunately I was not able to find the original trial manuscripts for the cases that Lutz reported in the Archives Municipales Sélestat.

¹³⁰ Lutz was originally from Rottweil and went to the University of Tübingen. For more information biographical information see: Nikolaus Paulus, ‘Der Schettstadter Pfarrer Reinhard Lutz’ in *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, lxi (1907) pp 168-170. For a discussion on Lutz’s treatise see: Stuart Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 453; Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562-1684*, p. 60.

¹³¹ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 453; Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany*, p. 60; Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 72. Behringer also refers to Lutz’s report as a Catholic Witch-report: ‘Katholische Hexenzeitung’ in Behringer, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse*, p. 155.

¹³² See Henry Charles Lea, *Materials towards a history of witchcraft* (3 vols, London, 1957), iii, 1130. Lea and Sigmund Riezler both claim that Reinhard Lutz was Protestant. See Sigmund Riezler, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse in Bayern* (Stuttgart, 1896), p. 234.

then.¹³³ Lutz quoted excerpts from Luther's discussion of witchcraft and agreed with Luther that: 'Witchcraft is the Devil's own proper work.'¹³⁴ One can never fully know Lutz's own personal religious beliefs, but from the evidence available one can surmise that he was most likely a Lutheran. Overall the passages that Lutz borrowed from Luther highlighted the treacherous nature of witchcraft, as the witches disowned God to join Satan. Luther, like Lutz, believed that for this spiritual crime witches should be punished.

All four of the witches discussed in the report were found guilty of making a pact with the Devil and of having diabolical intercourse. Lutz's treatment of this topic is interesting because, as a preacher, Lutz would have been able to spread his opinions via the pulpit and therefore his outlook on the diabolical pact could have potentially influenced his congregation. Indeed Lutz claimed that he wrote the tract in question so that the people of Sélestat may understand that 'a lawful sentence was pronounced'.¹³⁵ He proposed that many people, not understanding the nature of witchcraft, may have concluded or thought that one had 'dealt improperly and not lawfully with these people [the witches]'.¹³⁶ However, Lutz pointed out that the women, having entered a 'damnable, demonic and accursed covenant'¹³⁷ with the 'Evil Spirit', received their 'due punishment.'¹³⁸

Lutz believed that the Devil often came to women and men and spoke nicely to them, promising them good, as the Devil did to Christ himself (Lutz also references Matthew 4), but as soon as the same spirit made a pact with them, he taught them pride, meanness, lasciviousness, envy and hate. It was common for religious authorities to refer to Matthew 4, to exemplify to people how it must be possible for the Devil to tempt humankind, as he was able to try and tempt Christ himself. He argued that sorcery and witchcraft grew out of 'poverty, sadness, and

¹³³ Contemporaries also speculated about his Lutheran leanings, see Nikolaus Paulus, 'Der Schettstadter Pfarrer Reinhard Lutz', pp 168-70.

¹³⁴ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen*: 'Zauberey ist des Teufels selbs eigen werck'. The back of the title page of Lutz's pamphlet was titled 'Maritvs Lvthervs: Tomo colloquiorum'. In this section Lutz included Luther's thoughts on witchcraft citing passages from Luther's *Colloquia Oder Tischreden*. He specifically refers to passages DCIV and DLXXVII from the section 'On the Devil and his works.'

¹³⁵ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen*: '...deß ein billiches urtheil felle.'

¹³⁶ Ibid.: '...vielleicht viel gedencken / auch schliessen möchten / das man vngebührlich vnd nicht rechtmessig mit diesen Personen gehandelt..'

¹³⁷ Ibid.: '...schantlicher / teufflicher / vnd verfluchter verpflichung...'

¹³⁸ Ibid.: '...jhr gebürende straff'.

fleshly wantonness, envy and hate.’¹³⁹ Similar to the pamphlet of 1563 Lutz stated that the witches had to ‘repudiate belief in Christ and holy Baptism, and give themselves with body and soul to Satan, for his own, and in eternal servitude’.¹⁴⁰

However, unlike the earlier report, Lutz put more emphasis on divine permission, and implied that such a pact was only possible with the permission of God, stating that the Devil could not even move a small hair on his head without the permission of God.¹⁴¹ He referred to Job to prove God’s power over the Devil. Lutz argued that God allowed the Devil to tempt and harm people in order to test the beliefs of the pious and God fearing, as when God allowed the Devil to test Job.¹⁴² As a result he denied the possibility that witches could perform any real harm, as any harm that was done was not through them, but through the agency of the Devil, to whom God had given permission. However, if the witches were not able to practice harmful magic, they had to be guilty of something else—apostasy. It was at this point that the pact with the Devil became the ultimate crime of witchcraft, a spiritual crime, punishable by death. In the words of Lutz: ‘...they renounce their belief in Christ Jesus, all the holy sacraments and the whole Christian religion and after the vile Devil’s charge, they give themselves completely in body and soul to the Devil. For this reason they should be sentenced to death.’¹⁴³

Lutz stated that both godly and secular law commanded such and he quoted Exodus 22:18: ‘Thou shalt not allow a sorceress to live’.¹⁴⁴ He maintained that all diviners or fortune tellers should also be killed. He saw these magicians as enemies of the world who need to be eradicated: ‘These people, because they are strangers and enemies to nature, should be sentenced from life to death like the senseless animals’.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore Lutz believed that all black magic practitioners and necromancers also had an explicit pact with the Devil and for that reason they should

¹³⁹ Ibid.: ‘Zauberey vnnnd hexenwerck erwachsen auß armut / trawrigkeit / fleischlichem mutwillen / neidt vnd haß...’

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.: ‘Denn erstlich vnd fürnemlich/ so verlaugnen sie den glauben an Christum / vnd den heiligen Tauff / vnnnd ergeben sich mit Leib vnnnd Seel dem Sathan / für eigen / vnnnd in ewige dienstbarkeit...’

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² The figure of Job was referred to frequently in (especially Protestant) demonology see Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 445.

¹⁴³ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeitung / Von Gottlosen hexen*: ‘Zu dem sich verläugnen des Glaubens an Christum Jesum / aller heiligen Sacrament vnd der ganzen Christlichen Religion / vnd nach schadtlicher Teuffels verpflichtung ganz vnd gar mit Leib vnd Seel dem Teuffel ergeben : Darumb sollen sie zum todt verurtheilt.’

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.: ‘Diese / weil sie der natur frembd vnnnd feindt sind / sollen sie / wie die vnvernünfftige Thier vom leben zum todt gericht werden.’

also be exterminated. Lutz believed in an all powerful God, and therefore the only way to validate the execution of witches was not for *maleficium*, which only happened with God's permission, but through denouncing them as heretics in league with the Devil.

The pamphlet includes the stories of four women, Anna Strauben, Trüwel Greischerin, Ameley von Rotenburg and Barbel Schmidt. In these stories the pact-seduction narrative plays a key role, with the author giving a description of each of the witches' 'seduction' by the Devil. The first witch Anna, who was the wife of a joiner, Niclaus Strauben, claimed that Devil came to her years earlier in Offenburg. She said that her husband had often beaten her, even during childbed. She was in pain and distress when the Devil first appeared to her. The report stated that the Devil first appeared to her as a beautiful woman or virgin and then in the form of a man dressed in yellow. The Devil spoke to her and said: 'Do my will, then I will teach you, so that your husband will no longer beat you'.¹⁴⁶ She was then penetrated by and kept the evil spirit, who was called Laub.

Immediately, one can see that the pact-seduction narrative here is consistent with that suggested earlier. Anna is in need and the Devil offers her assistance if she will 'do his will'. Anna concedes and sex promptly follows. Anna was not the only witch to have joined the Devil as a means to protect herself from a violent husband. Domestic violence appeared in other contemporary seduction narratives. For example, in 1586, in the village of Allenhausen in Marchtal, another woman confessed that after suffering at the hands of her husband she joined the Devil who had promised her that 'if she would do his will, he would teach her a way that her husband would never beat her again'.¹⁴⁷ Indeed violence during childbed continued to be seen as a motive for joining with Devil well into the seventeenth century. For example, in a news report from 1616, we are told how a witch confessed that: 'many [women] are ensnared by the Devil in childbed when they are held hard by their husbands and badly hit, likewise when the husband eats and drinks day and night and afterwards beat the wives'.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.: 'Thust du meinen willen / so wil ich dich lehren / daß dich dein Mann nicht mehr wird schlagen: Darauff sie jhme etlich mahl zu willen worden.'

¹⁴⁷ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 90.

¹⁴⁸ *Zwo hexen zeitung / die Erste: Auß dem Bißthumb Würzburg [...] Das Ander: Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg [...]* (Tübingen, 1616): 'Sie sagt vnd bekennt auch /daß viel vom Teuffel in kindbetthen verführt / wann sie von den Männern hart gehalten / vnd übel zuschlagen werden in

The second witch discussed in Lutz's report joined the Devil for different reasons. Trüwel Greisherin the wife of Ulrich Greischer, was said to have joined the Devil ten years earlier. The Evil Spirit (böß Geist) had appeared to her in a forest when she was in poverty and distress, he told her that:

That she should do his will, he would give her enough, also she can call if someone does her harm, and she should curse them in his name, which was Kreutlin, and what she would or could not do, he would do and accomplish, he threw her, that first time, a half shilling, that when she wanted to lift up (with grace to report) was horse dung.¹⁴⁹

Kreutlin returned to Trüwel eight weeks later and she confessed to having sex with him six times.¹⁵⁰ Following this he instructed her to carry out many horrible acts.

Dillinger argues that the names given to demons in the witch stories can at times [he specifies Swabian Austria], reveal the application of fairy motifs to the Devil and interestingly the name 'Kreutlin' meaning 'little herb' indicated a vegetation spirit.¹⁵¹ The idea that the Devil gave money which later turned into dung, which was popular in these narratives, was also clearly borrowed from folklore, only in folklore it happened in the reverse; a fairy would give a person a seemingly worthless gift that would later transform into something valuable.¹⁵² As a side note, it is noteworthy that contemporary sceptics such as Johann Weyer used these types of narratives to argue that demonic pacts were invalid. Weyer stated, that because the promised items did not materialise, the contract, according to Roman Law, was 'leonine' and thus not legally binding.¹⁵³ Needless to say, the authors of *Hexenzeitungen* never questioned the validity of demonic pacts.

The third witch, Ameley von Rotenburg an der Tauber, confessed to also 'doing the will' of the Devil. Ameley was the wife of a furrier, and following her banishment from her town (for reasons that are not given) she became distressed.

gleichen/ wann die Männer Tag vnd Nacht fressen vnd sauffen / vnd hernacher die Weiber schlagen...'

¹⁴⁹ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen*: 'Daß sie seinen willen thun solle / er wöll jhr gnug geben / auch sie geheissen / wenn jr jemens leids thue / soll sie demselben fluchen in seinem Nammen/ wie er sich denn Kreutlin genannt/ vnd was die nicht thun wöll oder könn / das wöll er thun / vnd zu wegen bringen / hab jhr also das erstmal ein Plappart dargeworffen / da sie in auffheben wöllen / sey es (mit gunst zu melden) Roß mist gewesen.'

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Dillinger, "Evil People", pp 44-5.

¹⁵² Dillinger, "Evil people", p. 46.

¹⁵³ Erik Midelfort, 'Johann Weyer and the Insanity Defense' in R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *The German people and the Reformation* (Ithaca, 1994), p. 245. Weyer was one of very few that claimed such pacts could not be valid. For more information on the contemporary debate about the validity of the diabolical pact cf. Cornel Anton Zwierlein, *Das sematische Potential des Fausstoffes um die Wende von 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert* (unpublished MA thesis, Munich, 1999), pp 62-72.

Initially the demon, who was later known as Peterling, came to her in Obernfeld, and then again at another place in the form of a person. He said to her that she should do his will, he would help her a lot –and she did. However, following her agreement to do his will she noticed that he had the feet of a goat, ‘*Geißfuß*’, and was terrified by it. He then came to her another three times in the vineyards.

This seduction narrative is interesting as it reveals the contemporary belief that the Devil could not appear perfectly in human form. The Devil is often described as a creature with animal features.¹⁵⁴ This idea can be clearly seen in the earlier woodcuts that adorned Molitor’s treatise and the idea can be seen again in later *Hexenzeitungen*.

The final witch that Lutz reported about was Barbel, the wife of Hans Schmidt. Her narrative once again began by the Devil approaching her at a time of despair. Sixteen years earlier, the text states, Barbel was very poor and had neither money nor bread in her house and her neighbours were reluctant to lend to her. One morning her husband on his way to the vineyard ordered that she bring him food, but she had nothing, which caused her much displeasure. It was at this moment that the Devil appeared to her in the form of a handsome young man called Durch die Hurst and said ‘If she did his will, and give herself to him, he would give her enough.’¹⁵⁵ However when she added it up, he had given her no more than three half pennies, and it was also nothing good. Barbel’s seduction narrative ends abruptly here, and she continued on to confess her harmful magic without mentioning any carnal knowledge of demons.

Through studying Lutz’s pamphlet, we can see two different views on how witches made a pact with the Devil. Before detailing the confessions of the four witches Lutz defined and explained the crimes of witchcraft, making the diabolical pact the focal crime. That is why it may seem strange that nowhere in the confessions of the witches is there any reference to an actual pact or alliance with the Devil. However, intercourse with the Devil is instead represented as the physical counterpart of the pact. It is apparent that the witches’ confessions focused more on sex than the pact and this is not surprising as the concept of making a pact was an experience foreign to most of the accused, many of whom could not sign their own

¹⁵⁴ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 91.

¹⁵⁵ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeitung / Von Gottlosen hexen*: ‘Wenn sie seinen willen thue / vnnd sich jm ergeben / wöll er jhr gnug geben / den sie sich betrigen lassen / hab jhr nit mehr denn 3. heller geben / sey auch nichts guts gewesen / vnd sich genennt / durch diehurst.’

names.¹⁵⁶ These witches' did not sign pacts with the Devil, sex alone was what made the witch 'his'.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, the language that the Devil used to bind his victims to him was borrowed from courtship. The Devil promised 'that he would give her enough' if she would 'do his will'. The money that the Devil then supplied could also be seen to symbolise the stream of money he will supply as a husband.¹⁵⁸ In addition, it was a traditional understanding that if a woman agreed to a promise of marriage, and then had sex, the act of intercourse sealed the bargain.¹⁵⁹ Other practices that Lutz refers to, such as, renouncing the Christian religion, holy baptism and all the sacraments, are also not included in the 'pact-seduction narratives'. Thus one could conclude that while learned preachers, like Lutz, needed to explain the pact with the Devil within a demonological and religious framework, the witches', in their confessions, explained their relationship with the Devil through using pre-existing folkloric narratives and traditional concepts; and it was not until later that the two modes of explaining witchcraft merged fully. Indeed we can observe this development occurring in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

In some pamphlets the contemporary imagined connection between the pact and marriage was made explicit with some witches going one step further, reportedly marrying (or marrying their daughters to) the Devil himself. In 1576 a report was printed which claimed that an old witch named Anna gave her own daughter to be 'disgraced' presenting her to the Devil as a wife.¹⁶⁰ They held a wedding inviting many witches from all over. The wedding is said to have taken place at field in Kerbwiler beneath three walnut trees. The belief that mothers promised their own daughters to the Devil was to be further popularised by Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* in 1580.

Jean Bodin's text modified the demonological understanding of the pact with the Devil. In his work, Bodin extended the list of practices used to breach the faith to include the Devil's mark and re-baptism. In book two, chapter four, 'On those who renounce God and their religion by express agreement and whether they are bodily

¹⁵⁶ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 84.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 84. See also David Lederer, *Madness, religion and the state in early modern Europe: a Bavarian beacon* (Cambridge, 2006), pp 186-7.

¹⁶⁰ *Newezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. un hulden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schröckliche ding bekent haben*, printed by Hans Cudium von Hof (S.l., 1576).

transported by demons’, Bodin discussed the diabolical pact and demonic intercourse. Bodin claimed that the pact could be ‘sometimes made verbally without writing’ or how sometimes to be sure the Devil made them ‘write down their obligation and sign it if they can write’ sometimes even in their own blood.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, the Devil did not only make them renounce God, but he also marked them. Bodin borrowed this concept from Lambert Daneau, a French Protestant minister who published a demonological treatise, *Les Sorciers*, in 1574. Daneau noted that the Devil did not mark those who willingly dedicated themselves to him, but only those whose constancy he questioned.¹⁶² These Devil’s marks were placed on different parts of the body. On men they were usually on the lips, eyelids, backside or right shoulder, while on women they were frequently on the thigh, armpit or on their ‘shameful parts’ (*parties honteuses*).¹⁶³ Bodin elaborated on the practices used to breach the faith and enter into a diabolical pact, suggesting that Satan’s followers were also re-baptised: ‘It is stranger still that most witches are not satisfied to renounce God, but also have themselves rebaptised in the name of the Devil’.¹⁶⁴ Bodin, also commented on the appearance of the Devil, explaining how he sometimes showed himself in the guise of a very black and hideous man.¹⁶⁵

‘Whether witches have copulation with Demons’ was the topic of Bodin’s seventh chapter, in book two, and he opened the discussion by telling the story of a woman named Jeanne Harvillier. This story was to have a subsequent influence on other ‘seduction narratives’ and is worth including here:

...Jeanne Harvillier, a native of Verbery near Compiègne, confessed among other things that her mother had been condemned to be burned alive, by the decree of Parlement, in confirmation of the sentence of the judge of Senlis, and that at twelve years of age her mother presented her to the Devil who appeared as a tall black man, dressed in black, wearing boots and spurs, with a sword at his side, and a black horse at the door. Her mother said to him, ‘Here is my daughter whom I promised to you.’ And to the daughter, ‘Here is your friend who will make you very happy.’ Afterward she renounced God, and religion, and then he laid with her

¹⁶¹ Randy A. Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches* (Toronto, 1995), p. 112. The original French from Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 79^r: ‘...il leur fait écrire l’obligation & signer, & quelquesfois leur fait signer de leur sang’.

¹⁶² Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 79^v.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.* p. 80^r.

¹⁶⁴ Trans. from Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches* p. 113. Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 80^{f-v}: ‘Encore est il plus estrange que la pluspart des Sorciers ne se contentent pas de renoncer à Dieu, ains encores il se sont baptizer au nom du Diable’.

¹⁶⁵ Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 85^r.

carnally, in the same manner and way that men do with women, except that his semen was cold.¹⁶⁶

Here, like the pamphlet from 1576, the idea was put forward that women literally promised their own daughters to Satan, and following this publication the idea that women gave their own daughters to the Devil became a popular theme in the *Hexenzeitungen*. The Devil appeared to Jeanne in the form of black man in black clothes, and judging by his horse and sword he was well-to-do. The renunciation of the faith here was followed directly by sex, which was described as being the same as human sex apart from the cold semen. Following Bodin's publication, there was an increase in reports that refer to the coldness of the Devil and his semen. Bodin, referred to the author's of the *Malleus* experience in witch trials, and how after innumerable trials it became apparent that all of them 'universally without exception, confessed that the Devil had physical copulation with them, after making them renounce God and their religion.'¹⁶⁷ Like the earlier demonologists Bodin debated whether such copulation was possible and if it could result in procreation. He referred to the arguments of Aquinas and Kramer. What is interesting is that the possibility of procreation, while considered an important topic in learned texts did not feature in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

A witch-report published in the same year as Bodin's text reflects some of these modifications, with all of the witches giving elaborate descriptions of the Devil and his appearance and commenting on how 'ice-cold' he was. The report had a rather sensational title: 'A new report from Berneburgk, awful and outrageous to hear and to read, about three old devil's paramours, witches or sorceresses and what befell them at the end of the present year 79....'¹⁶⁸ The author reported on how and

¹⁶⁶ Trans. from Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 130. Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 104^{r-v}:

'Jeanne Hervillier native de Verbery pres Compiègne entre autres choses, confessa que sa mere auoit esté condānee d'estre bruslee toute viue, par arrest du Parlement, confirmative de la sentence du Iuge de Senlis, & que à l'aage de douze ans sa mere lá presenta au Diable en forme d'un grand homme noir, & vestu de noir, botté, esperonné, avec vne espee au costé, & vn cheual noir à la porte: auquel la mere dist, Voicy ma fille que ie vo⁹ ay promise: Et à la fille, Voicy vostre amy, qui vous sera bien heureuse. & deslots que elle renonça à Dieu, & à la religion, & puis coucha avec ques elle charnellement, en la mesme sorte & maniere que sont les hommes avec les femmes, horsmis que la semence estoit froide.'

¹⁶⁷ Trans. from Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 131. Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 105^r: 'que toutes generalement sans exception, confessoient que le Diable auoit copulation charnelle avecques elles, apres leur auoir fait renoncer Dieu & leur religion.'

¹⁶⁸ *Neuwe Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abschewlich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberinnen / was sich mit jnen am ende dieses verlauffenen 79.*

when the witches got involved with the Devil, what terrible deeds they committed and lastly what punishment they received. The report was directed to the Christian reader, and was very evangelical in style, constantly referring to scripture. The author began the report by stating that most important battle in life is not against the Turks, the Pope, the Spanish or the Hussars, but the Devil.¹⁶⁹ He quoted the first Epistle of Saint Peter, chapter five; that the Devil goes around like a rabid roaring lion seeking who he may like to devour. The Devil, the author stated, came again and again to visit his ‘old shelter’:

In summation he bears a very murderous heart against us, and if he could strike us with body and soul in a moment with murder, war, pestilence, sorcery, poisoning, all kinds of injury, perverting and cladding God’s word, and in abyss of light, he would surely save no trouble or industry.¹⁷⁰

The Devil was constantly lurking around waiting to attack and tempt people. Furthermore, the Devil ‘exercised his lewdness, baseness and devilment with many old women, over ninety years old, in recent years in our Fatherland, the worthy principality of Anhalt and they served as his agents, and instruments.’¹⁷¹ These women would have been incredibly old, given the much shorter life expectancy of the early modern period. Lyndal Roper has argued that the witch hunt as it operated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had offered a clear way of dealing with evil ‘by locating the source of evil in an old woman’.¹⁷² This association of old women and the Devil is evident in this report, as the author included an old proverb: What the Devil cannot accomplish, he accomplishes through an old woman (*Was der Teuffel nicht kan zu wege bringen / das bringt er durch ein alt Weib zu wege*).¹⁷³ The

Jars begeben vnd zugetragen / darinnen kürzlich vnd warhafftiglich vermeldet / wie vnd wann sie zu diesem bösen handel gekomen / was für grewliche thaten sie begangen / vnd was sie auch endlichen den 2. Januarij dieses 1580. Jahrs vor lohn empfangen (S.l., 1580).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.: ‘In summa / er tregt ein sehr mörderlich herz gegen vns / vnd wenn er vns in einen Augenblick mit Mordt / Krieg / Blut / Pestilenz / Bezauberung / Vergiftung / allerley beschedigung / verstockung vnd verblendung Göttliches Worts/ vnd in abgrund der hellen / mit Leib vnd Seele stürcken könnten / so sparete er gewislich keine mühe noch einiges fleisses.’

¹⁷¹ Ibid.: ‘Wie er dann (Gott sey es geklaget) solche seine Bulerey / Büberey / Schelmerrey nun etlich Jar in vnserem Vaterland / das löblichen Fürstenthumbs Anhalt mit etlichen Alten / vber neunzig jerigen Weibern geübet vnd getrieben / als seinen Werckzeugen / Organis vnd Instrumenten...’

¹⁷² Roper, ‘“Evil Imaginings and Fantasies”: Child-witches and the End of the Witch Craze’ in *Past and Present*, clxvii (167) (2000), p. 123. On the stereotype of the old woman as witch see also Alison Rowlands ‘Witchcraft and Old Women in Early Modern Germany’ in *Past and Present* clxxxiii (173) (2001), pp 50-89.

¹⁷³ *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abscheulich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberingen* (S.l., 1580).

text included the stories of three old women, Curt Kochin, Black Gertrude, and lame Gregerin.

The first witch, Curt Köchin, is described as being over 90 years old. Her account of her seduction by the Devil was included in the pamphlet. The Devil is said to have come to her house in Bernburg in the form of a young good looking journey man. He was impressive in character and well dressed. He called himself Junker Hans and he had a partner known as Peter. The author noted how he knew this information from the articles of her confession. Junker Hans spoke to Curt in sweet words, which was his art and custom, so that she slept with him. He came to her very often and promised to give her money. He taught her about many herbs, with which she could do both good and bad. She eventually granted to unite with him and be his with her heart and soul, but when he came thereafter, always ice-cold, he seldom brought money or brought very little.

The second witch, Black Gertrude similarly joined the Devil following promises of monetary gifts. She met the Devil eight years before she was tried as a witch. He appeared to her in a field wearing stately clothes, and appeared to be of grand character. His name was Junker Matthes. He showed her three beautiful white pennies, and promised to give her the money if she would be with him and be his. Like Junker Hans, Junker Matthes showed the prospective witch which herbs to use to cause harm, after which she ‘finally granted to make a pact and alliance with him, and when he now came to her, and had anything to do with her, he was found to be ice-cold all the time.’¹⁷⁴

The third witch who was discussed was the lame Gregerin or long Euphemia. Lame Gregerin was said to have confessed to being with the Devil for five years. One day on her way to town with a bushel of wheat she met someone in the form of a black tall man, well dressed and well spoken. His name was John and he spoke about a lot of things with her on the way there and back. She claimed that at first she did not want to talk to him at all, but then he showed her a beautiful gold gulden along with many herbs and ‘she finally granted to give herself to him.’¹⁷⁵ But once again, such money never came, and when he came to her ‘ice cold’- she received little of the pennies.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: ‘darein sie endlichen gewilliget / pact vnd verbündnis mit jm gemacht / wenn er nun zu jr gekommen / vnd mit jhr zu thun gehabt / so ist er auch alle zeit Eiskalt erfunden’.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

Immediately one can see that the three narratives follow a similar pattern. The woman is on her own when approached by a handsome man, who offers her money if she will be his and do his will. He shows her the money and teaches her how to use herbs to cause harm. All three of the witches do not join with him straight away, and the Devil has to woo them into submitting to him. Once they submit to him, he does not give them the promised money and is described as being always 'ice-cold.' Juxtaposed to the earlier stories from Lutz's pamphlet, these women do not appear to be in immediate distress when the Devil appears. They solely make an alliance in the hope of financial gain. The appearance of the Devil also received much more attention, with all three describing his clothes. Gregerin's Devil, Junker Matthes, is described along the same lines as Bodin's depiction of the Devil, 'as a tall black man'. Furthermore, it is obvious that the notion of the Devil being 'ice-cold' had become a firmly established stereotype, confessed by witches themselves during trials. Unlike the earlier reports the pact and alliance are directly referred to by Gertrude, but there was little or no mention of intercourse with the Devil, other than the insinuation that when he 'came' it was always 'cold.' Thus one can see that concepts were constantly being modified, and that demonological literature, and trials themselves influenced these changes.

The notion that women were promising their daughters to the Devil, which had been confirmed by the confession of Jeanne Harvillier in Bodin, was also reaffirmed and propagated in the *Hexenzeitungen* with two reports in 1582 telling stories of mothers who gave their daughters to the Devil. One of these reports was printed alongside a tract by Abraham Saur,¹⁷⁶ a lawyer and procurator at the Court of Hesse in Marburg. His work, 'A short true warning, notice and instruction, if also at the present time witches, magicians and sorceresses exist among us Christians and what they can do',¹⁷⁷ was preceded by a 'reputable', 'truthful' account of a recent confession from a witch tried at Marburg. In the report the author detailed the confession of a recently executed witch and how she entered into a diabolical pact

¹⁷⁶ Saur is more well-known for his *Theatrum Urbrium* a work on town castles and monasteries. His interest in witchcraft seems to have been considerable, as he later edited the famous *Theatrum de Veneficis* in 1586. See 'Saur, Abraham' in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* xxx (1890), pp 419-20.

¹⁷⁷ Abraham Saur, *Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht: Ob auch zu dieser vnser zeit vnter vns Christian / hexen / zäuberer / vnd Vnholden vorhanden : Vnd was sie außrichten können /rc. Einfältig vnd kürzlich durch M. Abraham Saur beschrieben vnd an Tag gegeben. Sampt einer vorachenden den jetzt neulich zu Marburg auff den 25. tag Maij / des jetzthwährenden 1582. jars hingerichten zäuberinnen bekandtnuß vnd Vrgicht*, printed by Christian Rabb (S.l., 1582).

under direct instructions from her mother. There appears to be a discrepancy between the representation of witchcraft in the report and the one portrayed by Saur's text which would lead one to believe that Saur did not author the preceding report. According to the account of the confession the woman claimed her mother was 'a queen among the witches'¹⁷⁸ and that she had taught her to refuse Jesus Christ and join with the Devil, whom she called Unflat, and then later Federhans.¹⁷⁹ Her mother told her that the Devil would give her plenty of money, but when he did it turned out to be horse dung. She confessed further that 'many years ago she had committed and bound herself to the Devil with her own blood, which the Devil took from her forehead with his claw. It happened one evening by the fire, her mother was there, who had called for him.'¹⁸⁰ Here we have again the story of the monetary gift turning to dung. However, the idea of the committing oneself to the Devil through blood had not been dealt with in any great detail in the previous reports. Her claim that he took the blood from her forehead corresponds with the idea, later proposed by Martín Del Rio, and Maria Francesco Guazzo, that the Devil 'thrusts his nail into their [the witches'] forehead, making them rub away the oil of baptism and destroy the mark it made.'¹⁸¹ As Bodin suggested in his treatise, the mother in this narrative played an active role in leading her daughter to the Devil. Another pamphlet printed in 1582 also alluded to a mother responsible for her daughter's demise, when a female apothecary held a wedding at the top of a mountain and gave her daughter to the Devil to be his wife.¹⁸²

However, what makes this pamphlet so remarkable is that inclusion of the treatise by the lawyer Saur. Saur discussed within the brief pages of the publication, whether sex with the Devil and procreation with the Devil was possible. This is the only time that this demonological argument is discussed in a *Hexenzeitung*. Saur

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.: 'vnd jhr Mutter die ein Königen vnder den hexen sey.'

¹⁷⁹ The name Federhans, which meant Jack Feather, was originally a derogatory name for mercenaries, which was subsequently transferred onto demons. See Dillinger, "Evil People", p. 45.

¹⁸⁰ Abraham Saur, *Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht...: 'Sagt ferrner / Ja sie hab sich vor etlichen Jaren dem Teuffel mit jrem Blut / so er jr ab jrer Stirn mit einer Klauwen genommen / verpflichtet vnd verbunden / sey eins Abends beym Feuer geschehen / jr Mutter darbey gewesen / die jn gefordert habe.'*

¹⁸¹ P. G. Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio: Investigations into magic* (Manchester, 2000) p. 75; E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Francesco Maria Guazzo: Compendium Maleficarum. The Montague Summers edition* (New York, 1988). p. 14.

¹⁸² *Warhafft vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung. Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr / wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schreckliche ding bekendt haben. Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan / vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schreckliche grosse Wetter in diesem vergangen Sommer im Teutschlandt gmacht haben*, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582).

comes across as well-educated and draws from a variety of sources, including Luther's *Tabletalk*, the Bible, and *Die Emeis* by Johann Geiler von Keisersberg. Saur believed that the Devil could not procreate as he was a spirit and had no real body or blood.¹⁸³ He argued that the Devil could take the form of a human, and deceive people into thinking he was human but really it was 'Affenwerck.'¹⁸⁴ He concurred with Molitor that if children existed from such unions they had to be stolen children, as the Devil could easily steal children, especially those who were unbaptised.¹⁸⁵ He also included a story from Martin Luther's *Tabletalk*, or *Colloquia oder Tischreden Doctor Martini Lutheri*, about a noble in Germany who had a succubus. Luther claimed to have heard the story from the Elector of Saxony.¹⁸⁶ The nobleman was said to have had a beautiful wife, who died and was buried. Not long after the burial the dead woman came to the lord during the night. She told him she could stay with him as long as he did not curse. For a time they lived happily together, they ate, drank and slept together, but then one day the lord broke the condition and uttered a curse and his wife disappeared again forever. Tales like this and others such as the Swan Knight, the tale Melusina, and that of Merlin were very popular during this period. Ultimately Saur's text shows us that the issue of procreation was important in the learned discourse of sex with the Devil, but in order to understand it they drew from popular folklore tales about humans who had supernatural lovers.

In 1587 a new tale about a human entering into a pact with Satan hit the market with a splash and would later become the basis of much Devil folklore, the *Historia of D. Johann Faust*. With the publication of the *Faustbuch*, printed in Frankfurt by Johann Spies, the idea that one could make a written pact with Satan in return for knowledge and wealth reached new boundaries. In the words of Lyndal Roper 'Through the *Faustbuch* of 1587, which borrowed from demonological treatises, demonology influenced drama and even figured in the development of the early novel.'¹⁸⁷ The book was based on a popular story of the real Dr Faustus an intellectual who was renowned for having sold his soul to the Devil. The historical

¹⁸³ Saur, *Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht..*

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Martin Luther, *Colloquia Oder Tischreden Doctor Martini Lutheri: er so in vilen Jaren, die Zeyt seines Lebens, gegen Gelerhten Leuthen, Auch frömbden Gesten und seinen Tischgesellen geführt...* (Frankfurt am Main, 1568), p. 213.

¹⁸⁷ Lyndal Roper, 'Witchcraft and the Western Imagination' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* xvi (2006), p.117.

Faustus' real name and date of birth is still disputed, but there are records that mention him and his historical existence is beyond doubt.¹⁸⁸ The author assembled contemporary stories of Faustus (such stories were popular in the mid-sixteenth century) and arranged them in chronological order, placing the magician's compact with the Devil, Mephostophiles, at the centre of the story. It included a 'copy' of his 'Devilish and Godless Writ'.¹⁸⁹ Faustus made a covenant with his Devil Mephostophiles that if Mephostophiles served him and was obedient to him 'in all things' he promised that after twenty-four years the Devil may 'order, ordain, reign, rule and possess all that may be mine: body, property, flesh, blood.'¹⁹⁰ He also rejected and defied the 'Heavenly Host and all mankind.'¹⁹¹ The contract was confirmed with Faustus' own blood: 'In confirmation and contract whereof I have drawn out mine own blood for certification in lieu of a seal.'¹⁹² Cornel Anton Zwierlein points out that legalistically the contract's structure harked back to feudal law, resembling feudal oaths of fealty, where one had to swear allegiance to one lord over another: 'In a systematically constructed pyramidal world order in which the last vassals are on one side the Devil as world ruler, on the other side the worldly and spiritual ruler "of God's Grace", Faustus would have changed over to the part that was ruled by the Devil as a direct, physical separate subject'.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸ Wolfgang Behringer, 'Faust, Johann Georg (CA 1480-1540)' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, ii, 352.

¹⁸⁹ This translation by Harry Haile is not based on the Spies print but rather on an earlier manuscript believed to be the basis for the print. The English translation of *The Historia and tales of Doctor Johannes Faustus* based on the Wolfenbüttel MS, available online in German (http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/germanica/Chronologie/16Jh/Faustus/fau_df0.html#The%20Faust%20Book) and in English (<http://lettersfromthedustbowl.com/Fbk1.html>) (2 Oct. 2010).

¹⁹⁰ Translation by Harry Haile *The Historia and tales of Doctor Johannes Faustus*. In the edition by Johann Spieß this is: 'Dagegen aber ich mich hinwider gegen jhme verpriche vnd verlobe / daß so 24. Jahr / von Dato diß Brieffs an / herumb vnd fürvber gelauffen / er mit mir nach seiner Art / vnd weiß / seines Gefallens / zuschalten / walten / regieren / führen / gut macht haben sole / mit allem / es sey Leib / Seel / Fleisch / Blut vnd gut / vnd das in sein Ewigkeit' in *Historia von D. Johann Fausten: Text des Druckes von 1587*, edited by Stephan Füssel and Hans Joachim Kreutzer (Stuttgart, 2006), p. 23.

¹⁹¹ Translation by Haile, *The Historia and tales of Doctor Johannes Faustus*. In Spieß edition: 'Hierauff absage ich allen denen / so da leben / allem Himmlischen Heer / vnd allen Menschen...'

¹⁹² Haile (trans.), *The Historia and tales of Doctor Johannes Faustus*. In Spieß edition: 'Zu festem Vrkundt vndd mehrer Bekräftigung / hab ic disen Receß eigner Hand geschrieben / vnderschreiben / vnd mit meinem hiefür getrucktem eygen Blut / meines Sinns / Kopffs / Gedancken vndd Willen / verknüpfft / versiegelt vnd bezeugnet / etc.' p. 23.

¹⁹³ See Cornel Anton Zwierlein, *Das sematische Potential des Fausstoffes um die Wende von 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert* (unpublished MA thesis, Munich, 1999), p. 72: 'In einer systematisch konstruierten pyramidalen Weltordnung, in der einerseits der Teufel als Weltenfürst, andererseits die weltlichen und geistlichen Herrscher „von Gottes Gnaden“ des letzteren Vasallen sind, wäre Faustus also als direkter, leibeigener¹⁹³ Untertan in den Teilherrschaftsbereich des Teufels übergewechselt.'

The story of Faustus continues with Faustus questioning Mephostophiles about spirits, the Devil, hell, the stars and much more. Faustus comes across as over inquisitive and curious. Not being permitted to marry, since marriage was Christian ceremony,¹⁹⁴ Faustus' devil told him that if he could not live chastely he could have 'whatever woman thou seest in this city or elsewhere. Whosoever might please thy lust, and whomever thou might desire in lechery, she shall abide with thee in such a figure and form.'¹⁹⁵ Doctor Faustus was so intrigued by this proposal that he no longer wished to marry, and he yearned day and night after the figure of the beautiful women in such excellent forms, 'dissipating today with one devil and having another on his mind tomorrow.'¹⁹⁶ Ultimately at the end of the twenty-four year period, Faustus met his miserable end at the hands of the Devil. The moral of the story was that human curiosity was a deadly sin which could lead one to hell. The story of Faustus quickly became successful in Germany and abroad, it was translated into English very promptly.¹⁹⁷ In addition to this, the English writer Christopher Marlowe composed a play on the subject *Dr Faustus* that was first published in 1604¹⁹⁸ (although the play itself was performed throughout the preceding years). It helped to popularise the idea that humans could enter into a pact with demons and that a written contract was necessary. Furthermore the narrative of Faust helped to further propagate the belief that humans could have sex with demons who appeared in the 'figure and form' of someone else.

In 1587, the same year that the original *Faustbuch* was printed, the trial of one Walpurga Haußmännin also made headlines. Walpurga, who was a mid-wife, was burnt as a witch in Dillingen in 1587. However, the written account of her confession was leaked and copies of her confession, provided by the town secretary, made their way across the wider region and can still be found in the municipal

¹⁹⁴ Zwierlein points out that this highlights the high value that Protestants placed on marriage despite its desacramentalisation. See Cornel Anton Zwierlein, *Das sematische Potential des Fausstoffes um die Wende von 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert* (unpublished MA thesis, Munich, 1999), p. 75.

¹⁹⁵ Translation by Haile, *The Historia and tales of Doctor Johannes Faustus*. In Spieß edition: 'so wil ich dir alle Tag vnd Nacht ein Weib zu Bett führen / welche du in dieser Statt / oder anderßwo ansichtig / vnd die du nach deinem Willen zur Vnkeuscheit begeren wirst /In solcher Gestalt vnnd Form sol sie bey dir wohnen.' p. 29.

¹⁹⁶ Translation by Haile *The Historia and tales of Doctor Johannes Faustus*. In Spieß edition: 'so er heut mit dem Teuffel Vnzucht triebe / Morgen einen andern im Sinn hatte.' p. 29.

¹⁹⁷ For example in 1592 P.F. Gent translated the original Frankfurt copy: *The historie of the damnable life, and deserued death of Doctor Iohn Faustus Newly imprinted, and in conuenient places imperfect matter amended: according to the true copie printed at Franckfort, and translated into English, by P.F. Gent* (London, 1592).

¹⁹⁸ Christopher Marlowe, *The tragicall history of D. Faustus As it hath bene acted by the right honourable the Earle of Nottingham his seruants* (London, 1604).

archives of Weißenburg and Munich, and the castle archive of the counts of Waldburg-Wolfegg.¹⁹⁹ The prince-bishop's government urged the lord mayor of Dillingen to reprimand the secretary for having leaked the text, however it was too late to stop the news from spreading and it was subsequently reported in the *Fugger-Newsletters* on 2 September as the:

‘Confessions of Walpurga Hausmännin, formerly licensed midwife at Dillingen, who, for almost thirty years, practised witchcraft and was in league with the Evil One. She was burnt at the stake at Dillingen on the 20th day of September anno Domini 1587.’²⁰⁰

The report was soon printed again by a local printer, and in 1588, another printer reprinted the earlier, now lost, local Dillingen print with an added woodcut.²⁰¹ For this research both the report in the *Fugger-newsletters*²⁰² and the later news-report from 1588 were consulted. The latter report was entitled: ‘The confession and articles that Walpurga Haußmännin from Dillingen confessed to during her painful torture, what evil and sorrow she wreaked and caused with her witchcraft, that she practiced for over 30. years, with the help and counsel of her lover-demon, who helped her with it.’²⁰³ The report in the *Fugger-newsletters* is almost identical to the news report printed in 1588; however there were some noticeable discrepancies. The *Fugger-Newsletter* reported that she was executed on the 20 September 1587, while the news report claimed it was on the 24 October. Similarly the name of her lover differs in both documents, in one he is called Utz and in the other Bis. However differences aside, the fact that Walpurga's execution was printed more than once shows that her contemporaries attached importance to her and her execution. Walter

¹⁹⁹ Behringer, ‘Witchcraft and the Media’, pp 225-6.

²⁰⁰ ‘Confessions of Walpurga Hausmännin, formerly licensed mid-wife at Dillingen, who, for almost thirty years, practised witchcraft and was in league with the Evil One. She was burnt at the stake at Dillingen on the 20th day of September anno Domini 1587’ in William Monter (ed.), *European Witchcraft* (New York, 1969), pp.75-81. In German: ‘Gute vnd peinliche Bekenntnisse der Walpurga Hausmännin, gewesene vnd beschworene hebamme zu Dillengen, die fast dreißig Jahre lang in der hexerei gesteckt vnd am bösen Feind gehangen. Sie ist zu Dillingen am 20. September anno 1587 mit dem Feuer gerichtet worden’ in Victor Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen . Ungedruckte Briefe an das haus Fugger aus den Jahren 1568-1605* (Munich, 1923), pp 103-10.

²⁰¹ Behringer, ‘Witchcraft and the Media,’ p. 226.

²⁰² ‘Confessions of Walpurga Hausmännin, formerly licensed mid-wife at Dillingen, who, for almost thirty years, practised witchcraft and was in league with the Evil One. She was burnt at the stake at Dillingen on the 20th day of September anno Domini 1587’, in E. William Monter (ed.), *European Witchcraft* (New York, 1969), pp.75-81.

²⁰³ *Urgicht und verzaichnuß / so Walpurga Haußmännin zu Dillingen inn ihrer peinlichen Marter bekandt hat / was sy für ubels und Jamers mit ihrer hexerey / so sy biß in die 30. Jar getrüben / angericht vnd gestüfft hat / mit hilff und raht ihres Bülteüffels / so ihr dazu gehölffen* (S.l., 1588), this copy is now in the Witchcraft Collection of Cornell University Library. .

Stephens goes as far as calling Walpurga an ‘an unwilling media star of her period.’²⁰⁴

Walpurga’s pact-seduction narrative was unlike any of the previous ones contained in the *Hexenzeitungen*. She is said to have confessed that she became a widow thirty one years earlier. She worked cutting corn for a Hans Schlumperger. While working she enticed one of Schlumperger’s servants, Bis/Utz im Pfarrhof, to meet up with her one night at her dwelling to indulge in libidinous desires (*Unkeuschheit*) but when Walpurga waited for him that night in her chamber ‘meditating upon evil and fleshly thoughts, it was not the said bondsman who appeared unto her, but the Evil One in the latter’s guise and raiment and indulged in fornication with her.’²⁰⁵ Following sexual intercourse, the lover presented her with a piece of money, but as always this money was no good, ‘was a bad coin like lead’²⁰⁶ and no one could take it from her. It was only after having sex that Walpurga realised her lover was not human:

After the act of fornication she saw and felt the cloven foot of her whoremonger, and that his hand was not natural, but as if made of wood. She was greatly affrighted thereat and called upon the name of Jesus, whereupon the Devil left her and vanished.²⁰⁷

Here one can see evidence of counter-demonism; when she calls out the name of Jesus the Devil is forced to disappear. However Walpurga received only temporary relief from the Devil, and the following night he visited her again and fornicated with her. He made her many promises and she finally surrendered herself to him, in both ‘body and soul.’²⁰⁸ Like the witch from Marburg in 1582, Walpurga claimed

²⁰⁴ Stephens, *Demon lovers*, p. 2.

²⁰⁵ Translation of Fugger newsletter from Monter (ed), *European witchcraft*, pp 75-76.

In German Fugger newsletter: ‘Als nun die Walpurga solches erwartet vnd nachts mit bösen fleischlichen Gedanken in jhrer kammer gesessen, ist nicht der gedachte böse Geist in dessen Gestalt vnd kleidung zu ihr gekommen vnd hat alsbald mit ihr Vnzucht getrieben’ see Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 103. The story is told in a similar fashion in the 1588 pamphlet: ‘Also nun sie Walpurg soliches / Erwart und in irer kammer mit bösen fleischlichen gedancken nehene gesessen / ist gedachtet Knecht nit / sonder in deß selben gestalt vnd kleydung / der böse Geist zu jr kommen / vnd hat alsbald seines willens der vnzucht mit jm gepflegen’ see *Urgicht und verzaichnuß / so Walpurga Haußmännin zu Dillingen* (S.l., 1588).

²⁰⁶ Trans. from Monter (ed.), *European witchcraft*, p. 76. Original German in Fugger newsletter: ‘es schlecht vnd wie Blei gewesen ist’ see Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 103.

²⁰⁷ Trans. from Monter (ed.), *European witchcraft* p. 76. Original German in Fugger newsletter: ‘Nach vollendeter Unzucht hat sie an ihrem Buhlteufel den Geisenfuß gesehen vnd gespürt, daß seine hand nicht natürlich, sonder wie aus holz gewesen ist. Darüber ist sie erschrocken und hat den Namen Jesus genannt, worauf der Teufel sie alsbald verlassen hat vnd verschwunden ist.’ The text of the 1588 pamphlet tells this narrative the same way.

²⁰⁸ ‘mit Leib und Seele ergab’ in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 104.

that Devil scratched her in order to draw blood, and with this blood she bound herself to the Devil:

Thereafter the Evil One inflicted upon her a scratch below the left shoulder, demanding that she should sell her soul to him with the blood that had flown therefrom. To this end he gave her a quill and, whereas she could not write, the Evil One guided her hand. She believes nothing offensive was written, for the Evil One only swept her hand across the paper. This script the Devil took with him and whenever she piously thought of God Almighty, or wished to go to church, the Devil reminded her of it.²⁰⁹

Unlike the earlier witch of 1582, whose blood was extracted from her forehead, Walpurga's blood was taken from her below her left shoulder. With this blood Walpurga was made sign away her soul to him, and since she could not write the Devil guided her hand. This shows that the concept of a written, signed contractual document or deed was becoming widespread, with not only learned doctors such as Faustus selling their soul to the Devil, but also poor old widows such as Walpurga. Like Faustus Walpurga was said to have disowned God, the saints, and the whole of Christendom. In addition to this, the report also told its readers how Walpurga was rebaptised with the 'Great Devil' supposedly baptising her afresh with the new name of Höfelein/Hellfin.²¹⁰ Interestingly, following her submission to the Devil Walpurga is reported to have often 'received the Blessed Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ'²¹¹ but she had always taken it out of her mouth and gave it to her demon-lover, whom she called Federlin. The sacrament would then be brought along to their 'nightly gatherings' where it would be blasphemed.²¹² The same demon-lover also requested that Walpurga should dishonour the Virgin Mary, to which Walpurga obliged, calling Mary an 'ugly harlot'/'ugly beast'²¹³ She confessed that

²⁰⁹ Trans. from Monter (ed.), *European witchcraft*, p. 76. Original German in Fugger newsletters: 'Darauf hat der böse Geist ihr alsbald unter der linken Achsel einen Krazer oder Riß zugefügt vnd verlangt, daß sie sich mit dem daraus geflossenen Blut ihm verscreibe. Dazu gab er ihr eine Feder, da sie aber selbst nicht schreiben konnte, hat ihr der böse Geist mit ihrer hand nur auf dem Papier herumgefahren ist. Diese schrift hat der böse Geist zu sich genommen, und wenn sie mit guten Gedanken Gottes des Allmächtigen dachte oder in die Kirche gehen wollte hat der Teufel sie an diese Schrift erinnert' from Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 104. Once again this story is reiterated with almost no variation in the 1588 pamphlet.

²¹⁰ In the Fugger newsletter she is rebaptised Höfelein while in the 1588 pamphlet this name altered to Hellfin.

²¹¹ Trans. from Monter (ed.), *European witchcraft*, p. 77. Original German in Fugger newsletters: 'Das hochwürdige Sacrament des wahren Leibes und Blutes Jesu Christi hat sie seit ihrer Ergebung an den Teufel scheinbar oft im Mund empfangen' in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 105. The 1588 pamphlet reports the same narrative.

²¹² 'nächtlichen zusammenkünften' in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 105.

²¹³ In the 1587 Fugger newsletter Walpurga called Mary a 'häßliche Dirne!' (an ugly harlot), however in the 1588 report this insult was modified to a 'häßliche Thier' (an ugly beast). See Klarwill (ed.),

she had fornicated with her paramour, Federlin. He came to her in many different places ‘even in the street by night and now while she lay in prison.’²¹⁴

The name that Walpurga gave her Devil was frequently cited by other witches. In nearby sixteenth century Marchtal, Roper claims that the Devil’s name was nearly always Federle, or Federlin, meaning the little feather.²¹⁵ The feather was a symbol of duplicity and trickery and could also refer to the penis; the moral significance of the name was thus clear: ‘the Devil was the master of illusion and trickery, his phallic feather stood for his lubricious nature.’²¹⁶ Walpurga did not join with the Devil out of necessity; she joined with him as a result of her sexual lust. After their first sexual encounter, when she realised that he was a demon, she still agreed to fornicate with him again. She claimed to be affrighted by his cloven hoof and wooden hand, but evidently not enough to stay away from him. Walter Stephens argues that her failure to recognize the cloven foot and wooden hand until after sexual consummation does not imply that she was stupid; rather, it insinuates that the demon’s imitation of the human body and its sexual performance was almost perfect.²¹⁷ The report does not go into detail about what he promised her, and instead describes their sexual escapades at great length.

Juxtaposed to the text, and its contents, the image that accompanied the 1588 report, shown above in Figure 1.4, did not depict any kind of sexual relations between Walpurga and her demon-lover. The woodcut that adorned the title page contained two separate images, or woodcuts, laid out side by side. One of the woodcuts is of the Devil and the other of Walpurga herself. Unlike the earlier images from Molitor’s work there is no display of affection between them, they are not even in the same woodcut. Walpurga is carrying a rake over her shoulder, presumably for her work in the fields. In her other hand she is carrying the bag of a midwife.²¹⁸ Like the witches in the earlier images of the fifteenth century, Walpurga is not ugly and looks rather young. Charles Zika has noted the artist was perhaps trying to portray her as she might have looked 31 years earlier when she first met the Devil.²¹⁹

Fugger-Zeitungen, p. 105 and *Urgicht und verzeichnuß / so Walpurga Haußmännin zu Dillingen* (S.l., 1588).

²¹⁴ ‘sogar auch des Nachts auf der Gasse und während sie jetzt in haft gelegen ist’ in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen*, p. 105. This story is told the same in the 1588 report.

²¹⁵ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 85.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Stephens, *Demon lovers*, p. 17.

²¹⁸ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft* p. 191.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

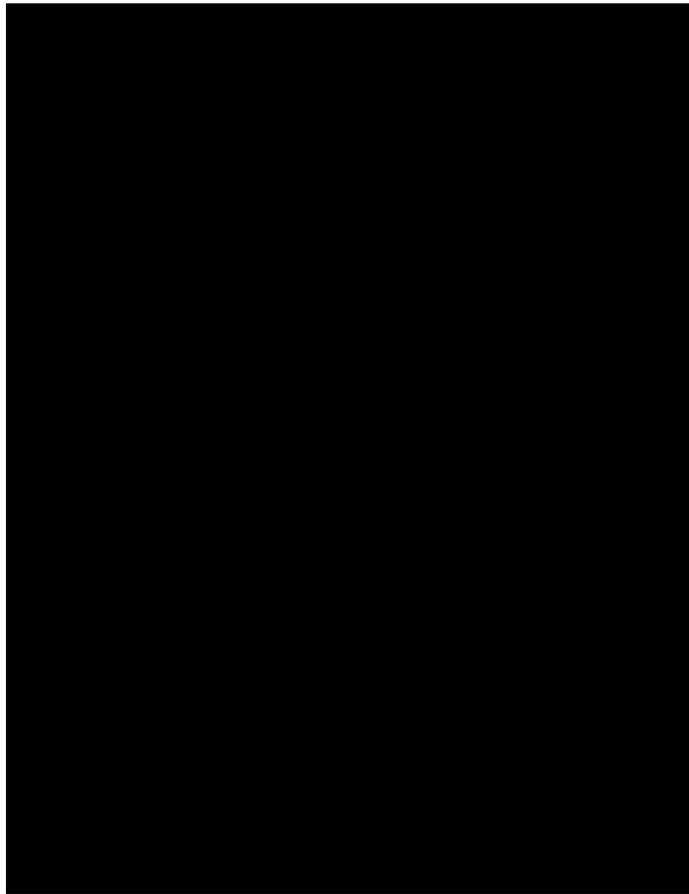


Figure 1.4 Walpurga Hausmännin and the Devil, titlepage woodcut, in *Urgicht und verzeichnuß so Walpurga Haußmännin zu Dillingen inn ihrer peinlichen Marter bekandt hatt...* (1588), digital image provided for this dissertation by Cornell University Library.

The woodcut of the Devil is unusual. Zika argues that the figure in the image is the Devil parading as the farm labourer, Utz/Bis, whose sexual seduction by Walpurga sparked the beginning of life of diabolical crime.²²⁰ This explains why the Devil is holding a two-pronged hoe. Like the earlier images the Devil is shown with a tail and hooped feet. Unlike the earlier images, which portrayed the Devil as well-dressed and almost handsome, the Devil in this image is not clothed, and overall looks quite hideous. He has strange face, with long beak instead of a mouth. He appears to be walking in the country side, in the direction of Walpurga's woodcut. Overall when compared with the sensationalist confessions described in the report, even though the image of the Devil is monstrous, the overall image is rather subdued and does not reflect the intimacy that Walpurga had with her Devil lover.

²²⁰ Ibid., p. 192.

Although most witches reported in the *Hexenzeitungen* were women, occasionally there were reports of male witches or sorcerers. In fact in 1589, one man's trial was to become so popular and news-worthy that it was even translated into English and printed in London.²²¹ This man was Peter Stumpf. Stumpf is more commonly known by witchcraft scholars as a werewolf. However, like the witches, he also received his powers by entering into a demonic pact. He also confessed to sleeping with a female Devil, or succubus, for some years (some accounts claim that it was for twenty-five years, while others say it was only for seven²²²). There are at least three German broadsheets outlining Stumpf's terrible deeds, but they only provide a short synopsis of his crimes.²²³ He also attracted the attention of the local printer Niclaus Schreiber, who reported on Stumpf in two separate occasions in two pamphlets dating from 1589.²²⁴ In comparison, however, the English pamphlet printed in 1590 in London offers a much fuller account of Stumpf and how he met the Devil.²²⁵ The author of the English pamphlet claimed that it was a translation of a (now lost) pamphlet printed in Cologne: 'Trulye translated out of the high Duch according to the Copie printed in Collin, brought over into England by George Bores

²²¹ Pamphlets on Stumpf were reportedly printed in Augsburg, Nuremberg, and in Denmark, Antwerp and London. Willem De Blécourt discusses the pamphlets and broadsheets printed about case, and how they communicated the werewolf concept in de Blécourt, 'Werewolf communications: on the Peter Stumpf case and its effects' forthcoming in Rita Voltmer (ed.), *Europäische Hexenforschung und Landesgeschichte – Methoden, Regionen, Vergleiche*. For further details on the Stumpf case see also de Blécourt 'The Werewolf, the Witch, and the Warlock' in Alison Rowlands (ed.), *Witchcraft and masculinities in early modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2009) p. 196 and Elmar M. Lorey, *Heinrich der Werwolf: eine Geschichte aus der Zeit der Hexenprozesse mit Dokumenten und Analysen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), pp 208-9.

²²² Two reports printed by Nikolaus Schreiber in 1589 cite 25 years.

²²³ *Warhafftige und Wunderbarlich / Neue zeitung von einen pauren / der sich durch zauberey / des tags siben stund zu ainen wolff verwandelt hat / und wie er darnach gericht ist worden durch den Colnischen Nachrichter / den letzten October Im 1589 Jar*, printed by Lucas Mayer (Nuremberg, 1589); *Bey Bedbur in dem selben land / hab ich mich jn ein Wolff verwandt [...]*, by Philipp Uffenbach (S.l., 1589); *Wahrhafftige vnd wunderbarliche Neue zeitung / von einem Bawren / der sich durch Zauberey / deß Tags siben stunt zu einem Wolff verwandelt hat / und wie er darnach gericht ist worden durch den Colnischen Nachrichter / den letzten October 1589*, printed by Johann Neagle (Augsburg, 1589).

²²⁴ *Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauber/ Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem wehrwolff hat können...*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589) and *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hun vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).

²²⁵ Willem de Blécourt believes that London version included every known rumour about the Stumpf case that had been conveyed to the printer by several letters from Germany and that this accounted for the lengthier narrative. See de Blécourt, 'The Werewolf, the Witch, and the Warlock', p. 198.

ordinary poste, the xi. daye of this present moneth of June 1590. Who did both see and heare the same.²²⁶

Unlike the previously reported witches, who only became evil after meeting the Devil, Stumpf is described as being ‘greatly inclined to evill’²²⁷ from his youth, and is reported to have practiced the wicked arts from the age of twelve. He was said to have acquainted himself with ‘many infernall spirites and feindes’ through magic, necromancy and sorcery, until ‘in the end careless of saluation [he] gaue both soule and body to the devil for euer, for small carnall pleasure in this life, that he might be famous and spoken of on earth, though he lost heaven thereby.’²²⁸ The Devil promised to give Stumpf whatever his heart desired. However unlike many other witches, he did not want riches or promotion or any ‘external or outward pleasure’, instead he requested that he might work his malice on men, women and children in the shape of a beast. The Devil granted this request and gave him a girdle which, when he wore it, had the ability to transform him into the likeness of a wolf. Overall, Stumpf is portrayed in the media as a sexual predator, using his wolf disguise as a means to ravish and murder young maidens. However his sexual needs and desires appear to be insatiable. In order to satisfy his filthy lusts he reportedly engaged in incest with his fair young daughter, Beell. He used her daily as a concubine, and ‘begat a Child by her.’²²⁹ According to the pamphlet, this was still not enough, ‘as an insaciate and filthy beast, giuen over to the work of euil, with greediness he also lay by his owne sister.’²³⁰ In addition, he also had a sexual relationship with a woman called Katrina Trompin. However even with so many concubines he was not satisfied and his wicked fancy was not contented with the beauty of any woman. For this reason the Devil sent him ‘a wicked spirit in the similitude and likenes of a woman, so faire of face and comelye of personage, that she resembled rather some heavenly Hellin then any mortall creature.’²³¹ He kept company with this spirit for seven years, and in the end she was found to be no other than the Devil. Eventually,

²²⁶ *A true discourse. Declaring the damnable life and death of one Stubbe Peeter, a most wicked Sorcerer, who in the likenes of a Woolfe, committed many murders, continuing this diuelish practise 25. yeeres, killing and deuouring Men, Women, and Children. Who for the same fact was taken and executed the 31. of October last past in the Towne of Bedbur neer the Cittie of Collin in Germany.* Printed for Edward Venge, (London, 1590).

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

according to the report, Stumpf was caught out, and suffered a nasty execution. The report claimed that he was executed on 31 October 1589, in the town of Bedbur, near Cologne.

His evil deeds and horrendous execution, which included being broken on the wheel, attracted the attention of the media. His story became so well known it was incorporated into Martín Del Rio's *Disquisitionum magicarum*.²³² It was included as an example in book two, question 18, which asked whether magicians could transform the bodies of one species into those of another.²³³ The same passage was then repeated in Maria Francesco Guazzo's work in 1608. Guazzo cited Stumpf's confession as proof that incubus and succubus devils existed in his *Compendium Maleficarum*:

Fifteen years ago, at Bamberg [this should be Bebburg, probably a mistake made by E. A. Ashwin in his translation]²³⁴ a certain Peter Stumpf was sentenced to death because he had sinned with a Succubus devil for more than twenty-eight years. This devil had given him a girdle which he had only to put on, and it appeared both to himself and others that he was changed into a wolf. He tried to devour two of his daughters-in-law. He lived with his own daughter and her godmother as his wives. This is all vouched for in the Court records, and is memorised in pictures carved in brass which are for sale.²³⁵

Del Rio and Guazzo's inclusion of Stumpf as an example highlights the popularity of his story. Guazzo's statement that brass pictures depicting Stumpf's crimes were for sale further implies that there was ample interest in Stumpf and his history. Stories of people entering into diabolic pacts, such as Faust, Walpurga and Stumpf entertained contemporaries and people wanted to know more about their sensational crimes. This case also shows how stories that were featured in the *Hexenzeitungen* could later be used to support arguments in demonological treatises.

²³² Martín Del Rio's *Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex*, printed by J. Pillehotte (Lvgdvni, 1608), book two, question XIX: 'Annus decimus agitur, cum Bebburgi (oppidalum est Vbiorum) supplicio affectus fuit quidam Stumfius Petrus eo quod cum daemone succuba plus quatuor lustris cosuesset, ab alic donatus fuit ata quadam zona, qua, cum cingebature & sibi & alius in lupum verti videbatur.'

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ I was unable to consult the original 1608 Latin edition to verify that Guazzo named the town Bamberg. In the 1626 edition it is called 'Bebburg' which bears more resemblance to the original town of Bedbur, also Del Rio named the town 'Bebburgi' see footnote 234 above.

²³⁵ English trans. from E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Francesco Maria Guazzo: Compendium Maleficarum. The Montague Summers edition* (New York, 1988). p. 32. The Latin from the Milan 1626 edition reads: 'Annus iam decimus quintus agitur, cum Bebburg (oppidum est Vbiorum) supplicio affectus fuit quid am Stumphius Petrus, eo quod cum Daemone succuba plus quatuor lustris coiuisset: ab hac donatus fuit lata quadam Zona, qua cum cingebatur, & sibi, & alius in lupum verti videbatur. Hoc schemate ter quinque pueros iugularat, eorumque comederat cerebrum. Duas nurus suas deuorare conatus fuerat. Propiam filiam, & Comatrem suam vxorum loco haburat. Constant haec omnia actis iudiciariis, & Iconibus in aes incisae palamquae venalibus.' See Francesco Maria Guazzo, *Compendium Maleficarum* (Milan, 1626), p. 67.

Similarly, however, stories of witches published in learned treatises on witchcraft could also make it into the *Hexenzeitungen*. This is evident in the case of Jeanne Harvillier, a witch whose confessions and trial were referred to by Bodin.²³⁶ Bodin continuously referred to Jeanne's trial throughout his book, using her as a 'narrative thread' to tie his work together.²³⁷ Lyndal Roper argues that demonology allowed authors to experiment with character types, and certain cases attracted more literary attention, namely the stories of young girls like Jeanne.²³⁸ Over fourteen years after Bodin published Jeanne's story, another author was similarly attracted to her confession or 'character type' and chose to include it in a pamphlet that was printed by Nikolaus Schreiber. However the author of the news report of 1594, altered Jeanne's story, firstly by making her name more Germanic, Johanna Harrweilerin, and secondly by reporting it as recent news.²³⁹ The author also states her trial happened in Germany in 1593. However, on reading an excerpt from the report there can be no doubt as to where the story originated. The author claimed that a sorceress, with the name of Johanna Harrweilerin, who was accused, confessed herself without the use of torture that she had killed many people and animals. This Johanna also confessed that as soon as she was twelve, her mother presented her to the Devil who appeared in the figure of a black man wearing black clothes. Her mother handed her over to him, for his own, announcing that she had promised her little daughter to the Devil as soon as she was born. In return the Devil promised to keep the mother well and lend her luck in her business. From that time, Johanna confessed, she disowned God and 'promised to serve the Devil, and then at that place performed fleshly intercourse with the devil.'²⁴⁰ From age twelve until she was about fifty, when she was arrested, she continued to have sex with the Devil. She claimed that sometimes they even had sex beside her husband without him noticing.

This story is taken almost word for word from the Preface to Bodin's work and is a blatant case of plagiarism. Here is Bodin's description of Jeanne:

The conclusion of the proceedings against a witch, to which I was summoned on the last day of April, 1578, gave me occasion to take up my pen in order to throw some

²³⁶ Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*.

²³⁷ Lyndal Roper, 'Witchcraft in the Western Imagination,' p. 131.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ Johann Fischart in his German translation of Bodin's work also translated Jeanne Harvillier to 'Johanna Harwilerin'. See Jean Bodin, *De Daemonomania magorum: Vom Außgelassenen Wütigen Teuffelsheer der Besessenen* translated by Johann Fischart (Strasbourg, 1581).

²⁴⁰ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber, (Cologne, 1594).

light on the subject of witches, which seems marvelously strange to everyone and unbelievable to many. This witch was named Jeanne Harvillier, a native of Verbery near Compiègne, who was accused of having caused the death of many people and animals. She confessed without torture although at first she stubbornly denied it and changed her story several times. She also confessed that her mother had presented her at twelve years old to the Devil, who was in the guise of an unusually tall, dark man dressed in black. Her mother told her that as soon as she was born she had promised her to the Devil, who promised to treat her well and to make her very happy. From that moment she renounced God and promised to serve the Devil. At the same time she had carnal relations with the Devil, continuing until she was fifty years of age or so when she was arrested.²⁴¹

Evidently, years later the author of the pamphlet thought it worthwhile to reproduce this story. This tells us a few things, firstly that stories like Johanna's were marketable, insofar as people wanted to read them, and secondly it shows us that authors of contemporary *Hexenzeitungen* were aware of and possibly read works by learned demonologists. Thus the story of Jeanne/Johanna was further disseminated among the populace. Further details about this case can be found in chapter five.

The pamphlet also told the story of another witch, a male barber or Badstöber, and gave an account of how he met the Devil. There has been no evidence found, as of yet, to indicate that this story was also copied. Therefore it is possible that it was a representation of a local trial. The truthfulness of the *Hexenzeitungen* in general, is a massive issue which will be discussed in detail in a chapter five. For the moment, what is important is how this second narrative corresponded to existing pact-seduction narratives. The author reported that the barber met the Devil when he was out walking and feeling depressed. The Devil asked the barber why he was sad. The barber did not realise it was the Evil Enemy and asked him how he knew him. The Devil responded saying 'Should I not know you? Tell me what you need, I will not leave you.'²⁴² The man answered the Devil, telling him that he was sad because he had no food and was very poor, having completely spent his money after partly gambling it away. As per usual the Devil

²⁴¹ *Jean Bodin On the demon-mania of witches*, translated by Randy A. Scott (Toronto, 1995), p. 35. Original French edition, Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), Book One, Preface: 'La Sorciere que i'ay dict s'appelloit Ieanne Haruillier, natisue de Verbery près Compieigne, accusee d'auoir fait mourir plusieurs hommes & bestes, comme elle confessa sans question, ny torture, combien qu de prime face elle eust denié opiniastrement, & varié plusieurs fois. Elle confessa aussi, que sa mere dés l'aage de douzeans l'auoit presentee au Diable en guise d'un grand homme noir, outre la stature des hommes, vestu de drap noir, luy disant qu'elle l'auoit, si tost qu'elle fut nee, promise à cestuy-là, qu'elle disoit estre le Diable, qui promettoit la bien traicter, & la faire bien heureuse: Et que dés lors elle renonça Dieu, & promist server au Diable. Et qu'au mesme instant elle eut copulation charnellement avec le Diable...'

²⁴² *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin*: 'solt ich dich nicht kennen / sag mir was dir gebricht / ich will dich nicht verlassen.'

offered the man assistance, stating: 'I will give you money enough, that you should have no need but you must commit to me with your blood, what I call and teach, you must achieve and accomplish.'²⁴³ The barber agreed, and committed himself to the Devil with his own blood. The Devil then put one hundred thaler in the barber's coat and said to him that when he spent it, he would come again to him.

The pact-seduction narrative of the barber starts off very similar to many others. Like many other witches, he was in need and the Devil appeared to offer assistance. It is striking that like Walpurga Hausmännin it is a particular vice that was responsible for leading him to the Devil, while Walpurga's vice was fleshly lust, the barber's downfall was caused by his gambling. The barber was reckless with money and caused his own demise. One can see that there is often an edifying moral in these reports. Juxtaposed to many other narratives though, the barber does not have sex with the Devil. Perhaps because the Devil offered him a monetary gift, any sex thereafter could be associated with prostitution which was by and large still considered a female occupation. Sex was only considered an integral part of the pact in the relationship between women and Devil as the female contract with the 'Evil Spirit' resembled contemporary courtship norms. Just as it was for marriage, so it was for the diabolic pact: the female witch had to consummate her contract with the Devil through sexual intercourse. The stories told about men who did have sexual relations with demons are different to the stories of women, insofar as sex does not directly follow the signing of the pact. In the case of Faust and Peter Stumpf, it is only after the pact has been made that the Devil offers to provide the men with a succubus purely for the sake of pleasure.

The demonological understanding of the diabolical pact was to be further modified and standardised at the turn of the seventeenth century, with the publication of Martín Del Rio's famous, *Disquisitiones Magicae Libri sex* (Six Books on the Investigation of Magic). The book was published in three parts between 1599 and 1600 and was frequently published thereafter, with twenty-five editions between 1600 and 1755.²⁴⁴ The work was so successful that it practically replaced the *Malleus Maleficarum*.²⁴⁵ Martín Antoine Del Rio (1555-1608) was born in Antwerp and was the son of a high Spanish-Dutch official. He studied law in Paris, Douai and

²⁴³ Ibid.: 'ich will der gelt genoch geben / das du keinen gebrech solt haben / aber du must mir verschreiben mit deinem Blüt / Was ich dich heise vnd lere / das du wöllest aber ausrichten.'

²⁴⁴ Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 101.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

Salamanca, and received his doctoral degree in 1574. He embarked on a political career for a few years before joining the Jesuit Order to study theology, and he took his final vows in 1600. His work, *Disquisitiones Magicae Libri sex*, was used as a handbook for judges and it provided numerous examples from the contemporary period, particularly from witch trials that he witnessed in the Spanish-Netherlands from 1592-1600. In the books Del Rio categorizes and explains in exhaustive detail all the different kinds of magic. Like others before him, he believed that the pact was necessary for any kind of magic. However, drawing on contemporary confessions and earlier demonological treatises, Del Rio explained how witches joined with the devil in more detail than any one before him in book two of his work, entitled 'Magic involving evil spirit.'²⁴⁶ It is here, under question four that he discussed 'the basis of this magic, that is to say a pact, explicit or implicit.'²⁴⁷

Del Rio concluded straight away that all magical operations rest upon, and are made possible by, a pact made between the magician and an evil spirit. He also concluded that the evil spirit was at liberty either to fulfil this pact or to fail to carry it out. He stated clearly, as proven by experience and reason that the Devil very rarely carries out what he has promised. He then continued to explain how the pact had two parts, one explicit and the other implicit. An explicit pact, according to Del Rio occurred in front of witnesses at a kind of ritual; where loyalty and homage were promised to the Devil who appears in corporeal form. This type of pact was not a major subject in the *Hexenzeitungen*, and where it is a feature it falls under the discussion of the sabbath. For this reason, the ritual/group worship of Satan will be explored in detail in chapter four. However, Del Rio describes another method which is performed without witnesses, and another that uses a substitute for the evil spirit, for fear of what the spirit may actually look or sound like. The method in which one joined the Devil was the same for all these pacts, and included various steps. Some of these steps were frequently reported in the *Hexenzeitungen* while others were never mentioned. The first step, according to Del Rio was the renunciation of Christian belief. Following this renunciation of the faith, the Devil would then thrust his nail into their forehead 'making them rub away the oil of baptism and destroy the

²⁴⁶ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio: Investigations into magic*, p. 73. Martino Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* printed by Jannem Pillehotte(Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 53: Libri II: 'De Magia Daemoniaca'.

²⁴⁷ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*, p. 73. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 53: 'De basi Magiae huius siue de pacto, expresso, & implicito.'

mark it made.’²⁴⁸ The Devil then rebaptised them with water, and gave them a new name. The soon to be witch had to then deny their Christian god-parents and were assigned new ones. The witch had to then give the Devil a piece of their cast-off clothing. This was because the Devil needed to own something belonging to them, as one of the principal ways which occult power was exercised was through personal contact.²⁴⁹ The Devil also required their blood and sometimes one of their daughters. They then had to swear allegiance to the Devil within a circle drawn on the ground and ask him to remove them from the Book of Life and inscribe them in the Book of Death. They promised to sacrifice to him, and some witches promised to sacrifice a small child for him every month or fortnight. They also had to pay their Devil every year. Following this the Devil put his mark upon them, and the witch made certain promises. The initiate witch had to promise to never worship the Eucharist and to insult the Virgin Mary and saints. They had to:

...tread underfoot, pollute, break in pieces, and keep themselves at a distance from any relics of the saints, images, the sign of the cross, holy water, blessed salt, wax figures and anything else which has been blessed or consecrated by the Church. They will never give a complete confession to a priest and, in steadfast silence, will keep secret their traffic with the evil spirit. On prearranged days they will fly to meetings, if they can, and there they will always actively accept orders telling them what they must do. Finally, whenever they can, they will add to the numbers of those enslaved to the evil spirit. The Devil promises each one that he will always be in attendance upon them, that he will grant their prayers in this world, and that he will bless them after death.²⁵⁰

Del Rio’s description of how one made a pact with the Devil became popular and was later copied by an Italian Barnabite friar, Maria Francesco Guazzo, in his *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches), which was printed in 1608. In Chapter VI of his work Guazzo discusses ‘Of the Witches Pact with the Devil.’ In this chapter, he reiterated all of the stages put forward by Del Rio. Guazzo notoriously borrowed from stories and examples from numerous demonological

²⁴⁸ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*, p. 75. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 56: ‘Ideo vnguē illis daemon in frontem iniicit, fingens se chrisma abradere & baptismicharakterem delere.’

²⁴⁹ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*, according to P.G. Maxwell Stuart, p. 75.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 75-6. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 57: ‘...nunquam se Eucharistiam adoraturos; iniurios se perpetuò ac contumeliosos in B. Virginem, sanctòsque reliquos, futores, non verbis tantùm, fed & factis: conculcaturos enim, conspurcaturos, & confracturos quasuis sanctorum reliquias ac imagines : signo crucis, aquâ lustrali, sale benedicto, cereis & reliquis, ab Ecclesiâ benedictis, consecratísue se abstenturos: confessionem peccatorum integram se nunquam manifestaturos sacerdoti, istúdque commercium cum daemone pertinaci silentio obscuraturos: stasis diebus, ad conuentus, sie queant, aduolaturus; & que illic peragenda, non segniter obituros; denique, quotquot poterunt, daemons seruitio adiuncturos. Vicissem DIabolus pollicetur, se illis semper praesto futurum se, in hoc mundo, votis eorum satisfacturum: se, post mortem, illos beaturum.’

works. Unlike Del Rio, his work was accompanied by a series of woodcuts depicting witches and the Devil that pictorially represented the seduction, pact, baptism and Sabbath. However, his use of Del Rio's theory suggests that by the seventeenth century these new elaborate methods to enter into a pact with Satan had become standardised. But were these new methods, referred to by the demonologists, reflected in the *Hexenzeitungen* of the seventeenth century?

Surprisingly, in the first half of the seventeenth century there is relatively little evidence in the news reports of this new elaborated diabolical pact. A news report in 1616 briefly mentioned that debauchery (*hurerey*) between a certain landlady (*Wirtin*) and her devilish lover was indescribable (*unbeschreiblich*), but it did not include any detailed information about her diabolical pact.²⁵¹ Conversely, a pamphlet from 1618, printed in Vienna, referred to pacts made in blood in general, but not to diabolical intercourse.²⁵² The latter publication was meant to be sung to the tune of 'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern' (How lovely shines the morning star) a popular religious hymn that was first published in 1599. As a result, the pamphlet was written in short verses, two of which tell the story of the diabolical pact:

8. Each of them must firstly give themselves to the Devil,
And swear to the Devil,
That they want God to be their enemy,
And all the heavenly lords.

9. Each of them must with their blood,
Commit themselves to the Devil,
Those who cannot write, the Devil guides their hand,
So that they write henceforth.²⁵³

The idea seems to have become widely accepted that even those unable to write were able to sign the pact with the assistance of the Devil. Other stories about demon lovers made it through the press but they were very short and were mentioned usually only in brief before listing the horrific crimes of the witch. An unusual story about a young man who married a female devil was reported curtly in a pamphlet

²⁵¹ *Zwo hexen zeitung / die Erste: Auß dem Bißthumb Würzburg Das Ander: Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg. Wie der herzog zu Württemberg / in vnterschiedlichen Stätten das hexenbrennen auch angefangen... Gedruckt zu Tübingen / 1616.* (Tübingen, 1616).

²⁵² *Warhaffige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zaubersichen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Hämburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen grentz verbrennt hat* (Wien, 1618).

²⁵³ *Ibid.* : '8. Ein jede die dem Teuffel sich / ergibt die muß alßbald erstlich / dem Teuffel sich verschweren / daß sie woll Gott im himmel feint sein / dem ganzen himlischen here. 9. Ein jede muß mit ihrem blut / dem Teuffel sich verschreiben gut / welche nicht schreiben kant / der Teuffel ihre hand / das sie schreibet fortane.'

from 1626,²⁵⁴ and a devil lover was once again reported in passing in 1650,²⁵⁵ but it was not until 1654 that the effect of Del Rio's elaborated theories can be seen infiltrating into the popular media. In that year, a news report was printed in Augsburg reporting the crimes and evil deeds of two women, Barbara Fröhlin and Anna Schläferin.²⁵⁶ It is in this report that we can see an immensely elaborated version of the pact-seduction narrative.

Barbara and Anna were both *Warterinnen* (attendants) for a mute girl Maria Pihler; who was supposedly possessed by the Devil. However, in 1654 they found themselves sentenced to death by the town magistrate for witchcraft. Barbara Fröhlin was only seventeen years of age and came from Rieden while Anna Schläferin was aged sixty-four and hailed from Erringen. They were both found to be guilty of witchcraft and were executed on the 18 April 1654. The author of the report, extensively detailed their confessions, including the story of their seduction by the Devil. The author began by telling the story of Barbara. The Devil first appeared to Barbara on a Sunday night when she was keeping watch over Maria. She was in the same room as Maria, who lay in her bed, when the Devil arrived in the form of black man. The Devil claimed that she was already inclined to evil that 'she was already herself, of an evil mind and intention',²⁵⁷ and therefore she should follow his desire and refuse the holy Trinity, God's mother Mary and the saints. Furthermore he requested that she should not have any relationship or community with God or Mary, and that she was not to ever worship or revere them, or to look to them for help or assistance, 'but serve only the Devil as her future lord, to wait on him, and she should desire and use his assistance in all things.'²⁵⁸ Her Devil, we are told was called Sawriessel. Following this, she 'really' (*wirklich*) had intercourse with him

²⁵⁴ When the young man was twelve, the Devil came to him in the form of a woman, and they got married at large wedding that lasted seven nights, with over 3,000 people attending. See *Zwo Warhafftige / vnd doch Männiglich zuvor bekante Neue Zeitungen. Die Erste / Von dem grossen Jammer / Welcher sich begeben in der Marggraffschafft Baden / wie allda schon vber die fünfzig hexen / mann / weib / knaben vnd mädlein / sein verbrant worden / was dieselben für schreckliche Sachen bekant haben...* (Moltzen, 1626).

²⁵⁵ This pamphlet briefly mentions a *Bademutter* who had a relationship with the Devil for thirty-seven years. *Erschreckliche Neue Zeitung / Welche sich begeben vnd zugetragen in diesem 1650. Jahr / in der Osternacht / im Schweizer Gebirge / bey der Stadt Dillhofen auff einem Dorffe Dimdurff genandt / in welchem drey hexen gewohnet...* (Dillhofen, 1650),

²⁵⁶ *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhafft gelegne zwo hexen / benandtlich Barbara Fröhlin von Rieden / vnd Anna Schläferlin von Erringen / wegen ihrer hexereyen güet vnd peinlich bekent...* (Augsburg, 1654).

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: '...sie allbereit selbst in einer bösen meinung und voras gewesen...'

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*: 'sonder allein dem Teuffel als ihrem künstigen herrn dienen / auffwarten / und in allen Sachen seinen Beystandt begehren vnd gebrauchen sole vnd wolle.'

and he gave her the witches' mark (*Teufflische hexenzaichen*) in her 'secret places' (*haimlichen orthen*). The use of the term '*wirklich*' here is interesting, as it shows that the author felt the need to emphasise the reality of demonic intercourse, in order to convince his readers. From this one can conclude that by 1654 the potential audience of these news-reports were perhaps becoming more sceptical of 'real' corporeal diabolical intercourse. Barbara, the author reports, had sex with the Devil another two times. He claimed that after such sexual activities she felt much anguish and her body felt very lame as if she had been heavily rocked or thrashed the night before. The Devil visited her often, frequently in the form of a black dog and sometimes as a 'fiery frog'.²⁵⁹ He also desired her to get more people involved in witchcraft.

It is noteworthy that, following her arrest, Barbara managed to get away from the evil spirit by using a scapular and some holy words. The report claims that the Devil visited her in prison in the form a black dog, and he had pressed her terribly 'because she called the names of Christ Jesus and our lovely lady, also because she had a soaked scapular around her throat.'²⁶⁰ She is said to have made the sign of the cross before he drifted away. The author stated that the Devil had great 'troublesomeness' (*beschwärnuß*) with the scapular and that from that time on Barbara remained unchallenged by the 'Evil Spirit'. This is one of a few examples I have found among the *Hexenzeitungen* that I have analysed that reports the use of counter-demonism by a witch. It was generally believed that evil spirits vanished when confronted with sacramentals, for example the sign of the cross or in this case a scapular. Even calling out the name of the lord was powerful enough to make the Devil disappear, as was seen in the case of Walpurga Hausmännin. However, that did not stop the Devil reappearing to Walpurga. The scapular here is more effective as the Devil, supposedly, did not challenge Barbara again. The inclusion of such counter-demonism was necessary to inform the populace that the Devil was not all powerful, and that there were ways and means to protect oneself. Walter Stephens argues that while sex with Demons was needed to prove demonic reality, 'so verification that sacramentals chase demons away was needed to show that God

²⁵⁹ Ibid: 'fewriger Stral'.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.: 'weil sie aber Christo Jesu / und unser liebe Frawen zugeruffen / auch ein gewechtes Staplelier am hals gehab.'

takes care of his own.'²⁶¹ Despite Barbara's willingness to repel the Devil during her incarceration, she was still guilty of witchcraft crimes and was therefore sentenced to death.

The story of the old witch, Anna Schläflerin from Erringen, was also recounted in the text. The author stated that Anna confessed following torture, or the *strengte Frag*. She confessed that about two years earlier, she lived as a vagrant beggar for a few weeks in the county of Württemberg. One time she went out in a very dense mist in order to beg in a nearby town. In the mist she came through a forest and then into a smaller wood. It was in this small wood that the Evil Spirit presented himself to her, as a middle-aged man. He was dressed in black clothes and had a white feather in his hat. He began to speak with her and question her in a friendly manner, and asked her what she was doing in distress and begging. He claimed that: 'she should give and commit herself to him, with body and soul, and do what he desired; in return he would create a good livelihood and a better life for her.'²⁶² Finally he spoke to her sternly saying that he desired her to refuse, damn and accuse God, the mother of God and everything holy. The Devil requested that she should nevermore desire their help in anything, but from then on only recognise him [the Devil] as her true lord, and seek his help and assistance in all things. Interestingly, she then made a circle on the ground which was needed for the disavowal. The author reported that the earth outside the circle was green, but that there was nothing green or fresh within the circle. From inside this circle she damned, dishonoured and blasphemed God Almighty and the Virgin Mary, and submitted her body and soul eternally to the Devil. In return the Devil gave her his mark, '*Teuffels oder hexenzaichen*', in her private parts. He is said to have pushed this mark into her painfully. Like Barbara she then 'really' had sexual intercourse with him: '*sie würcklich beschlaffen*' and this intercourse confirmed the pact between the two. Her spirit's name was Ganßdreck, literally, Goose Filth.

The circle on the ground is very important as it highlights that the learned ideas were filtering into popular belief. In the sixteenth century such practices would have been associated with male learned black magic practitioners, not old female vagrant beggars. Traces of the influence of the legendary Faust can also be seen in

²⁶¹ Stephens, *Demon lovers*, p. 189.

²⁶² *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg...: 'sie soll sich ihme mit leib vnd seel ergeben vnd versprechen /auch thun was er begehren vnd haben / hingegen er jhr shon gute Mittel / vnd bessers Leben schlaffen wolle.'*

Anna's narrative in the way in which she questions her Devil. She is somewhat demanding and curious, the author reported how one day she asked and begged her Devil if she could not see the top Devil. To which her devil gave the answer: 'it will hardly happen, because he is busy with many other more distinguished people and could not come everywhere.'²⁶³ Following the advice of her Devil, Anna also desecrated the holy Eucharist, the 'most holy Sacrament of the Altar'.²⁶⁴ Instead of putting it in her mouth, she secretly had it fall into a napkin and following the end of mass, she and her demon lover would throw it on the ground and spit and jump on it. By abusing the Eucharist the witch and her Devil were literally seen to be assaulting the body of Christ. For this reason Anna received extra punishment for dishonouring the most holy sacrament; she was sentenced to be torn two times with red hot pincers before her execution.

The story the author tells of both Barbara and Anna show how the more elaborated idea of the diabolical pact had begun to emerge in regional trials, and subsequently in news-reports printed about them. Unlike the earlier *Hexenzeitungen* the two witches are reported to have the Devil's mark, or *Hexenzeichen* on their private areas. Anna is said to have sworn allegiance to the Devil within a circle on the ground. This idea was put forward by Del Rio and later reiterated by Guazzo. They systematically reject and blaspheme the Christian faith desecrating the sacraments. Ultimately the narratives included in this text demonstrate that learned theories of witchcraft, over time, made an impression on the popular perception of the diabolical pact.

Turning to the visual representation of the pact with the Devil, there were three broadsheets printed in the seventeenth century that depicted witches with the 'Evil Spirit'. These images are relevant as they further emphasise the difference in the contemporary image of the pact for male and female witches. As illustrated earlier in the chapter, the female relationship with the Devil was understood within the conceptual framework of contemporary courtship and marriage. As a result, the Devil is described as a handsome suitor who promises her a gift if she will be his. The contract was consolidated with physical intercourse. However, in stories concerning men in the *Hexenzeitungen* the male relationship with the Devil was

²⁶³ Ibid.: 'Item hab die Schäflerin einsmals ihrem Buelteuffel gefragt vnd gebetten / ob sie nit den obersten Teuffel sehen köndte? Welcher ihr zur antwort geben / es werdt schwärlich geschehen / weil er mit vil andern vornemmeren Leuthen beschäftigt seye / vnd nicht vberal vmbkommen könde.'

²⁶⁴ Ibid.: 'hochheylige Sacrament deß Alters'.

represented differently. The contract is less like one of marriage, it did not require sex, and the Devil rarely approached men in the form of a prospective partner (that is, as a good looking woman). It is noteworthy this discrepancy is also reflected in the woodcuts that portrayed male witches meeting with the Devil. In two broadsides, one from 1600 and the other from 1666, two male witches are shown conversing with the Devil.

The first image (figure 1.5), from 1600, was included in a report detailing the crimes of the Pappenheimer family.²⁶⁵ This broadside was printed by Michael Manger following the execution of a family, mother, father, and two sons, for the crime of witchcraft.²⁶⁶ Two accomplices were also sentenced to death. The report about their execution was promptly printed and was adorned with four woodcuts. One of the woodcuts displayed a man, presumably the father Paulus Pappenheimer, with the Devil, while the other three represented the multiple punishments that they received for their crimes. Intriguingly the text of the report, which enumerated the many crimes of each person individually, did not go into detail about the witches' pact with the Devil. This is surprising as the trial records relate that each of the witches involved had confessed to entering into a pact.²⁶⁷ For example Paulus had confessed that about ten years previously he had been approached by a 'beautiful woman in a tall hat'.²⁶⁸ The rest of his account is very similar to the pact-seduction narratives for women. The Devil, in the form of a seductive woman, persuaded him with a 'wealth of grand promises' to fornicate with her.²⁶⁹ Two weeks later the Devil approached Paulus again, this time in the form of a man and told Paulus that he should pledge himself to him in body and soul, which, he confessed, he did. It is notable that this narrative was not included in the report. Perhaps the author of the

²⁶⁵ *Kurze Erzählung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen / was massen sie auch / an dem 29. Tag dess Monats Julij / in dem 1600. Jar / in der Fürstlichen hauptstatt München / von dem Leben zum Tod gebracht worden / den Bösen zu einem Schröcken / den Frommen aber zur Wahrnung / für die Augen gestellt*, printed by Michael Manger (Augsburg, 1600).

There is a book written about the trial and execution of this family, see Michael Kunze, *Straße ins Feuer: Vom Leben und Sterben in der Zeit des Hexenwahns* (Munich, 1982). This work was also translated into English: Kunze, Michael, *Highroad to the stake: a tale of witchcraft*, translated by William E. Yulli (London, 1987).

²⁶⁶ The whole family bar the youngest son was executed. The ten-year-old son had to watch the punishment of his family.

²⁶⁷ See Kunze, *Straße ins Feuer*, pp 207-11.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 207: 'eine schönes Weib in einer hohen Hauben'.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 'vielfältig großen Verheißungen'.

report felt the inclusion of the image of Paulus with the Devil would efficiently communicate to the readers that the Devil was at the root of all the witches' crimes. In addition to this, it is striking that the artist of the woodcut chose to represent the Devil, not in the form of a beautiful woman, or man (which is how Paulus described the Devil), but as a type of devilish beast (figure 1.5). The Devil is shown with the head of a goat with two large horns. From the neck down he appears human and is fully clothed. Their encounter is set in the woods, with the Devil standing in front of Paulus. A building, possibly a church, is located in the right background. Their hand gestures are quite strange; both of them have their hands in the air suggesting they are in an animated discussion. Unlike the images of women there is no embrace. In fact, there is no physical contact.

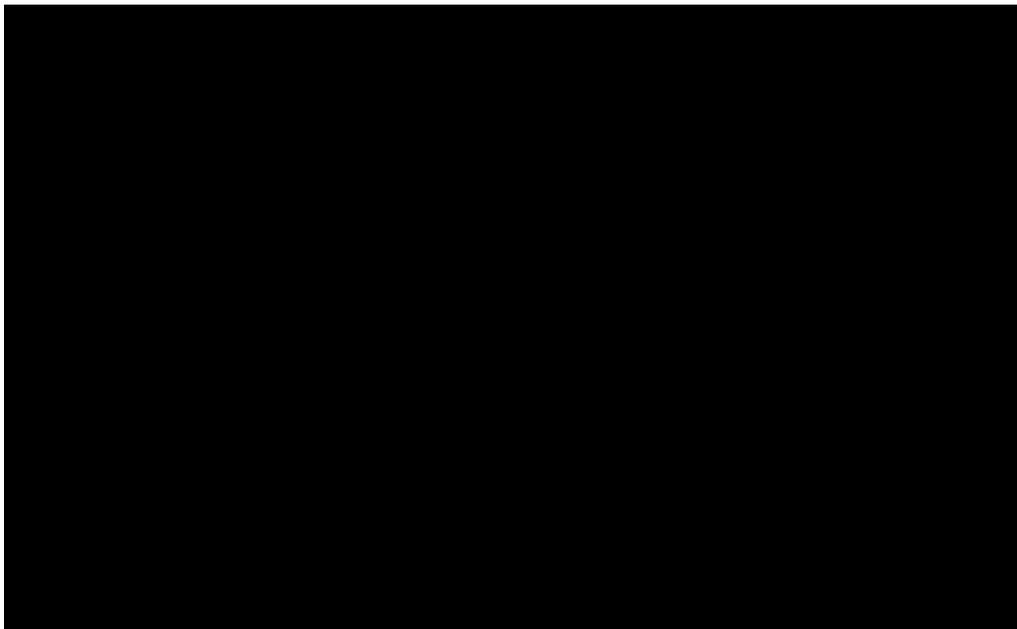


Figure 1.5 Paulus meeting with the Devil, from *Kurze Erzählung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen....*, printed by Michael Manger (Augsburg, 1600). Image taken with permission from the Münchener Stadtmuseum for this dissertation.

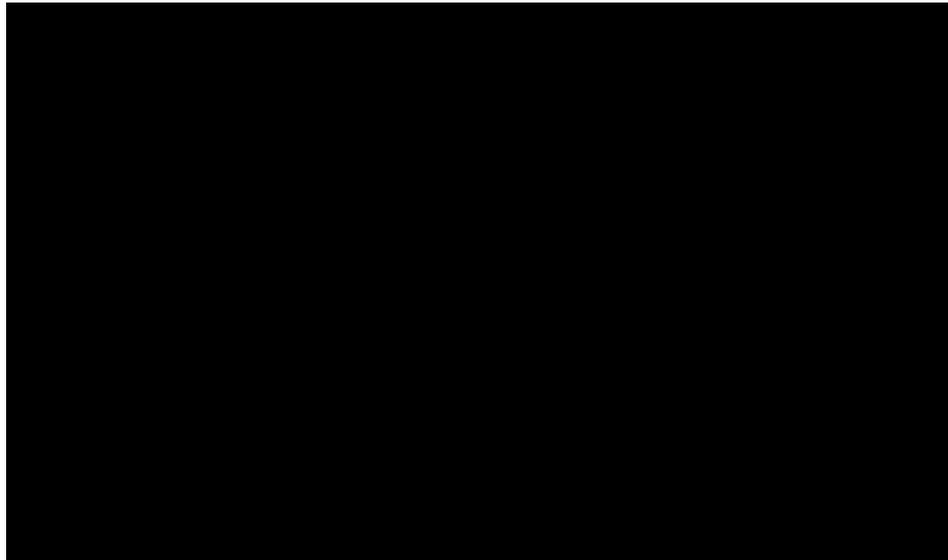


Figure 1.6 Simon with the Devil, from *Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfürstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666). Image taken for this dissertation with permission of the Münchener Stadtmuseum.

In 1666 another woodcut of a man with the Devil was produced for a broadside detailing the crimes of the witch Simon Altsee (figure 1.6).²⁷⁰ Simon was also executed for witchcraft in the city of Munich. Unlike the Pappenheimer report, the text in the later broadside outlined Simon's relationship with the Devil, albeit briefly. The images in this broadside (there were six woodcuts) were connected to the text by means of an alphabetic key. Thus the viewer could now connect text and image. The meeting with the Devil represents the starting point of Simon's crimes, hence it is labelled 'A', this reflects the idea that the pact was the foundation of all witchcraft crimes. In the text that corresponds to 'A' the author explained that Simon had disowned God and all the saints and had instead sworn himself to the Devil. The text stated that Simon had 'continual fellowship' (*unaußgesezte Gemeinschaft*) with the Devil—but there is no mention of a sexual relationship. Like the woodcut of Paulus Pappenheimer, Simon meets the Devil outdoors, with a building in the background. However, there are a number of notable differences between the two woodcuts. To begin with the Devil here is portrayed as completely demonic with, little or no human characteristics, he is not even clothed. He has a strange face with a large nose and pointy chin. He has large breasts, wings, horns, a tail and cloven feet. Unlike the image of Paulus and Devil, Simon is shown in physical contact with the

²⁷⁰ *Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfürstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).

Devil—shaking hands. A handshake was considered a symbolic legal act that could make a sales contract binding. Here the handshake replaces the embrace (which insinuated a romantic relationship and sexual intercourse). This provides further evidence that the representation of the pact with the Devil in the *Hexenzeitungen* differed according to gender.



Figure 1.7 Close up of woodcut from *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschrecklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen [...]*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669) available online on Zeno.org (<http://images.zeno.org/Kunstwerke/I/big/HL80673a.jpg>) (25 November 2012).

The final image I wish to discuss is from 1669 and is from a broadside that was printed about a witch named Anna Ebelerin (figure 1.7).²⁷¹ Like the previous broadsheet this report contained an array of images, displaying, pictorially and systematically, the stages of Anna's journey, from her first meeting with the Devil, to her final place of execution. The first woodcut depicted her seduction by the Devil at a dance. The image shows Anna standing beside the Devil conversing with him. She is well dressed, and has her head turned so that she is facing the Devil. Unlike the images from 1600 and 1666, the Devil is in the guise of gentleman; he is nicely attired and wears a hat with two feathers in it. However the location of the two feathers, also suggest that they could be horns. He does not look 'devilish' and could even pass for handsome. The only characteristic that reveals his true identity are his

²⁷¹ *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschrecklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen...*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

cloven/hoofed feet. He looks towards Anna and offers her his hand. The image has striking similarities with the earlier woodcut (Figure 1.2) that was printed in Johann Zainer's edition of Molitor's, *Won den unholden oder hexen*. Firstly the scene is set in the countryside, and secondly the Devil and the witch are placed in the same positions as the earlier woodcut (albeit slightly further apart from each other). From this one can deduce that in the seventeenth century the visual representation of the Devil and diabolical seduction of women still borrowed heavily from the 'visual language of witchcraft'²⁷² that was formed by woodcuts dating from the end of the fifteenth century.

In the text Anna's first meeting with the Evil Spirit is described. The author reports how Anna confessed that she had been with the Devil for about 13 or 14 years. He first came to her in the form of a man during a dance at a wedding (depicted above). Following the wedding he came to her house in the same form, to engage in 'a secret pact and alliance.'²⁷³ She confessed that she not only gave herself completely (*ganz und gar*) but that she also denied and renounce the Holy Trinity, and that this was done verbally in a blasphemous manner. Following this she then signed the pact with Satan: 'The devil afterwards brought her some paper, and directed her hand and she signed and cemented it with her blood, from which time she then also fornicated many times with the unpleasant Satan.'²⁷⁴

By this time it is evident that it was popularly believed that the Devil could guide somebody's hand so that they could sign the pact with their blood. One can see that the visual representation of the diabolical seduction of women did not necessarily change dramatically from the fifteenth century to the seventeenth century. Although the rituals surrounding the pact developed further and fluctuated throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the idea that witches were required to make an alliance with Satan in order to perform *maleficium* remained constant and over time became the focal crime of witchcraft.

²⁷² Zika, *Appearance of witchcraft*, p. 26.

²⁷³ *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs Statt Augspurg*: 'ein heimliche Pact vnd Verbündnuß'.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*: 'Nach dem er selbige selbst zu papier gebracht / und ihr die hand geführt / auch so gar mit ihrem Blut unterschreiben und bekreffitiget / von welcher zeit an sie mit dem laidigen Satan auch manches mahlen Unzucht getriben.'

Conclusions

It has been shown that many *Hexenzeitungen* went into great detail explaining and recounting how various witches came to be seduced by the Devil. Overall, one can see that the news reports reflected and sometimes mirrored the formulaic narratives that were evident in the trial manuscripts. Most pact-seduction narratives followed a certain pattern. The narratives in the earlier *Hexenzeitungen* were more heavily influenced by folkloric narratives and fairytales. The stories included in the reports borrowed from popular traditions and story-telling. In these earlier pamphlets, such as the one by Lutz in 1571, the witches focused more on how they met the Devil and had sex with him and did not describe any kind of written or verbal pact. Sex was seen as the physical counterpart of the pact, and it is apparent that this demonic copulation signified an alliance with Satan in its own right. However later reports, from the 1580s onwards, refer to explicitly to pacts.

It is evident that the female pact-seduction narratives drew from contemporary courtship and marriage customs. It is also noticeable that in the *Hexenzeitungen* the male pact with the Devil was represented differently, sex was not considered an integral part of pact, but rather as something that Devil provided for pleasure following the contract. In addition to this, in the seventeenth century, female and male interactions with demons were visualised differently in the reports. Both Paulus and Simon (figure 1.5 and 1.6) are portrayed as meeting the Devil in his true form, whereas Anna's meets the Devil in the guise of a gentleman. On a deeper level, these images insinuate that while women were duped and seduced by the Devil, under the impression that he was gentleman, men, on the other hand, were fully aware that they were conversing with the Devil and consciously made an agreement with him.

There is generally a consensus that the pact seduction narrative did not change over time, but it has been shown that witchcraft trials themselves and the books and pamphlets to which they gave rise, helped to generate and modify content overtime. Bodin, for example, elaborated on the theory and practice of entering into a diabolical pact, making re-baptism and a verbal or written contract central to entering into an alliance with Satan. He also propagated the idea, firstly proposed by Lambert Daneau, that the witches were given special marks by the Devil. The story Bodin told of Jeanne Harrvillier made a significant impact on subsequent news-reports. Bodin reported how Jeanne was given to the Devil by her own mother. He

told his readers how she had sex with him as if he were a real man, and that the only difference was that he was ice cold. Following Bodin's publication there was an increase in the number of reports about ice-cold devils and mothers giving away their daughters. The story of Jeanne Harrvillier even managed to make it into a *Hexenzeitungen* published by Schreiber in 1594. Similarly the publication of the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* in 1587 led to an increase in reports of witches entering into written agreements with the 'Evil Spirit'. Even witches who were unable to write, had their hands guided by the Devil so that they could sign the compact with their own blood. The boundaries between learned and popular discussions of the diabolical pact became blurred over time and ideas freely flowed from one into the other. Stories about diabolical copulation featured in the *Hexenzeitungen* could also be used to support arguments in later demonological treatises, as was seen with the case of Peter Stumpf.

Ultimately the idea that a diabolical pact was the basis for all witchcraft was continuously communicated throughout the *Hexenzeitungen* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Many reports highlighted the physical and spiritual nature of this crime. The pact was one of the central parts of the cumulative concept of witchcraft, and it was only the rituals involved in joining with the 'Evil One' that changed overtime. The pact alone was considered to be an ominous spiritual crime—amounting to apostasy—that deserved utmost punishment. However, according to the reports, and many other accounts, the pact was just the first step in the witches' journey to the dark side. Following the pact witches' were then deemed capable of inflicting harm and devastation on people and animals with the help of the Devil. These crimes, malignant and manifold, will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Contemptible Crimes and Monstrous Misdeeds

'It is impossible to record what misery and heartbreak these witches wreaked on old and young, spiritual and worldly people, rich and poor....'¹

(New Report from Bernberg, 1580)

After making the pact with the 'Evil Spirit', it was believed that witches were able to perform *maleficium* (harmful magic) with the help of Devil. They were accused of using this magic to cripple, blind, cause illnesses and kill people. They were also charged with damaging crops, destroying livestock and weather magic. There was seemingly no lack of events that could be blamed on witchcraft and, as a result, witches were scapegoated for both personal and communal misfortunes.² News pamphlets frequently listed and detailed the contemptible crimes of witches. In this way, like public executions, the *Hexenzeitungen* had the potential to firmly establish belief in witchcraft crimes in the contemporary consciousness. This chapter will examine what different types of harmful magic (bar weather magic, which will be discussed in chapter three) were emphasised and communicated by the *Hexenzeitungen*.

The chapter will also investigate whether the crimes reported correlated to periods of historically recognised subsistence crises and other hardships that contemporaries faced. This is significant as recent studies have shown that suspicions of witchcraft accumulated in times of inflation and agrarian crises.³ It will look at how witches were purported to cause *maleficium*, assessing what types of methods and ingredients were described in news narratives. As infanticide was

¹ *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abscheulich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberingen / was sich mit jnen am ende dieses verlauffenen 79. Jars begeben vnd zugetragen / darinnen kürzlich vnd warhafftiglich vermeldet / wie vnd wann sie zu diesem bösen handel gekommen / was für gewliche thaten sie begangen / vnd was sie auch endlichen den 2. Januarij dieses 1580. Jahrs vor lohn empfangen* (S.l., 1580): 'Was für jammer /herzleid diese hexen / bey alten vnd jungen / bey gesitlichen vnd Weltlichen Personen / reich vnd arm angerichtet haben / ist zu schreiben vnmöglich.'

² Behringer, *Witchcraft persecution in Bavaria*, p. 160. Harmut Lehmann proposes that hunting witches was used by contemporaries as a way to restore order and bring instant relief from the scorn of God. See Harmut Lehmann, 'The Persecution of Witches as Restoration of Order: The Case of Germany, 1590s-1650s' in *Central European History*, xxi (1988), pp 107-21.

³ See Christian Pfister, 'Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts: Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries' in *The Medieval History Journal* x (2007), pp 33-73, Wolfgang Behringer, 'Climatic Change and Witch-hunting: the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities' in *Climatic Change* xliii (1999), pp 335-51; Behringer, 'Weather, Hunger, and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality' in *German History*, xiii, no.1 (1995), pp 1-27.

one of the major crimes represented in the news, the chapter will also consider how infanticide and witchcraft became intertwined in this period. The controversial myth of the midwife witch will also be examined. Finally as the idea of harmful magic existed long before the first *Hexenzeitung* was ever printed, the first section of the chapter will provide a short historical overview of the development of belief in witches' *maleficium* and infanticide.

The Making of Maleficium

The idea that witches could cause injury, or *maleficia*, was firmly established by the turn of the sixteenth century with many authoritative figures writing about the harm caused by the witches during the fifteenth century, such as Johannes Nider and Heinrich Kramer. For centuries people believed in magic and sorcery but it was only during the fifteenth century that simple *maleficium* became associated with, and viewed as reliant on, the diabolical pact. In the 1430s, there was a surge in discussion about witches and the damage they could inflict.⁴ This discourse, which was in part influenced by the ecumenical Council of Basel (1431-49),⁵ appears to have had an enduring influence on how people conceptualised harmful magic. Therefore it is worthwhile to review some of the main ideological and theoretical developments from this period. The two main concepts that will be explored here are, firstly, what kind of injuries witches were believed to cause, and secondly, how they were supposedly able to inflict this harm, that is, the rituals and ingredients they were said to have used.

In the 1430s Johannes Nider, a Dominican professor of Theology, described what kinds of *maleficium* the witches were capable of in his work the *Formicarius*. Nider claimed that there were seven ways in which *malefici* injured others: by inspiring love; by inspiring hatred; by causing impotence; by causing disease; by taking life; by depriving of reason; by injuring some one in his property or animals through some of the above means.⁶ Interestingly, love magic is never mentioned in

⁴ The main texts from the 1430s that played an important role in redefining witchcraft were, Claude Tholosan's, *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37), the anonymous *Errores Gazariorum* (1437) and Johannes Nider's *Formicarius* (c. 1435-38).

⁵ See Bailey, *Battling demons*, p. 6. For more detail see Michael Bailey and Edward Peters, 'A Sabbat of Demonologists: Basel, 1431-1440' in *The Historian*, lxx (2003), pp 1375-95.

⁶ Henry Charles Lea, *Materials towards a history of witchcraft* (3 vols, London, 1957), i, p. 261. Johannes Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, p. 349: 'Vnus igitur modus est, quo amorem malum ingerunt viro alicui ad mulierem aliquam, vel mulieri ad virum. Alius est, quando odium vel inuidiam in aliquot seminare procurant. Tertius est in his qui maleficiati dicuntur, ne vi generatiua vti valeant ad feminam, vel vice versa femellae ad virum.'

the *Hexenzeitungen*, but it did feature in miracle books.⁷ The other six forms of damage that Nider described here remained crucial throughout the witchcraft persecutions during the following centuries. Nider also included detailed narratives about how the witches created such harm. For example, he recounted a story, which he had heard from Peter of Bern, about a particular witch or *grandis maleficus* named Staedelin. Staedelin had supposedly caused several miscarriages in a certain house and prevented all cattle from bearing young. He was said to have procured this by placing a lizard under the threshold, and that such harm would continue so long it remained there. Examination was made and no lizard was found; but presuming that it had turned to dust, the earth was dug up and removed. When this was done the fertility of both humans and animals was restored.⁸ The idea that burying specific magical items in the ground or under thresholds could cause harm was a popular belief and its popularity is explicit in the news reports of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The popularity of the theory was undoubtedly reinforced by many later demonologists' repetition of Nider's narrative. For example, the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* and John Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, along with many other demonologists, copied and reprinted this story.⁹

Another concept that was included in Nider's text that would become incredibly predominant throughout the persecutions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the association of witchcraft with infanticide. Witches were reported to have committed infanticide so frequently in the *Hexenzeitungen* that it is worth exploring the origins of this association. Johannes Nider was one of the major authors of this period who brought attention to the witches' infanticidal ways. However he was not the first to draw such a connection as Thomas Aquinas also linked sorcery to infanticide. In his work *Summa contra gentiles* Aquinas claimed

Quatrus modus est, cum in membro aliquot hominem egrotare faciunt. Quintus, cum a vita priuant. Sextus, quado vsu rationis aliquem priuant. Septimus, cum quocunq; praedictorum modorum aliquem in suis rebus vel animalibus laedere quaerunt cum effectu.'

⁷ See David Lederer, 'Constructing a Wonder: The Influence of Popular Culture on Miracle Books', *forthcoming*.

⁸ Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, p. 350.

⁹ This story was repeated in the *Malleus Maleficarum* in book two, chapter six: 'The method by which they impede the force of procreation' see *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, translated and edited by Christopher S. Mackay, (Cambridge, 2009), pp 321-22. It also featured in Jean Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers* in Book two, chapter eight: 'Whether witches can send illnesses, sterilities, hails and rainstorms, and kill men and beasts' see *Jean Bodin On the Demon-mania of witches*, translated by Randy A. Scott (Toronto, 1995), p. 138.

that he had read of innocent children being slain by those who practiced magic.¹⁰ In the thirteenth century, the time when Aquinas was writing, sorcery would have been affiliated with learned masculine magicians and necromancers. As explained in the previous chapter, Aquinas also believed all magic to be the result of a pact with the Devil. In the fifteenth century these same traits were ascribed to the village witch. To practice simple sorcery, the witch required not only a diabolical pact but also the corpses of dead children. In addition to this, witches in the fifteenth century were increasingly accused and suspected of eating children. In the *Formicarius* Nider informed his readers how certain witches were guilty not only infanticide but also cannibalism. He claimed that the inquisitor of Autun had reported how, ‘in the duchy of Lausanne certain witches even cooked and devoured their own children.’¹¹ Peter of Bern also told Nider how, in the Bernese territory, the witches had devoured thirteen children. Peter said that he asked one of the witches how they devoured the infants, and she answered:

The method is thus: With infants not yet baptized, or even baptized ones, especially if they are not protected by the sign of the cross and by prayers, these ones, through our ceremonies, we kill in their cradles or lying at their parents’ sides, who afterwards are thought to have been crushed or to have died in some other way. We secretly remove them from the graves. We boil them in a cauldron until, with the bones having been torn out, all of the flesh is made into a liquid draft. From the more solid matter we make an unguent suitable for our desires, and arts, and transmutations.¹²

Other contemporary authors also asserted that witches often used the corpses of innocent children to inflict harm on other people. For example, in 1437, the anonymous author of the *Errores Gazariorum* detailed how witches caused injury to others. He explained how the witches cause great mortality and bad weather by scattering special powders in the air, and how they killed people by smearing them with special ointments made from dead children and poisonous animals.¹³ The

¹⁰ ‘From the *Suma contra gentiles*: Sorcery and the World of Nature’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700*, p. 95.

¹¹ Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, p. 351: ‘..quod in Luasanensi ducatu quidam malefici proprios natos infants coquerant, & comederant.’

¹² Translation from Michael Bailey, *Battling Demons*, p. 42. Original Latin: ‘Modus iste est, nam infantibus nondum Baptisatis insidiamur, vel etiam Baptisatis, praesertim si signo crucis non muniantur, & orationibus, hos in cunabulis, ver ad latera iacentes parentum caeremonijs nostris occidimus, quos postquam putantur oppressi esse, vel aliunde mortui, de tumulis clam furto recipimus, in caldari decoquimus, quousq; euulsis ossibus tota pene caro efficiatur sorbilis & potabilis. De solidiori huius material vnguentum facimus nostris voluntatibus, & artibus, ac transmutationibus accommodum’ in Johannes Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, p. 351.

¹³ ‘The *Errores Gazariorum*’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700*, p. 161.

author upheld that at their meeting the Devil supposedly gave the witch a jar full of ointment which was made ‘by a mystery of diabolic malignancy out of the fat of small children who have been cooked...’¹⁴ The author added that the said fat of children is usually mixed with the most poisonous of animals such ‘serpents, toads, lizards, and spiders.’¹⁵ The author claimed that if a person was touched once with such a salve they were immediately doomed to die an evil death, sometimes over a long period with a persistent illness or other times dying very quickly. However, witches are also said to use the internal parts of the children, mixed with poisonous animals, to make powders to kill human beings. They were said to scatter this powder in the air and that ‘those touched by that powder either die or suffer serious and lingering illness.’¹⁶ Like the witches’ in Nider’s account, according to this author, the witches strangle children while their parents are asleep ‘...in the dark night with the silent help of the Devil they enter the houses of the parents and grasp the child by the throat or the sides and strangle him until he is dead.’¹⁷ They then attended the burial and lamented the death with the mourning parents, before returning the following night to dig up the body ‘sometimes leaving the head, and they never take hands and feet unless they need to make some magic with the hand.’¹⁸ The witches are then said to have cooked and eaten the children at their gathering. This text highlights the wickedness of the witches, who not only used children for their sorcery, but also devoured them at the gatherings.

The lay magistrate Claude Tholosan also explicated what horrors the magician could carry out in his *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37). He maintained that witches compounded poisonous powders which they gave to their enemies, and that such powders worked ‘with the help of the Devil and according to quantity given’¹⁹ so that the victim would suffer a lingering illness or sudden death for which there was no medical cure. He also claimed that they prevented conception in women and rendered men insane. Furthermore Tholosan stated that he heard such things from the witches himself: ‘All of the above things I myself have heard from witches and, Oh how terrible, more than a hundred of them, and from people upon

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 162.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ ‘Claude Tholosan: *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700*, p. 165.

whom they worked their magic, I, Claude Tholosan, licentiate in law, senior judge of the district of Briançonnais in the Dauphiné.²⁰ Regarding infanticide, Tholosan asserted that the witches offered children to the Devil and that they did so in the following way: ‘on bended knee; they hold the child, naked, under the arms and kill him, and then exhume him after burial and make a powder out of the body...’.²¹

The *Malleus Maleficarum* also noted that the witches killed unbaptised children, and that the ones that they did not kill, they dedicated to the Devil. Moreover, the *Malleus* is one of the earliest sources that directly linked midwives to witchcraft and infanticide, creating the ‘sorceress midwife’, or midwife witch – a link that persisted throughout the media representation of witchcraft in the sixteenth century. Chapter two of book two of the *Malleus* is sensationally titled ‘The method by which midwife sorceresses inflict greater losses when they either kill babies or offer them to demons by dedicating them with a curse.’²² Like other demonologists before him, he argued that the demons urged the witches to kill young unbaptised infants, so they could make pastes out their limbs.²³ He believed that they used this paste whenever they wanted to be transported from place to place.²⁴ He also suggested that many sorceress midwives devoted unbaptised children to the Devil. However, unlike the earlier texts Kramer did not go into gruesome detail about how the witches killed the children, and does not accuse the witches of cannibalism. It is noteworthy that Kramer associated infanticide not with witches in general, but specifically with sorceress-midwives. The examples he gave pertaining to infanticide involved two midwives who killed children as they emerged from the womb, with one confessing how ‘she would stick a pin into their heads through the crown straight down into the brain.’²⁵

The *Malleus Maleficarum* also included copious accounts of harmful magic. For example, Kramer repeated the story told by Nider about the witch Staedelin, who was to said to have caused multiple miscarriages by burying a lizard under a threshold.²⁶ However, in Kramer’s rendition of the story the lizard becomes a snake.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Mackay, (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, p. 366.

²³ Ibid., p. 369.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 298.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 368.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 321-2.

This makes sense as elsewhere in the *Malleus* Kramer argued that snakes served the purposes of enchantment better than other animals as they were ‘the first tool of the devil.’²⁷ Indeed, it was the temptations by the biblical snake in the Garden of Eden that led to the fall of Adam and Eve. However, the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* also included other examples of how the burying of items could cause injury to humans and animals. In book two, chapter ten, he wrote about a man who was made possessed and deprived of reason by a witch after ‘a device for sorcery was placed under a certain tree by the sorceresses.’²⁸ In chapter fourteen, titled, ‘On the method by which sorceresses inflict various forms of harm on domestic animals’, Kramer claimed animals could be killed or harmed ‘by touch and glance or by glance alone or when sorcerers place some sorcery underneath the threshold of the door of the barn or in a place where they are regularly watered.’²⁹ Kramer then regaled his readers with a story about two witches from Ravensburg. The two witches, who were named Agnes and Anna, confessed that the Devil instructed them to inflict sorcery on ‘superior’ horses and fat domestic animals.³⁰ When asked how they achieved such effects, Agnes confessed that:

‘...they hid certain things underneath the threshold of the barn, and when asked what things, she answered, “The bones of various varieties of animals.” When further asked in whose name, she answered, “In the name of the Devil and other demons.”’³¹

The other witch Anna, who was deemed responsible for the harming of twenty-three horses, claimed she dug a hole and the Devil put certain things into it which she did not recognise. Kramer reckoned from then on it was ‘inferred that they need only apply their hand or glance, the purpose being that either way, the sorceress should work with the Devil.’³² Ultimately, however, Kramer concluded that the witches could not harm anyone without the permission of God and he believed that the Devil was always the origin of the illness or harm. Furthermore he professed that the Devil was only allowed to inflict illnesses because of the witches’ breach of faith and:

²⁷ Ibid., p. 421.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 347.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 378.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 378.

³¹ Ibid., p. 379.

³² Ibid.

‘Therefore such acts of sorcery should be secondarily imputed to the sorceresses in just judgement, however much the Devil is the original instigator.’³³

The Devil, and not the witches, was seen as the real perpetrator, acting with divine permission. Ulrich Molitor’s work, *De Laniis et Phitonicis Mulieribus* (translated into German as *Von Hexen und Unholden*), similarly argued that the harm was caused only with God’s permission. Published only a few years after the *Malleus Maleficarum* Molitor’s treatise offers an unusual insight to the debate on whether witches could cause harm. Written as a dialogue, it offers a more complete overview of the contemporary discourse on harmful magic. In chapter two, the three participants, Archduke Sigismund, Ulrich Molitor, and the mayor of Constance Conrad Schatz, discussed whether the witches could inflict ailments and harm on adults and children.³⁴ The character of Sigismund, wanting to learn the truth about the witches’ ability to harm, questions the two other men as to whether it is possible. Conrad Schatz immediately says that it is possible and professed that the witches were really capable of causing harm and inflicting disease on humans. He claimed that he had heard from many women that some children had become victims of witchcraft. These children, who were still in their cradles, were said to have been lamed and blinded by the witches. To back up his statement he announced that witches, or *böse weiber*, confessed to doing such things themselves when they were imprisoned, and that they confessed that they did so out of hate and envy for the child’s parents. However this evidence alone is not sufficient for Sigismund, and he asks Conrad for additional proof that such *böse weiber* could actually harm infants. Conrad immediately refers to the bible. He recalled the story of Job, and how God allowed the Devil to harm his children, as well as Saint Jerome’s letter to Paula on the death of her daughter Blæsilla. In his letter to Paula Saint Jerome questioned how it was ‘that children three years old or two, and even unweaned infants, are possessed with devils, covered with leprosy, and eaten up with jaundice, while godless men and profane, adulterers and murderers, have health and strength to

³³ Ibid., p. 355.

³⁴ The original Latin title of this chapter was ‘De nocumentis [et] morbis hoībus et infantib[us] illatis.’ See Ulricus Molitoris *De laniis [et] phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Prüss (Strasbourg, 1489). In one of the earliest German translations of Molitor’s text this was translated as ‘Von den gebresten und scheden so den kinden und menschen zu gefügt werden’ see *Von den unholden oder hexen: tractatus von den bosen weibern die man nennet die hexen*, printed by Johann Zainer der Ältere (Costentz, 1489?).

blaspheme God?’³⁵ Thus in this roundabout way Saint Jerome acknowledged that the Devil could harm children. Subsequently, Conrad concluded that this proved such harm was possible. It is notable that there is no mention of infanticide for the purpose of sorcery and the children are reported as victims rather than ‘ingredients’.

However, following this discussion, Sigismund, still not contented, asked for proof that the Devil could harm adults. Once again, Conrad speaks first from experience, claiming that he has met many crippled and lamed persons who alleged that the harm had been done to them by witches. Sigismund again interjects asking what Holy Scripture says about such matters. This time Conrad refers again to Job, but also to the legends of Saint Anthony, Saint Simon and Saint Jude. In the legend of Saint Anthony, Anthony was plagued and tricked by numerous devils, while in the legend of Saint Simon and Saint Jude two magicians caused lawyers to go mute and lame in front of the King of Babylonia.³⁶ This, Conrad argued, proved that God allowed the Devil to harm adults. At this point they end the dialogue on this topic vowing to return to it. When they return to this topic in dialogue nine, the character representing Ulrich Molitor puts forward their final conclusions on the issue. He stated that they believed that the witches were not able to cause any harm themselves but that it was the Devil’s doing, who in turn relied on the permission of God. They admitted that the witches sometimes used sorcery and secret means to try create harm but they believed that such actions did not actually cause the harm, and that the Devil only got them to do such foolish things to trick the witches into thinking they were responsible for the harm themselves.³⁷

However, as explained in the previous chapter on the Devil’s pact, Molitor’s treatise contained a *de facto* fourth voice within it pages -that of the images- and the dialogue on whether witches could harm and cause disease was also accompanied by a striking woodcut. The image that was most often used to represent harmful magic in the various editions of Molitor’s work was a female witch with a bow and arrow, shooting a backward arrow at man’s foot. In many of the versions the man’s boot has

³⁵ Letter XXXIX to Paula, from ‘Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome’, available online on Christian Classics Ethereal Library (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.XXXIX.html>) (10 July 2012).

³⁶ For the full legends see William Granger Ryan (ed.), *Jacobus de Voragine: The Golden Legend: reading on the saints* (Oxford, 2012): The Legend of Saint Anthony, pp 93-6; The Legend of Saint Simon and Jude, pp 285-90.

³⁷ Ulrich Molitor, [German version] *Von Hexen und Unholden*, translated into German by Conrad Lautenbach (Strasbourg, 1575), p. 44.

come off thus symbolising the efficacy of the witches' actions. Charles Zika argues that the arrow sorcery seen in the image is a particular variant of bringing magical substances in contact with the bodies of those to be harmed.³⁸ However, Zika also

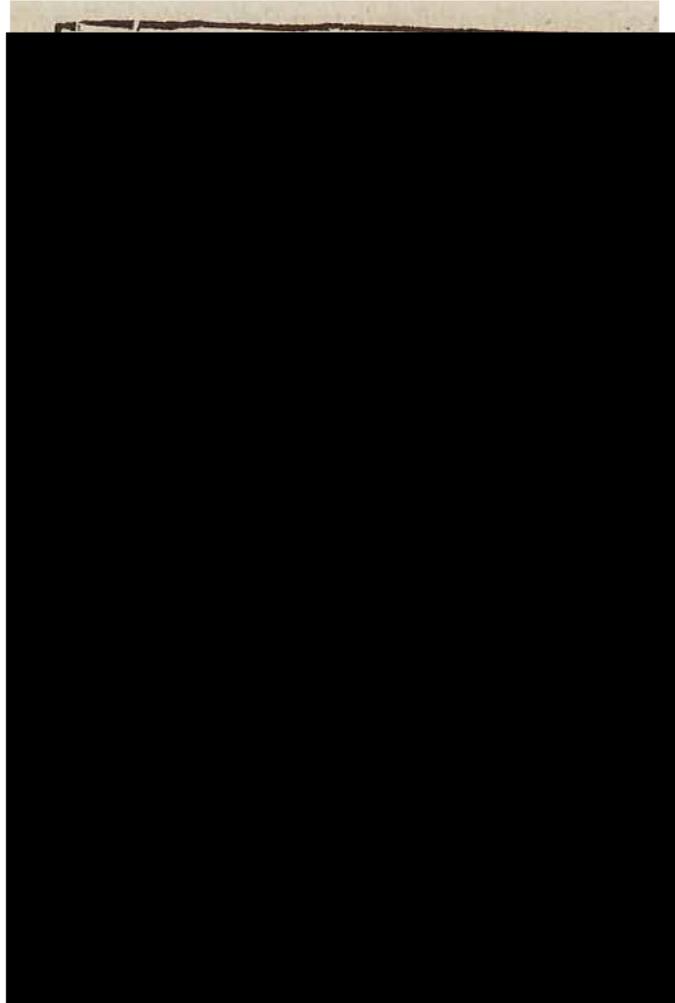


Figure 2.1. Image of woman shooting backwards arrow from Prüss edition of Molitor, Ulricus Molitoris *De lanis [et] phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Prüss (Strasbourg, 1489) available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek (<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/146-13-theol-14/start.html>) (2 Jan. 2013).

notes the image's peculiarity as the shooting of an arrow would not normally involve magic.³⁹ There are not many images representing harmful magic throughout the period, probably because artists struggled to represent harm that was caused invisibly. The creator of the woodcut for Molitor's text wanted the readers to understand the reality of harmful magic, and therefore, it could be argued that they

³⁸ Charles Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft: print and visual culture in sixteenth-century Europe* (Oxon, 2007), pp 20-2.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

used the bow and arrow as an allegory for malefic sorcery as it insinuated and indicated real harm.

All in all, by end of the fifteenth century it was widely believed that *maleficium* was possible. Whether the witches were able to do it for themselves, or the Devil was responsible for the harm done, there was a general consensus that harm was done, and that witches were guilty, if only by virtue of being in league with the Devil. What is more, many leading figures believed that, at the instigation of the Devil, the witches used dead infants for magical purposes and, during this same period, stories of witches killing innocent infants began to circulate. Although many texts focused primarily on the harm caused to humans, by the time the *Malleus Maleficarum* was printed Kramer included a chapter on how the witches could also harm domestic animals. The witches were believed to be able to cause infertility, madness and marital discord. The fact that contemporaries believed children were a key ingredient for the witches' ointments, explains how infanticide came to be seen as an integral part of witchcraft. But how were these sensational crimes treated in the media? The next section will trace the reportage of the witches' 'evil misdeeds' in the reports from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The Crimes of Witches in the Hexenzeitungen

During the period of intensive witchcraft persecution, from 1560-1630, a number of recurrent subsistence crises took place.⁴⁰ It has been claimed that the danger of an immediate threat to life itself, which the population was exposed to in times of crisis, was an important factor in the witchcraft equation.⁴¹ However, it is important to note that subsistence crises themselves did not cause the witch hunts, but rather the cultural interpretation of these crises. This investigation will show how witch news pamphlets played an important role in this regard. As the majority of news reports purported that witches were solely responsible for the suffering contemporaries experienced, they offered audiences new ways of interpreting their own personal misfortunes, from the loss of child or relative, to the sudden death of an animal. Furthermore, news pamphlets lent credibility to the invisible crime of *maleficium*.

⁴⁰ Pfister, 'Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts: Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', p. 33.

⁴¹ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 97.

Just like public executions, the *Hexenzeitungen* had the potential to anchor the belief in witchcraft more firmly in the consciousness of contemporaries.⁴² In the words of the historian Joy Wiltenburg: ‘In all periods, discourses and rituals of crime, rather than direct experience of criminal acts, are the key determinants of a crime’s cultural impact.’⁴³ Therefore the reporting of witchcraft crimes in the media played an important ‘cultural role’ and this reportage requires careful analysis.

While the diabolical pact was, in essence, a spiritual crime, *maleficium* was a secular crime and was treated as such by authorities. For example, the official law code of the Holy Roman Empire, the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* (1532), stipulated in Article 109 that the crime of sorcery (rather than heresy) deserved capital punishment, stating that: ‘...anyone who inflicts harm or injury on others through sorcery shall be punished from life unto death, and such punishment shall be carried out by fire.’⁴⁴ This paragraph on harmful sorcery provided the legal basis for many witchcraft trials in early modern Germany.⁴⁵ While most authorities, secular and religious, agreed that the harm was real, it has been shown that there was considerable debate as to whether witches were responsible for the injuries they inflicted. On the one hand some authors, like Molitor, conjectured that only God could be responsible and that the witches were deceived by the Devil into thinking that they caused the damages themselves. Others, such as Kramer, and later Bodin, maintained that while God’s permission was necessary, once it was given, witches could inflict real damage and should therefore be considered as ‘real’ physical threats to society. The overwhelming majority of authors of the *Hexenzeitungen* fell into the latter category, and what is more, while they did not deny that divine permission was necessary, they also failed to remind their readers that it was.

The witch reports of both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included lurid and exhaustive accounts of the heinous crimes of the witches. Witches were frequently said to have harmed and killed humans and animals through witchcraft.

⁴² For example, Behringer included an account of how a witness told the court in Augsburg that she ‘she had never believed before that there were such people until she had now seen that it was open and public.’ The *Hexenzeitungen* also made witchcraft confessions public and thus potentially helped anchor belief in the crime of witchcraft. Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 212.

⁴³ Joy Wiltenburg, ‘True Crime: The origins of Modern Sensationalism’ in *American Historical Review*, cix, no. 5 (2004), p. 1377.

⁴⁴ Friedrich-Christian Schroeder (ed.), *Die Peinliche Gerichtsordnung Kaisers Karl V. und des Heiligen Römischen Reichs von 1532 (Carolina)* (Stuttgart, 2000), p. 73, Article 109, Straff der Zauberey: ‘Item so jemandt den leuten durch zauberey schaden oder nachtheyl zufügt, soll man straffen vom leben zum todt, vnnd man soll solchen straff mit dem feuer thun.’

⁴⁵ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 115.

During the sixteenth century *maleficium* that targeted people and animals were equally reported in large numbers. However, in the seventeenth century, there was a significant decrease in the number of news reports mentioning animals, and the focus shifted primarily to the harming and murdering of humans. In general witches were commonly reported as crippling and blinding people, as well as causing marital discord, infertility, and madness. Animals were sometimes bewitched, but mostly they were killed, often as a way to cause financial harm to their owner. Most authors freely moved from reporting about harmful magic against humans to harmful magic waged against animals—with very little differentiation made between them. Others just made sweeping general statements such as how the witches or witches harmed many people and animals. For example, an author of a pamphlet from 1582 claimed the certain witches ‘had done such great harm to people and animals that is it is not sufficient to write about it.’⁴⁶ In addition, the same author asserted that witches’ crimes were much worse in reality, stating that the ‘harm is much bigger than it is in print.’⁴⁷ It is important to examine how the witches’ crimes were reported, as it provides one with a much needed insight as to how contemporaries understood witchcraft. The following section will trace the development of the reportage of harmful magic in the *Hexenzeitungen*, focusing particularly on how authors explained such harm was caused.

The first report that contains references to harmful magic dates from 1540.⁴⁸ The report tells the story of how four people, one old woman, her son and two accomplices, were executed for their various ‘evil misdeeds.’⁴⁹ The old woman who was portrayed as the ringleader and Devil’s paramour apparently had made a special powder (*pulver*) that was poisonous and she also taught the others how to make the powder. Following this, the woman and her three accomplices used the powder to kill an ‘untold amount of animals’⁵⁰ including oxen, cows and pigs. There is very little reference to what the witches used to make the powder and the author’s

⁴⁶ *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung: Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr / wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekendt haben. Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan / vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wether in diesem vergangen Sommer im Teutschlandt gmacht haben*, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582): ‘...haben solchen grosen schaden / under Menschen und Vich gethan / das nicht genugsam darvon zu schreiben ist.’

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: ‘...der schad ist viel grosser / dan es im Druck ist.’

⁴⁸ *Paul zun Rom. XIII. Die Gewaltigen oder Oberkeiten sind nicht den die gutes/ sunder den die böses thun [...]*, printed by Lucas Cranach the Younger (Gotha, 1540).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘böse missethaten’.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*: ‘ein onzeli che menge viehes’.

emphasis is on the harm done to good people through the devastation of the livestock. Furthermore there is also no mention of physical harm being caused to humans in this report.

In the *Hexenzeitungen* the first account of a witch causing physical harm to another person dates from 1555. It featured in a report printed in Nuremberg about three witches from Regenstein.⁵¹ Two of the witches Gröbische and Gißlerische are reported to have wondrously returned from the dead, two days after they were executed, to kill Gißlerische's husband. They apparently thrust him outside a door, causing him to fall down and die. A neighbour overheard the commotion, and ran to the scene, and saw through the door the two women dancing fervently around the fire while the husband lay outside the door, dead.

This narrative is fascinating because it is the only report that includes details of a crime that was carried out *after* the witches' execution. However, the method of murder is physical. The third witch in the report, known as Serckschen is also accused of injuring others. The author informs his readers that Serckschen was found guilty of poisoning the wife of Lord Achacius von Veldthaym. Moreover, she also confessed to laming a man from Derneberg, and to killing his livestock, by burying a toad beneath his threshold. Immediately one can see a connection between this narrative and the narratives included in the demonological texts from the fifteenth century, and it is clear that it was popularly believed that witches could cause harm by burying certain magical animals or objects beneath a threshold. However, while the author emphatically refers to the Devil in the opening section, exclaiming that the Devil tries to lure women, who are the 'weaker agent'⁵², to join him, he noticeably chooses not to refer to the Devil when discussing the witches' crimes. The result of this omission is that Serckschen appears to be solely responsible for the poisoning and harm carried out. It was common for authors of such reports to focus on the witches' actions and treat them as a real threat rather than question whether they caused the harm themselves.

The first pamphlet that really gives ample description of the witches' crimes, including their infanticidal inclinations is from 1563. This report is simply packed with stories of how the witches harmed people and animals. The report which was

⁵¹ *Ein erschrockliche geschicht/ so zu Derneburg in der Graffschafft Reinsteyn/ am Harz gelegen / von dreyen Zauberin [...]*, printed by Georg Merckel (Nuremberg, 1555).

⁵² *Ibid.*: 'schwecheren werkzerug'.

titled ‘The truthful and terrible deeds and actions of the 63 witches who were executed by fire at Wisenstaig’⁵³ was printed following the first known Reformation era witch panic, which resulted in sixty-three witches being burnt at the stake in the town of Wiesensteig in the county of Helfenstein in south-western Germany between 1562/63.⁵⁴ The report began by discussing how the witches joined with the ‘abominable Satan’ (*laidigen Sathan*), before discussing the horrifying murders and terrible deeds that they have committed with the Devil’s encouragement and help. As there were so many crimes to innumerate the author utilised a list format, literally enumerating their horrific crimes, one by one. They are reported to have killed thirty-six old persons, over forty years of age, with many witches even killing their own husbands. They were also guilty of infanticide, and the author stated that they killed 208 young infants, depriving twelve of them of baptism. The author also noted that they not only killed people, but that they also bewitched both young and old causing some to go blind, lame, or mad. Their diabolical misdeeds did not only harm people, but also livestock, they killed an assortment of animals including: sixty-six horses, eighty-five cows, sixty-four calves, fifteen sheep, five pigs and seventeen goats. Beneath this list of crimes, the author adds emphatically that these deeds and damages have been made known by the witches themselves.

The author of the report also included a vivid description of how the witches used the children they killed in despicable ways, digging them up from their graves before boiling them and burning them, to make their malefic salves that they used to wreak havoc. However, they also mixed other ‘unseemly’ (*vngepürliche*) items in with the children: ‘Namely rats, rabbits, goats, dogs and other animals, also people, especially those with red hair, pigs hairs, wool, spider webs, mites, eggshells...’⁵⁵

Menstrum Muliebere (womanly menstrual blood) was also included in the concoction. It was a popular belief that menstrual blood could cause injury.⁵⁶ In fact, Claude Tholosan stated in the *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* that contact with menstrual blood alone could kill trees and that witches used it often to make men

⁵³ *Warhafftige vnnnd Erschrecklich Thatten vn handlungen der LXIII. Hexen vnnnd Vnholden so zu Wisentag / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seint*, printed by Friedrich Gutknecht (S.l.,1563).

⁵⁴ Ibid. Erik Midelfort discusses the dynamics of this witch panic in *Witch hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562-1684*, pp 88-90.

⁵⁵ Ibid.: ‘Nämlich allerlay Rathen / hasen / gayß / hund / vnnnd ander Their / Desgleichen Menschen fürnemlich aber Rott har / Sew borst / wollen / Spinnenwebben / Gemilb / Ayrscha en...’

⁵⁶ Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Early Modern Europe, 1450-1789* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 55.

wild with sexual passion.⁵⁷ Similarly the power of red hair and people with red hair was referred to in the anonymously written, *Errores Gazariorum*, where the author wrote that ‘when they are able, they capture a red-haired man’, they kill him and then use the corpse to create poison.⁵⁸ Overall the report from 1563 elucidated the horrific extent of the witches’ ability to cause harm and it is one of the first *Hexenzeitungen* to suggest that the witches used dead children for their harmful magic. Their alleged crimes are manifold, and the author does not question their reality. Furthermore, the discussion is very general and there is no insight as to why the witches harmed the people and animals, other than that they did so out of the Devil’s provocation. It is noteworthy that this wave of persecution in Wiesensteig can be related to widespread epidemics that took place in these years. It is known that a series of harvest failures led to inflation between 1559 and 1563.⁵⁹ In turn harvest failures made humans and livestock more susceptible to disease as a result of malnutrition. Therefore the long list of casualties, included in the report, may have reflected real life casualties that happened as a result of contemporary epidemics.

In reports that dealt with smaller numbers of witches, one can find much more detailed narratives that discuss *how* and *why* the witches caused injury to others. In these more comprehensive narratives the reasons for the *maleficium* are revealed. The most common reason for causing harm is revenge. It is noteworthy that revenge narratives were also popular in English news reports about witches.⁶⁰ Marion Gibson claimed that she found three distinct stereotypical narratives in the English reports which could be seen ‘most readily in the inferred motive of the witch: stories chose between denial of charity, revenge or motiveless malignity.’⁶¹ Two German reports that offer in-depth narratives worthy of analysis are Reinhard Lutz’ report from 1571,⁶² which was about four witches recently executed at

⁵⁷ ‘Claude Tholosan: *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37) in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700*, p. 165.

⁵⁸ ‘*The Errores Gazariorum* (1437)’ in *ibid.*, p. 161.

⁵⁹ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 92.

⁶⁰ Marion Gibson, *Reading witchcraft: stories of early English witches* (London, 1999), p. 94-101.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁶² Reinhard Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen / Auch ketzerischen vnd Teuffels Weibern/ die zu Schlettstadt / deß h. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung / rc. sindt verbrennt worden.* (1571). Lutz’s work was also later printed in the *Theatrum de Veneficis* or *Theatre of Witches* (Frankfurt, 1586) which was a folio volume produced by the Frankfurt publisher Nicolaus Basse.

Sélestat, and the anonymously written report ‘New news from Bernberg’ which detailed the execution and crimes of ‘three old devil’s paramours.’⁶³

Lutz’s report, as mentioned in the previous chapter, was special in that it was much longer than usual containing a thorough discussion of witchcraft by the author who was a preacher in Sélestat. In this elaborate introduction the author informs his readers of why God allows the Devil to harm humans. Lutz believed firmly in divine permission and assured his audience that the Devil was not even able to move a hair on his own head without God’s permission.⁶⁴ However this led him to ask an important question; why does God allow the Devil so much, that he can cause great harm to livestock and people? Lutz argued that God allowed the Devil to cause harm for two main reasons, firstly to test the pious and the God fearing, to see if they would remain true to him in affliction as well as happiness, and secondly, to punish ‘the Godless madmen and evil people.’⁶⁵

Lutz’s explanation of how the witches and the Devil elicit inflictions is intriguing. He claimed that the sorcerers could practice, through their devil, many wonders with *Arzney* (physic): ‘Thereafter they injure animals and people to death.’⁶⁶ However he explained that sometimes the Devil causes this harm himself. He stated that as soon as the Devil heard that the witches wanted to cause harm he quickly gathered all sorts of filth and then sent it miraculously through the person’s pores in to their body, leaving it in their flesh.⁶⁷ He compared it to when a person leaves a stone in water and then takes their hand back out, leaving the stone lying there, but nobody sees how the stone came to be in the water.⁶⁸ Through this method, Lutz reported, the Devil injured and poisoned both people and animals. For Lutz the Devil was the one acting, with the permission of God. The witches were only tricked into presuming that they could actually hurt other people. Despite this, Lutz argued

⁶³ *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abscheulich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberinnen / was sich mit jnen am ende dieses verlauffenen 79. Jars begeben vnd zugetragen / darinnen kürzlich vnd warhafftiglich vermeldet / wie vnd wann sie zu diesem bösen handel gekomen / was für gewliche thaten sie begangen / vnd was sie auch endlichen den 2. Januarij dieses 1580. Jahrs vor lohn empfangen* (S.l., 1580).

⁶⁴ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung*: ‘nicht ein härlein hat er [der Teufel] jhm ohn verhengnuß Gottes auff seinem haupt bewegen können.’

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘die Gottlosen verrüchte / vnnd böse Menschen’.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*: ‘demnach sie Viehe vnd Leuthe biß auff den Todt verletzen’.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘so einer ein Stein in das Wasser leget / und zeucht die handt wider hierauß / lesst den stein liegen / denn sihet niemandts / wie der Stein in das wasser kommet.’

that they were still 'strangers and enemies to nature' and therefore should be sentenced to death.⁶⁹

In the second part of the pamphlet, Lutz included an individual synopsis of each witches' confession. It is striking that, in this part of his publication, Lutz did not reiterate that the Devil, and not the witches, was responsible for the harm done. He simply outlines the witches' crimes as if they were completely responsible for them. For this purpose he utilized a similar list format to the one used by the author of the 1563 report. However, he goes into more detail about individual crimes. For example, the first witch he wrote about - Anna, the wife of Nicolaus Strauben - is said to have harmed her neighbour who was a baker. However, Lutz does not leave it at this, he goes on to elaborate how she caused the injury. She, supposedly, only caused damage to his arm at first, but when the strife between them increased, she gave him a grip in his 'secret place'⁷⁰ (i.e. his genitals), in the name of the Devil which caused him to decay, and he ultimately died as a result.

The list continues to note how she also killed a cow belonging to a butcher, and harmed a cow and newly bought calf belonging to a female farmer nearby. She also confessed that, after not being invited to a wedding, she threw a bewitched wreath into the couples' house that would make it so that the wedding guests would not have a good time together, and bewitched it in such a way that if a virgin were to sit on the wreath, her hair would all fall out. However, Lutz reported that this did not happen, because it was known that a young boy wore the wreath and threw it down before collapsing to the floor and dying. Just before he died, he supposedly woke up, and said that he had been bitten by a snake. This story shows how witches were not believed to be infallible and that they did not always achieve their aims. However, it also suggested that sometimes their magic could harm people who were not the intended target. Also, as weddings played an important social role in the community, they appear from time to time in the reports. Usually the witch, disgruntled at not being invited to a wedding, tries to harm the people and guests involved either through harmful magic or weather magic. Keith Thomas noted that in early modern England failure to invite someone to a common celebration was considered a great offence as it was a social duty to invite neighbours to their christenings and

⁶⁹ Ibid.: '...weil sie der nature frembd vnnnd feindt sind'.

⁷⁰ Ibid.: 'Also hab sie in (als er in einem Beckenfürtuch vor dem Backofen gestanden) einen griff ins Teuffels namen an sein Heimlich ort geben / daß er verfaulen / vnd dessen letzlich sterben müssen.'

celebrations.⁷¹ Guests attended such events ‘as of right’ and it was a ‘positive slight to refuse an invitation to anyone who was eligible.’⁷² In this light, the motive for this harmful magic was revenge for the witches’ social ostracisation.

The witches were also believed to cause madness and disunion amongst Christians. In fact Anna was said to be guilty of giving a cobbler, Jacob Engelender, a special drink which caused him to go out of mind and run from women.⁷³ In addition to this she also bewitched the wife of Martin Ergeßheim so that she went out of her mind: ‘daß sie nich bey sinnen.’⁷⁴ Anna was also accused of bewitching children, and she is reported to have bewitched the small daughter of a cooper (*Kübler*) so that she died. She also harmed a child belonging to Michel Künßheim ‘which she cast out of the cradle’,⁷⁵ however, unlike the cooper’s daughter this child was able to recover. According to the pamphlet Anna caused enormous damage to many people and animals and while she is portrayed as doing it sometimes out of enmity most of her crimes seem unprovoked.

A good example of how witches’ sometimes used harmful magic as a form of revenge can be seen in the confession of Trüwel Greisherin. Trüwel confessed that years before, when she was carrying wood, she asked a farmer from Hesse if he would help; but he would not.

‘Therefore she was enraged because of him and, and with encouragement from her (demon) lover, she lay an herb that he gave her, in his name, and hid it with earth. Then he said when he (the farmer) wants to go home and steps on it, he will die, which happened.’⁷⁶

Following this confession Lutz provided a long list of other crimes committed by Trüwel. She allegedly killed lots of animals including: two sheep, two pigs, two cows, three calves, three horses and a dog. She also confessed to giving a drink to a man called Christman Scherer with the hope that it would make his liver rot. However, because this did not happen immediately, she called on her ‘Evil One’ so

⁷¹ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth- and seventeenth century England* (London, 1971), pp 663-4.

⁷² Thomas, p. 664. Thomas points out that the classic malevolence of the wicked fairy in *Sleeping Beauty* also sprang from the failure of *Sleeping Beauty*’s parents to invite her to the christening.

⁷³ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung*: ‘Hab also Jacob Engellender dem Schuchbletzer ein trunck zugerüst / daß er von sinnen kommen / vnd von der frawen gelauffen...’

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Seinem kind aber hab sie ein schaden gethan / welches sie auß der Wiegen herab in die Stuben geworffen...’

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*: ‘Darumb sie uber jn erzürnet / vnnd auß anreizung jres Bulen / in seinem Namen / ein Kraut / das er jr geben / in weg gelegt / vnd mit Erden verdeckt : Denn er gesagt / wenn er wider heim wil / vnnd darauff tretten würd / so müß er sterben / welches geschehen.’

that, ‘in the form of a cat, during the night, she came to him over the bed took him by the hair and gave a snatch in the sides in his name, that he must die.’⁷⁷ This narrative is very unusual, as there are very few accounts of metamorphosis in the *Hexenzeitungen*, and what is interesting is that the transformation here is only a means to an end, so that the witch can effectively kill Christman Scherer.⁷⁸

The confessions of the final two witches in Lutz’s report are similar. Ameley von Rotenberg an der Tauber also confessed to killing and harming animals. She claimed that she threw capsules that her demon-lover had given her over the wall of a priest’s farm in order to kill his hens and chickens. She also killed a horse by giving it a *streich* (strike). The last witch, Barbel, was also stated to have killed many animals such as, pigs, horses and cows. However, she was also guilty of infanticide. She is reported to have killed a one year old child belonging to a miller, and, she is also sensationally reported as having bewitched her own grandchild so that it died. However, Barbel confessed that her magic could be rendered ineffective if the lord’s name was called. For example, when she and her lover demon were about to injure a horse a servant called out ‘Jesus protect us’⁷⁹ and they were unable to do the deed.

In addition to the accounts of the confession of the four witches Lutz also included a small appendix detailing the confession of another witch Anna Otten, who he said died in prison at the hands of the Devil. This last witch was reported to have wretchedly lamed and killed her own children ‘along with other damage that she wreaked on animals and people.’⁸⁰ However, according to the pamphlet, the infanticide was not carried out not for magical purposes and none the witches are

⁷⁷ Ibid.: ‘Jtem / sie hab auß anstiffung vnd mithülff des Bösen / dem Christmen Scherer seligen ein trunck geben daß jm die Leber solt verfaulen /da das nit bald geschehen hab sie der Böß weiter angefochten /vnd sey in gestalt einer katzen bey nacht zu jme uber das Bett kommen / in beim haar genommen / vnd ein griff in die seiten / in seinem namen geben / daß er sterben müssen.’

⁷⁸ There were a number of pamphlets and broadsheets printed in the 1580s that reported on werewolves, for example there was a particular werewolf named Peter Stumpf/Stupe who was executed near Cologne in 1589 that gained especial media attention. Willem de Blécourt has written about this case in ‘The Werewolf, the Witch, and the Warlock: Aspects of Gender in the Early Modern Period’ in Alison Rowlands (ed.), *Witchcraft and masculinities in early modern Europe* (London, 2009), pp 191-213. For a more broad discussion of werewolf legends see de Blécourt ‘‘I Would Have Eaten You Too’’: Werewolf Legends in the Flemish, Dutch and German Area’ in *Folklore*, 118 (April, 2007), pp 23-43. There was also a sensational report about 300 women who could transform into wolves printed in 1591: *Erschröcklichen und zuvor nie erhörte neue Zeitung / welcher massen im Landt zu Gülch uber dreyhundert Weibs personen / mit dem Teuffel sich verbunden [...]*, printed by Georg Kress (Augsburg, 1591).

⁷⁹ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeitung*: ‘Jesus behüt uns’.

⁸⁰ Ibid.: ‘...neben anderem schaden / die sie viehe vnd Leuthen zugefügt’.

said to have subsequently used the corpses of the children for their harmful magic. Rather they appear to kill children just to be wicked and destructive.

Lutz's pamphlet is one of the most detailed from this period and from it one can ascertain that crimes attributed to witches in the reports were expanding and varied. The witches' executed in Sélestat were found guilty of murdering and killing numerous livestock and people, including children. What makes this report significant is the detail it gives on how the witches caused such harm: by using pills given to them by the Devil; by poisoning people's drinks; by burying herbs in the ground; by giving the animals a special *streich*. More importantly it gives a valid insight into the two major reasons why the witches caused such harm – to get revenge and to serve the Devil. Like the report in 1563, there is evidence that in the year that these witches were executed there was a significant subsistence crisis. In the early 1570s Central Europe was visited by a major famine and the year of 1570 was particularly bad.⁸¹ Food shortages, and subsequent inflation, meant many people, especially old and young, were possibly malnourished and more susceptible to disease. The climate historian Christian Pfister also notes that such epidemics also had an impact on cattle and livestock.⁸² Thus it can be construed that that the horrendous deaths of people and animals recounted in the reports possibly resonated with readers' experiences, many of whom may have suffered a personal misfortune in some shape or form.

A second pamphlet that goes into great detail on the harm caused by witches is a sensational report, from 1580, about three old witches from Bernberg, titled 'New news from Bernberg, awful and outrageous to hear and to read about three old devil's paramours....'⁸³ Since this pamphlet focused on only three witches the author went into great detail describing their 'evil business' and 'terrible deeds.'⁸⁴ The three witches that are referred to in the report are Curt Köchin, Black Gertrude, and Long Euphemia. The pamphlet has a misogynistic undertone throughout and the author quotes a contemporary saying implying that old women were more powerful than the

⁸¹ See Pfister, 'Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts', pp 51-2, Behringer, 'Weather, Hunger, Fear: Origins of the European Witch-Hunts', p. 13 and Behringer, 'Witch-hunting : the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities', p. 340.

⁸² Pfister, 'Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts: Strategies of European Societies I Coping with Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', p. 62.

⁸³ *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abscheulich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberingen [...] (S.l., 1580).*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*: 'böse handel' and 'grewlich thaten'.

Devil: ‘What the devil cannot accomplish, he accomplishes through an old woman.’⁸⁵ Like the previous reports, the harming of humans and animals is reported. All three witches are said to have killed, lamed and crippled people and livestock by using special herbs. The first witch, Curt, confessed that she went to the Blocksberg to acquire this special herb which had a small blue flower and confessed that ‘when she threw this over a house or sent it in all their names people were quickly withered, lamed and blinded.’⁸⁶ She also killed people’s livestock and caused miscarriages. To add to the reality of the report the anonymous author noted at this point that an actual ‘sack or basket of these herbs’⁸⁷ was found at her house following her arrest. She did not only lame and cripple people, but she also reportedly tried to ‘affect an honest married couple’⁸⁸ by curbing the fertility of their marriage, and she also caused a notable Burgess to have five miscarriages ‘and to produce no living child in the world’.⁸⁹ Curiously she is also said to have caused a monstrous birth. While witches were commonly accused of killing infants, monstrous births were more commonly attributed to the behaviour of the mother or more generally as an ill-omen.⁹⁰ (The deformity could also possibly be seen as the resultant of demonic intercourse). However, monstrous births were, for the most part, portrayed in the early modern media as being a sign of the impending Apocalypse, with authors frequently linking them to other wonders such as celestial apparitions and natural disasters.⁹¹ The witch in this pamphlet stated that she ordered her lover demon, named Peter, to affect the head of child of another well known Burgess. The author exclaimed that the ‘lovely infant was turned into a horrible monster, with an extremely big shapeless head, that piteously broke...’⁹² Interestingly, the author adds this harm also damaged the ‘poor old mid-wife’ (*die arme alte Wehmutter*) as following what happened she did not stand well in the community. This is noteworthy as it shows an author of a

⁸⁵ Ibid.: ‘...nach dem alten Sprichwort / Was der Teuffel nicht kan zu wege bringen /das bringt er durch ein alt Weib zu wege’.

⁸⁶ Ibid.: ‘Wenn sie dis oder dergleichen in ein haus geworffen /oder gesendt in aller derer namen / so seind die Leut als bald verdorret / verlahmet / vnd blind worden...’

⁸⁷ Ibid.: ‘ein ganzen sack oder korb vol’.

⁸⁸ Ibid.: ‘einem erbarn pahr Ehevolcks’.

⁸⁹ Ibid.: ‘...das sie jr lebenslang [...] kein lebendiges kindlein auff diese Welt geben sollte...’

⁹⁰ Rebecca Kukla, *Mass hysteria: medicine, culture and mother's bodies* (Oxford, 2005), p. 13.

⁹¹ See *ibid.*, p. 13. Also see Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous births and visual culture in sixteenth-century Germany* (London, 2009).

⁹² *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk [...]* (S.l., 1580): ‘...vnd das liebe vnschuldige kindlein zu einem grewlichen Monstro / mit einen vberaus grossen vngestalten heupt gemacht / das jemmerlich zerrissen / geplaget vnd gemartert / welches endlichen von diesem Jammerthal / durch fromer Leut Gebet / so teglichen geschehen / abgeschieden.’

news report actively sympathising with a mid-wife whose reputation was injured by a witch, as opposed to the later reports which increasingly linked midwives to witches.

The witches were also portrayed in this report as using their new found powers to get even with their enemies, exacting revenge. For example, the author stated that the third witch, named Long Euphemia, along with her lover-demon, caused great harm to a neighbour who was a shepherdess, he claimed that:

Because this Euphemia, hitherto, had discord with her neighbour who was a shepherdess [...] her (demon) lover and Junker, Lord John, gave her some herb that had small blue flowers, and was known as the devil's herb, which she put in a new pot, together with other ingredients and materials, to which she added human hair and bones, and buried it in the Shepherd's farm. This caused the Shepherdess to go blind and her eyes to fall out and her husband was altogether impoverished, insofar as all his small and big livestock died and fell down.⁹³

It is evident that the concept of burying 'magical' items to cause harmful magic was still a popular belief in the sixteenth century. Long Euphemia also confessed to killing 'many children, and through such sorcery the skeletons and small bones were consumed.'⁹⁴ However, the witches' harmful magic was not always achieved through the use of physical rituals. Sometimes the witches could invoke injuries by cursing a person or putting a spell on them.

This is exactly what the witch named Gertrude was accused of, and confessed to. In the report Gertrude is said to have cursed an honest woman who had refused to give her beer. Before she became a witch she had once asked the wife of a well respected man if she would give her a jug full of beer, but the wife refused 'saying she had beer to sell, not to give away.'⁹⁵ This angered Gertrude greatly and the author stated that as soon as Gertrude became a witch she put a spell on this woman 'so that on the morning that their living daughter first leaves the house, a terrible wrenching and hurting will come to all her limbs –so awful that she will die from

⁹³ Ibid.: 'Weil diese Euphemia hibeuer vbel gestanden mit jrer Nachbaurinne / einer Schefferin / die Hans habe Köstin genandt / hat jhr jhr Bule vnd Juncker / Herr Johan / etlich kraut / so blawe Blümlein gehabt / vnd Teuffels kraut genandt / gegeben / sampt anderer *Instruction* vnd *Materia*, welche sie in einen neuen Topff darzu sie haar vnd knochen vom Menschen gethan / vnd in des Scheffers Hoff eingegraben / daruon die Schefferin blind worden / vnd jr die Augen ausgefallen sein / vnd der Man ganz vnd gar verarmet / in dem jm all sein klein vnd gros Vihe gestorben / vnd vmbgeschlagen.'

⁹⁴ Ibid.: 'damit sie viel vnschuldige kinderlein vmbbracht / die da durch solche Bezauberung bis auff Geribbe vnd knöchlein verzehret sein worden...'

⁹⁵ Ibid.: 'Sie: aber geantwortet / Sie habe Bier zuuerkauffen vnd nicht zuergeben.'

it.⁹⁶ This narrative pattern was very common in witchcraft confessions in England. Keith Thomas states that the majority of fully documented witch cases fell into this simple pattern: ‘The witch is sent away empty-handed, perhaps mumbling a malediction; and in due course something goes wrong with the household, for which she is immediately held responsible.’⁹⁷ The requests made by the witch varied, usually the witch was looking for food or drink, and in all cases denial was quickly followed by retribution.⁹⁸ Similarly, Johannes Dillinger in his comparative study of the witch persecutions in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier found that witchcraft accusations frequently grew from disputes that were initially ‘quite ordinary.’⁹⁹

Interestingly, Gertrude was also guilty of cursing the executioner’s wife. The report stated that she was publicly heard threaten the executioner’s wife. Gertrude had exclaimed that she would die from the first bite that went into her mouth, ‘which has since happened.’¹⁰⁰ Unlike the curse against the child, which had no physical component, the author informed readers that the executioner’s wife died from eating poison which was administered by another witch. Wolfgang Behringer notes that one of the few possibilities of proving a connection between witches and harmful sorcery was given by threats (such as this one), followed by a misfortune.¹⁰¹ Threats were one of the major triggers of witch trials because they were specific and therefore lent a complaint of witchcraft plausibility in the eyes of both the population and the authorities.¹⁰² Furthermore article 44 of Charles V’s Imperial law code the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* of 1532 stipulated that a threat that was carried out was indicative of witchcraft and that the person could be questioned with the use of torture:

‘Item if someone offers to teach sorcery to other people, or threatens to bewitch someone and works the like on the person threatened, also particularly if they have association with sorcerers or sorceresses, or deal with such suspect things, gestures, words and signs, that are charged with sorcery, and the same person is also reputed the same, that is a fair indication of sorcery, and sufficient reason for torture.’¹⁰³

⁹⁶ Ibid.: ‘Da nun des Morgens sein leibes Töchterlein erstmals aus dem hause gehen wil / kompt jhr so ein grausams reissen vnd schmerzen in allen jhren Gliemassen an / das es daruon Todes sein mus.’

⁹⁷ Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic*, p. 661.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Dillinger, “*Evil People*”, p. 80.

¹⁰⁰ *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk [...]* (S.l., 1580): ‘...welchs denn auch also ergangen vnd geschehen’.

¹⁰¹ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 168.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Schroeder (ed.), *Die Peinliche Gerichtsordnung Kaiser Karls V. und des Heiligen Römischen Reichs von 1532 (Carolina)*, p. 45: ‘44. Item so jemandt sich erbeut andere menschen zauberei zu

In general this report highlights conclusively that there were many methods that the witches could use to bring about physical harm. Sometimes they were accused of cursing people verbally in order to inflict damage, while other times they are said to have used poison to injure their victims. Although the author did emphasise how the witches asked their lover demons for help in injuring others, he never questioned the efficacy of their spells and suggested that the old women were responsible for the damage themselves, and that they were on equal par with the Devil in terms of their wickedness. This pamphlet also shows again the importance of revenge in harmful magic narratives. The witches are portrayed as holding grudges with their neighbours and using their powers to exact retribution. However in the majority of *Hexenzeitungen* the witches' motives are not mentioned and they are represented as injuring people and animals indiscriminately.

Throughout the latter half of the sixteenth century multiple reports made sweeping statements about the harm caused by the witches and there is a definite shift toward 'motiveless malignity'. In 1576 two reports were printed accusing a group of witches from Breisgau of harmful magic.¹⁰⁴ In one of the reports fifty-five witches were reported to have harmed men, women and children, by laming, crippling and blinding them. The other report from 1576 claimed that 136 witches from Breisgau lamed and crippled many people by making 'little cakes made from strange things' which they then threw in peoples' houses.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, unlike the witches in the earlier reports these witches did not have a specific target or victim in mind but threw the *küchlein* (little cakes) so that whoever walked over it would be made lame. In addition to this they were said to have poisoned an entire

lernen, oder jemens zu bezaubern bedrahet vnd dem bedraheten dergleichen beschicht, auch sonderlich gemeynschafft mit zaubern oder zauberin hat, oder mit solchen verdecktlichen dingen, geberden, worten vnd weisen, vmbgeht, die zauberey auf sich tragen, vnd die selbig person des selben sonst auch berüchtigt, das gibt eyn redlich anzeygung der zauberey, vnd genugsam vrsach zu peinlicher frage.'

¹⁰⁴ *Neuwezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unholden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben*, printed by Hans Cudium (S.l., 1576); *Neuwe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breißgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn* (S.l., 1576).

¹⁰⁵ *Neuwe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breisgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn* (S.l., 1576): 'wie sie weiter haben gethon / küchlein von selzam sachen / die habens in die heuser geworffen / wer drüber ist gangen oder glofen / haben sie krumm vnd lam thon machen.'

community's livestock. Immediately it is obvious that, in news reports reporting on large amounts of witches, witches were no longer depicted as having problems with only one or two individuals but rather they were presented as enemies of the entire community. Similarly a group of witches were reported to have lamed, blinded and crippled many people in a report by Ambrosium Wetz in 1578.¹⁰⁶ Wetz also stated that the witches harmed many animals causing them to die and that they also stole milk from animals.¹⁰⁷ The witch as a 'milchdieb' or milk thief was a prominent idea in the fifteenth century and a number of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century woodcuts portray the mystical theft of milk by witchcraft,¹⁰⁸ however it is a crime that rarely features in the *Hexenzeitungen*. Increasingly the witches' crimes are now motiveless and this 'motiveless malignity' becomes a main feature of the reports. The witches' crimes are detailed—not their motives. Such reporting served to make witches appear as hostile enemies willing to harm anyone—man, woman or child for no reason. However, while the authors became less interested in explaining *why* witches' caused harm, they remained very interested in *how* witches caused harm.

Elaborate descriptions of the ingredients and methods used to cause harm remained prominent in reports in the last decades of the sixteenth century. For example three reports from 1589, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber, included gruesome descriptions of what the witches used to injure people and animals.¹⁰⁹ In two reports detailing the executions and crimes of Peter Stumpf and other witches that were recently burnt the author stated that an old woman from Ellwangen confessed that:

‘they boiled in many pots, snakes, toads, dead bones, and unknown herbs, they then buried the same, be it in houses and stables and barns, it would not fare well there,

¹⁰⁶ *Warhafftige und ein erschreckliche neue Zeitung, des grossen Wasserguß so den 15. May diß lauffenden 78. Jahrs zu Horb geschehen [...] wie man hernach alda etlich Unhulden verbrent hatt wie sie schröcklich Ding bekendt haben*, printed by Ambrosium Wetz (Antdorf, 1578).

¹⁰⁷ This is one of the only references to milk robbing that I have found in this sample of *Hexenzeitungen*.

¹⁰⁸ Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁹ The three pamphlets printed by Nikolaus Schreiber were: *Warhafftige vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von einem Zauberer Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können mach..... Auch / wie man hin vnd wider / viel Zäuberschen verbrandt hat* (Cologne, 1589); *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hin vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre* (Cologne, 1589); *Zauberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen* (Cologne, 1589).

for whoever went over it, young or old, people or animals, they would all be surrounded with great pain and woe.’¹¹⁰

The report continued to explain how the same witches also made a magical (*zauberische*) salve which they could use to harm people or animals. The witches confessed that if they smeared their victims during the day, or by night, they could lame them, blind them or cause them to have great tumours so that they may have ‘no healthy hour’¹¹¹ until they meet their end. The same old woman was also reported to have informed the authorities of the locations of these magical pots—and the news reporter informed readers that the authorities then dug them up and as a warning the pots and salves were burnt along with the women. A longer report from 1590, entitled the ‘Expanded Witch Report’ also included the same story of the witch from Ellwangen and republished the same list of ingredients found in Schreiber, along with the description of the salve used to cause harm.¹¹²

A third report printed by Schreiber in 1589, entitled the ‘Magical report’ (*Zauberische Zeitung*), contained yet another list of ingredients.¹¹³ This report was quite unusual. It recounted a story of how a female witch gave her son magic powers so that he could poach on his lord’s land and not get caught. The mother had reportedly sewn a ‘spur of the Devil’¹¹⁴ into the left breast of the son’s clothing which gave him the ability to metamorphosise into any animal, or even a bush, stick or stones. However, there is a small section in the report which outlines the ingredients that were used to create an illness (as confessed by the old woman). The author stated that to create illness with sorcery the woman said they used children, goat’s blood and milk from women and cows. The use of children for harmful magic

¹¹⁰ *Warhafftige vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von einem Zauberer Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können mach..... Auch / wie man hin vnd wider / viel Zäuberschen verbrandt hat* (Cologne, 1589) : ‘Nach dem haben sie gleich von stund an in vielen döpfen gesotten / schlangen / kröten / todenbein / vnd viel vnbekanter kreuter / wohin sie nun dieselben begraben haben / es sey in heusern /Ställen vnd Schewren da ist es nicht wol zugangen / dann wer darüber ist gangen / jung vnd alt / Menschen oder Viehe / die wurden alle mit grossen schmerzen vnd wehe vmbfangen.’

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*: ‘Desgleichen haben sie noch ein zauberische salbe gemacht / Welche auch Menschen vnd viech schädlich gewesen wen sie damit bey tag oder nacht bestrichen / seindt von grossem geschwulst erlambt vnd erblindt / mochten keine gesunde stunde biß an jhr letztes ende haben.’

¹¹² *Erweyterte Vnholden Zeyttung. Kurtz Erzehlung wie viel Vnholden hin und wider / sonderlich inn dem Oberrn Teutschland / gefängklich eingezogen / was für grossen schaden sie den Menschen / vemög jhrer vrgicht / zügefüget / vnd wieviel vngefährlich deren / inn disem 1590. Jar / biß auff den 21. Julj von dem Leben zum Todt hingerichtet vnd verbrandt worden seyen* (Ulm, 1590).

¹¹³ *Zäuberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülfflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen... , printed by Nikolaus Schreiber* (Cologne, 1589).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘Denn jrem jeden die Mutter / inn die lincke Brust der kleider / einen Teuffels sporn eingenehet..’

was commonly reported and children were believed to be one of the main ingredients for harmful potions and salves. Women's breast milk also seems to have been believed to be replete with magical powers. The bodies of women were themselves mysterious, and as a result any attribute that differentiated them from men were often credited with magic powers— 'human milk, menstrual blood, afterbirth, even a dead fetus could be used for magical purposes.'¹¹⁵ In the words of B. Ann Tlusty: 'When perverted, the very traits of womanhood that defined their natural role as mother and nourisher could thus become instruments of destruction and sin.'¹¹⁶ In this way, the role of breast milk, which usually provided nourishment and sustained life, was inverted when used by the witches to cause ailments and death.

Breast milk appeared as an ingredient to create harm in two other reports from the period, one from 1576 and in another from 1599.¹¹⁷ The report from 1599 was particularly sensational, and it was printed in both Vienna and Dresden. It reported on the execution and crimes of two male Jewish sorcerers, and detailed their misadventures in trying to procure breast milk from honest women to kill over a hundred thousand people. However their plans failed miserably as the first woman that they approached, on the advice of her husband (who believed that they could do much damage to people's bodily health with her milk), gave them cow's milk instead. When they then tried to make their sorcery, by pouring this milk into the brains of a recently executed body on a gallows, they were unsuccessful. Realising that they had been deceived they then set out to find another woman to give them milk who 'is badly simple minded.'¹¹⁸ However a male passer-by overheard the two men while they were asking another young woman for breast milk and they were

¹¹⁵ B. Ann Tlusty, 'Crossing Gender Boundaries: Women as Drunkards in Early Modern Augsburg' in B. Ann Tlusty et al (eds), *Ehrkonzepte in der Frühen Neuzeit: Identitäten und Abgrenzungen* (Berlin, 1998), p. 196.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Neuezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unholden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben*, printed by Hans Cudium (S.l, 1576); *Zwo Neue Zeitungen / Die erste welcher gestalt zween falsche Jüden / durch Zauberey zuwegen gebracht / daß vil tausent Stück Vihe hingefallen vnd gestorben ist. Welche auch in disem Monat Junij dises 1599. Jahrs / ihren gebürenden Lohn derentwegen empfangen haben. Die ander Zeitung... Gedruckt zu Wien in Osterreich / durch Johann Formick.* (Vienna, 1599). This report was also printed in Dresden by Gimel Bergen: *Neue Zeitung : Welcher gestalt / zween falsche Juden / durch Zauberey zu wegen gebracht / daß vil tausend stück Vihe hingefallen vnd gestorben ist Welch auch in diesem Monat Juni dises 1599 Jahrs....*, printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1599).

¹¹⁸ *Zwo Neue Zeitungen / Die erste welcher gestalt zween falsche Jüden* (Vienna, 1599): 'So wöllen wir doch eine andere / die da einfeltig schlecht vnd alber ist / antreffen.'

quickly apprehended by the authorities, imprisoned and eventually impaled after confessing to sorcery.

While breast milk and menstrual blood, and numerous poisonous animals were commonly believed to be used as ingredients to procure harmful salves, by far the most frequently reported ingredient was dead children. The witches were believed to have used both the fat of boiled children in their concoctions, as well as their little bones to wreak all kinds of sorcery. At first glance use of human body parts for sorcery seems horrifically shocking—however, it was medically accepted in the early modern period that human bodies had healing powers. According to learned physicians the healing nature of human body parts derived from a ‘vital force’ which remained in the body beyond the moment of death.¹¹⁹ The historian Kathy Stuart explains in her work *Defiled Social Trades* how executioners of the period used human cadavers for their medical treatments, deriving many of their ingredients from the bodies of executed criminals.¹²⁰ Human fat, also known as poor sinner’s fat (*Armsünderfett*) rendered from the bodies of executed criminals was considered to be ‘potent medicine’ right up until the mid-eighteenth century and was often used to cure a variety of ailments including; broken bones and sprains. Its use was so popular that there was even a traditional rhyme praising its efficacy:

*Zerlassen Menschenfett ist gut für lahme Glieder,
So man sie damit schmiert, sie werden richtig wieder.*

Melted human fat is good for lame limbs.
If one rubs them with it, they become right again.¹²¹

In essence contemporaries believed that the human fat of corrupt criminals could heal and cure all kinds of illnesses. In this light, it can be argued that the belief that the fat of innocent children could cause harm was a direct inversion of this medical principle on two levels. Firstly, if medical practitioners used human body parts to heal, it makes sense that the witches were guilty of the contrary, using body parts to cause harm. However, there is an inversion here at a deeper level also. While the body parts of convicted criminals were believed to be endowed with healing magical powers, the bodies of innocent new born babies and infants were inversely said to have the power to elicit harmful sorcery. This rich inversionary symbolism is

¹¹⁹ Kathy Stuart, *Defiled trades and social outcasts: honor and ritual pollution in early modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1999), pp 160-1.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, translation by Kathy Stuart, p. 157.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

unequivocal. Inversion played a very important role in structuring witchcraft belief, so much so that Stuart Clark argues that the ‘full intelligibility of demonological literature was, in the end, dependent on success in reading into each individual fact of demonism an actual or symbolic inversion of a traditional form of life.’¹²²

Table 3.1 List of *Hexenzeitungen* that reported infanticide. Reports that included stories about midwives are highlighted in bold and the number of midwives is also indicated.

Year	Title of Report	Midwives
1563	<i>Warhafftige vnnnd Erschrecklich Thatten vn hanglungen der LXIII. Hexen vnnnd Vnholden so zu Wisentag</i>	
1571	<i>Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen Hexen</i>	
1578	<i>Warhafftige und ein erschrückliche neue Zeitung... durch Ambrosium Wetz</i>	1 Midwife
1579	<i>Newe Zeitung von einer Erschrecklichen That, Welch zu Dillingen / von einem Jhesuwider / und einer Hexen [...]</i>	
1580	<i>Newe Zeitung aus Berneburgk</i>	
1580	<i>Zwo Neue Zeittung, was man für Hexen oder Unholden verbrenndt hat</i>	
1582	<i>Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung</i>	6 Midwives
1583	<i>Warhafftige vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung / von hundert vnd vier vnd dreyszig vnhulden</i>	6 Midwives
1583	<i>Ein New klüglich Lied / von dem grossen schaden der Vnholden</i>	4 Midwives
1588	<i>Urgicht und verzaichnuß / so Walpurga Hausmänner zu Dillingen...</i>	1 Midwife
1589	<i>Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen</i>	2 Midwives
1589	<i>Warhafftige vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von einem Zauberer Stupe Peter genandt..</i>	2 Midwives
1589	<i>Zauberische Zeitung</i>	
1590	<i>Erweyterte Vnholden Zeytung</i>	3 Midwives
1594	<i>Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin</i>	1 Midwife
1596	<i>Warhafftige Zeitung / Vnd gruendliche beschreibung / von zehn Hexen...</i>	
1596	<i>Zwo erschreckliche und unerhörte Geschicht...</i>	
1600	<i>Kurze Erzöhlung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen</i>	
1603	<i>Ein Warhafftige Zeitung. Von etlichen hexen oder Vnholden...</i>	
1616	<i>Zwo hexen Zeitung</i>	1 Midwife
1618	<i>Warhafftige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern</i>	
1626	<i>Zwo Warhafftige / vnd doch Männiglich zuvor bekante Neue Zeitungen.</i>	1 Midwife
1627*	<i>Druten Zeitung</i>	1 Midwife
1650	<i>Erschreckliche Neue Zeitung / Welche sich begeben vnd zugetragen in diesem 1650. Jahr</i>	1 Midwife
1666	<i>Warhaffte Beschreibung deß Urteils [...] an einer alten Weibs-person...</i>	
1669	<i>Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. [...] von einer Weibs=Person...</i>	

*The *Druten Zeitung* was censored and copies of the print were seized by Nuremberg authorities.

¹²² Stuart Clark, ‘Inversion, Misrule and the Meaning of Witchcraft’ in *Past and Present*, lxxxviii, no. 1 (1980), p. 118.

However while executioners had direct access to corpses for their magical practice, the witches did not. Therefore contemporaries believed witches had to source children for their sorcery through killing infants and exhuming their corpses from the ground—and the crime of infanticide featured repeatedly in the *Hexenzeitungen*. Furthermore, many witch reports included shocking stories about murderous midwives that heedlessly killed newborns that they had sworn to protect. This stereotype of the midwife sorceress flourished in the news reports of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. In fact midwifery was the most frequently named profession in the reports and sorceress midwives were mentioned in at least thirteen reports, nine dating from the sixteenth century and four from the seventeenth century

This number is significant as infanticide was mentioned in twenty-six of the *Hexenzeitungen* I have analysed for this research (see Table 3.1). This means that in over half of the reports that detail the crime of infanticide midwives are directly implicated. The news writers were undoubtedly attracted to the narrative of the midwife witch as their murdering of innocents was even more sensational, as their crime represented a total inversion of their normal role. Midwives were not alone in this regard and other medical professions were sometimes mentioned in the reports, albeit much more infrequently. For example one report in 1590 featured a story about an apothecary who killed people instead of healing them,¹²³ whilst another in 1594 described how an Oculist killed the very patients that he was meant to help.¹²⁴

Regional studies of witch persecutions and trial records have found that very few midwives appear to have been actually prosecuted. This has led historian David Harley to label the midwife witch as nothing more than a ‘myth’.¹²⁵ Harley argues that the myth was propagated by the demonologists of the time and that the ‘factual case for the existence of mid-wife witches in Europe rests largely on a handful of sensational cases’ and should not be considered ‘typical’.¹²⁶ However apart from briefly mentioning the famous report on the midwife witch Walpurga Hausmännin, which appeared in the *Fugger Zeitungen*, Harley failed to acknowledge and recognise how prominent and, indeed, *typical*, the mid-wife witch was in the early modern media. And this investigation of the *Hexenzeitungen* highlights the

¹²³ *Erweyterte Vnholden Zeytung* (Ulm, 1590).

¹²⁴ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber, (Cologne, 1594).

¹²⁵ David Harley, ‘Historians as Demonologists: The Myth of the Mid-wife witch’ in *Social History of Medicine*, iii, no. 1 (1990), pp 1-26.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

popularity of ‘myth of the mid-wife witch’ in the reports. Whether or not midwives were actually being executed in large number as witches, it is clear that media actively participated in propagating the heinous crimes of midwife witches.

The most famous midwife witch was undoubtedly Walpurga Hausmännin who was tried for witchcraft in 1587 in the town of Dillingen. The news reports on Walpurga are worthy of examination as they are brimming with descriptions of her contemptible crimes—chief among them infanticide. As mentioned in chapter one, the case was reported in the *Fugger Zeitungen* in 1587 and in a pamphlet printed in 1588.¹²⁷ In addition to this the ‘Expanded Witchcraft Report’ of 1590 also made a reference to Walpurga’s trial stating that two years ago three witches were burnt at Dillingen, and that ‘among them was a mid-wife, who killed over a hundred children as they emerged from the womb with an evil grip.’¹²⁸ Like most witches Walpurga Hausmännin was said to have caused harm and the author of the Fugger news report declared that she confessed that:

...her paramour gave her a salve in a little box with which to injure people and animals, and even the precious fruit of the field.
He also compelled her to do away with and to kill young infants at birth, even before they had been taken to Holy Baptism. This she did, whenever possible.¹²⁹

The author then used a numerical list format to detail her manifold crimes. She is reported to have killed numerous children at birth by ‘pressing’ on their brain. Sometimes she killed the mother in childbed along with the child. She is also said to have cause miscarriages by touching pregnant women’s bodies with her salve. Interestingly Walpurga also confessed to burying dead infants under thresholds as a means to cause miscarriages:

When six years ago, she partook of food with Magadalea Seilerin, called *Kammerschreiberin*, she had put a salve in her drink, so that she was delivered prematurely. This child she, Walpurga, secretly buried under the doorway of the said wife of the scribe on the pretext that then she would have no other miscarriage. The same she also did with many others. When she was questioned under torture for the

¹²⁷ Behringer, ‘Witchcraft and the Media’, p. 226.

¹²⁸ *Die Erweyterte Unholden Zeytung* (Ulm, 1590): ‘Darunder ein Hebamm gewesen, welche uber die hundert Kinder / als sie von Mutter Leib empfangen / mit einem schelmen griff / in umb das Leben gebracht.’ For a thorough analysis of this report see Wolfgang Behringer ‘Hexenverfolgungen im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Publizistik. Die „Erweyterte Unholden Zeytung“ von 1590’ in: *Oberbayerisches Archiv*, cix (1984), pp 339-60.

¹²⁹ This English translation of the Fugger newsletter comes from George T. Mathews (ed.), *News and rumor in Renaissance Europe: the Fugger newsletters*, pp. 137-43. Original German available in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger Zeitungen*, p. 105: ‘Sie bekent auch, daß ihr ihr Buhle in einem Büchlein eine Salbe gegeben hat, um Menschen und Vieh wie auch die lieben Früchte auf dem Felde zu beschädigen. Er hat sie auch dazu gezwungen, die jungen Kinder bei der Geburt, und noch ehe sie zur heiligen Taufe gekommen sind, umzubringen und zu töten. Dies hat sie auch, so viel es ihr möglich gewesen, ausgeführt.’

reasons of this burial, she admitted that it was done in order to cause disunion between two spouses. This her Devil-Paramour had taught her.¹³⁰

It is interesting that she buried the child beneath the threshold, as burying items beneath thresholds was commonly reported to cause injury in other reports. However this is the only example that I have found that included a dead baby being buried. Children were more commonly used to make the witches' salves. Indeed Walpurga confessed that the Devil also used the blood of children to concoct a salve. Unlike other reports which reported the use of boiled children, Walpurga said that the Devil used the blood of the children, which she, surprisingly, sucked out herself. Not only did she suck the blood from infants, but she confessed to eating them as well. The author of the report added that Walpurga confessed further 'that every year since she has sold herself to the Devil, she has on St. Leonhard's Day exhumed at least one or two innocent children. With her Devil-Paramour and other play-fellows [accomplices] she has eaten these and used their hair and their little bones for witchcraft.'¹³¹ This is one of the rare occasions in the *Hexenzeitungen* that cannibalism is reported.¹³² While the witches are frequently reported to have killed children, using their bodies for magic, they were not usually said to have eaten them. Aside from this unusual reference to cannibalism and the pamphlets over arching emphasis on infanticide the report on Walpurga contains many of the other usual examples of *maleficia*. For example she killed animals including a horse and a 'large number of cattle' and she also injured people causing them bad health.¹³³

Walpurga's confession was considered particularly exceptional because of her profession, but it is important to note that she was not first mid-wife to be

¹³⁰ Translation from Matthews (ed.) *News and rumor*, p. 140. Original German available in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger Zeitungen*, pp 106-7: 'Als sie vor sechs Jahren mit der Magdalena Seilerin, Kammerschreiberin genannt, gegessen, hat sie ihr eine Salbe in den Truck getan, wodurch diese ein unzeitiges Kind auf die Welt brachte. Diese kinds hat sie, die Walpurga, Heimlich unter der Türschwelle der gedachten Kammerbeschreiberin vergraben unter dem Vorwand, daß diese dann keine Fehlgeburt mehr machen werde. Dieses hat sie auch bei vielen Anderen getan. Als sie mit Ernst nach den Ursachen dieses Begrabens gefragt wurde, gab sie an, daß es darum geschehe, um zwei Eheleute dadurch auseinanderzubringen. Dies hat sie ihr Buhlteufel gelehrt.'

¹³¹ Translation from Matthews (ed.) *News and rumor*, p. 142. Original German in Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger Zeitungen*, pp 108-9: 'Die Walpurga bekent weiter, daß sie alljährlich, seitdem sie sich dem Teufel ergeben hat, bei St. Leonhard mindestens ein oder zwei unschuldige kinder ausgegraben hat. Diese hat sie mit ihrem Buhleteufel vnd anderen Gespielen gefressen vnd die Flachsen vnd knöchlein zur Zauberei verwendet.'

¹³² Cannibalism was also referred to in two other *Hexenzeitungen* in the seventeenth century: *Zwo hexen zeitung* (Tübingen, 1616) and *Warhafftige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberschen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Häimburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen grenzt verbrennt hat* (Vienna, 1618).

¹³³ Matthews (ed.), *News and rumor in Renaissance Europe*, p. 142.

connected to witchcraft in the *Hexenzeitungen* and she was certainly not the last. A decade before the report on Walpurga another report claimed that midwife (*Wehmutter*) who was a witch was guilty of killing fifty children.¹³⁴ The 1580s saw a surge in reports involving midwives. In 1582 and 1583 witch reports from the printing presses of Nicolaus Wiriod, in Strasbourg, and Jakob Schotten, in Wesel, referred to mid-wife witches.¹³⁵ It is probable that Schotten copied part of the information from the report printed by Wiriod as they are quite similar (see chapter five). Wiriod's report from Strasbourg, first published in 1582, claimed that thirty-eight women were burned as witches in town called Reyte, including four midwives. The midwives were described as killing children at birth and along with many mothers who were in childbed. The author reported the following about the four midwives:

The first killed 19 children at birth and 3 mothers in childbed, and was the wife of trickster farmer in the Black Forest. The other killed 7 children and 5 mothers in childbed and was the wife of a smith. The third killed 9 children and 4 mothers in childbed and was the wife of a miller. The fourth killed 4 children and 8 mothers and was the wife of a tailor.¹³⁶

It is interesting that the author paid particular attention to the crimes of the midwives. Later in the same report, he stated that another two midwives were burnt as witches in Alsace and explained how these midwives were also said to responsible for killing infants and their mothers. These examples prove that the 'myth' of the sorceress-midwife dated back further than Walpurga's well documented case.

¹³⁴ *Warhafftige vnd ein erschröckliche Neuwe Zeitung / des grossen Wasser guß / [...] / wie man hernach alda etlich Vnhulden verbrent hatt / wie sie schröcklich ding bekandt haben*, printed by Ambrosium Wetz (Antdorf, 1578).

¹³⁵ *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung. Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr / wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekendt haben. Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan / vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wetter in diesem vergangen Sommer im Teutschlandt gmacht haben*, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582); *Warhafftige vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung / von hundert vnd vier vnd dreyssig vnhulden / so vmb / irer Zauberey halben / diß vershinen 1582 Jars / zu Gefencknus gebracht / und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October / auff jhr vnmenschliche thaten vnd gräwliche außag...*, printed by Nikolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583); *Ein New klüglich Lied / von dem grossen schaden der Vnholden / so sie in Westphalen zu Aschen brüggk vnd andern orten begangen haben / in dem jetztwerenden 1583 jar / wie auch jrer 180 jemmerlich verbrenndt seind worden / Jm Thon zu singen....*, printed by Jakob Schott (Wesel, 1583).

¹³⁶ *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung* (Strasbourg, 1582): 'Die erste hat 19. Kinder in der geburt und 2 kinderbetterin umbgebracht / und ist eines Rotbawren weib gewesen auff dem Schwarzwald. Die ander hat 7. kinder vnnd fünff kinderbetterin umbgebracht / und ist eines Schmidts Weib gewesen. Die drit hat 9. kinder und vier kindbetterin umbgebracht / und ist eines Müllers Weib gewesen. Die vierdt hat 4. kinder und 8. kinderbetterin umbgebracht / und ist eines Schneiders weib gewesen.'

In 1589 two reports were printed by Nikolaus Schreiber in Cologne containing additional stories of midwife witches.¹³⁷ However it is noteworthy that a witch did not have to be a midwife to be guilty of infanticide and the reports from 1589 refer to cases of witches and midwife-witches killing children. For example an ‘old woman’ from Mergenthal, who is not identified as a midwife, is reported, in both reports, to have killed eighty children. This same old woman supposedly confessed that ‘there were no pious midwives in Mergenthal to be found within 10 miles, that they were all witches.’¹³⁸ This statement is striking, as it clearly proves that ‘myth’ of the midwife-witch was flourishing in popular discourse at the time. Furthermore, the ‘Expanded Witch Report’ from 1590 repeated this narrative further perpetuating the ‘myth’ by reiterating the exact same quote.¹³⁹ In 1594 a midwife-witch featured again, in another report printed by Schreiber; this time the crimes of the midwife became even more elaborate.¹⁴⁰ The author alleged that a midwife had presented and handed over children to the Devil by placing them in the air. Not only did she give them to the Devil but she killed around 500 children along with their mothers. Like Walpurga she is said to have dug up the children from their graves before cooking them like meat using ‘the fat for particular Devil’s affairs’ and evil deeds.¹⁴¹ It is evident from these examples that the midwife-witch was a hot topic in the *Hexenzeitungen* at the end of the sixteenth century, but did the ‘myth’ continue to be propagated in the reports of the seventeenth century?

While infanticide continued to be one of the main crimes reported in the seventeenth century midwives were much less frequently mentioned. Witches were still portrayed as killing large numbers of children in the media. For example in 1600 a broadsheet was published reporting the crimes and execution of the Pappenheimer

¹³⁷ *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hin vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589); *Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauber Stupe Peter genandt der sich zu einem wehrwolff hat können...*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).

¹³⁸ *Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauber Stupe Peter genandt der sich zu einem wehrwolff hat können* (Cologne, 1589): ‘es were keine fromme hebamme umb Mergenthal / auff zehen meilen zu finden / dann es alle hexen weren’.

¹³⁹ *Erweyterte Vnholden Zeytung* (Ulm, 1590).

¹⁴⁰ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrant sein worden*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1594).

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*: ‘Wenn sie dann merckte / das man die kinder zu grabe trüge / gieng / sie hin / vnd grub sie wider aus / kocht sie darnach als das fleisch / vnd hub das fette zu sondern Teuffels sachen auff vnd vil vbelthat begangen hatte’.

family at Munich reported how they had murdered a grand total of 401 children.¹⁴² Another ‘Truthful Report’ printed in Frankfurt in 1603 claimed that the witches were ordered by the Devil to kill nine hundred children.¹⁴³ However the first reference to a midwife-witch in the seventeenth century only occurred in 1616 in a double report titled: ‘Two witch reports, the first, from the Bishopric of Würzburg [...] The other, from the Duchy of Württemberg...’¹⁴⁴ In the first of these reports there is an account of a midwife from Würzburg. This midwife was said to have killed 180 children, including twenty-two of her own relations. The author explained how she dug many of the children out of their graves and cooked them to make her ‘*schmir*’, or salve. The author also remarked that she gave the bones of the children to the pipers to use as pipes (presumably at their gathering).¹⁴⁵ The second report, which detailed the crimes and confessions of the witches from the Duchy of Württemberg, also included an account of infanticide, however this time the culprit was not a midwife—but an just an ‘old witch’ (*alte Hexen*). The old woman confessed under torture that the witches had killed so many children that she may never recount it, but that it was probably close to 400. She herself had ‘killed 3, dug them up, boiled, cooked and partly ate them, and used them for the salve and for the witches’ art.’¹⁴⁶ Like the midwife from Würzburg she confessed that she gave the bones of the children to pipers to play as instruments. She also committed an array of other crimes laming, killing and bewitching many people—including a priest. Charles Zika noted that, in general, there was an increase in the visual depictions of the cannibalistic witch from the beginning of the seventeenth-century;¹⁴⁷ however, this

¹⁴² *Kurze Erzählung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen / was massen sie auch / an dem 29. Tag dess Monats Julij / in dem 1600. Jar / in der Fürstlichen hauptstatt München / von dem Leben zum Tod gebracht worden / den Bösen zu einem Schröcken / den Frommen aber zur Wahrnung / für die Augen gestellt.* (Augsburg, 1600). Michael Kunze researched the trial of the Pappenheimers in great detail. See Kunze, *Highroad to the stake: a tale of witchcraft*, translated by William E. Yulli, (London, 1987).

¹⁴³ *Ein Warhafftige Zeitung. Von etlichen hexen oder Vnholden / welche man kürzlich im Stifft Mäntz zu Ascheburg / Dipperck / Ostum / Könßhoffen / auch andern Orten / verbrenndt / was Vbels sie gestifft / vnd bekandt haben. Im Thon: Pomey / Pomey / jhr Polen / etc.* (Frankfurt, 1603).

¹⁴⁴ *Zwo hexen zeitung / die Erste: Auß dem Bißthumb Würzburg [...]*Das Ander: Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg... (Tübingen, 1616).

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*: ‘Jr selbstn hat sie drey vmbbracht / wider außgegraben / gesotten / gekocht / theils gefressen / zur Schmir / vnd hexenkunst gebraucht.’

¹⁴⁷ Charles Zika, ‘Cannibalism and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Reading the Visual Images’ in *History Workshop Journal*, Issue. 44 (1997), p. 78.

study has found that textual references to cannibal-witches remained fairly uncommon in the reports, while visual references were practically non-existent.

The idea that witches sometimes consumed the dead babies themselves was reported again in 1618 in a sensational pamphlet printed in Vienna, titled: ‘A truthful new report about many sorceress women that were burnt in these years 1617 and 1618 in Haimburgk in Austria...’¹⁴⁸ While this particular report contained stereotypical accounts of how witches caused harm to people and animals, the horrific detail of the witches murdering of children is extraordinary. The reporter claimed that the witches pitifully killed 300 newborns. He alleged that they firstly ate them and then made a ‘foul powder’ out of their bones. He added that when this powder was sprinkled on the street whoever went over it would be crippled. In addition to this the witches ‘took out the pulp of the bone / and made a poisonous salve from it.’¹⁴⁹ With this salve they then caused people to become crippled and to shrivel up. From this reading of the *Hexenzeitungen* from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it is evident that it was widely believed that the corpses of children contained magic powers and that the witches’ therefore killed numerous children for their witchcraft.

In general the methods that witches were said to use to cause *maleficum* differed very little in the demonological texts and *Hexenzeitungen*. This infers that belief in such practices was popular. Often the methods mentioned in the *Malleus Maleficarum* or the *Formicarius* crop up again and again. It is also important to note that the demonologists themselves copied and quoted each other’s text at length. Thus the same methods to invoke harmful magic were repeated in many of the leading treatises such as Jean Bodin’s *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers* (1580), Martin Del Rio’s *Disquisitiones Magicae* (1599/1600) and Maria Francesco Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum* (1626). However, sometimes the news reports repeated narratives and methods from these treatises. For example a report in 1594 suspiciously reported two cases of harmful magic that resembled earlier narratives.¹⁵⁰ One witch was said to have buried powder, given to her by the Devil, half a man deep under the threshold, where the horses go in and out, and in this way

¹⁴⁸ *Warhafftige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberschen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Hämburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen grentz verbrennt hat* (Vienna, 1618).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘Das marck in Beinen nehmens rauß / machen vergiffte Salben darauß.’

¹⁵⁰ *Erweytterte Vnholden Zeytung* (Ulm, 1590); *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden*, printed by Nikoloaus Schreiber, (Cologne, 1594).

she killed thirty-three horses. This story is strikingly similar to the story of the witch Agnes in Kramer's *Malleus*. Furthermore, a second witch in the report is said to have caused seven children to die in the womb and disturb livestock by burying a toad under a threshold. This story is undeniably a reworking of the story originally told in Nider's *Formicarius* about Staedelin. However it is most likely that the author copied the story from a more recent publication that included the narrative such as Bodin's *De la Demonamania des Sorciers* which was frequently reprinted in German around the same time.¹⁵¹ The major difference between the treatment of harmful magic in the demonological treatises and in the *Hexenzeitungen* was that the authors of the demonologies emphasised God's permission and claimed that the witches could not really cause harm. For example Bodin made clear in his work that '...one must believe that there is nothing done, either by demons or by witches, which is not done by a just judgement of God who permits it, either to punish those who deserve it, or to tempt and strengthen the good.'¹⁵² He added further that it was not the poison, or bones, or buried powders that caused death, 'but Satan, at the prayer of the witches by the just permission of God.'¹⁵³ The absence of this discussion of God's just permission in the *Hexenzeitungen* is conspicuous, as authors veered away from attributing the witches' harm to the Devil or God alone and instead hastened to make the witches appear as powerful beings, in league with the Devil, able to harm people in their own right.

The authors of the news reports in the sixteenth century must have believed that their readers were interested in factual and physical ways in which the witches caused harm. By focusing on the 'real' ingredients used they enhanced the reality of the reports, and made the crimes tenable and believable. Furthermore, it is apparent that there were a few prominent methods by which they were said to cause harm. One of main ways that they caused harm was by burying items under the ground, often under a threshold. As previously shown this method, which was originally

¹⁵¹ Bodin's work was quickly translated into German by Johann Fischart in 1581 and was entitled: *De Daemonomania magorum Vom Außgelassnen Wütigen Teuffelsheer der Besessenen* (Strasbourg, 1581).

¹⁵² Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 135. Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 111^{r-v}: 'Et faut croire qu'il n'est rien fait, soit par les Daemons, soit par les Sociers, qui ne se face par vn iuste iugement de Dieu qui le permet, soit pour chastier ceux qui le meritent, soit pour tenter, & fortifier les bons.'

¹⁵³ Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 139. Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 115^r: 'Ce n'est donc pas la poison, ny les os, ny les pouldres enterrees qui sont mourir: mais Satan à la priere des Sorcieres par la iuste permission de Dieu.'

cited in Nider, continued to flourish throughout the media reports in this period. The witches also used special powders and salves to harm and kill people and animals. They sprinkled their powder on people, places or animals, and they smeared the salve on their victims. Female witches, as this chapter has shown, were commonly reported to make their own malefic potions, however the Devil also gave them special unguents after making the pact. Interestingly men are never reported to make their own salves or potions; perhaps this is because cooking was more easily associated with women as a domestic duty. Overall men were less frequently reported to inflict injuries in the *Hexenzeitungen*, however when they did crop up their crimes were equally heinous and evil. For example in 1615 there was a shocking report printed in Nuremberg about three witch-priests from Ellwangen, one of whom baptised all of the children in the parish in the name of the Devil.¹⁵⁴ In terms of causing *maleficium* men usually used a special salve or magical item given to them by the Devil. For example, in 1594 a barber (*Badstöber*) was reported to have killed 400 people and to have blinded many others by using a black and grey salve given to him by the Devil.¹⁵⁵ Similarly in 1666 Simon Altsee was reported to cause harm by using a special root that he received from his Devil.¹⁵⁶

The broadsheet describing the crimes and execution of Simon Altsee importantly contained six woodcuts that directly corresponded to parts of the text. The images were linked to the text via an alphabetical key. One of these woodcuts (Figure 2) depicted the Devil giving Simon a harmful salve and ‘special root.’ The scene marked ‘E’ was linked to the text marked ‘E’ which claimed Simon ‘had received from the devil a root and salve, with which he made himself strong, also he crippled and killed people and animals [with it], also he poisoned the pastures eleven times.’¹⁵⁷ This is one of the very few images in the *Hexenzeitungen* that was related to harmful magic, and it is significant that the artist chose to represent the root and the salve (which is shown on the ground in a pot) which were used to cause harm,

¹⁵⁴ *Zwei hexenzeitung / die Erste / von dreyen hexen Pfaffen / unnd einem Organisten zu Ellwang / wie dieselben Christo abgesagt [...] Die ander: Von einer Vnholdin oder hexen / wie sie mit jhren Gespilen alles zuverderben vnterstanden [...]* (Nuremberg, 1615).

¹⁵⁵ *Erschreckliche erzelung vnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber, (Cologne, 1594).

¹⁵⁶ *Warhafft Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem erschrocklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden.* (Augsburg, 1666).

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: ‘E. hat er vom Teuffel ein Wurzl vnd Salben empfangen / mit welcher er sich vest gemacht / auch Menschen vnd Viech erkrumpt / vnd hingerichtet / auch die Waiden Ailff mahl vergiffet.’

rather than the actual harm caused. This highlights just how problematic the visualisation of harmful magic continued to be for artists.



Figure 2.2. Image from broadsheet printed by Elias Wellhöffer titled: *Warhaffte Beschreibung deß Urtheils /so Anno 1666. den 9 Januarij in der Churfürstlichen Residenz Statt München...*(Augsburg, 1666). Image taken with permission from the Münchner Stadtmuseum.

Harmful magic, although rarely portrayed in images, continued to feature in reports about witches throughout the seventeenth century. In fact one of the first reports of the seventeenth century printed in 1600 about the notorious execution of the Pappenheimer family in Munich continued to claim that the witches were guilty of murder, robbery, harming people and animals, causing marital discord.¹⁵⁸ The author immediately opened his report by exclaiming:

‘Terrible and sordid it is to hear, that six lowly and shabby persons, idolatrously bewitched, lamed, killed and murdered so many young and old people, exclusive of other great sins and evil crimes that committed with robbery, theft and other things.’¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ *Kurze Erzöhlung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen / was massen sie auch / an dem 29. Tag dess Monats Julij / in dem 1600. Jar / in der Fürstlichen hauptstatt München / von dem Leben zum Tod gebracht worden / den Bösen zu einem Schröcken / den Frommen aber zur Wahrung / für die Augen gestellt.* (Augsburg, 1600). For a detailed history of the Pappenheimer case see Michael Kunze, *Highroad to the stake*.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘Schröcklich vnd Erbärmlich ist es anzuhören / das Sechs so geringe vnd vnansehnlich Personen / so vil junger vnd alter Leüth / abgöttisch verzaubert / erkrümbt / getödtet / vnnd ermordt /

The author then listed the individual crimes of each of the witches, the father Paulus, his wife Anna, their sons, Gumprecht and Jacob and their accomplices Ulrich Schlzbour an Innkeeper from Tettenwang and the tailor Georg Schmölzel. Their crimes seem endless; the author makes this shocking summation of their crimes towards the end of the report:

‘So these six maleficent persons killed with sorcery a total of four hundred and one children and eighty-five older people..... committed twenty-eight church robberies, one hundred and seven murders, twenty-six fires, twenty-five nightly break-ins, nine highway robberies, thirteen thefts, twenty-one hail and showers, and destroyed an unmentionable amount of animals and pastures and made four bad marriages.’¹⁶⁰

The execution of the Pappenheimer family also attracted international attention, and in 1601 an English printer published an English copy of a German report by Lucas Mayer.¹⁶¹ Unfortunately the report by Mayer appears to be no longer in existence but as Mayer was an active *Formschneider* (block-cutter) in this period it is possible that such a pamphlet existed. The English report contained some extra information, including an account of how the wife Anna was responsible for a double suicide. The pamphlet explained that she made the wife of an innkeeper run into a burning hot oven through witchcraft, whereby she burned to death, and likewise caused the husband to be so ‘vexed’ that he thrust his head into a swilling tube full of swine’s’ meat and smothered himself.¹⁶² This is the only example that I have found where a witch has been blamed for suicide in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

The report also explained that the witches used magic to help them commit other regular crimes. For example, the son Simon used his magic to make himself invincible so that he could attack, rob and kill people, the father was also able to commit theft with his art as ‘no locke nor doore could withstand him, but by witchcraft he could make flie open.’¹⁶³ This use of magic to commit natural crimes is

ohne andere grosse sünden vnd vbelthatten / die sie mit Raub / Diebstal vnd anderen sachen begangen haben...’

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.: ‘Haben also dise Sechs Malefizische Personen / in einer summa vier hundert vnd ain kind / fünff vnd Achtzzig alter Leüth / mit Zauberey hingerichtet... Acht vnd zweinzig Kirchenraub vnd ain hundert vnd siben Mord begangen : Sechs vnd zweinzimal gebrandt : fünff vnd zweinzimal Nächtlicher weil eingefallen : Neunmalen Straßrauberey getriben : Dreyzehnmal Diebstall verbracht : Ain vnd zwainzig hagel vnd schaur gemacht : Vnzählich vil malen vich vnd weyd verderbt / vnd vier böse Eyen gemacht.’

¹⁶¹ *A Strange Report of sixe most notorious witches, who by their diuelish practises mured about the number of hundred small children: besides the great hurtes they committed vpon diuers other people*, printed by W.W. for T. Pauier (London, 1601).

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

comparable to the report from 1589 in which a young man's mother aided him through witchcraft so that he could poach.¹⁶⁴

Laming and crippling of humans and animals continued to be one of the major witchcraft crimes throughout the seventeenth century. In 1603 a female witch was said to have lamed men and women, and a male innkeeper from Ostum was also believed to have frozen wine and to have lamed people and animals.¹⁶⁵ The author reported that the witches used the method of smearing salves onto people to cause injuries. In 1618 a report from Vienna accused the witches, whom he refers to as the 'Zauberische Weiber' of harming people and animals and of killing thousands of people through pestilence.¹⁶⁶ It expounded that the witches sometimes murdered their own husbands, livestock and children along with many thousands of animals belonging to rich and poor people. Unlike the reports of the sixteenth century which gave elaborate lists of exactly how many animals or people were killed, sweeping generalisations began to creep in over time as the witchcraft persecutions rocketed from 1580-1630—undoubtedly exaggerating the crimes committed by the witches. However as the number of persecutions and witch burnings began to decline in the later of the seventeenth century, the scale of the crimes reported in the *Hexenzeitungen* also declined. From 1650 onward most reports refer to specific individual witches, such as the reports about Anna Ebelerin,¹⁶⁷ Simon Altsee,¹⁶⁸ and Anna Schwayhöfer,¹⁶⁹ and their crimes, although heinous, are on a much smaller scale. It is noteworthy that from 1650 onwards great crises became progressively less frequent and mortality slowly reached a state of stability.¹⁷⁰ The reportage of crimes

¹⁶⁴ *Zäuberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen...*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).

¹⁶⁵ *Ein Warhafftige Zeitung. Von etlichen hexen oder Vnholden / welche man kürzlich im Stifft Mäntz zu Ascheburg / Dipperck / Ostum / Könßhoffen / auch andern Orten / verbrenndt / was Vbels sie gestiftt / vnd bekandt haben. Im Thon: Pomey / Pomey / jhr Polen / rc.* (Frankfurt, 1603).

¹⁶⁶ *Warhafftige Newe Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Hämburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen grentz verbrennt hat* (Vienna, 1618).

¹⁶⁷ *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschrücklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen [...]*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

¹⁶⁸ *Warhafftige Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem erschrücklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).

¹⁶⁹ *Warhafftige Bescheibung deß Urtheils / so Anno 1666. den 15. Aprilis / in deß heiligen Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg / an einer alten Weibs-person namens Anna Schwayhoferin hat begeben vnd zugetragen...* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).

¹⁷⁰ Andrew B. Appleby, 'Epidemics and Famine in the Little Ice Age' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* x, no. 4 (1980), p. 643.

in the *Hexenzeitungen* reflects this change. For example instead of killing and laming hundreds of people, single witches are reported to have killed a only a small number of individuals. For example Anna Schwayhöferin is said to have only killed one child and made a person ill. While the main crimes remained prominent, namely, laming, crippling and killing humans, and harming animals, the number of people and animals they harmed were significantly less.

Conclusions

From this analysis of the crimes reported in the *Hexenzeitungen* a number of important observations can be made. Firstly, the main crimes reported in the media, excluding weather magic, were the harming and killing of humans and animals. This research has also shown that the main crimes in the media potentially mirrored *real* crises that people would have experienced.¹⁷¹ The fact that the crimes reported in the media correlated with existing tribulations undoubtedly added to the plausibility of the crimes of the witches. Not only did the harming and killing of humans and animals, and infanticide correspond to some of deepest ‘traumatic fears’ that contemporaries would have had—but it is well known that terminal diseases and high infant mortality were, in reality, prevalent in this period.¹⁷² In addition to this, while not everyone attributed the cause of ailments to witchcraft the belief in the magical or supernatural causes of some illnesses was widespread.¹⁷³

Furthermore it is likely that many contemporaries experienced the death of a young child as one out of every four or five people failed to survive the first year of life.¹⁷⁴ The media reports on witches thus offered to their audiences a new way to interpret the individual misfortunes they might have experienced, whether it was the death of a new-born infant, or the loss of their best horse. In the words of Robert Walinski-Kiehl ‘...the broadsheets were able to offer villagers the simple but

¹⁷¹ There have been a number of studies on how agrarian and weather crises affected the witch-hunt, see: Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Climatic Change and Witch-hunting: the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities’, pp 335-51, ‘Weather, Hunger, and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality’, pp 1-27; Christian Pfister, ‘Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts’, pp 33-73; Christian Pfister and Harmut Lehmann (eds), *Kulturelle Konsequenzen der ‚Kleinen Eiszeit‘*, *Cultural consequences of the Little Ice Age* (Göttingen, 2005).

¹⁷² Mary Lindemann, *Medicine and society in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 34.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

emotionally satisfying explanation that the seemingly inexplicable ills they repeatedly suffered were caused directly by an organized group of evil people,¹⁷⁵ who they could eradicate through the authorities. Although it is impossible to ascertain the effect such reports had on readers, it is obvious that a number of these reports clearly tried to propagate the witch-hunt, inciting people to eradicate witches from society. The reports also served an important role in validating the execution of the witches, by divulging, in detail, the heinous crimes of the witches the authors proved how just the authorities were for up-rooting the evil sect. For example, a report in 1589 announced concluded that the audience should ‘pray to God night and day, that he gives the authority strength and courage, that they wholly prosecute and uproot all witches with their devil spirits.’¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, the anonymous author exclaimed that ‘such vermin has no other use, than to be thrown into the fire’.¹⁷⁷

In terms of how harmful magic and the witches’ crimes were treated in the reports, it is clear that the authors’ of the *Hexenzeitungen* preferred to focus on *how* the witches caused harm as opposed to *why* the witches caused harm. Unlike English pamphlets which detailed the motives behind the witches’ crimes, such as refusal of charity or revenge, the German pamphlets rarely disclosed a background story and the witches are most frequently represented as killing and injuring people for no particular reason. Their malignity is overwhelmingly ‘motiveless’ especially from the 1580s onward. In the few cases that offer detailed narratives revenge appears as the main reason given for causing harm to the victim. The most pronounced feature of the reports is their elaborate descriptions of *how* the witches caused harm. Multiple reports gave lists of the supposed ingredients that the witches used to cause harm. By focusing on the ‘real’ ingredients used the reports achieve a certain level of credibility and enhance the believability of the crimes committed. Furthermore the ingredients that are said to be used are interesting in their own right, as they shed light on popular superstition in the period. This analysis has also shown that the use of children’s corpses to cause harm was commonly reported in the media—and that the use of child body parts to inflict injuries can be seen a direct inversion of the contemporary practice of using the bodies’ of criminals to heal.

¹⁷⁵ Walinski-Kiehl, ‘Pamphlets, propaganda and witch-hunting in Germany, c.1560-c.1630’, p. 62.

¹⁷⁶ *Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauberer / Stupe Peter genandt [...] Auch / wie man hin und wider viel Zäuberschen verbrandt hat / in diesem 1589...* printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589): ‘Darumb last vns Gott tag vnd nacht bitten / das er der Oberkeit sinn vnd muth gebe / das sie alle hexen mit jrem Teuffelsgespenst / ganz und gar verfolgen vnd außrotten’.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*: ‘...solchs vngezieffer anders kein nutz / dann ins fewer zuwerffen ist.’

Joy Wiltenburg argues that the media had the power to bring deviant actions from the margins of experience into the mainstream. No where is this more explicit, than in the case of mid-wife witches. Although very few midwives were prosecuted in the period, this research has revealed that the *Hexenzeitungen* brought the midwife-witch into the spotlight. Given the nature of the *Neue Zeitungen* as a genre it is not surprising that mid-wife witches made it so frequently into the reports, after all the authors endeavoured to include the most sensational stories and those that would be perceived as the most horrifying.

Overall the *Hexenzeitungen* offered contemporaries shocking and detailed reportage on the witches' crimes. However unlike other witchcraft concepts, such as the pact with the Devil, the treatment of harmful magic remained textual, and it was rarely included in the accompanying images. When *maleficium* was referred to visually it was usually represented by the objects, or ingredients, used to cause harm, as the artists struggled to signify invisible crimes.

On the whole, the pamphlets and broadsheets presented the crimes of witches as a *reality*. This is where reports differ from the demonological discourse concerning harmful magic, which as this chapter has shown, always highlighted the powerlessness of the witches and emphasised God's providence. Juxtaposed to this, authors of *Hexenzeitungen* did not question the efficacy of the witches' magic. While many noted that they worked with the aid of the Devil, the overall impression that is conveyed is that the witches were capable of causing harmful magic themselves; and that they were responsible for the death and destruction that ensued. According to the reports, witches could attack, cripple and kill you, your kin, cattle and livestock. However, as we will see in the next chapter, increasingly witches were believed to attack not only individuals but entire communities, even countries, with their own diabolical weapon of mass destruction—weather.

CHAPTER 3

Weather Magic in the Media

‘They all cried with great lament,
Oh God it is the Day of Judgement’.¹
(News report, 1576)

Unlike most *maleficium* or harmful magic, which was usually believed to be carried out by a single witch against an individual, weather magic was seen as an attack on the community as a whole. Witches acting alone, or, more often, together were accused of wreaking havoc on their towns and villages, destroying crops and wine by creating hail, frost and tempests. In this way witches were seen to be conducting a war on humanity, under the leadership of the Devil, and many pamphlets soon called for the immediate eradication of this evil sect of witches. For the period which this thesis is concerned, weather magic was the principal witchcraft crime reported in the *Hexenzeitungen*. In the sixteenth century it was the most frequently mentioned offence, with over twenty reports specifically referring to the crime. In the seventeenth century weather magic continued to attract media attention, although it was marginally surpassed by harmful magic as the most reported crime during that period.

Deteriorating weather conditions at the onset of the Little Ice Age led many contemporaries to believe that the end of the world was upon them, many of them believing that the unusual weather was being caused by witches and devils. While the reality of weather magic was hotly debated (and sometimes even refuted) in contemporary learned texts the *Hexenzeitungen* tell a different story - one of popular fear linked with belief in witches and weather magic. The starkest period of the Little Ice Age was from 1560-1630; it was during this same period that the witch persecutions reached their peak. In the last few decades historians and researchers, including Wolfgang Behringer, Christian Pfister and Geoffrey Parker have highlighted the importance of climate change and how it can affect society and

¹ *Warhafftige geschicht / vnd eigentliche Beschreibung / Von den Hexen Weybern / so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar / vnd im Westpfahlen / Prißgau vnd anderstwo /rc. verbrandt hat / dises 1596. Jar / in Reimen weiß verfast*, printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596): ‘Sie schryen all mit grosser klag / Ach Gott es ist der Jüngste tag.’

culture.² As a result of this research historians have begun to decipher the relationship between climatic epochs and events in history. To this end, it has been argued that there was a correlation between climate change and the witch-hunts. However witches were not the only ones held responsible for the ‘unnatural weather’. David Lederer has argued that suicides were also scapegoated during periods of crisis, as contemporaries believed that the act of suicide caused bad weather, by provoking God’s wrath.³ Like witches, those who killed themselves also had to cast out from the community of the living and the dead.⁴

This chapter will explore how contemporary sources explained the relationship between God, the Devil, witches and the weather; and more specifically how the concept of weather magic was treated in the media reports. Both learned texts and the *Hexenzeitungen* will be analysed. Firstly the contemporary discourse about weather magic will be considered, focusing on authors such as Nider, Kramer, Molitor, Brenz, Bodin and others. Then there will be an in-depth exploration of the concept of weather magic in the *Hexenzeitungen*, and how it fit in within the wider discourse.

The Weather Magic Debate

Up until the late fifteenth century the belief in weather magic was traditionally frowned upon by the Catholic Church and was mostly a part of the popular imagination⁵. As early as 563, the Second Synod of Bracara rebuked the Priscillian belief that the Devil could control the weather, and many of the ideas were denounced for their pagan origin.⁶ Right up until the fifteenth century learned

² See Wolfgang Behringer, *Kulturgeschichte des Klimas von der Eiszeit bis zur globalen Erwärmung* (Munich, 2007), Behringer, ‘Climatic Change and Witch-hunting: the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities’, pp 335-51, Behringer, ‘Weather, Hunger, and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality’, pp 1-27, Christian Pfister, ‘The Little Ice Age: Thermal and Wetness Indices for Central’, pp 665-96; Geoffrey Parker, ‘Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered’ in *American Historical Review*, cxiii (Oct., 2008), pp 1053-79.

³ David Lederer, ‘Aufruhr auf dem Friedhof: Pfarrer, Gemeinde und Selbstmord in frühneuzeitlichen Bayern’ in Gabriela Signori (ed.), *Trauer, Verzweiflung und Anfechtung* (Tübingen, 1994), pp 189-209 and ‘Verzweiflung im Alten Reich: Selbstmord während der ‚Kleinen Eiszeit‘ in Wolfgang Behringer, Hartmut Lehmann and Christian Pfister (eds) *Kulturelle Konsequenzen der ‚Kleinen Eiszeit‘*, *Cultural Consequences of the Little Ice Age* (Göttingen, 2005), p. 267.

⁴ Wolfgang Behringer, *A cultural history of climate* translated by Patrick Camiller (Cambridge, 2010), p. 117.

⁵ Behringer, ‘Climatic Change and Witch-hunting: the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities’, p. 336.

⁶ Midelfort, *Witch hunting in Southwestern Germany*, p. 15.

clerics ridiculed those who believed in the efficacy of magic; for example Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), a Franciscan theologian who was part of the Observant branch of the Order, is known to have scorned ‘foolish’ believers saying:

To chase away a storm that might threaten your crops, you must bare your bottom to the approaching clouds... There was a certain young woman in Genoa who, seeing the bad weather coming and wanting to chase it away with a spell, raised up her skirts from behind and pointed her rear end toward the bad weather. Just at that moment lightning struck and killed her, because she had faith in such foolishness.⁷

Throughout the Middle Ages canon law punished those who believed magicians could cause or affect storms.⁸ So where, how and when did it change? One could argue that it began with the Dominican friar and theologian Johannes Nider (1385-1438) and his work *Formicarius*, or ‘Anthill’, which was written in 1437 and 1438. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, Nider discussed various types of *maleficium* in the *Formicarius*. In book five, chapter four, Nider included an account of contemporary weather magic. He had heard the story from the judge Peter of Bern. According to Peter of Bern a great sorcerer named Staedelin had confessed, under torture, to conjuring hailstorms. Staedelin confessed that to cause bad weather he first implored the prince of all demons with certain words that he should send a demon to strike a place designated by them. Staedelin confessed that then, with a certain demon arriving, they sacrificed a young black fowl at some crossroads, throwing it high into the air. The demon then obeyed and immediately roused the air, but he did not always damage the places that were designated, instead sending hail and lightning to where the living God permitted.⁹ Nider appears to have accepted that witches could affect the weather; however, it is noteworthy that God still retained power over the magic, choosing where the weather should be directed. Interestingly, Nider also included a description of a counter-spell that Staedelin confessed to. Following his statement about how they caused bad weather Staedelin claimed that the witches’ weather magic could be counteracted by uttering a simple charm:

⁷ Rune Blix Hagen, ‘Weather Magic’ in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western Tradition*, iv, 1186.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1185.

⁹ The original Latin was ‘Primo verbis certis in campo principem omnium daemoniorum imploramus, vt de suis mittat aliquem, à nobis designatum percutiat, deinde veniente certo daemone in campo aliquo viarum pullum nigrum immolamus, eundem in altum projiciendo ad aëra, quo à daemone sumpto, obedit, et statim auram concitat non simper in loca designate à nobis, sed iuxta dei vinentis permissionem grandines et fulgara projiciendo’ in Johannes Nider *Formicarius* edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 4, p. 358. See also Michael Bailey, *Battling demons: witchcraft, heresy, and reform in the late middle ages* (Pennsylvania, 2003), p. 44.

‘I adjure you, hail and winds, by the three nails of Christ, which pierced the hands and feet of Christ, and by the four evangelists, Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, that you should fall dissipated into water.’¹⁰

This is notable as counter-weather magic rituals and festivals were to become popular in the sixteenth century; for example in Weingarten ad hoc processions and blessings took place during bad weather; similarly parish ‘hail festival’ processions took place in the Trier region which included prayers for the protection of crops from hail and storms.¹¹

In the 1480s attention was once again drawn to the danger of witches and their ability to conjure up bad weather. In fact in the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum*, printed in 1486, the author Heinrich Kramer dedicated an entire chapter to the witches’ weather magic, titled: ‘The Method by which they stir up hailstorms and rainstorms and also make lightning strike humans and domestic animals.’¹²

In that chapter the author examined how witches were able to affect the weather. He used scripture to found his argument that demons could indeed affect the weather, quoting the first and second chapter of Job.¹³ Kramer noted that the demons and their disciples could affect the weather as the demons received the power from God and that the demon’s disciples receive his permission.¹⁴ He reminded the reader that God used demons to act as his torturers when he inflicted evil in the world ‘as our sins demand’.¹⁵ But if the demons could create the weather themselves (as in Job), why did they need witches? Kramer claimed that the Devil preferred to use witches and sorcerers as God was more angered by this and thereby the demons were granted more power by God to punish and afflict.¹⁶ He noted that the weather could only be changed with the permission of God; however, he gave the impression that once God granted permission, the witches really did have the ability

¹⁰ Translation from Bailey, *Battling demons*, p. 133. Original Latin from *Formicarius* (Duaci, 1602), p. 358: ‘Adiuro vos grandines, et ventos per tres Christi diuinos clauos qui Christi manus et pedes perforarunt, et per quator euangelistas sanctos Matthaenum, Marcum, Lucam, et Joannem, vt in aque resoluti descendatis.’

¹¹ Dillinger, “*Evil people*”, pp 63-9.

¹² Mackay (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, pp 380-6.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

to cause storms and lightning. He drew from Nider's earlier work, quoting the story originally associated with Staedelin:

When asked by the judge how they stir up hail storms and rain storms and whether it was easy for them to cause them, he answered, "It is easy for us to cause hailstorms, but we are not able to inflict harm at will"... "We can harm only those who are bereft of God's help, and we cannot harm those who protect themselves with the Sign of the Cross."¹⁷

The method for causing storms also comes directly from Staedelin's confession:

First, in the field we use certain words to beseech the Prince of All Demons | to send one of his subordinates to strike the person indicated by us. Then, when a certain demon comes, we sacrifice a black rooster to him at a crossroads by casting it up into the air. Having accepted it, the demon obeys and immediately stirs up a breeze. Yet, he does not always cast the hailstorms and lightning bolts into the places intended by us, but does so according to the permission of the Living God.¹⁸

By using this example from Nider Kramer was seeking to highlight that the witches could easily affect the weather but that God's permission was still required.

However, Kramer also discussed his own knowledge and experience of witches who had affected the weather. He included a story of two witches from the diocese of Constance, Agnes the bathkeeper and Anna of Mindelheim, who supposedly created a 'very savage hailstorm.'¹⁹ He noted how virtually all of the inhabitants of the town believed that the weather was the result of sorcery. The matter was investigated and led to the arrest of the two women mentioned above. Agnes is said to have confessed 'freely' after a period of questioning under what Kramer refers to as 'the lightest torture'.²⁰ She confessed to many things, including having a relationship with the Devil, harming humans and animals and renouncing her faith. She was questioned in relation to the hailstorm as to whether she knew anything about it and she confessed (after torture) that she did. Kramer then proceeded to detail what Agnes supposedly confessed about the storm and the method she used to make it. Agnes claimed she had been told by a demon to make the rain. He told her to bring water and he pointed to the tree that she should put it under. She then poured the water into a small hole and stirred it with her finger, 'but in the name of that devil and all the other demons'.²¹ Furthermore, Agnes confessed that the Anna Mindelheim was her associate and that she (Anna) had done the same

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 382.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 383.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., p. 385.

under another tree. Kramer then reported how the very next day Anna wondrously confessed the same story after also being exposed to questioning ‘under the lightest torture’.²² The fact that they both confessed stories along similar lines supported the reality of the crime, and they were both burned the next day. The *Malleus* argued that these witches’ confessions were sufficient evidence that weather magic was possible, dispelling any uncertainty: ‘Nonetheless, it has been found on the basis of their unprompted confessions that sorceresses have caused them [lightning bolts]. Reason also lends its support, since they can cause lightning bolts as easily as they can hailstorms. Hence all uncertainty is removed.’²³

Discussion of weather magic was not confined to the designated chapter of the *Malleus*, but was also discussed earlier in the work in part two, chapter three: ‘On the method by which they are transferred in location from place to place.’²⁴ Here we are told the story of a witch who was hated by her townsmen, and how she summoned up a storm with the help of a demon as means of wreaking revenge following her exclusion from a wedding celebration. The method that she used to create the weather was similar to that recounted in the confessions of Agnes and Anna. She too was helped by a demon, and had to pour water into a ditch. However as she had no water she urinated into the ditch instead, and then stirred it with her finger with the demon beside her: ‘Suddenly raising this liquid up, the demon sent a violent, stone sized hailstorm over just the dancing inhabitants of the town.’²⁵ Once again the town folk were suspicious, and she ended up being arrested and executed for her ‘weather magic’.

The *Malleus* thus gave its readers the overall impression that weather magic was possible, even outlining the methods by which it was performed. And although the author stressed that it was with God’s permission and at the instigation of the Devil, he contended that the (female) witch should be blamed:

Therefore, as for the broom that the woman dips in the water to cause rain by splattering the water into the air, although it does not by itself cause the rain and the woman should not be censured for this, nonetheless, when she does such things as a sorceress as a result of an agreement entered into with a demon, she is rightly blamed, even though it is the demon who causes the rain, because with her bad faith and work she serves the Devil, handing herself over to his allegiance.²⁶

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., p. 386.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 292.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 299.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 356.

One cannot help but feel that the message of the text is somewhat contradictory; on the one hand Kramer acknowledged that the witch could not really affect the weather, but simultaneously he held her responsible. The point of view of the *Malleus* has been termed ‘strongly fearful’.²⁷ The text revealed real concern over the damage that could be caused by witchcraft or *maleficium*.

In 1489, however, another publication on witchcraft came to the press, Ulrich Molitor's *De Lamiis et Phitonicis Mulieribus*,²⁸ later translated into German as *Von Hexen vnd Vnholden*.²⁹ In this work Molitor responded to Kramer by providing an alternative interpretation of the relationship between God, the Devil, witches and the weather. Molitor began his treatise with a discussion of weather magic in Dialogue One ‘If the witches and sorcerers can also make with their deeds hail, thunder and rain’³⁰, and then discussed it further at length in Dialogue Nine ‘If the devil and witches can make hail and storms and do harm’.³¹ The fact that he placed the topic of weather magic at the beginning of his work highlights the importance he attached to it. There is a thorough debate between the three men; Sigismund, Molitor and Conrad.

Conrad is shown to be a believer of weather magic throughout the discussion; he began the conversation by mentioning a proverb of the philosophers: What one commonly says is not always wrong.³² He argued that the common opinion that witches can make thunder and hail, must be true, adding that the witches confess it under torture themselves and that one knows from daily experience that they learn such arts from one another.³³ However Sigismund offered a rebuttal and argued that common sayings were not always true. Furthermore, he argued that they should not be satisfied with the confessions that witches made during torture: ‘Since times often one must confess out of fear and pain during the painful questioning to something

²⁷ Midelfort, *Witch hunting in Southwestern Germany*, pp 64-5.

²⁸ Ulrich Molitor, [Latin version] *De lamiis et phitonicis mulieribus Teutonice vnholden vel hexen* printed by Johann Otmar (Reutlingen, 1489).

²⁹ Ulrich Molitor, [German version] *Von Hexen und Unholden*, translated into German by Conrad Lautenbach (Strasbourg, 1575).

³⁰ Ulrich Molitor, *Von Hexen und Unholden*, (Strasbourg, 1575): Dialogvs I ‘Ob die hexen vnd Unholden auch hagel / donner vnd regen mit der that machen können.’

³¹ Ibid.: Dialogvs IX, ‘Ob die Teuffel vnd hexen hagel vnd vngewitter machen / vnd schaden thün können’.

³² Ibid. p. 2: Conrad: ‘Es ist nit alles fehl / was man gemeinlich saget’

³³ Ibid.: Conrad: ‘So bekennen sie auch in der peinlichen frag selbs / vnd man weiß auß der täglichen erfahrung / das sie einander solche künste gelehret haben.’

that he has never done'.³⁴ Sigismund questioned the witches' ability to create the weather, arguing that if they really could, princes and lords would not need armies but only sorcerers. He also explained that as part of Christian belief, only God alone could rule the stars and the elements according to his own will.³⁵ He then asked: 'How then can the witches through the Devil's help and assistance intervene with the sovereign ruler, who prescribes for all things a certain order, hinder the sky's course and affect other things?'³⁶ Conrad Schatz responded by quoting examples of sorcery and magical marvels that happened in the Bible, including the book of revelation.³⁷

He quoted St John:

Thereafter I [John] saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, that held the four winds of the earth, that no wind blew over the earth, nor over the sea nor any tree, and saw another angel ascending from the sunrise, who had the seal of the living God and he cried in a great voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea...³⁸

Sigismund then asked who the four angels were that were permitted to damage the earth, and Molitor explained that it was the Devil. They then concluded the first dialogue informing the reader that the issue would be discussed further in dialogue nine.

Dialogue nine, 'If the Devil and witches can make hail and storms and do harm,' contained a much more in depth discussion on what role the witches had in creating bad weather and the role of God and divine permission. Moreover, it also discussed the natural causes for the weather. At the beginning of the dialogue Molitor pointed out for the first time that the Devil and people were able to nothing without the permission of God. Sigismund hastily questioned if this meant that they could inflict harm when God allowed them? Ulrich explained that the Devil could only do whatever God allowed him to do, nothing more. Sigismund then enquired as

³⁴ Ibid. p.2: Sigismund: 'Sintemal offt einer auß forcht vnd schmerzen in peinlicher frag bekennen muß / das er nie gethan hat'.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 3: Sigismund: '... Darneben so lehret vns auch vnser Christlicher Glaub / das Gott allein die Stern vnd Element nach seinem gefallen regiere / vnd das himmels lauff in ein gewisse ordnung fasse...'

³⁶ Ibid., p. 4: Sigismund: 'Wie solten dann die Vnholden durch des teuffels hülff vnd beystand dem obersten Regenten / der allen dingen ein gewisse ordnung fürscreibet / eingriff thün / des himmels lauff hindern / vnd anders außrichten können?'

³⁷ Ibid., p. 4. He quotes Chapter 7 of the Book of Moses, Chapter 1 of Job and Chapter 7 of St John's Revelation.

³⁸ Ibid., pp 4-5: 'Zu dem sagt auch Johannes in dem 7. cap. Seiner Offenbarung: Darnach sahe ich die vier Engel stehen auff den vier ecken der Eerden / die hielen die vier winde der Erden / das kein wind vber die Erden bliese / noch vber das Meer / noch vber einigen baum. Und sahe einen andern Engel auffsteigen von der Sonnen auffgang / der hatte das siegel das lebendigen Gottes / vnd schrey mit grosser stimm / zu den vier Engeln / welche gegeben ist zu beschädigen die Erden / vnd das Meer ...'

to whether God allowed the Devil to inflict harm on land and people or to afflict air and water.³⁹ Molitor's response to this issue is very interesting, as it provides an insight into the growing understanding of natural forces that affected climate conditions: 'Therefore I say that hail and storms and other things are oftentimes issued out of Godly decree and natural motion of the planets.'⁴⁰ Sigismund then asked: if the bad weather happened naturally, when then was the Devil able to cause such things? Clarification was supplied by Molitor, who stated that the Devil was allowed to do such things to punish our sins.

Following on from this answer, Sigismund raised this issue: 'How is it then that the witches themselves think and profess as if they perform such things themselves, namely changing the air, making weather, and afflicting people with illnesses?'⁴¹ This Ulrich Molitor explicated as 'foolish and false illusion' (*'ein thörrichter vnd falscher wohn'*). He argued that they were deceived by the Devil into thinking that they really caused the weather. When God allowed the Devil to cause bad weather, the Devil then told the witches to perform a foolish work (*'narrenwerck'*) at a certain place and time. When the bad weather followed the witches believed that they had created the weather, and therefore thanked the Devil and worshiped him. Thus once more, the witches were not seen as being responsible for the weather, but were seen as being true worshipers of the Devil.

Eventually the three participants came to a conclusion, which was that witches were not able to affect the weather. The final speech of dialogue nine, spoken by Sigismund summed it up succinctly:

I now understand enough from it, that the evil women neither make hail, nor can they create other misfortunes- but that such either have natural causes or are wreaked by the Devil, for the merciful and fair God, either to punish the evil or to test and reward the pious and will not be permitted without good reason and particular well meaning.⁴²

³⁹ Ibid., p. 40: Sigismund: 'Nun möchten wir wol wissen / ist es anders zuwissen / wann der Allmechtige Gott den Teuffeln erlaubt vnd gestatte / das sie dem land vnd den Menschen schaden zufügen / lufft vnd wasser betrüben rc.'

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 40: Ulrich: 'So sage ich derhalben / das hagel vnd vngewitter vnd andere ding sich offermals on des Teuffels würckung auß Götlicher verordnung vnd natürlicher bewegung der Planeten begeben..'

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 44: Sigismund: 'Wie kumpt es dann / das die hexen vnd vnhulden selbs meinen vnd fürgeben / als ob sie solche ding alle in eigener person verrichten / nemlich den lufft endern / wetter machen / vnd den leuthen kranckheiten zufügen'.

⁴² Ibid., p. 48: Sigismund: 'Ich verstehe nun gnügsam hierauß / das die bösen weiber /weder hagen machen / noch ander vnglück stiften können / sonder das solches entweder seine natürliche vrsachen habe / oder aber dem Teuffel anzürichten / von dem barmherzigen vnnnd gerechten Gott / entweder zü straff der bösen / oder zür prob vnd belohnung der frommen / auß grundloser güte vnd soderlicher wolmeinung verhenget werde.'

Molitor's text makes plain the issues that contemporaries had with weather magic. We can see the questions that they might have raised throughout the text; however, one must also consider the crucial element of the illustrations in this publication. Many editions of Molitor contained a series of woodcuts, and many contained a full illustration relating to weather magic. This image varied very little from one edition to another; all showing two female figures placing a cock and a snake into a cauldron (Figure 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3).

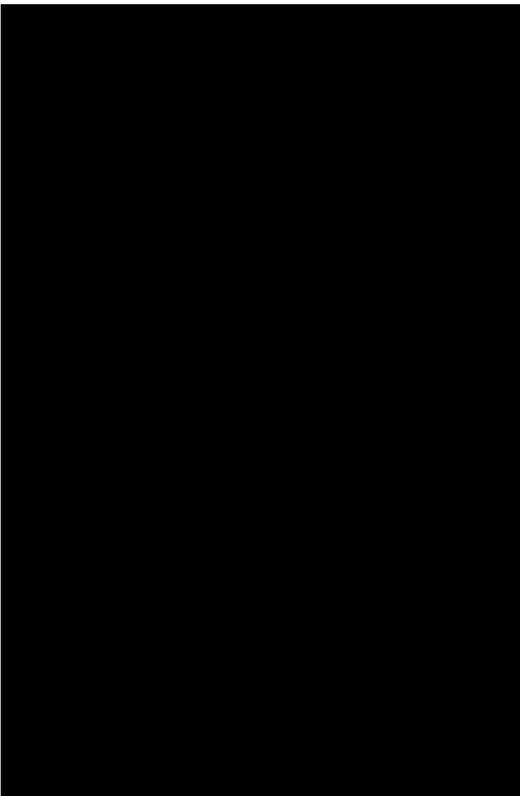


Figure 3.1 (Prüss edition)

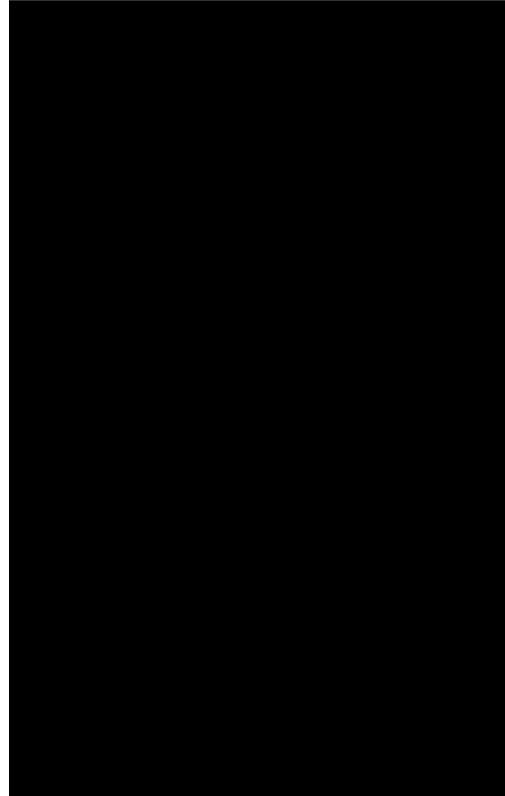


Figure 3.2 (Zainer edition)

Figure 3.1 (Above left) Image of weather magic, from Molitor's text, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* printed by Johann Prüss (Strasbourg, 1489) available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek (<http://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=inkunabeln/146-13-theol-14>) (29 Nov. 2012).

Figure 3.2 (Above right) *Won den unholden oder hexen* printed by Johann Zainer (Constentz, 1489?), available online on the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0003/bsb00033852/image_41) (29 Nov. 2012).

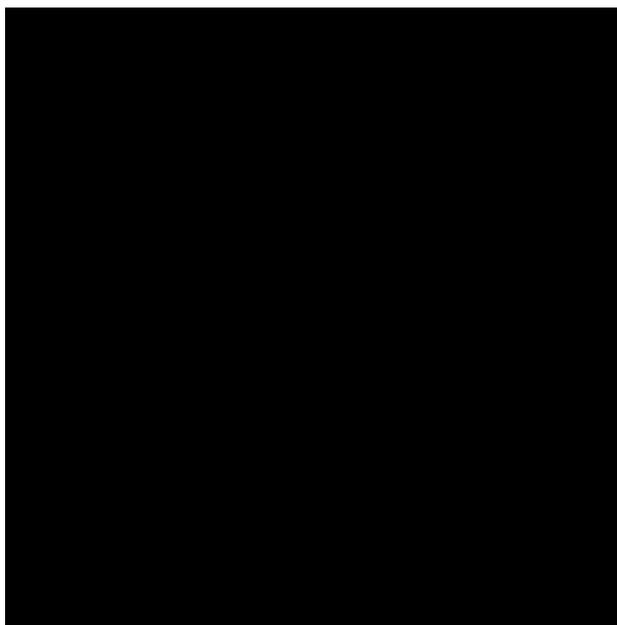


Figure 3.3 (Zierikzee edition)

Figure 3.3 Weather making from Ulrich Molitoris *De lanijs et phitonicis mulieribus ad illustrissimum principem dominu[m] Sigismundu[m] archiducem austrie tractatus pulcherrimus* printed by Cornelis de Zierikzee (Cologne, c. 1500), available online on Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek (http://ora-web.swkk.de/digimo_online/digimo.entry?source=digimo.Digitalisat_anzeigen&a_id=5043) (1 Dec. 2012).

This image (seen in figure 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) clearly shows two witches engaged in weather making. At the centre of the image is the cauldron, or ‘weather pot’ the contents of which they are heating over a fire. In all of the images the women have their hair covered and are well clad. That fact that their hair is covered insinuates that they are married. In the image from the Zainer edition the woman on the right also has some additional utensils hung around her waist. These images are very important as there are very few visual representations of weather magic. The two items that the women are using to cook up the storm are a snake and a cockerel. As shown in the previous chapter snakes were commonly referred to as an ingredient for causing harm, with the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, Kramer, arguing that snakes best served the purposes of enchantment as they were ‘the first tool of the Devil’ having led to the fall of Adam and Eve.⁴³ The use of the cockerel could possibly be a reference to the story told by Nider, in which Staedelin used a black roost to conjure the weather. Above the cauldron clouds are forming, and large drops of water or hail are bursting from the heavens. The positioning of the cloud exactly above the cauldron links the weather, visually, to the witches’ concoction. Juxtaposed to the

⁴³ Christopher, (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, p. 421.

text - which drew on various opinions on whether and how witches could affect the weather - the woodcut is direct, conveying its point with clarity and force⁴⁴ that the weather/hail is being created by the witches. Jane P. Davidson, argues that there is ‘a quality of factual reporting’ to these illustrations and that they had ‘the same effect on the fifteenth century reader as reading a modern news magazine would have on the twentieth century reader. This was reality.’⁴⁵ She also believes the overall impact of the image on the reader may have been more profound than that of text.⁴⁶ Therefore while we have quite a range of interpretations on what causes the weather in the text, the image does not reflect the diversity of the debate, but rather depicts what the debate was about, witches making weather. However, this image was ambiguous and could be interpreted by the viewer to mean that witches could actually affect the weather, which is contrary to the final conclusion of the text. Therefore while Molitor’s text officially denied the witches’ ability to affect the weather, the image demonstrates otherwise, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the majority of *Hexenzeitungen* undoubtedly side with the message suggested by the image.

Both the *Malleus* and *De Lamiis* were reprinted frequently in the course of the sixteenth century. However it was not until the 1560s that witchcraft persecutions began on a large scale, with the first major persecution happening at Wiesensteig in 1562.⁴⁷ Interestingly, it was at this time that weather conditions began to deteriorate due to the Little Ice Age. During this period the debate on weather magic was once again rekindled, after a bad storm caused the populace to suspect witchcraft was at play. The prominent players in the weather magic debate during the sixteenth century were the Lutheran theologian and Württemberg reformer Johann Brenz (1499-1570), evangelical pastor Thomas Naogeorgus from Esslingen (1508-1563), the Württemberg court preachers Matthäus Alber (1495-1570) and Wilhelm Bidembach (1538-1572) of Stuttgart, and, the physician of the court of Jülich-Cleves, Johann Weyer (1515-1588).

⁴⁴ Davidson, *The witch in Northern European art, 1470 – 1750*, p. 16.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ See Midelfort, *Witch-hunting in South-Western Germany: 1562-1684*, pp 88-90. There is also a pamphlet that reported the news of this event: *Warhafftige vnnnd Erschrecklich Thatten vn handlungen der LXIII. Hexen vnnnd Vnholden so zu Wisentaig / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seint*, printed by Friedrich Gutknecht (S.l., 1563).

In 1539 Johann Brenz gave a sermon on hailstorms and the question of witches, following a severe hailstorm at Schwäbisch hall. Brenz argued that natural disasters, storms and harvest failures were the work of almighty God – not humans. He even suggested that those who granted or ascribed to witches - the Devil's followers - and to magicians what pertained and belonged only to God's majesty, were guilty of idolatry too.⁴⁸ His sermon was later printed in 1558 and 1565, thus undoubtedly influencing the weather magic debate of the 1560s. Brenz firmly believed in providence; that God alone was the creator of all things. He argued that bad weather happened as a result of people's sins, and that the people who were calling for witches to be burned 'would do better to remember their own sins and many misdeeds, which they do very rarely because they never muddy their own waters and think that in the sight of God they are innocent.'⁴⁹ He believed that God made hail in order to punish the godless, the faithless, and the unjust, thereby making them recognise their sins in order to turn them to repentance and improvement. Brenz followed the same explanation as Molitor in describing how witches came to think that they had created the weather. He explained that when the Devil was allowed to create bad weather, with the permission of God, the Devil then deceived the witches into thinking they had created the hail or storm:

he [the Devil] at once turns to his tools, the witches, and encourages them to use their magic and to attack their neighbours by causing misfortune. And when the hail begins to fall, it comes not from the power and strength of the witches but from the Devil, to whom God gave control and permission. In this way the witches are deluded and deceived by the Devil into thinking that it was their work [...] when actually it is the Devil alone who causes such things with God's decree.⁵⁰

But even though witches could not affect the weather, they were nonetheless guilty of a spiritual crime due to their pact with the Devil and Brenz believed that they deserved to be punished on that account. Nonetheless he did sanction caution when persecuting witches, and preached that one should not rely solely on the confession

⁴⁸ Johann Brenz, *Ein Predig von dem Hagel und Ungewitter* (Frankfurt, 1558). The sermon was translated in to English by Erik Midelfort in Robert M. Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and revolution: problems and issues of European history* (Minnesota, 1974), pp 213-19. All quotes from Brenz come from this translation, however I have also consulted a later edition printed in 1565: *Von Donner /Hagel / von allem Vngewitter / woher sie komen / wie sie zuuertreiben / vnd ob die Zauberin vnd Vnholden so mechtig seien / das sie einen hagel vnd wetter machen können... Ein sehr nützliche predig vnd vnterweisung des Ehrwürdigen herrn Johan Brentzen* (S.l., 1565).

⁴⁹ Robert M. Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and revolution: problems and issues of European history* (Minnesota, 1974), p. 214.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 216-7.

but on proven ‘undeniable’ facts.⁵¹ His reasoning for this was that even if they were to burn all the witches to ashes, hail, storms and thunder would not cease, as they were sent from God.⁵² Therefore the only way, Brenz concluded, to remain safe was to do ‘true penance’ and to turn your heart to God.⁵³

However, not all preachers believed witches to be powerless, in fact some believed that the witches really could affect the weather, and preached the fear of witches from the pulpit; one such person was the evangelical pastor Thomas Naogeorgus from Esslingen (1508-1563). Following bad weather in 1562 the Esslingen pastor Naogeorgus supported the popular demands for witchcraft persecution and believed that witches were responsible for the weather.⁵⁴ However, his cry against the witches did not go unnoticed by the Esslingen city council, and on 18 August 1562 he was warned not stir up the people so irresponsibly.⁵⁵ Eric Midelfort has investigated Naogeorgus’ background, and found that after the witch panic he was dismissed for theological irregularity and died the following year in 1563. At the same time as Naogeorgus was preaching to persecute witches, two Württemberg court preachers Matthäus Alber and Wilhelm Bidembach, both of Stuttgart, denounced the rumours that witches could affect the weather in a series of sermons, which were subsequently printed.⁵⁶ They reiterated the arguments put forward by Brenz. Like Brenz they concluded that witches were guilty of a spiritual crime, and on those grounds should still be punished. In their sermon they sought to answer three questions: where the hail and other terrible harmful storms came from, why such storms happened and lastly, how one could protect oneself from harm.⁵⁷ They believed that God was the only one responsible for the weather, and that he sent bad weather as punishment for human sins. However, they also acknowledged that God could permit the Devil to create the weather, and that the Devil in turn could delude witches into thinking that they were responsible for the hail or storms,

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 218.

⁵² Ibid., p. 214.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 219.

⁵⁴ Midelfort, *Witch hunting in Southwestern Germany*, pp 88-9.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Mattheus Alber and Wilhelm Bidenbach, *Ein summa etlicher Predigten von Hagel vnd Vnholden* (S.l., 1562).

⁵⁷ Ibid.: ‘Wöllen derwegen auffskürzet vnnd eynfeltigst jetzmal dise drey stuck handeln. Zum ersten / Waher oder von wem die hägel vnd andere erschreckliche / verderbliche Vngewitter herkommen. Zum andern / Warumb / vnnd auß was ursach vnnd verschuldt / sie über vns vnnd unsere Gütter gangen. Zum dritten vnd lesten / Wie wir soche schäden fürohun verhüten vnnd fürkommen / oder so sie vns weytters begegnen / zü vnserm nuzen vnd frommen verwenden mögen.’

(as had been argued by Molitor and Brenz). They argued that people should look to their own sins, that when they called on witches to be burned, they were condemning themselves to the fire and that there would not be enough wood and fire to burn all the witches and, even if there was, the Devil, thunder and hail would still not cease: ‘And when one should burn all such witches, one would not have enough wood and fire, and in the case that all sorcerers and witches (which we also call them) were burnt, still the evil spirit, thunder and hail would not be burnt and so the matter would not be helped.’⁵⁸ They advised the authorities to act carefully in respect to witchcraft and told them that it was always better to let a thousand guilty persons to go free than to punish and kill one innocent: ‘Zü dem / ist es allweg besser tausent Schuldiger loß gelassen / dann einen Vnshuldigen verurtheilen vnd tödten.’⁵⁹ Although this makes the preachers look enlightened, it is clear that they still believed witches should be punished, albeit with caution, and not for their harmful deeds but for their spiritual crime. There was however one man in the sixteenth century who took it one step further and questioned if the witches were guilty at all: Johann Weyer.

Weyer, a famous physician, also commented on the reality of weather magic,⁶⁰ he too concluded that God alone could affect the weather, and that witches had nothing to do with it, but unlike Brenz and the theologians from Stuttgart, he went further, and concluded that if they were not really responsible for any harm, then why should they be punished at all? Weyer decided to discuss this issue with Brenz, and the correspondence between the two men is revealing. Midelfort suggests that it shows ‘the importance of accurate biblical interpretation in the sixteenth century and helps explain why even humane and reasonable men could believe in witchcraft’.⁶¹ Therefore a short examination of this correspondence will be constructive. On 10 October 1565 Weyer wrote a letter to Brenz. He began his letter by praising Brenz’s sermon which had recently been published.⁶² He believed that Brenz had rightly disproved the witches’ ability to create bad weather.

⁵⁸ Ibid.: ‘Vnnd wa man alle solche Vnholden verbrennen solt / man wurde nicht holz vnd fewel gnüg haben / Vnd im fall / das alle Zewberer vnd Vnholden (die wir also nennen) verbrennt weren / So were doch der böß Geist / der Donner vnnd hagel noch nicht verbrennt / vnd were also der sachen noch nicht geholfen.’

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Johann Weyer, *De Praestigiis Daemonum et incanationibus ac venefisciis Libri sex* (Basel 1564).

⁶¹ Kingdon, p. 219.

⁶² Letter from Johann Weyer to Johann Brenz, translated by Erik Midelfort in R. Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and revolution*, pp 220-25.

Verily you instructed and taught your congregation and dear flock rightly by displaying witnesses from Holy Scripture and also by showing the natural causes of hail so that it is in no way a work or creation of the Devil or of his followers, the witches and magicians, but that it is God the true author and ruler's creation and work, and that he sends such things to mankind that the godless may thereby be punished, led to recognize their sins, and encouraged to repentance and improvement of life. But also that the pious may be tested through such hail and storms whether they will remain steadfast in the true faith.⁶³

Weyer was in complete agreement with this part of Brenz's sermon; however, he objected to the second part, that the witches should be punished severely for their godless lives. Having reiterated Brenz's conclusions that witches had no power to cause hail storms and how they were only deluded into thinking so - which meant that they did not cause any real harm - he continued:

The law, however, does not speak of those who cannot work such magic, but of those who do use evil magical arts, which our witches cannot learn or understand because they are stupid, uneducated, dull, foolish, and crazy, and also because of their age and sex. And the law states clearly that it has those in mind who disturb and poison the air, which again our witches cannot do, as you [Brenz] explicitly teach. For no one can do that. Thus such witches are not referred to in this law for they cannot harm human life.⁶⁴

Weyer then addressed the issue of the spiritual crime. He believed that they should be trying to help old women who give themselves to the Devil. They should be trying to convert them and bring them back to Christ- not condemning them to the fire. He believed that their lives should be spared; if one must punish them he argued that miserable exile and a fine would be sufficient.⁶⁵ He also disputed the meaning of Exodus 22, stating the Hebrew word *Mechasepha* should rather be translated as a 'poisoner' and not 'sorceress', thus concluding that 'this decree does not concern our witches, who poison no one and use no poisons in their business'.⁶⁶

Brenz responded firstly by praising Weyer's work, but insisted on rejecting Weyer's argument that witches should not be punished. He argued that it was not the witches' crimes [which were false, and could not be real] but their evil intention and 'completed attempt' that earned them punishment. He stated that:

the law "regards the complete and certain attempt as equivalent to the crime itself." For these poor, wretched women do not only intend to disturb the elements with their cooking and other arts, but they do all they can with the greatest energy, collecting herbs, cooking them with their charms over a fire, and all those things that they have

⁶³ Ibid., p. 220.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 221.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 224.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

learned from the Devil and his followers. Here the law is right in punishing the “completed attempt.”⁶⁷

Brenz was not the only one to refute Weyer’s ideas: the famous French lawyer Jean Bodin also disagreed with Weyer. Bodin also disagreed with Brenz, believing that witches and witchcraft were a major threat to Christendom and should be rooted out aggressively. Jean Bodin (1529/30-1596) was one of the most important writers of the second half of the sixteenth century.⁶⁸ Bodin is famously known for his work *Six Livres de la République* which provided an analysis of political power, and also discussed the effect of climate on character. His work is considered to have influenced later scholars’ understandings of climatic determinism. Therefore it is noteworthy that in his work on witchcraft *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers* Bodin also included a chapter on weather magic. The chapter was titled: ‘Whether witches can send illnesses, sterilities, hails and rainstorms, and kill men and beasts’.⁶⁹ In this chapter Bodin drew heavily from the examples of weather making that were given in the *Malleus Maleficarum*. He retold the story Agnes and Anna, and of the witch from Constance, who after her exclusion from a wedding caused a storm with the help of the Devil by urinating in a pit.⁷⁰ Overall he did not add anything new to the debate on weather magic, rather he reverted back to *Malleus* proposing witchcraft and weather magic as real threats. This is important as it demonstrates that the fearful tradition of witchcraft was still prominent in 1580, and many of the *Hexenzeitungen* from 1580 onwards agree with this representation of witchcraft.

Thus one can see that contemporary learned attitudes to witchcraft varied throughout the sixteenth century. While Molitor, Brenz, and Alber and Bidembach preached of an ‘all powerful’ God, and believed that the witches could not carry out any real harm, they still believed in the spiritual crime of witchcraft. Others such as Naogeorgus and Bodin took on the fearful tradition of the *Malleus*, and were convinced that the witches could cause real harm with God’s permission. All in all weather magic was an important, albeit controversial, topic for theologians and demonologists. In the learned texts and treatises it was largely agreed that the

⁶⁷ Response of Johann Brenz to Johann Weyer, translated by Erik Midelfort in R. M. Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and Revolution*, pp 225-6.

⁶⁸ Scott, (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 9.

⁶⁹ Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), Book 2 Chapter 8, p. 109r : ‘Si les sorciers pevent enuoyer les maladies sterilitez, gresles, et tempests, et tues hommes et bestes’.

⁷⁰ Mackay (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, pp 380-6.

witches could not create bad weather by themselves, and while some suggested they could do so with the help of the Devil, who in turn relied on the permission of God, others simply refuted their ability to cause harm altogether. But did their work have any affect in altering the popular concept of weather magic? What did the *Hexenzeitungen* have to say about witches and the weather?

The crime of weather making in the Hexenzeitungen

In this part of the chapter I am going to explore the theme of weather magic in the *Hexenzeitungen*, and compare them to the learned discourse which has been discussed. Furthermore, where possible, I will discuss other source documents that provide further evidence for the weather conditions that are reported in the pamphlets or broadsheets. As mentioned previously one of the first large witch hunts happened in Wiesensteig in 1562. In the same year a massive hailstorm hit central Europe, destroying crops and vineyards and killing animals.⁷¹ The weather that year was so bad that it attracted the attention of a few news reports. One was entitled: ‘Concerning the immense and terrible signs in the heavens and on earth / which have occurred so recently’,⁷² while another was called: ‘A terrible new report. A truthful and thorough report, how the weather in the county of Wirtenberg has done huge damage.’⁷³ The latter reported how the weather was so bad that many thought it was the end of the world⁷⁴ and that such damage had not been done in over a hundred years.⁷⁵ The hail was said to have damaged crops, livestock and people, wreaking devastation. However this author did not hold witches responsible, but blamed the sinful lives of people. He asked for God to help them to right their sinful lives so that they could escape his wrath: ‘God help us and light up our hearts with your holy godly word and spirit that we work ourselves to rightly remedy and improve our

⁷¹ Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Climatic Change and Witch-Hunting: the impact of the Little Ice Age on Mentalities’ in *Climatic Change* 43 (1999), p. 335 and Christian Pfister ‘Weeping in the Snow: the second period of Little Ice Age-type Impacts, 1570-1630’ in Wolfgang Behringer, Hartmut Lehmann and Christian Pfister (eds) *Kulturelle Konsequenzen der ‚Kleinen Eiszeit‘*, *Cultural Consequences of the Little Ice Age* (Göttingen, 2005), p.32.

⁷² *Über die grossen und erschrecklichen Zeichen am Himmel und auff Erden / so in kurzter Zeit geschehen sind* (Leipzig, 1562).

⁷³ *Erschreckliche Nüwe Zytung. Warhafftiger vnd grundlicher bericht / wie das Wetter im Wirtenberger land so grossen schaden gethan hat / einem guten Freund zugeschriben* (S.l. 1563), copy of this text is available in Wolfgang Behringer *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland* (Munich, 2000), pp 137-8.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘...das meniglich gemeint der Juengstag sei vorhanden’.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

sinful lives / that we also escape the furious anger of our loving God and finally will be overjoyed with all loving Saints and elected Christians, through Christ, our loving Redeemer and Saviour, Amen.’⁷⁶ However, not everyone was of the same opinion, and the declining weather conditions sparked debate about who was responsible for the ‘unnatural’ weather.

In 1562 sixty-three witches were burned at Wiesensteig in south-west Germany. A combination of religious conflict and agricultural disaster are thought to have caused the panic. Wiesensteig had remained steadfastly Catholic up until 1555 when the reformer Jacob Andreae was invited to lecture there.⁷⁷ He was followed by other reformers, but they split into factions and argued much with each other as to which reformed church was the best. The Counts of Helfenstein, Sebastian and Ulrich, were ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the reform movement, and following the early death of Sebastian, Ulrich decided to return to Catholicism after suffering from an illness in 1567.⁷⁸ This meant that at the time of the witch-hunt, there was religious turmoil. Furthermore, the terrible hail storms, which were deemed to be ‘unnatural’ caused the population to pressure the authorities to find and arrest the witches responsible. But there was considerable debate over the issue. The Count of Helfenstein was undoubtedly educated in the contemporary weather magic debate; it was only later in the same year Naogeorgus preached for persecutions from the pulpit in nearby Esslingen. He would have also been familiar with the counter-argument of the court preachers Alber and Bidembach. While the latter had success at quelling the witch-hunt in Esslingen,⁷⁹ they had no influence on Ulrich von Helfenstein, who subsequently approved the arrest and execution of over sixty ‘godless women of Wiesensteig’.⁸⁰ Shortly after the executions, in 1563, a pamphlet was printed recounting the horrid deeds of the

⁷⁶ Ibid.: ‘Gott helff vns vnd erleuchte vnsere herzen / mit seinem Heilichen Goetlichen wort / vnd Geyst das wir vns zu rechter Buß vnd besserung vnsers Sundlichen Lebens schicken / das wir auch des grimigen Zorns vnsers lieben Gottes entfliehen / vnd entlich mit allen lieben Heiligen / vnd Ausserwelten Christen / selig werden durch Christum / Vnsern lieben Heiland / vnd seligmacher Amen.’

⁷⁷ Midelfort, p 88.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ In Esslingen all three persons that had been arrested there were let go, Midelfort has speculated that this could be a result of the sermons of Alber and Bidembach, and their advocacy for more moderate procedures. See Midelfort, *Witch hunting in southwestern Germany: 1582-1684*, pp. 88-89.

⁸⁰ Midelfort, *Witch hunting in southwestern Germany*, p. 89.

witches and their fate: ‘The true and terrible acts and deeds of sixty-three witches and sorcerers who were burned at Wiesenstaig.’⁸¹

When one examines the content of the pamphlet, it becomes evident that the author of the text also sided with Count Ulrich and Naogeorgus, even citing the confessed ingredients for ‘cooking’ bad weather. He explained how the witches were responsible for the bad harvests and how they had deprived people of foodstuff by creating hailstones, rain, wind and frost. However the author stated that they could only do so insofar as God allowed them (‘sovil jnnen von Gott verhengt worden’⁸²). Nevertheless he summarized the contents of the evil concoction required to create the weather. In order to make the hail they needed to use water in which they had boiled children, herbs and harmful animals.⁸³ They then, with many wonderful blessings and conjurations, threw the pot into a pit with the help of the Devil.⁸⁴ The pamphlet ended with this description. There was no mention of the importance of human sin. The witches were seen to be the ones responsible for the weather, and for doing so in the most despicable manner, by using dead children and enlisting the help of the Devil. Furthermore, unlike other pamphlets or broadsheets the author did not suggest how one could protect oneself from harm and did not offer any spiritual advice for the reader. Although the text did mention that God’s permission was necessary, it cannot be denied that the overall impression the audience was left with was that the witches were malicious, wretched creatures who caused real harm.

However, other pamphlets did stress that it was only God that could create the weather. For example in a witch report written in 1571 Reinhard Lutz (preacher of Sélestat) reiterated the idea put forward by the evangelical reformer Brenz that God alone could affect the weather.⁸⁵ Lutz claimed that witches were deceived into believing that they caused harm when it happened and that any damage caused was

⁸¹ *Warhafftige vnnnd Erschreckliche Thatten vnd handlungen der Lxiii. Hexen vnnnd Vnholden / so zu Wisenstaig / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seindt*, printed by Friedrich Gutknecht (S.l., 1563).

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen / Auch ketzerischen vnd Teuffels Weibern/ die zu Schlettstadt / deß h. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung / rc. sindt verbrennt worden.* (1571). Lutz’s work was also later printed in the *Theatrum de Veneficis* or *Theatre of Witches* (Frankfurt, 1586) which was a folio volume produced by the Frankfurt publisher Nicolaus Basse, the work contained seventeen treatises about witchcraft by different authors.

only ‘what the Devil does with the permission of God.’⁸⁶ His similarity to Brenz has been noted by both Stuart Clark and Erik Midelfort.⁸⁷ He agreed that they should be sentenced to death for their spiritual crime. However Midelfort argues that Lutz’s text demonstrated a certain ‘ambiguity’.⁸⁸ He points out that that while Lutz clearly agreed with the providential view in principle he still continued to regard the witches as physically dangerous.⁸⁹ This ‘ambiguity’ is a prominent feature not just in Lutz’s report but in many other *Hexenzeitungen* also, as authors struggled to try and reconcile the concept of an all powerful God with the idea of a world overflowing with the evil deeds of witches.

Lutz reported the execution of four witches in Sélestat in 1570, two of which were said to have been involved with weather magic, Ameley from Rottenburg an der Tauber and Barbel, the wife of Hans Schmidt. These accusations are not surprising as the bad weather in the later 1560s led to a hunger crisis in 1570.⁹⁰ In the words of Christian Pfister:

The severe European crisis of the early 1570s protrudes from the series, marked by a sharp peak. During the preceding decades, severe crises were absent, which may have led to an increase of vulnerability stemming from rapid population growth and the cultivation of marginal and risk-prone areas. Moreover, we must assume that the degree of public and private preparedness to cope with crises was declining. The subsistence crisis of the early 1570s was thus a bolt of thunder after a long period of economic sunshine.⁹¹

Ameley confessed to having tried to create bad weather by burying blennies, dog hair and rat hair inside in a hole.⁹² However she does not appear to have been successful. Similarly Barbel also attempted to affect the weather, along with other witches: ‘Like wise they had all wanted to make weather, so that the whole courtyard or place should sink or be wrecked, but it had only thundered.’⁹³ Furthermore she

⁸⁶ Ibid.: ‘Daß aber die Vnholden nichts anders mit jhren Teuffeln / den schaden vnd verderben der andern Craturen suchen / auch sie nicht anders meynen / denn sie selbs thun / was der Teuffel auß verhengnuß Gottes thut.’

⁸⁷ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 453; Midelfort, *Witch hunting in Southwestern Germany: 1562-1684*, p. 60.

⁸⁸ Midelfort, *Witch hunting in Southwestern Germany*, p. 60.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Behringer, ‘Witch-hunting : the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities’, p. 340.

⁹¹ Christian Pfister, ‘Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts’, pp 51-2.

⁹² Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeitung / Von Gottlosen hexen...: ‘Item/ Sie sey auch darbey gewesen / da sie mit einander ein loch bey S. Lonhardt gegraben / allerley hexenwerck zusammen bracht / lumpen / hund vnd ratzenhaar darein gelegt / in willens / ein grawsam wetter zu machen’.*

⁹³ Ibid.: ‘Item / haben alle wollen ein Wetter machen / dass der ganz plan oder platz solt vndergangen / oder zerschlagen woden seyn / aber es hat allein gedonnert.’

confessed to making hail for six years with her companions and how they made a hailstorm three years before, but she was not able to go as she was sick.⁹⁴

During the 1570s more news reports began to link the dismal climate to the evil sect of witches. And as persecution rose rapidly, the news reports eagerly reported weather magic as one of the key crimes of the witches and sorcerers. In 1576 two reports were printed detailing the persecution of witches in Breisgau. Hans Cudium, from Hof, printed one of these reports pamphlets. The report was about the burning of fifty-five sorcerers.⁹⁵ Unfortunately the printer of the other report from 1576 is unknown, as is its place of publication. The latter reported that 136 witches had been burnt in the Breisgau region; perhaps this report was printed at a later date after more witches had been burnt.⁹⁶ Both reports were written in rhyme to be sung to the tune of ‘Come unto me say the son of God.’ The two reports cover almost the exact same material, although they use slightly different language in their rhymes—however the overarching concepts that are presented are the same. Both pamphlets open with an account of the terrible weather that happened in the year of 1576. The report from Hof exclaims: ‘When one numbers the year 1500 and 76, forsooth / then one hears cries and laments / in many lands near and far as corn, wine and grain were frozen / in recent days gone by.’⁹⁷ The author adds that such weather has occurred as a result of their sins as they have enraged God: ‘Therefore Christ is much enraged / that we live seriously in sin / and let the punishment come / through the force of the Devil in some places.’⁹⁸ The other report also claimed that such weather was deserved as punishment for ‘our swearing / also gorging / boozing and gluttony.’⁹⁹ Similarly he claims that because of these sins God sent the Devil’s offspring (*teuffels geschlecht*) to impose punishment in some lands. Both of the reports then turn their

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ *Newezeitung und ware geschicht, dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breisgaw, wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken in die 55 Unholden gefangen und verbrent hat [...] in ein Lied verfasset, im Thon, Kompt her zuo mir spricht Gottes, Gestellet und gemacht durch Hans Cudium* (S.l., 1576).

⁹⁶ *Newe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breisgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrenndt hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn* (S.l., 1576).

⁹⁷ *Newezeitung und ware geschicht, dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breisgaw, wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken in die 55 Unholden gefangen und verbrent hat [...]: ‘Als man zelt 1500. jar / vnd 76. fürwar / da hört man schreyen vnnnd klagen / in vielen landen nah vnd weit als erfröret war Korn Wein vnnnd Träid / inn kürz verschinnen tagen.’*

⁹⁸ Ibid.: ‘Darumb ist Christus erzürner ser / das wir leben in sünden schwer / hat die straff lassen kommen / durch teuffels zwang an manchen ort...’

⁹⁹ *Newe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breisgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen* (S.l., 1576): ‘Solchs alles wir verdienet hon das wir haben erzürnen thon / Got mit vnserem schwören / auch fressen sauffen vnd fillerey..’

attention to the witches. According to the reports the witches were only permitted to carry out the weather magic because God was already enraged with the sins of people, and that in this way such harm and devastation was considered as just punishment. The authors both report the number of witches that were arrested in area of Breisgau, citing the names of the towns along with the number of witches executed there. Both reports alleged that the witches confessed to weather magic and that the Devil himself has asked them to create thunderstorms, hail and showers through ‘all the land’ (*durch alle land*) in order to damage the fruits of the earth. Following the Devil’s instructions the witches are reported to have created frost on the feast day of Saint Philip and James (1 May). The method by which they made the weather is also included in both of the pamphlets. According to one report the witches supposedly confessed ‘freely’ how they burnt frogs, adders and snakes with a roasted horse’s head, and how they set fire to herbs in order to make bad weather.¹⁰⁰ In addition, they used strange blessings. The other report also said that they used snakes and frogs; however the author did not mention horses or herbs, instead adding that they used a sow for their concoction.¹⁰¹ Ultimately both authors explicitly state that witches were responsible for the horrible weather that had damaged the corn, wine and fruits of the field. However, they also remind the audience that God is the one allowing the Devil to cause harm as punishment for human sin.

Unnatural weather was not always attributed to witchcraft. Sometimes the weather was interpreted as a sign of God’s scorn; that is, the weather was solely created by God without the help of any witches. In fact, on occasion two different authors could easily interpret the same natural disaster differently. For example on the 15 May 1578 the town of Horb was devastated by a terrible flood. Following the flood the printer Ambrosium Wetz printed a pamphlet in which he implied unequivocally that witches were responsible for the horrific flooding, titled: ‘A truthful and terrifying new report about the great flooding that happened in Horb, which belongs to the honourable house of Austria, on the 15 May this current year

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ *Newezeitung und ware geschicht, dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breisgaw, wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken in die 55 Unhulden gefangen und verbrent hat [...]* (Hof, 1576).

78, how they thereafter burnt many sorcerers / as they confessed terrible things.’¹⁰² However the same flooding was reported as ill-omen, or miraculous sign, in a broadsheet printed in Strasbourg.¹⁰³ The Strasbourg broadsheet reported the flooding along with news of two recent monstrous births. The author of the broadsheet described how the flood had unearthed bodies from the graveyard, and the image in the broadsheet displayed a body in a shroud and coffin floating in the flood water. Jennifer Spinks has noted that unearthing of the graves added to the apocalyptic air of the scene as it recalled for audiences the events of the coming Day of Judgement when the dead would rise from the ground.¹⁰⁴ The author told his readers that they must pay close attention to ‘warnings like these’ which were ‘not without meaning and effect.’¹⁰⁵ In contrast to this the pamphlet by Ambrosium Wetz did not consider the flood to be a sign from God but rather the direct result of ‘witches’ weather magic.

The author of the pamphlet printed by Wetz began the text by recounting how in May the witches gathered together in Horb and ‘wreaked great trouble.’¹⁰⁶ He asserted that at around midday (on the day of the flood) the witches practiced their Devil’s game (*Teuffels spiel*) under a lime tree beside a cool well. The Devil supposedly told the witches they would meet their end soon so they should reckon themselves at the right time. Upon hearing this, the witches were reported to have made a fire, and many bones were brought, and snakes and toads were baked. All sorts of grain were also brought and boiled in a pot. They then all danced monstrously with the Devil around the fire and afterwards threw the contents of the pot into the fire. The author professed that straight away the unnatural weather began:

‘Then soon started, a horrible roar with force, which sprung large stones from the mountains, some thirty-hundred weights heavy which broke the town wall.

¹⁰² *Warhafftige und ein erschröckliche neue Zeitung, des grossen Wasserguß so den 15. May diß lauffenden 78. Jahrs zu Horb geschehen [...] wie man hernach alda etlich Unhulden verbrent hatt wie sie schröcklich Ding bekendt haben*, printed by Ambrosium Wetz (S.l., 1578).

¹⁰³ *Warhafftige und schröckliche Bildnuß und gestalt zwoer neuer leydigen vngewonlichen Missgeburten ... Sampt der beschreibung des Erbärmlichen. Wassergusses/ jüngst zu Horb im Land Wirtenberg / den 15. Tag Maij dieses LXXVIII. Jars vorgangen* (Strasbourg, 1578).

¹⁰⁴ Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous births and visual culture in sixteenth-century Germany* (London, 2009), p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Warhafftige und ein erschröckliche neue Zeitung, des grossen Wasserguß so den 15. May diß lauffenden 78. Jahrs zu Horb geschehen [...] wie man hernach alda etlich Unhulden verbrent hatt wie sie schröcklich Ding bekendt haben*, printed by Ambrosium Wetz (S.l., 1578): ‘vil hexen kamen da zusammen / vnd stifften grosses leyden.’

Thereafter came a great body of water, it no doubt took away thirty houses, as I do tell you now, in addition it took away many horses, children and pigs.¹⁰⁷

According to this report the witches' involvement with this disaster was explicit. The author even recounted how one witch sat on the house of an old townsman with the wish to split his house, as a result 'the good man drowned inside' and 'the house was swept away very soon.'¹⁰⁸ The report stated that the desperate townspeople cried piteously to God 'rescue us Lord in this emergency and allow us not to be harmed, because they thought nothing other than they would all have to die.'¹⁰⁹ God then, allegedly took pity on the people and diverted the flood water. However unlike the two reports published in 1576 the author here did not discuss why God may have allowed the terrible flood in the first place. The pamphlet went on to inform the reader that not long after the flood many women were arrested in the city, and that the same women soon confessed about the evil deeds that they had done 'through the Devil's spite.'¹¹⁰ The witches are also said to have confessed that if God had allowed it they would have split the mountains with their arts and sorcery and let them fall on the town. Following this confession, along with the confessions of other crimes, such as harming animals and children, and fornicating with the Devil, nine witches were burnt publicly. The report also included details of other witch burnings that took place in Rotenburg, Offenburg, and Allgau before praying to God to protect their corn and wine, and all our seeds. Thus while the author held the witches accountable for the destruction of the town, he simultaneously recognized that God was the divine power and therefore the only one who could offer solace.

Only one year later, in 1579, another report was printed that reported about a weather making witch and her Jesuit accomplice. The report, written by Hans Kuntz, told the story of a witch from Dillingen who had not only practiced witchcraft herself, but had also taught other people the wicked arts, including a Jesuit (*Jhesuwider*).¹¹¹ The woman who was accused of witchcraft was called Fritzinne and

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.: 'Da hat sich angefangen bald / ein grausam prausen mit gewalt / groß stein vom Berg geschossen / etlich dreyssig zentner schwer / haben die Stattnaur eingestossen. Darauff ist ein groß gewässer kommen hat wol dreyssig heusser weg genommen / wie ich euch jetzt thü sagen / darzu vil pferd kinder vnd schwein...'

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.: 'In der Statt ein alter Burger saß / auff seinem hauß ein hexe saß / das hauß wolt sie zerspalten / der güte Mann ertrank darinn / das hauß floß wegk gar baldt.'

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.: 'Die Leuth schreien kleglich zu Gott / erreth uns Herr in diser noth / vnd laß uns nit verderben / dann sie gedachten anders nicht / sie müsten alle sterben.'

¹¹⁰ Ibid.: '...durch Teuffels tücke..'

¹¹¹ Hans Kuntz, *Neue Zeitung von einer Erschrecklichen That / Welche zu Dillingen / von einem Jhesuwider / und einer Hexen / geschehen ist [...]*, printed by Niclaus Heinrich (Urssel, 1579).

was 73 years old. In 1576 Fritzinne was reported to have created bad weather on the feast day of Saint Philip and James (1 May) in the Alsace, and along the Neckar and Rhine. This date is significant, as in the reports from 1576¹¹² the 1 May was also reported as the day that the witches had attacked the land through storms in Breisgau. Old Fritzinne was also accused of creating rain and terrible wind during 1578 and was reportedly apprehended by the authorities, but as she would not confess she was released from prison. Upon her release she began to teach her art to a Jesuit who had offered to pay her. Once the Jesuit had joined with the Devil he conspired immediately to avenge all his enemies through the art of witchcraft by using weather magic. The enemies he had in mind were none other than the Lutherans. So on the 2 August 1579 the Jesuit, along with the Devil and old Fritzinne worked together to create terrible weather over Thuringia, Sachsen, Meissen and all Lutheran territories. The Jesuit hoped that the storm would not only destroy the fields and grains, corn and wine, but also buildings, trees, people and babies, which Kuntz alleged ‘partly happened.’¹¹³ With the help of the old woman such ‘uncouth weather with rain and cold’ damaged the fruits so that none of them could ripen. Eventually old Fritzinne was arrested after being caught trying to kill someone in the bath house, however the Jesuit was reportedly never caught. This report is fascinating as it combines witchcraft with Reformation propaganda. The narrative implies that Jesuits were in league with witches and the Devil and are conspiring to harm all Lutheran states through magical means. In terms of belief, the author, Hans Kuntz, does not question the truth of the story or whether it was possible for witches to affect the weather. He reports the narrative as an actuality—presenting merely the *facts*.

The issue of weather magic remained an important topic throughout the 1580s and 90s. In 1580 a report printed in Hof once again confronted the issue of who was responsible for the weather.¹¹⁴ The pamphlet reported how in this short

¹¹² Hans Cudium, *Newezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unholden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben.* (Hof, 1576); *Newe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breisgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn* (S.l., 1576).

¹¹³ Hans Kuntz, *Newe Zeitung[...]* (Urssel, 1579): ‘Nach seinem gefallen verwüstet / vnd verderben / welchs zum theil geschehen.’

¹¹⁴ *Zwo Neue Zeittung, was man für Hexen oder Unholden verbrent hat / von dem siebenden Hornung an biss auff den zwentzigsten Höwmonat diss MDLXXX. Jars / auch darbei angezeigt / an*

period over 114 witches had been burnt in various localities in southwest Germany and the Alsace region. The author wrote his report in the form of a ballad to be sung – a much-used technique in popular literature:

‘Hear Oh Christians, what is now sung to you; listen eagerly to what has recently happened – great misery and a miracle! Behold an evil deed, this year, as I will show. They executed many witch-women, as I will shortly show, and what they did; behold the great wonder.’¹¹⁵

He swiftly outlined the numerous where witches were burnt, and how many were executed in each place. The list of the towns seemed to go on and on, with witches perishing at every one. Nine died at Wurza, five at Biberach, nine in the Allgau, three in Wanga and Isna and so on. The author appears to have recounted all kinds of witch burnings, both big and small. The report suggested that widespread witch persecutions were taking place throughout the land. It portrays how some sort of witch-mania had swept over the country side, but more importantly it highlights the growing focus on weather magic as an explanation for the deteriorating weather conditions, which had well set in by 1580. It is fair to say that while the first half of the pamphlet reported where and how many witches were burnt, the other half dealt with the crimes of the witches, and one crime was at the centre of attention- weather magic. The author sensationally exclaimed that he ‘must tell what they confessed; I cannot remain silent’.¹¹⁶ The first thing he mentioned is how they had tried to cause frost throughout the land on Holy Pentecost and in order to do so:

They prayed to the Devil for help and counsel. At once they buried three pails of corn, wine and grain in three places. There was a young maid there from Wurzach, who was the daughter of witch. They looked and found the pails deep in the woods, full of all kinds of fruit. They seized her at once and said the Devil had taught her to harm man, woman and child.¹¹⁷

He told the readers how they confessed that they all came together and how the Devil had told them to make a storm ‘so that no one would bring sickles to the fields for thirty German miles around.’¹¹⁸ However, the author did not believe that the witches could do as they wished; he believed that God had the power to affect the

*was ohrt und enden, auch was sie bekendt haben [...] (Hof, 1580). For the discussion of this pamphlet the author will be using the complete English translation by Erik Midelfort, in Robert M. Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and revolution: problems and issues of European Renaissance and Reformation history* (Minneapolis, 1975), pp 211-213.*

¹¹⁵ Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and Revolution*, p. 211.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 213.

witches' deeds: 'And they said they wanted it [the bad weather] to start in that place on the day of Christ's Ascension. But God used his power to protect so that the storm went no farther than five German miles, starting in the Black Forest and having a width of one-half mile.'¹¹⁹ However despite God's supposed intervention the weather still destroyed most of the grain in the fields at Biberach and ruined the fruit of the trees at Breisach. Was this an 'all powerful' God? Instead of God being the one responsible for the bad weather, the source impressed upon its reader that there was real harm being carried out by the witches and that God was trying to protect them from it –in other words a battle between good and evil.

According to the report it was not only the Devil who was beckoning the witches to create bad weather at their assembly or gathering, the witches' demonic paramours also told them to make a large storm:

With their strange help it could happen. So they tried five times to make hail which was to wreak destruction. They couldn't make a storm as large as they wanted, but a rainstorm came that did much harm to houses, mills, grain, corn, which drowned in the fields of many pious folk. Shortly afterward they confessed that if they hadn't been caught so quickly, they would have made a storm for forty German miles around, that would have caused much more damage. They would have ruined so much grain and wine so far round that no pious upright man could have made even half a measure of wine or brought even half a bushel of grain into his barn.¹²⁰

By executing the witches the author believed they were preventing the terrible weather from happening, or so went the logic. Even the witches themselves confessed that if they had not been caught by the authorities they would have wreaked worse damage.

Narratives about weather magic that were included in demonologies also sometimes made it into pamphlets. For example in 1581 a rather exceptional story about a young girl who was able to perform weather magic, contained in the *Malleus Maleficarum* was re-worked into German and passed off as current news.¹²¹ The pamphlet was titled:

A terrifying truthful report, that happened in the Margraviate of Baden, in a village known as Knylingen, which lies one mile away from Ettlingen, about an old sorceress who taught the Devil's art and sorcery to her own daughter, who was only 8 years of age, which afterwards was revealed when the little girl made weather for her father in the fields (because the father wished for rain) and the old sorceress was

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 212.

¹²⁰ Ibid. p. 212-3.

¹²¹ *Erschreckliche / Warhafftige / Neue Zeitung / so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen / in einem Dorff Knylingen genand [...] von einer alten Zeuberin / welche irem eignen Tochterlein [...] Teuffelskunst und Zeuberey gelehret [...]*, printed by Melcher Sachsen (Erfurt, 1581).

thereafter given to the authorities by her own husband, and was sentenced from life to death.¹²²

This highlights the growing market interest in stories about weather making witches. If printers or authors were unable to find a real narrative from their locality, they could always (and sometimes did, as chapter five will show) steal older stories and print them as current news. It is worth including a short summary of the narrative that the author stole from the *Malleus* here. The story was about a young eight year old girl who learnt witchcraft from her mother. When the little girl was out checking the crops with her father, the father expressed concern over the dryness of the earth. Upon hearing her father's concerns the little girl offered to make rain for him. In fact she told her father that not only could she make rain, but also hail and storms. The father, shocked, asked her where she had learnt such things. The girl told her father that it was her mother who taught her, and that her mother had entrusted her to a master. When the father asked what this master looked like, the girl responded by saying many men went to visit mother everyday and that 'they go in and out of the house'¹²³ and that her mother said 'it is our master, I should receive them gloriously.'¹²⁴ The father, seeking proof, asked his daughter to summon rain, but only in their field. The girl complied and by using a little water from a stream, in which she placed her hand in the name of her master, she caused rain over the father's field alone. The father then asked her make hail, and when she did this too, he became certain that his wife was a witch and duly accused her before a judge. His wife was convicted and burnt to ashes; however the daughter was delivered from the curse of the Devil. Overall the narrative made it seem as though weather magic was so easy that even a child could do it. There is no mention of human sin or of God's power.

¹²² Ibid: 'Erschreckliche, warhafftige, neue Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen, in einem Dorff Knylingen genand / ein Meyl weges von Ettlingen gelegen / von einer alten Zeuberin / welche irem eignen Töchterlein / die nur acht Jahr alt gewesen / Teuffelskunst vnd Zeuberey gelehret / welchs darnach das Megdlein dem Vater auff dem felde durch ein Wetter machen (weil der Vatter ein Regen wünschte) offenbaret / Vnd ist solche alte Zeuberin hernach durch ihren eigenen Mann bey der Oberkeit angeben / vnd von Lebeb zum Tode verurtheilt worden.'

¹²³ Ibid.: 'Das Megdlein zu dem Vater saft / Es kommen zur Mutter alle tag / Etliche Menner gegangen / die gehn im hause auß und ein.' See also Christopher Mackay (ed. and trans.) *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, p. 374.

¹²⁴ Ibid.: 'die Mutter spricht: Es vnser Meister sein / ich solt sie herrlich empfangen.'

In 1582 there was a surge in the number of reports describing the terrible bad weather that was being experienced throughout Germany.¹²⁵ On the whole most authors considered this weather as a punishment or warning from God. For example a pamphlet printed by Hans Ringer included a woodcut on the title page that depicted God sending the weather from the heavens (Figure 3.4).

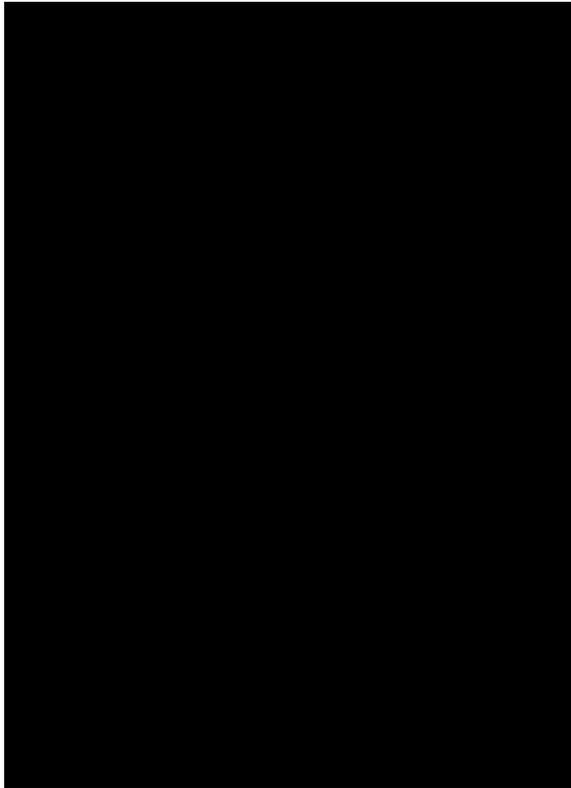


Figure 3.4 Woodcut showing God producing hail from title page of *Warhafftige vnd Erschröckliche Newe Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter vnd Schawr so geschehen den 12. Tag May des 82. Jars im Hochlöblichen Hertzogthumb Obern Bayern drey Meyl von der Fürstlichen Hauptstatt München vber der Jser ergangen vnd für was schaden es gethon dergleichen in Teutschland vor nie erhört worden* printed by Hans Ringer (1582) available on DFG viewer (http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0002/bsb00026843/image_1) (20 Nov. 2012).

¹²⁵ Marcum Magnerum, *Warhafftige/ schreckliche drewung vnd warnung/ der || Allmechtigen/ ewigen/ guetigen Prouidentz/|| vber des gantzen Menschlichen geschlechts Suende/ als/|| daß ein Stein vom Himmel herab gefallen/ in einem || grossen Wetter/ Neun vnd viertzig Pfundt wegende/ Anno Christi 1581. den 26. Julij/ in Dueringen/|| im Fluhr/ des Dorffs Niderreussen/ nicht weit von || Budstadt/ Sampt andern einfeltigen kurtzen Wun=||lderwercken ... || zusammen gefasset* (Magdeburg, 1582); *Warhafftige und erschreckliche newe Zeitung von einer jungen Dienern, welche sich dem Teufel sechs Jahr lang ergeben (...), Item von grewlichen ungestümen Wettern, so den 12. Maii dieses 1582. Jars in Baiern (...) grossen Schaden an Menschen und Viehe gethan haben* (Dresden, 1582); *Warhafftige vnd Erschröckliche Newe Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter vnd Schawr so geschehen den 12. Tag May des 82. Jars im Hochlöblichen Hertzogthumb Obern Bayern drey Meyl von der Fürstlichen Hauptstatt München vber der Jser ergangen vnd für was schaden es gethon dergleichen in Teutschland vor nie erhört worden* printed by Hans Ringer (S.l., 1582).

Beneath the image the author included a reference to the bible to chapter twenty-five of the book of Isaiah: ‘The Lord says: Turn you to me, and I will allow you help.’¹²⁶ However one author, whom I will look at here, linked the dismal conditions to witchcraft by adding a second report to the original ‘weather report’ detailing the recent arrest and execution of witches who were allegedly responsible for the weather. This pamphlet was titled: ‘A truthful and credible report. How in this year, 1582, well over 225 women were burnt: And what terrible things they confessed. Also what great harm they did against people and animals and made, with their sorcery, terrible big weather in the last summer in Germany.’¹²⁷ The first part of the report contained the exact same description of the recent weather as printed in two other reports;¹²⁸ the only difference being the name of the towns. However it is hard to ascertain whether the other printers copied Wiriod’s report, or if he copied theirs. Irrespectively, Wiriod’s account, printed in 1582, was the only one to include an additional report attributing the weather to the witches. The report appears to have been successful, as not only did Wiriod reprint it twice in 1583, but another author in Wesel copied the majority of the report and printed it in the form of a new song in 1583. Further details about this copying and plagiarism will be discussed in chapter five. Needless to say the contents of such a popular report call for examination.

Nicolaus Wiriod first printed the report, which was divided into two sections, in Strasbourg in 1582. In the first part of Wiriod’s 1582 report, the author gave an account of the recent weather and the damage that it caused. The contents of this part of the report contain the exact same descriptions of the recent weather that can be

¹²⁶ *Warhafftige vnd Erschröckliche Newe Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter* printed by Hans Ringer (S.l., 1582): ‘Spricht der Herr: Wendet euch zu mir / vnd laßt euch helffen.’ It is noteworthy that this quotation is more in keeping with Isaiah 45:22: ‘Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.’ *The new Oxford annotated Bible: new revised standard version*, ed. Michael D. Coogan (Oxford, 2007), p. 1042.

¹²⁷ *Warhafftige vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung. Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr / wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekendt haben. Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan / vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wetter in diesem vergangen Sommer im Teutschlandt gmacht haben*, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582).

¹²⁸ *Warhafftige und erschreckliche neue Zeitung von einer jungen Dienern / welche sich dem Teufel sechs Jahr lang ergeben [...] Item von grewlichen ungestümen Wettern, so den 12. Maii dieses 1582. Jars in Baiern [...] grossen Schaden / an Menschen und Viehe gethan haben*, printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1582); *Warhafftige vnd Erschröckliche Newe Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter vnd Schawr so geschehen den 12. Tag May des 82. Jars im Hochlöblichen Hertzogthumb Obern Bayern drey Meyl von der Fürstlichen Hauptstadt München vber der Jser ergangen vnd für was schaden es gethon dergleichen in Teutschland vor nie erhört worden* printed by Hans Ringer (S.l., 1582).

seen in Ringer's report. The author reported that the bad weather began on a Saturday:

'The first weather began on Saturday 12 May in the afternoon at three o'clock, and lasted until late in the night, with thunder, lightning and hard pounding that the people in the same places- supposed nothing other, than the world was crumbling to the ground and the Judgement day was already present.'¹²⁹

The weather was described as being totally abnormal, even apocalyptical, possibly marking the end of world.

He then listed the damage and harm that had been wreaked by the weather in various towns and places. In Mimpelgart the weather smashed windows of the castle and damaged crops, while in another town, over 200 hundred sheep were killed, along with their shepherd who drowned with them after another cloudburst. In the village of Herzhausen 14 houses were smashed to the ground so that the people inside were crushed including seven children. Likewise many people and animals were killed in Stockbrunnen, Sultzhausen and Putzenbrun. All of these facts and figures were also reported in the two other weather reports, albeit with different place names. According to the two other reports this destruction happened in Markt Hag/Hach, Burckhausen and Herla.

In Obernberg, the author claimed so many animals died in the fields that the farmers had enough to drive their corpses home in many wagons. The weather even damaged buildings that one had thought impermeable to weather: 'It thrashed 14 houses and stables so terribly, that were considerably built, that one had thought / it was impossible that weather could do so much damage.'¹³⁰ In the other two reports this was reported to have happened in the town of Hohenbrunn.

The author of Wiriod's report gave a detailed description of the weather:

'... the weather raged so rough and atrocious and howled in the air, as when one hears wild oxen: It also pelted hailstones bigger than two men's fists and many like hens eggs / the smallest still as big as marbles and it rained after so thick: it killed seven cows and eight big pigs belonging to a farmer and also thrashed houses and the town.'¹³¹

¹²⁹ *Warhafftige vnd glaubwirdige Zeytung [...] printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582):* 'Das erste wetter hat am Samstag nach mittag den 12 May / bey drey uhren angefangen / vnd gewehret biß auff Enisse in die nacht / mit Donner / Plitzen / vnd Schawrschlagen / das die Menschen derselben orten / nicht anderst vermeint / dan die Welt werde zu grundt gehen vnd seye der Jüngst tag schon verhanden.'

¹³⁰ *Ibid.:* 'Es hat bey vierzehen heuser vnnnd städl so gewrelich nider geworffen die zimbleich erbaut gewesen / das einer vermeint het / es wer unmöglich dz ein wetter souil schaden thun könte.'

¹³¹ *Ibid.:* 'da hat das Wetter also grob vnd grausamblich getobet vnd im luftt geprüllet /

The weather in Waldkirchen was apparently so bad that people thought the world was going to its doom. However following the bad weather, they found a stone from the storm and broke it up, and in it they found hair and other ‘zauberische’ things, thus linking the weather to the witches. Hans Ringer’s pamphlet also included an account of how after the storm a stone was found which contained ‘hair and other magical things.’¹³² However, the author of report printed by Ringer did not discuss the connection between the witches and the weather at any further length.

In contrast to this, the author of Wiriod’s report included a separate account of what he terms the other weather: ‘Das ander Wetter.’ In this part of the report all of the weather was explicitly professed as being caused by witches. In this section the author listed several places and the number of witches that had been executed there and what crimes they had committed. At the forefront of all their crimes was weather magic. In Neckarsulm on the 26 July a witch caused so much harm that in a two hundred acre vine-yard ‘not three measures of wine were to be made’¹³³, she was subsequently burned.

However, the witch did not always work alone; the author informed the reader how in Mimpelgart the witches created the weather together on a mountain at a dance:

You should also have a credible account- of how in Mumpelgart on a mountain, a pot was captured and many peculiar things from all fruits were in it and it belonged to the witches or sorcerers, whatever one will call them, well enough there were 134 of them, who held a dance on the mountain on the 21 of July. Under these witches, there was a cow herder (female) who spilt the pot as she was supposed to, but bitterly cried over it, her companions asked her why she was crying? She answered them: she felt sorry only for the small children and the innocent blood that shall die through this weather / as soon as she had spilt the pot, only even half of it, there followed horrible and terrible weather and great harm was done, as is still evident to see.¹³⁴

als wan man wilde Ochsen höret: Es hat auch also Kiselstein geworffen / zweyer mans feust gros vnd etliche wie die henen Ayer / die kleinsten also gros wie schusser / vnd so dick als ab daher regnet: Es hat einem Bawren sibem Khüe / vnd acht grosser schwein erschlagen / es hat auch heuser vnd stadt nidergeworffen.’

¹³² *Warhaffte vnd Erschröckliche Neue Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter [...]* printed by Hans Ringer (1582): ‘Vnd wann man hernacher Stein gefunden hat die auff klaubt vnnd zerschlagen/ so hat man haar vnnd andere Zäuberische ding darinn gefunden.’

¹³³ *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung [...]*, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582): ‘...nicht drey Mas Wein lesen’.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘Ihr solt auch ein glaubwürdigen bericht haben / wie das man bey Mümpelgart / auff einem Berg / den hafen gefungen hat / vnd viel seltzamer sachen von allen Früchten so darinnen gewesen / vnd seind der unholden oder zauberer / wie mans pflegt zu nennen / wol bey hundert vnd vier vnd dreyssig gewesen / und einen Tanz den 21 Hewmonat / auff dem Berg gehalten. Es ist auch eine Khuhirtin vnter ihnen gewesen / die hat den hafen sollen umschütten / Sie aber bitterlich darüber geweinet / ihre gespielenaber haben sie gefragt / warumb sie weine? Sie ihnen geantwortet : Es betaure sie nur die kleine Kinder / vnd das vnschuldige Blut / so durch dis Wetter sollen umbkomen / als bald hat sie den haffen umbgeschit / aber nhur den halben theil / darauff ein grausam vnd erschrocklich Wetter gefolgett vnd grossen schaden getan wie noch augenscheinlich zusehen.’

Here there was no question about the witches' ability to affect the weather. They were portrayed as powerful beings that were capable of inflicting real damage; the permission of God was not even mentioned. They were reported to have been justly burnt for their crimes. The message of this pamphlet was clear—witches were wholly responsible for the unusual weather contemporaries were experiencing. Although we cannot know how the audience interpreted such reports, the fact this particular pamphlet was reprinted with some changes the following year, leads one to believe that it was a good seller.

A popular ballad about the crimes of witchcraft published in 1588 also included a verse about the weather making capabilities of witches.¹³⁵ The report was called: 'A truthful new report from the land of Westphalia of the town of Ossenbruck, how one burned over 133 witches there in one day, also what they confessed and did, laid out in song. In tone: O world I must leave you.'¹³⁶ The author reported that the witches confessed that 'they were allowed to make terrible weather and downpours with hail and with stones, doing great damage to the trees through there Devil's art.'¹³⁷ Another report from 1588 about the trial and execution of Walpurga Haußmännin also claimed that Walpurga was able to affect the weather with her witchcraft and reported that twice a year she used the little bones of children to make hail.¹³⁸ Thus it is evident that by the 1580s weather magic was a firmly established part of the cumulative concept of witchcraft.

The 1590s are thought to have been one of the worst decades of the Little Ice Age, and not surprisingly many *Hexenzeitungen* from this decade deal with weather magic in great detail. It is now known that there was an almost uninterrupted sequence of cold winters between 1586 and 1595.¹³⁹ Furthermore from 1591 until

¹³⁵ The reason I refer to this ballad as 'popular' is because it was reprinted in 1589, 1591 and 1596. See chapter five for more details.

¹³⁶ *Warhafftige: Neue Zeittung auß dem Land Westuahlen / von der stat Ossenbrück / wie man da hat auff einen Tag 133. Vnholden verbrenndt / auch was sie bekand und getrieben haben / gesang / weiß gestellt* (S.l., 1588).

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Weyter habens bekandt dermassen / wie sie haben außgehn lassen / grausame Wetter vnd Wassergüß / mit hagel vnd mit Steinen / grossen schaden thun an den Baumen / wol durch jhr Teuffels / kunst.'

¹³⁸ 'Confessions of Walpurga Hausmännin, formerly licensed midwife at Dillingen [...]' in George T. Matthews (ed.), *News and rumor in Renaissance Europe: the Fugger newsletters* (New York, 1959), p. 142.

¹³⁹ Christian Pfister and Rudolf Brázdil, 'Climatic Variability in Sixteenth Century Europe and its Social Dimension: A synthesis', in *Climatic Change* 43 (1999), p. 19.

1598 there was also a series of eight cool summers.¹⁴⁰ Pfister states that from 1560, coldness and wetness in central Europe increased in all seasons, but that the tendency culminated between 1587 and 1597.¹⁴¹ In addition to this storm activity increased during phases of winter cooling and therefore there would have been more storms between 1585 to the late 1590s.¹⁴² In light of this is, I must agree with Behringer that we cannot dismiss the unusual accumulation of reports concerning ecological catastrophes by contemporary authors as mere tropes.¹⁴³ The *Hexenzeitungen* from the 1590s more than likely reflect the fear and dismay felt by contemporaries as a result of the ‘unnatural’ weather conditions they were experiencing.

The weather in question led one author to believe that the Devil was beginning to get the upper hand. The *Erweyterte Unholden Zeyttung* (1590)¹⁴⁴, or the ‘Expanded Witch Report’ was printed anonymously. In this pamphlet the author gave the reader a panoramic overview of the witch-hunt, while simultaneously offering individual accounts of certain witches. He reported how many witches were burned and executed up until the 21 July 1590. The numbers are bewilderingly large, as the author indicates by stating: ‘In summation there were already so many arrested and burnt here and there in this year 1590, that should all their statements be together it would be a big book.’¹⁴⁵ The author noted that the power of the Devil was growing so much that his servants were in almost every town in Germany:

As in our times all sorceries and devilish tricks gain the upper hand to such a degree that almost every town, market and village in the whole of Germany, I do not want to speak about other peoples and nations, is full of such vermin and servants of the Devil, who not only venture to ruin the crops in the field, which God allows to grow with his blessing, with unusual thunders, lightning, showers, hail, storm, winds, frosts, droughts, mice, worms and other things, that God has decreed to them, through the Devil’s aid and support.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁴³ Behringer, ‘Weather, Hunger and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-Hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality’ p. 9.

¹⁴⁴ *Erweyterte Unholden Zeyttung. Kurtz Erzelung wie viel Unholden hin und wider / sonderlich inn dem Oberrn Teutschland / gefängklich eingezogen / was für grossen schaden sie den Menschen / vermög jhrer vrgicht / zügefüget / vnd wieviel vngefehrlich deren / inn disem 1590. Jar / biß auff den 21. Julij von dem Leben zum Todt hingerichtet vnd verbrandt worden seyen* (Ulm, 1590).

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.: ‘In Summa es seind in diesem 1590. jar schon vil hin und wider engezogen und verbrandt worden / solten alle ire aussagen beysamen seyn / es würde ein großes Buch daraus werden’..

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.: ‘Dieweil dann zu unsern zeitten alle zaubereyen und Teuffelsgespänst dermaßen uber hand nemen / das schrier alle Städt / Märckt und Dörffer im gantzen Teuschland / will von andern völkern und nationen nicht redder / desselbigen unzifers und Teuffels dienern voll seindt / welche nicht allein die liebe frucht auff dem Feldt / die unß Herr durch seinen segen wachsen lasset / mit ungewöhnlichen Donnern / Blitz / Schawr / Hagel / Sturmwinden / Reiffen / Wassernöthen / Meüsen / Gewürm / und was andere sachen mehr / an ihnen / vnd ihnen Gott verhenget, durch deß Teuffels hilff und beystand’.

It is important to note here, that the bad weather was said only to have been possible because God had decreed it. However in the 1590s both Lutheran and Catholic territories and Free cities began to believe that the Devil's power was on the increase, and that his followers, the witches, were wreaking havoc on the country, albeit with God's permission.¹⁴⁷ God was supposedly allowing more damage due to the large amount of heretical witches. Therefore it made sense to contemporaries to eradicate the witches. The 'ambiguity' of the author's belief in the providential tradition was also evident in this document; like Lutz, whilst declaring that God decreed the weather, he still attributed harmful sorcery to the witches themselves.

In 1594, another report was printed that included an account of weather sorcery, this time by Nikolaus Schreiber¹⁴⁸ in Cologne; it was titled, 'A terrifying story and confessions of the sorcerers and sorceresses who were recently burned...'¹⁴⁹ This pamphlet had one vital element that will help this investigation, a title page with an image of a weather-making witch. However, despite having a picture of a weather-making witch on the cover, the source said very little on the topic of weather magic.¹⁵⁰ It focused primarily on a midwife who had supposedly killed over 900 people, and also on story of werewolf called Jacob. Nevertheless the text did include a story of weather making that is very intriguing. The story was about a witch from a town where there was a great wedding. Everybody in the town was invited to the wedding except the witch. And when she saw the people at the wedding so happy and dancing, she got the Devil to take her to a rock near the village. The Devil transported her there through the air, and since such happened in the light of day, all of the shepherds saw.

¹⁴⁷ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 119.

¹⁴⁸ Schreiber seems to have had an interest in printing reports about witches, printing three pamphlets pertaining to witchcraft in 1589 alone: *Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauber Stupe Peter genandt der sich zu einem wehrwolff hat können* (Cologne, 1589), *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hun vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre* (Cologne, 1589), and *Zauberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülfflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen* (Cologne, 1589). In 1594 he printed the one that is being discussed here: *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden* (Cologne, 1594).

¹⁴⁹ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden...* printed by Nicolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1594).

¹⁵⁰ The relationship between the image and the text is very interesting in the *Hexenzeitungen*, and while most correspond closely to the text, there are examples such as this which leads one to question how the printer selected the image. It could be that the artist was not familiar with the text, and created an image of what they associated with witchcraft, or, it could also be that there was already an existing woodcut that could be used.



Figure 3.5. Title-page of Schreiber's pamphlet in 1594, available online on the website Hexenforschung Archivmaterial AKIH, Quellen/5: Faksimile: Kölner Hexenflugschrift 1594 (<http://histor.ws/hexenforschung/quel05.php>) (01 Dec. 2012).

If there was any question about where this story originated it is quelled by the following description of how she made the weather:

As she then came to the hill and had no water, which she cultivated in the magical pit in order to make water, she urinated in the hole and stirred the contents round and round also she said many words, then as soon as the clear sky was bleak and black and great hail had smashed the town, including the wedding.... the witch climbed down the hill and went home. Following that however she was arrested under suspicion, due to the denunciations of the shepherds and was burnt alive.¹⁵¹

This narrative is exactly the same as the one about a witch from Constance included in the *Malleus Maleficarum* and Jean Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*.¹⁵² However, the text was not the only thing that was derived from an earlier period, the

¹⁵¹ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden...* (Cologne, 1594): 'Als sie aber auff den hügel kömpt vnd kein wasser hat / welchs sie in die zäuber Grube gosse / dadurch ein Wetter zu machen / in massen sie gepfleget / hat sie in die Grube gebinckheit / vnd die Seiche darin vmb vnd vmb offft rumb gerüret / auch etliche Wort dazu gesprochen / da ist als bald er klare himmel trüb vnnnd schwarz worden / vnnnd hat ein grosser hagel auff das dorff zugeschmissen / darin die hochzeit / vnd welche hauffen getanzet / vbel empfangen / sie aber die Zauberin ist vom hügel gestiegen / vnd wider anheim gangen. Nach dem aber durch anzeigung der hirten die Zaberin des Wetters halben verdacht gefangen worden hat man sie lebendig verbrandt.'

¹⁵² Mackay, (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, p. 299; Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 135.

image (Figure 3.5) that was used was simply a reproduction of a woodcut used in Thomas Murner's *Narrenbeschweerung* which was printed in 1518.¹⁵³

The image shows a single witch cooking up a storm in a cauldron which is boiling on top of a fire. She is stirring the contents of the pot with a stick, while a magical cloud forms directly above the pot. In the top right hand corner the sky looks dark and threatening and large lumps of hail are falling as a result of her weather magic. The iconography is also very similar to the iconography in Molitor's weather magic woodcuts, the main difference being that this witch is alone.

In 1596, three *Hexenzeitungen* were published that included detailed accounts of weather magic. The three pamphlets were printed in Strasbourg, Innsbruck and Cologne. They each recounted the terrible and unusual weather that people in Germany were experiencing. Two of the pamphlets recounted the recent trials that had occurred in Rottenburg am Neckar in 1596. Johannes Dillinger in his study of the witch persecutions in Swabian Austria discovered that fear of weather sorcery was the primary motive driving proponents of witch hunting in this region.¹⁵⁴ Rottenburg depended heavily on viticulture and around a quarter of the towns inhabitants worked in wine production.¹⁵⁵ When bad weather affected their harvests many people called for the eradication of witches. In fact in 1605, after nearly two hundred trials had taken place Rottenburg wine growers complained that 'nothing is being done about people suspected of witchcraft, and their fruit keeps getting damaged.'¹⁵⁶ Other vineyard owners demanded that 'because they had so much hail, the authorities should arrest the witch-women.'¹⁵⁷ Dillinger claims that the damage done to the grapevines, which were vulnerable to thunderstorms, was interpreted as sorcery. This impression is also conveyed in the two pamphlets that detailed the confessions of the witches executed there in 1596. One report printed in Strasbourg was titled: 'A truthful report and thorough description of ten witch women who were burnt to ashes on the 9 May this year 96 in Rottenburg am Neckar.'¹⁵⁸ The witches

¹⁵³ Thomas Murner, *Narrenbeschweerung* printed by Johannes Knobloch (Strasbourg, 1518). A copy of this image can be seen in Charles Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 76.

¹⁵⁴ Dillinger, "Evil people", p. 99.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁵⁸ *Warhafftige Zeitung / Vnd gruendliche beschreibung / von zehh Hexen / Vnhold weibern / so man zu Rottenburg / am Neckar / den 9. May diese 96. jar / mit dem fewer zu puluer verbrent hat*, printed by Jost Müller (Strasbourg, 1596).

who were executed are said to have confessed to creating frost, hail and large thunder:

Of which they burned ten
Such terrible vices they had confessed,
How much frost they had made
Much hail and great thunder crashed¹⁵⁹

Like most of the other witches they are reported to have made the storm by cooking ingredients in a pot. However the weather did not improve after their death, which caused the author to conclude that there would be no more good times until the servants of the Devil were all uprooted:

There comes also no good times,
Till the servants are uprooted
They arouse God's scorn,
Which is then imposed on wine and corn.¹⁶⁰

This resonates with the statements of the wine growers, who claimed that their vines were still being attacked after the executions of the witches. The only solution put forward by this author is simply to execute more witches. According to the author, it was the witches who were arousing God's scorn, and thus they needed to be exterminated. Interestingly all the blame is laid on the witches, and the pamphlet does not even consider that human sins, more generally, could be angering God.

Similarly the report printed by Johannes Agricola at Innsbruck also alleged that the witches were responsible for the weather. The report was titled: 'A truthful history and actual description of the witch women that were burnt in Rottenburg am Neckar and in Westphalia, Prißgew and other places in this year 1596.'¹⁶¹ This report was printed alongside another eye-catching report, which described the dreadful weather that had affected Tyrol: 'The other report, about the dreadful weather and miraculous signs in Pusterthal in Tyrol that happened on 3 July this year 96.'¹⁶² The second report related how fire and water had come from the sky, and instructed readers that this abnormal weather was a sign from God. The author stated that God

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 'Deren man dann zehen verbrent / So greulich Last hand bekent / Wie vil reyffen sie haben gmacht / Viel hägel vnd groß Donner kracht.'

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 'Es komme auch kein gutte zeit / Bis das gesindt werd auß gereüt / Die dann erwecken Gottes zorn / Verhengt dann vber Wein vnd Korn.'

¹⁶¹ *Warhafftige geschicht / vnd eigentliche Beschreibung / Von den Hexen Weybern / so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar / vnd im Westpfahlen / Prißgau vnd anderstwo /rc. verbrandt hat / dises 1596. Jar / in Reimen weiß verfast* printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596).

¹⁶² *Die ander Zeyttung / Von dem Erschröcklichen Wätter vnd Wunderzeichen / in Pusterthal / in Tyrol / geschehen den 3. tag Julij / diß 96. Jar* printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596).

sent many punishments for ‘our sins and crimes’ (*unser sünd vnd schand*).¹⁶³ This illustrates that unusual weather could still be interpreted as being solely a sign from God, with no connection to witchcraft. It is especially interesting that the two reports were published together, as this suggests readers would have happily agreed with both suggestions. The first part of the report claimed that the witches had wreaked devastation through weather magic throughout Rottenburg. On the 21 July 1596 the witches are said to have created horrible weather that brought the farmers much sorrow. The same weather also ripped trees out of the ground, knocked over walls, broke windows and smashed the fruits of the earth. The storm supposedly continued for so many hours that the people thought it was the end of the world: ‘They all cried with great lament / Oh God it is the Day of Judgment.’¹⁶⁴ Like many other reports on witchcraft, the weather was said to be made in a pot at the witches gathering:

‘In the end they knocked over a pot,
Then all of the witches flew off,
And the reported weather came straight thereafter.’¹⁶⁵

Like the previous report the author asserted that good times would only follow once they had uprooted such people from society.¹⁶⁶ The reporter held the witches responsible for the weather and vigorously attacked those who argued against the notion, suggesting that the opponents of the witch hunt should themselves be put in the fire. In fact the author specifically mentions the sceptic Johann Weyer, calling him a sorcerer. He stated:

‘Those who would like to cease now,
They must also in the fire go,
No more can any person shield them,
Like the Sorcerer Wierus did.’¹⁶⁷

This highlights that contemporaries were aware of Weyer’s arguments, but also clearly shows that not everybody was willing to believe that witches were innocent when it came to weather magic.

The third report printed in 1596 was also quite exceptional, as it claimed that it was the witches, acting as a united front under the leadership of the Devil, that were causing the bad weather. The title alone suggests that over 100,000 witches

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.: ‘Sie schryen all mit grosser klag / Ach Gott es ist der Jüngste tag.’

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.: ‘Letzlich ein Hafen stiessens vmb / Da verflig gar die Hexen Summ / Vnd gemelde Wätter gleich drauff kam.’

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.: ‘Damit man solch Leut ganz auß reüt / Als dann volgt wider gutte Zeyt.’

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.: ‘Die mögen wol jetzund abstahn / Sie müsen sonst ins fewr auch gahn. Kein mensch nicht mehr sie bschirmen kann / Wie der Zauberer Wierus hat thon.’

were coming together to destroy the earth: ‘Two terrible and never before heard stories / which happened on the Brockersberg in this year 1596, There around 100,000 sorcerers or witches gathered. And held counsel with the Devil, how they would like to harm all the fruits of the earth and trees through bad weather [...]’,¹⁶⁸ The report was written in form of a song. The author revealed how the witches, one and all, from far and near, gathered together on the Brocksberg on Walpurgis night (the night between the 30 April and 1 May).¹⁶⁹ While gathered the Devil gave them his order: ‘The counsel from him was determined / they will destroy everything completely through weather they will send everything to the ground and make everything foul in the whole of Germany so that no green foliage should remain standing.’¹⁷⁰ Subsequently, that May, during Rogation week¹⁷¹ the author reported that wine and corn were damaged in many lands. The author suggested further that the witches were successful in their goal, as on the 4 May there was such weather ‘that one cannot say enough how large the damage it done was’.¹⁷² The weather was so stark that one had thought ‘nothing other than that the heaven and earth would be destroyed’.¹⁷³ The weather was supposedly so bad that it killed a shepherd with his sheep and broke many windows in two. And all this weather was reported to have been created by the witches with the help of the Devil. Furthermore the author did not even mention divine permission. This *Hexenzeitung* assigned all the blame for the weather to the witches, the Devil and their terrible magic. It presented a grim picture of Germany almost under siege by the Devil and his servants. But was the weather really that bad in 1596? In all probability it was: as previously mentionedd

¹⁶⁸ *Zwo erschreckliche und unerhörte Geschicht / welches in diesem XCVI. Jar geschehen ist auff dem Brockersberg / Dar sich ahn die hundert tausend Unholden oder Hexen versamlet. Und rath mit dem Teuffel genommen / wie sie alle fruchten der Erden und Bäumen durch ungewetter verderben möchten [...]*, printed by Bertram Böchholz (Cologne, 1596).

¹⁶⁹ The Brockersberg and Walpurgis Night are both significant, as in popular belief Walpurgis Night was when witches would meet at the top of the Blocksberg, now called Brocken, in the Harz Mountains in central Germany. Here the mountain is a combination of both names: ‘Brockersberg’. For more see Thomas P. Becker, ‘Walpurgis Night’ in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the Western tradition*, iv, 1178-79.

¹⁷⁰ *Zwo erschreckliche und unerhörte Geschicht [...]*, printed by Bertram Böchholz (Cologne, 1596): ‘Der Rath vom ihn beschlossen war / sie wolten alles verderben gar / im gantzen Teutschen Landt / kein grünes Laub sol bleiben stan / durch Wetter alles zu grunde gan / vnd alles machen zu schanden.’

¹⁷¹ The Rogation Days are the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Holy Thursday, or Ascension Day, this week together is called Rogation week.

¹⁷² *Zwo erschreckliche und unerhörte Geschicht [...]*, printed by Bertram Böchholz (Cologne, 1596): ‘In diesem 96. Jar / den 4. Tag im Meyen zwar / habens ein Wetter gemachet / welches mann nicht genugsam sagen kan / wie grossen schaden es hat gethan’.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*: ‘mann hat nicht anderst gemeynet / dann himmel vnd Erd werd vntergahn’.

from 1591 until 1598 there was a series of eight cool summers.¹⁷⁴ As a result of the cold, more storms would have been likely.

During the seventeenth century the concept of weather magic continued to feature in news reports about witches, however the crime of weather magic was not as pronounced in these media reports. While weather magic was predominantly associated with female witches in the sixteenth century, in the seventeenth century news reports frequently reported cases of male witches who were involved with weather magic. This change most likely reflects the changing dynamic of the witch-hunts in this period, as during the seventeenth century more men began to be persecuted as witches throughout the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁷⁵

For example in 1600 the Pappenheimer family and their associates were accused of creating hail and showers, alongside an array of other horrific crimes.¹⁷⁶ In a broadside printed about their crimes and execution, the author stated that not only the mother, but also the men were responsible for making storms. The mother, Anna, was said to have created hail and showers four times; the eldest son, Gumprecht 7 times; and the youngest son, Jacob, ten times. The broadsheet also claimed that the tailor Georg also helped them to make hail. However the German broadsheet did not describe the weather magic in detail. In 1601 their story was reported in the English media and the English report gave a more detailed description of the ‘strange hayle and tempests’¹⁷⁷ that they caused. For example the author of the English version stated that the younger son Jacob confessed ‘that by witch-craft he had caused a herd of cattel in a tempest to be blowne into a river, and there drowned: and the said Tempest or storm to be so violent, that Trauellers could

¹⁷⁴ Christian Pfister and Rudolf Brázdil, ‘Climatic Variability in Sixteenth Century Europe and its Social Dimension: A synthesis’, p. 29.

¹⁷⁵ There have been a number of recent publication on male witches: Rolf Schulte, *Man as witch: male witches in central Europe* (New York, 2009); Lara Apps and Andrew Gow, *Male witches in early modern Europe* (Manchester, 2003); Alison Rowlands (ed.), *Witchcraft and masculinities in early modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2009).

¹⁷⁶ *Kurze Erzöhlung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen / was massen sie auch / an dem 29. Tag dess Monats Julij / in dem 1600. Jar / in der Fürstlichen hauptstatt München / von dem Leben zum Tod gebracht worden / den Bösen zu einem Schröcken / den Frommen aber zur Wahrung / für die Augen gestellt.* (Augsburg, 1600).

¹⁷⁷ *A Strange Report of sixe most notorious witches, who by their diuelish practises muredred aboute the number of hundred small children: besides the great hurtes they committed vpon diuers other people* (London, 1601).

hardly trauell by the high way.’¹⁷⁸ The author did not debate whether this magic was possible or not and reported it as an actuality.

Similar, albeit more fleeting, references to weather magic were made in reports throughout the seventeenth century. For example in 1618 a report printed in Vienna claimed that the witches of Haimburgk confessed to making ‘great weather’ with their sorcery which caused harm to wine and corn for many miles. The author professed the truthfulness of such reports: ‘it is true as I tell you.’¹⁷⁹ Indeed, another striking report, which described the intense witch persecutions in Bishopric of Bamberg during 1629, claimed that even the burgomasters who had been apprehended for sorcery were guilty of weather magic. The burgomasters supposedly confessed that they ‘made much terrible weather and great wonders, many houses and buildings were smashed, and many trees in the forest and fields were wrenched out of the earth...’¹⁸⁰ In addition to this the report added that the chancellors and the jug moulders, along with the old female miller ‘buried something this summer, that the sun should not shine’ and made cold and rain with the intention that all the fruits should be ruined.¹⁸¹

The idea of weather magic as a collective activity had fully formed by this period, and indeed weather magic was to become one of the most prominent activities carried out at witches’ gatherings. Moreover, the use of pots or cauldrons, or burying items to cause bad weather seems to have been a widespread belief. In 1650 another report described how three witches from Dillhofen had caused all sorts of harm including weather magic.¹⁸² The witches, one of them a midwife, were reported to be carrying pots to bury outside the city when they were caught by some shepherds. The shepherds regarded the women with suspicion and made them hand

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ *Warhafftige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Häimburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen grenzt verbrennt hat* (Vienna, 1618): ‘ist war wie ich euch sage.’

¹⁸⁰ *Kurzer und wahrhafftiger Bericht und erschrecklich Neue Zeitung von sechshundert Hexen, Zaubern und TeuffelsBannern* (Bamberg, 1659) reprinted in Wolfgang Behringer (ed.), *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland* (Munich, 2006), p. 263.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.: ‘...daß sie heuer diesen Sommer Sachen eingegraben, daß die Sonne nicht hat scheinen sollen, nur lauter Kaelt und regen gemacht, vermeinte, daß die Fruechte all solten dardurch verderben.’

¹⁸² *Erschreckliche Neue Zeitung / Welche sich begeben vnd zugetragen in diesem 1650. Jahr / in der Osternacht / im Schweizer Gebirge / bey der Stadt Dillhofen auff einem Dorffe Dimdurff genandt / in welchem drey hexen gewohnet / da die eine 25. Jahr eine hebamme gewesen / viel Menschen vnd Vieh verderbet : wie dann weiter durch jhr Tueffels kunst in Willens gewesen in dem 51. Jahr alles Getrayde auff dem Felde / Wein vnd Obs zu verderben ...* printed by Matthias Hammer (Dillhofen, 1650)

over their pots, in which they found all sorts of things used for witchcraft. Not only did the witches have corn and wheat in the pots but also snakes, mice, worms and toads, along with many bones of the dead.¹⁸³ However, sometimes the use of pots proved difficult for some witches. According to a report in 1654 about two witches in Augsburg, Barbara Fröhlin and Anna Schläferlin, Anna was unsuccessful in her two attempts to cause weather magic. Surprisingly she confessed that she failed because the hail pot (*hagelhafen*) that she had to use was too heavy for her to lift!¹⁸⁴

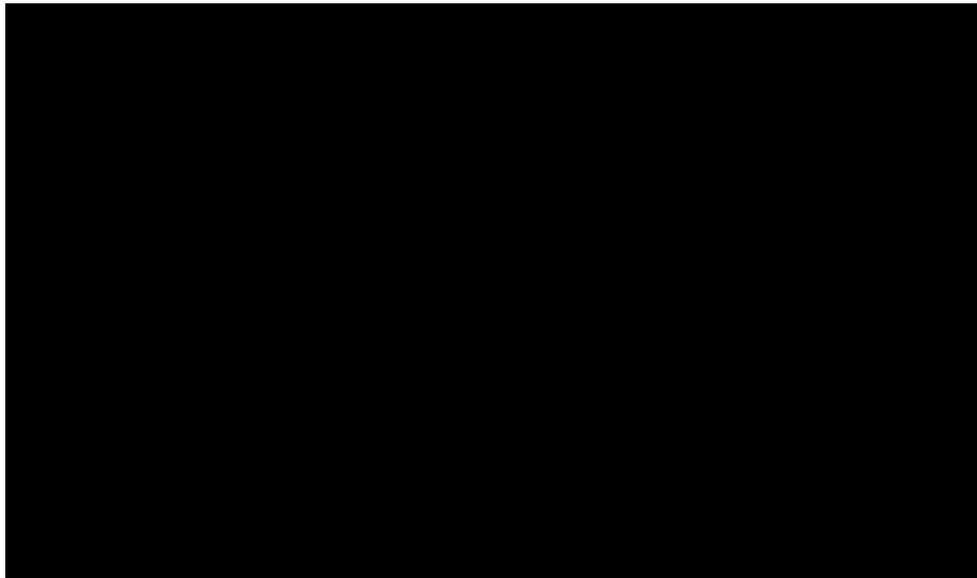


Figure 3.6. Simon making weather taken from broadsheet reporting the sentencing of Simon Altsee in 1666: *Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden.* Printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666), image taken with permission from the Münchner Stadtmuseum.

In the 1660s there were a few more references to weather-making witches. In 1666 a 78 year old male sorcerer named Simon Altsee was reported to have caused hail eleven times. According to the report Simon created weather magic as a way to seek revenge on those that had wronged him. For example, he caused weather magic in Pöbing because someone had tried to give him a no-good horse to sell. It is noteworthy that the broadsheet detailing Simon’s trial and execution, printed by Elias Wellhöfer, a *Briefmaler* in Augsburg, included a woodcut depicting the weather that Simon had created (figure 3.6). The broadside had six woodcuts

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhaft gelegne zwo hexen / benandtlich Barbara Fröhlin von Rieden / vnd Anna Schläferlin von Erringen...* printed by Andreas Aperger. (Augsburg, 1654): ‘...es hab jhr aber das Wettermachen zum zweytenmahl gefählt / vnd seydt der hierzu angerichte hagelhafen so schwär worden / daß sie denselben nicht erheben / noch die vermeinte schwäre hagelwetter zu wreck richten konden...’

displaying Simon's journey, from his pact with the Devil to his eventual execution. Simon was allegedly given a special root from the Devil to cause harm. In this woodcut he appears to be holding something in his right hand pointed towards the sky. This is probably his magical root. Directly at the point where his hand meets the skyline large droplets of rain and hail appear falling from the sky, crashing down on the houses in the distance. This is the only original woodcut depicting weather magic that I have found in the *Hexenzeitungen*, despite it being such a prominent theme in the text of the reports. It could be argued that like harmful magic, weather magic was hard to portray and artists struggled to convey the physical creation of weather by witches. The same *Briefmaler* printed another report in 1669 about a witch named Anna Eblerin.¹⁸⁵ Anna was also alleged to have caused bad weather, however this later report did not include an illustration of her weather making. The text of the report professed that 'she made weather with the assistance of the Devil through cursing and swearing, including weather which smashed Günzberg and did great damage.'¹⁸⁶

These examples all serve to highlight the continuing belief in weather magic that existed throughout the seventeenth century. However, not all *Hexenzeitungen* believed the witches were causing bad weather wherever and whenever they wished; in fact, two very unusual reports from 1615 and 1616 argued that the Devil himself would no longer permit the witches to cause harm with weather sorcery. In 1615 a two part report was printed in Nuremberg about witches, titled: 'Two witch-reports.'¹⁸⁷ While the first report did not mention weather magic at all, the second report dealt specifically with the crime of weather magic and included an account 'About a sorceress or witch, how she attempted to ruin everything with her accomplices, however Satan put forth to them why they should leave such remain,

¹⁸⁵ *Relation oder Beschreibung so Anno 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs Person / welche ob grausamer and erschröcklicher hexerey vnd Verkrümmungen der Menschen / wie auch wegen anderer verübten Vbelthaten durch ein ertheiltes gnädiges Vrtheil von eim ganzen Ehrsamen Rath / zuvor mit glüenden Zangen gerissen / hernach aber mit dem Schwert gericht / der Leib zu Aschen verbrennt* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*: 'Ferners habe sie [...] durch grausam fluchen vnd schwören mit zuthun deß bösen feidts Etliche Wetter gemacht / darunter eines zu Günzburg eingeschlagen und grosen schaden gethan.'

¹⁸⁷ *Zwei hexenzeitung / die Erste / von dreyen hexen Pfaffen / unnd einem Organisten zu Ellwang / wie dieselben Christo abgesagt [...] Die ander: Von einer Vnholdin oder hexen / wie sie mit jhren Gespilen alles zuverderben vnterstanden [...]*, (Nuremberg, 1615).

also he had not wanted to permit it or let it happen.’¹⁸⁸ The report claimed to be a ‘credible story’.¹⁸⁹ The witches were described as gathering together to cause damage to all grain, wine and corn on Walpurgis night. However when they came together at the fixed time and place upon the mountain, Satan appeared and, most unusually, questioned their ‘most destructive plan.’¹⁹⁰ Satan argued that the recent bad year had caused people to turn to God, and thus his empire was diminishing. He believed that if there was a good year, in which the harvests were fruitful and everything grew richly ‘the poor as well as the rich would do nothing other than gorge and booze, curse and swear, gamble and quarrel, thereby they forget God and will be subject to the Devil.’¹⁹¹ A long dispute allegedly followed between the witches and Satan, and the witches argued ‘that poverty also induced witchcraft.’¹⁹² The author continued to state that the poor witches argued for the destruction more fiercely, only so that others would have to also suffer the poverty that they endured. However the Devil remained resolute that such weather would not be permitted and he physically broke the material that they needed to carry out the sorcery. Thus their plan was staved off.

All of this was reportedly confessed by a ‘poor witch’ to the authorities, but no name, place name or date is given. Ursula Maria Krah believes that this report was intended as a satirical attack on the belief in weather magic and witch-hunting.¹⁹³ Krah argues that the author remained anonymous because he was writing a literary criticism of the witch persecutions that were taking place. From examining the text it is clear that the text is satirical, but one must ask what *exactly* is being satirised. The text implies that things were *so* bad that even Satan himself took pity and noticed the need for better weather and harvests; if only as he could ensnare more people through sin as a result. But how did the report represent the witches? Ultimately the witches were portrayed in a bad light; in contrast to Satan many of the poor witches

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.: ‘Die ander: von einer unholdin oder hexin / wie sie mit jhren Gespilen alles zuverderben vnterstanden / der Satan aber / jhnen vrsachen / warumb sie solches sollen bleiben lassen angezeigt / auch nicht gestatten / oder geschehen lassen wöllen.’

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.: ‘glaubwürdige geschicht’.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.: ‘ihr hochschädliches vorhaben.’

¹⁹¹ Ibid.: ‘Dann wann es volle Jahre gebe / vnd alles reichlich erwachse / so theten so wol arme / als reiche anders nicht / als fressen vnd sauffen / fluchen vnd Schweren /spielen vnd hadern / dabey sie dan Gottes vergessen / vnd jhme anhengig werden.’

¹⁹² Ibid.: ‘...daß die Armuth auch die Hexerey verversache..’

¹⁹³ Ursula-Maria Krah, ‘Fiktionalität und Faktizität in frühneuzeitlichen Kleinschriften (Einblattdrucke und Flugschriften)’, in Katrin Moeller and Burghart Schmidt (eds), *Realität und Mythos – Hexenverfolgung und Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Hamburg, 2003), pp 80-1.

still wished to cause more harm, to make more people suffer. The inherent irony in this text is that Satan is shown to be more generous than the witches themselves. In addition to this the author insinuated that if the witches had it their way, more hardship would be in store. Would this portrayal of the witches have encouraged audiences to criticize the witch-hunts?

This spectacular narrative was also included, albeit with some important changes, in a pamphlet that was printed the following year in Tübingen in 1616.¹⁹⁴ This was a double report; the first detailed the witch executions that took place in the Bishopric of Würzburg, while the latter report detailed the persecutions that happened in the Duchy of Württemberg. It was the first of these two news items that included the same story about the Devil prohibiting weather magic. The story began the same way, with the witches coming together to create bad weather when the Devil appeared and told them to stop. He once again reminded the witches that people called on God when they were in want of food, and therefore he required a fruitful year so that people would sin. The Devil believed that if there was a good year the people would do nothing other than ‘gorge and drink, gamble, curse, swear and blaspheme God, kill each other, whore and practice adultery, thereby his realm is mightily advanced and augmented.’¹⁹⁵ However in this narrative there is a different ending. In this rendition of the story the Devil’s speech had no effect on the witches and on the next Walpurgis night the witches made frost and hail. The Devil was supposedly so displeased that he beat some of the witches to death.¹⁹⁶ Like the report from 1615 the witches are portrayed in a negative light, the main difference being that the witches in the 1616 pamphlet are so evil and uncontrollable they do not even obey the Devil’s orders. The permission of God is not even mentioned in the story, and it purported that the witches could make weather even without the Devil’s consent.

Interestingly the second of these reports -which was about the witches that were burnt in the Duchy of Württemberg- focused on divine providence, reminding the reader that only God alone could affect the weather. The author claimed that the Devil was a *Tausentkünstler* (a master of a thousand arts) and explained that he

¹⁹⁴ *Zwo hexen zeitung / die Erste: Auß dem Bißthumb Würzburg [...] Das Ander: Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg [...] . Gedruckt zu Tübingen / 1616* (Tübingen, 1616).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.: ‘Wann alles gerahte / vnd fruchtbare Jar seyen / so theten die Leut anders nichts / als fressen vnd sauffen / spielen / fluchen / schweren / vnnd Gott lästern / einander vmbbringen / Huren / vnd Ehebrecherey treiben / dadurch sein Reich mächtig befördert / vnd vermehrt werde...’

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.: ‘darüber der Teuffel / etliche biß vff den Todt geschlagen...’

could tell by the stars ‘which time, on what day, hour and place this or that harmful tempest will approach.’¹⁹⁷ Armed with this information the Devil then ‘prattled the information into their [the witches’] ears.’¹⁹⁸ The witches then spill an old kettle or pot in order to make the weather, which in fact ‘pours out without them.’¹⁹⁹ The author stated that ‘it follows that the poor blind people suppose that they did it and let them burn for it, but the lord master is alone the one who makes and gives the hail and rain, fertile and unfruitful weather at his time and when and how it is pleasing to the Godly Majesty.’²⁰⁰ This is the most sceptical opinion concerning weather magic out all of the *Hexenzeitungen* that have been analysed for this project. Not only did the author of the pamphlet profess that the witches could not create the weather, but he also emphasised that the people were burning witches for crimes they did not commit. Thus while the news reports generally portrayed witches as real threats to society, this example proves that by the seventeenth century some of the sceptics’ ideas, as put forward by Weyer and other others, were finally beginning to make their way into the media reports.

Conclusions

Throughout this chapter we have looked at what can be learnt about the contemporary understanding of weather magic by exploring how it was treated in both the news media and various demonological treatises. An investigation into the learned discourse on witchcraft revealed that the authors’ beliefs varied significantly when it came to the discussion of weather magic. Some authors emphasised God’s providence, reminding their readers that God was the sole ruler of all things including the weather, and therefore arguing that the witches could do no harm. Many authors, including Molitor, Brenz, Alber and Bidembach, and to some extent Weyer, maintained this argument. During the same period there were authors who alleged that the witches were a real threat to Christendom and should be uprooted vigorously. The more famous proponents of the latter idea were Heinrich Kramer

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.: ‘dieser sihet zu welcher Zeit / an welchem Tag / Stund / vnd Ort / diß oder jenes schädliches Vngewitter vorgehen wird.’

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.: ‘dann denselben rechtgesessenen Hexen vnnnd Vnholden inn die Ohren zu plaudern.’

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.: ‘alsdann kompt das Wetter / welchs ohne jhr außschütten’.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.: ‘...gefolgt were / da vermeynen die armen Leut / sie habens gethan / vnd lassen sich auch darauff verbrennen / Aber der Herr Herr ist allein der / der Donner vnd Regen macht vnd gibt / fruchtbar vnd vnfruchtbar Wetter / zu seiner Zeit / vnd wann / vnd wie es der Göttlichen Mayestät wollgefällig.’

and Jean Bodin. They both believed that the Devil could only cause harm with the permission of God, but that once God granted permission, the witches were in fact dangerous. They thought that witches should be persecuted as their existence angered God, causing him to punish all humans with terrible weather.

The second part of this chapter looked at how weather magic was represented and discussed in the *Hexenzeitungen*. From this analysis it became clear that the majority of the *Hexenzeitungen* portrayed the witches as dangerous people, in league with the Devil, who could cause real harm with their weather magic. However, there were also some reports that did adhere to the providential tradition. For example the two pamphlets printed in 1576 claimed that the bad weather they were experiencing was deserved punishment for people's sins, and that God was punishing humanity by using the witches and the Devil. Interestingly by the 1590s some authors began to argue that God was allowing the bad weather as punishment for the very existence of witches themselves, and therefore they stressed that the only way for things to improve was to eradicate and uproot all of the witches completely; this line of thought was prevalent in the two news pamphlets from 1596.

Other *Hexenzeitungen* claimed that only God could affect the weather, but they did not emphasise human sin. Examples include Lutz's report in 1571, the 'Two news reports' from 1580 and the 'Expanded witchcraft report' of 1590. However the narratives in these pamphlets contained a certain 'ambiguity'; while they stated that the weather depended on God they still suggested that the witches themselves could be actually harmful.

Most of the witch news reports presumed the existence of weather magic as an actuality, never questioning the reality of the crime. This type of reportage increased significantly in the 1580s and 1590s. The pamphlets printed by Nicolaus Wiriot in Strasbourg in 1582 and 1583 are prime examples of how authors purported to show that witches were powerful beings who were capable of inflicting real damage. Similarly the report printed by Bertram Böchholz in Cologne in 1596 also assigned all the blame for the weather to witches, the Devil and their terrible magic. The reporting of weather magic as fact continued into the seventeenth century, with multiple news tracts alluding to the crime of weather magic without questioning its reality. However, this investigation has shown that at least one news report in the seventeenth century incorporated a more sceptical approach to witchcraft. This pamphlet, printed in 1616, detailing the crimes of witches in the Duchy of

Württemberg, explicitly stated that the witches were not responsible for causing bad weather and that they were burnt for crimes they could not commit.

Overall this research highlights that in late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, during the peak of the Little Ice Age, there was a receptive audience for reports concerning weather magic. There was a market so to speak, so much so, that reports on witches and weather magic were being sold all around Germany, from Strasbourg to Cologne, from Erfurt to Wesel. Weather magic was a popular theme throughout the *Hexenzeitungen*, and from looking at these sources it is clear that contemporaries were noticeably frightened and devastated by the damage wreaked by the weather. And ultimately this devastation led to a breakdown of society – somebody had to be responsible for the weather.²⁰¹ Despite the conjectures of preachers such as Brenz, and the physician Johann Weyer that weather-magic could not actually happen, popular demand and dismal weather conditions meant that the traditional rejection of weather magic was temporarily put on hold or at least ‘rolled back along a broad front.’²⁰² This analysis importantly highlights how weather magic consistently made the news headlines during the period as one of the leading crimes of persecuted witches.

It is important to note that this thesis does not propose that a deterministic relationship between subsistence crisis and witch hunts. However, as Christian Pfister pointed out in his article ‘Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts’, the weather played an important role in both ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’ spaces.²⁰³ The weather alone was not responsible for the persecution of witches. Wolfgang Behringer has noted that the transformation of popular mentality towards a depressive world view was a significant contributing factor.²⁰⁴ This thesis argues that the *Hexenzeitungen* played a vital role in disseminating this world view to a

²⁰¹ The witches were not the only ones to be scapegoated for the deteriorating weather during the Little Ice Age; David Lederer has also shown that suicides were also blamed for the ‘unnatural’ weather, and held responsible for the crisis, see David Lederer, ‘Verzweiflung im Alten Reich: Selbstmord während der ‚Kleinen Eiszeit‘ in Wolfgang Behringer, Hartmut Lehmann and Christian Pfister (eds) *Kulturelle Konsequenzen der ‚Kleinen Eiszeit‘*, *Cultural Consequences of the Little Ice Age* (Göttingen, 2005), pp 255-82.

²⁰² Behringer, ‘Weather, Hunger, and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality’, p. 23.

²⁰³ Pfister, ‘Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts: Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries’, p. 66.

²⁰⁴ Behringer, ‘Weather, Hunger and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality’, p. 20.

wide audience. The reports frequently attributed the crises that contemporaries were experiencing to witches' and weather magic. In conclusion it can be said that it was not the weather, but how the weather was 'culturally' interpreted that plausibly had an impact on the witch hunt; and the vast majority of *Hexenzeitungen* made it clear who was responsible: the witches, and their terrible magic. In addition to this, witches were not always portrayed as making weather alone. They were increasingly reported to create hail and storms together at special gatherings, convened by no other than Satan himself.

CHAPTER 4

The Witches' Sabbath¹

'But during the dance, she confessed, all the sorceresses shout with cheer and with clear voices Harr, harr, Devil, dance here, dance there, play here, play there. Others shout only Sabbat, Sabbat, that is our holiday.'²

(News report, 1594)

The idea that witches were acting collectively, under the leadership of the Devil, reached its peak during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Many people believed that witches traversed great distances over mountains and valleys on various objects and animals, such as goats, sticks, oven forks and brooms in order to meet together. At this meeting, the Devil appeared to his followers, sometimes in the form of a man, but more often in the form of an animal, particularly as a goat. The witches would worship him, either by kneeling down, or by kissing him on the anus—the *osculum infame*, or kiss of shame. The participants then held a feast. The feast was thought to be large but always unsatisfying, and it never included bread or salt. Following this witches and demons danced together in the most bizarre ways before engaging in a promiscuous orgy. The Devil then instructed the witches how they were to devastate and destroy their neighbours and enemies, inciting them to kill and wreak havoc. Finally at the end of the night they flew home before the cock crowed. This sequence of events was what ultimately became known as the witches' sabbath.

To modern day readers the above account may seem fantastical and unreal. However many contemporaries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries also found such accounts problematic. Many demonologists struggled to explain how witches were supposed to be able to fly and to prove the reality of their nocturnal gatherings.

¹ The term 'witches' sabbath' is used by historians today as a general term to describe and denote the witches' gathering. However the term, 'witches' sabbath,' was not used frequently in the early modern period, and only became somewhat popular in the seventeenth century. Terms that were more commonly used to refer to the witches' gathering were, the 'witches' assembly' or 'gathering' (*Versammlung*) and 'the witches' dance' (*Hexentanz*). Also in the fifteenth century the term 'synagogue' was used to describe the witches' gathering by learned authors. Throughout this chapter, I will use the term 'witches' sabbath' in its more general context, in keeping with modern day historiography, by referring to the discourse of witches' sabbath and the myth of the witches' sabbath. However, I will also use the term 'witches' gathering' throughout the chapter.

² 'Aber vnter dem tanzen / haben sie bekent / schreyen alle Zäuberinnen mit jauchzen vnd mit heller stimme / harr / harr / Teuffel / tanze hieher / tanze dorthin / spiele hie / spiele dort / Etliche aber schryen nür Sabbat / Sabbat / das ist vnser Feyer tag.' This quote is from a report printed by Nicolas Schreiber: *Erschreckliche Erzelung / Unnd Bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche kurzlich verbrandt sein worden...* (Cologne, 1594). This same phrase was also reported in Jean Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, see Scott (ed. and trans.), *Jean Bodin*, p. 120, and in Pierra De Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons*, see Gerhild Scholz Williams (ed.), *On the Inconstancy of witches: Pierre de Lancre's Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons (1612)*, translated by Harriet Stone and Gerhild Scholz Williams (Arizona, 2006), p. 227.

But what did the contemporary reports have to say on these matters? This chapter explores how the witches' flight and sabbath were represented in the *Hexenzeitungen*. As the previous chapter has shown, increasingly during the sixteenth century, witches were portrayed as performing weather magic in groups at special meetings. These meetings have become historically known as the 'witches' sabbaths'. Two separate ideas were combined in the imagining of the witches' sabbath. The stereotype of the witches' sabbath was comprised by amalgamating the belief in nocturnal flying, cannibalistic women/witches (which can be traced back to as early as the sixth century) with the belief in an anti-human sect (which had existed since Christianity itself). Both these ideas were firmly rooted popular belief. In order to understand the concepts more fully, the first part of this chapter will provide a brief outline of how belief in flight and the sabbath developed and, indeed merged together in the centuries preceding the publication of the reports. The second part of the chapter will focus on how these gatherings were described in, and communicated by, the *Hexenzeitungen*. To date, most scholarly work has focused on the demonological discourse of sabbath—in which the sabbath was rich with inversionary symbolism, Devil worship and sexual excess. The popular discourse on the sabbath has not received as much attention. However it is clear that *Hexenzeitungen*, from 1580 onwards, repeatedly refer to the collective activity of witches. This chapter investigates how witches' gatherings were imagined in news reports, and assesses how these representations compared to the elaborated sabbath narratives that were evident in demonological literature. It is important to understand how such gatherings were represented in the popular media as it was the notion of the sabbath that allowed witch-hunts to spread rapidly and take on 'massive dimensions'.³ In the words of Norman Cohn:

Left to themselves, peasants would never have created mass witch-hunts –these occurred only where and when the authorities had become convinced of the reality of the sabbat and of nocturnal flights to the sabbat. And this conviction depended on, and in turn was sustained by the inquisitorial type of procedure, including the use of torture. When suspected witches could be compelled by torture, to name those whom they had seen at the sabbat, all things became possible: the mayor and town councillors and their wives were just as likely to be accused as were peasant women.⁴

³ Norman Cohn, *Europe's inner demons: the demonisation of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (Revised ed., London, 1993), p. x.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

The Origins of the Witches' Sabbath

As the commonly held belief was that the sabbath began with a flight, it seems logical to begin with an exploration of this concept. How did the idea of flight evolve and how did it become intertwined with witchcraft and the witches' sabbath? The concept of night-flight developed from a few beliefs, but it predominantly derived from the belief in *Strigae* and the idea that certain pagan Goddesses, particularly Diana, flew around at night with her followers. It is generally accepted that belief in *strigae* was widespread well before the witch-hunts. *Strigae*⁵, (singular, a *strix* or *stria*) were believed to be women by day, but cannibals by night who flew around on 'amorous' and 'murderous' errands.⁶ As early as the sixth century the earliest body of Germanic law, the *Lex Salica*, considered the *striga* to be a reality and it even fixed a fine to be paid 'if a *stria* shall devour a man and it shall be proved against her.'⁷ It is interesting to note that the same law also included a fine that should be levied if 'anyone shall call a free woman a *stria* and shall not be able to prove it.'⁸ There was apparently no uniformity in legislation against these nocturnal criminals and some authorities even forbade the execution of *strigae*.⁹ Although there appears to be a mixed reaction as to how to deal with belief in *strigae* it is clear that belief in such beings was very real indeed. The Christian Church however denied the possibility of magical flights, and issued warnings to those who believed in such, instructing them to mend their ways. Indeed in the fifteenth century when the belief in the Sabbath and transvection began to take hold, one of the most difficult problems for the Christian demonologists was how to break free from the Church's previous denial of such activities.

One of the first documentary sources that provides an insight into the Church's stance on nocturnal flights and gatherings is the *Canon Episcopi* of the tenth century. In this text, Regino of Prüm complained about 'certain women' who

⁵ The term *strigae* originated from the term for owl-shaped flying creatures in Antiquity, and during the Greek and Roman period they were considered to be demonic creatures that flew through the air, stealing children and eating them.

⁶ Cohn, *Europe's inner demons*, p. 163.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ For example the Alemannic law which was written around 600. Similarly in 643 the Lombard King Rothari (c. 606-52) decreed that Christians must not believe that women devour a human being from inside and 'therefore supposed witches (*strigae*) must not be killed, particularly not convicted in court.' Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 30.

...seduced by the illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess that, in the hours of night, they ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the night traverse great spaces of earth, and obey her commands as of their lady, and are summoned to her service on certain nights. But if only they alone perished in their faithlessness, without drawing many other people with them into the destruction of infidelity.¹⁰

Regino believed that all such women were deluded by the Devil and that the journeys were only in the spirit and therefore not real:

Thus Satan himself, who transfigures himself into an angel of light, when he has captured the mind of a miserable little woman and subjugated her to himself by infidelity and incredulity, immediately transforms himself into the species and similitudes of different personages and deluding the mind which he holds captive and exhibiting things, whether joyful or mournful, and persons, whether known or unknown, leads it through devious ways, and while the spirit alone endures this, the faithless mind thinks these things happen not in the spirit but in the body.¹¹

Ultimately the *Canon Episcopi* stated that such things happened only in spirit, and it highlighted the need to distinguish the difference between dreams and reality. The author referred to the Bible to support this argument, noting that both the prophet Ezekiel and the apostle John could decipher when things were done in the spirit and not the body. However, it is important to note that these women were not yet witches, and they were not yet following the Devil but the goddess Diana.¹²

Belief in such journeys appeared to be widespread and it is doubtful that the *Canon Episcopi* had much success at quelling such superstition completely as penalties for such beliefs were reinforced only one century later. In the beginning of the eleventh century Burchard of Worms, who was also the bishop of Worms, once again set down penalties for such beliefs in his *Decretum* (or the 'Corrector'):

Have you believed what many women, turning back to Satan, believe and affirm to be true, as you believe in the silence of the quiet night when you have gone to bed and your husband lies in your bosom, that while you are in bodily form you can go out by closed doors and are able to cross the spaces of the world with others deceived by the like error and without visible weapons slay persons who have been baptized and redeemed by the blood of Christ, and cook and eat their flesh and in place of their hearts put straw or wood or anything of the sort and when they are eaten make them alive again and given an interval of life? If you have believed this,

¹⁰ 'Regino of Prüm: A Warning to Bishops, the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906)' in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700*, p. 62.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Diana was a Roman goddess who continued to have a cult following in the early Middle Ages. She was the Roman goddess of the moon and lover of the night. According to Valerie Flint and Norman Cohn Diana could also have been easily associated with other female goddesses such as the Greek Hecate who was accompanied by her hounds or the German Holde. This makes sense as it was characteristic of Hecate to ride at night followed by a train of women or souls. Furthermore these dreams of Diana were apparently confined to women, and *The Life of Caesarius* associated Diana with a sort of madness which attacks women at night. See Valerie J. Flint, *The rise of magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 1991), p. 122 and Cohn, *Europe's inner demons*, p. 168 for more information.

you shall do penance for forty days, that is, a 'carina,' on bread and water, and the seven succeeding years [perform a similar penance]...¹³

In this piece of text, we can see that the night ride had evolved further to include the murder of innocents and cannibalism. However, Burchard maintained that this belief was just a 'belief', and had no foundation in reality. However such beliefs were still blasphemous and therefore had to be punished by the church. In this work Burchard also prescribed one years penance for the belief in flying with Holde, and two years penance for belief in flying with Diana or for believing that you indulged in demonic combats.¹⁴ However unlike Regino in the *Canon Episcopi* Burchard also makes references to Herodias¹⁵ and Holda¹⁶ in his work. The latter, Holda, (also known as Hulda, Holle, Hulle, Frau Holl etc.) was prominent in German folklore, particularly in Hesse where Burchard was born.¹⁷ All three figures, Diana, Holda and Herodias were to transform over time until eventually they became synonymous with witchcraft and cannibalism and their nocturnal travels became 'nocturnal assemblies.'¹⁸

Such transformation is evident in the *Policraticus* by John of Salisbury. This work, written in 1154 by the learned English cleric, shows that the belief in the night flight had changed overtime and how the previously folkloric figure of Herodias had become synonymous as a witch-ruler:

The Evil Spirit, with God's permission, inflicts the excesses of his malice on certain people in such a way that they suffer in the spirit of things which they erroneously and wretchedly believe they experience in the flesh. It is in this sense that they claim that a *noctiluca* or Herodias or a witch-ruler of the night convokes nocturnal assemblies at which they feast and riot and carry out other rites, where some are punished and others rewarded according to their merits. Moreover, infants are set out for *lamias* and appear to be cut up into pieces, eaten and gluttonously stuffed into the witches' stomachs. Then, through the mercy of the witch-ruler, they are returned [in one piece] to their cradles.¹⁹

What is apparent here is that the concept of transvection and flight had become

¹³ 'Burchard of Worms: The *Corrector*; *sive Medicus* (ca. 1008-1012)' in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe, 400-1700*, p. 67.

¹⁴ Flint, *The rise of magic*, p. 169.

¹⁵ Herodias was the wife of Herod the tetrarch who was responsible for instigating the murder of John the Baptist. Many legends surrounded her and some people claimed that she was awarded a third part of the world for killing the prophet. Therefore a third part of man-kind served her and it was believed that 'from midnight until cockcrow she can sit on oaktrees and hazelbushes, resting from her eternal travelling through the empty air.' See Cohn, *Europe's inner demons*, p. 169.

¹⁶ Holda was a supernatural and motherly being who could be both good and terrifying, but she only became terrifying when angered. She was said to lead the 'furious army' across the sky during a storm. See Cohn, *Europe's inner demons*, p. 169.

¹⁷ Cohn, *Europe's inner demons*, p. 169.

¹⁸ 'John of Salisbury: The *Policraticus* (1154)' in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 77.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp 77-8.

interlinked with the concept of an anti-human assembly, or more precisely, an assembly of witches. This is a vital transformation in the belief structure. However, John of Salisbury, like those before him did not maintain that such gatherings were real, on the contrary he believed that they were suffered 'in the spirit'²⁰ rather than the flesh. He argued that such imaginings were created by demons and were only believed by old women and simple minded men: 'Who could be so blind as not to see in all this a pure manifestation of wickedness created by sporting demons? Indeed, it is obvious from this that it is only poor old woman and the simpleminded kinds of men who enter into these beliefs.'²¹

Thus far we have seen how belief in nocturnal flying figures existed long before the witch-hunts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, what is interesting is that the church condemned belief in such journeys for centuries. So how and when did this change? When did diabolical fantasies become accepted as real events? It can be argued that things began to change when such flights became connected with anti-human, cannibalistic assemblies of witches. But to understand this better, one must investigate the origins of the belief in an anti-human sect. Carlo Ginzburg argues, that there was, as least from the beginning of Christianity, an 'obsessional image of a plot directed against society.'²² By the second century, Christians themselves found themselves being accused of terrible crimes, including cannibalism and incest.²³ Many believed that those who joined the sect (of Christianity) were forced to cut a child's throat, before eating it and drinking its blood. After eating the human flesh they were rumoured to turn out the lights and participate in an incestuous orgy.²⁴ Pagans were highly suspicious of the new religious sect. It is fascinating how the rumours and accusations against Christians almost mirror the subsequent rumours about witches and their sabbaths over one thousand years later. One of the first Latin apologists for Christianity recorded how a pagan described the practices of Christians. It is truly sordid, they supposedly worshipped the head of a donkey, or sometimes even the genitals of the presiding priest and they initiated new members by drinking the blood of children, furthermore on the feast day they practiced 'impure lust':

²⁰ Ibid., p. 77.

²¹ Ibid., p. 78.

²² Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies:deciphering the witches' Sabbath*, translated by Raymond Rosenthal (London, 1991), p. 71.

²³ Ibid., p. 74.

²⁴ Ibid.

On the feast-day they foregather with all their children, sisters, mothers, people of either sex and all ages. When their company is all aglow from feasting, and impure lust has been set afire by drunkenness, pieces of meat are thrown to a dog fastened to a lamp. The dog springs forward, beyond the length of its chain. The light, which would have been a betraying witness, is overturned and goes out. Now, in the dark, favourable to shameless behaviour, they twine the bonds of unnameable passion, as chance decides. And so all alike are incestuous, if not always in deed at least by complicity; for everything that is performed by one of them corresponds to the wishes of them all ... Precisely the secrecy of this evil religion proves that all these things, or practically all, are true.²⁵

Incest, cannibalism and infanticide are all highly anti-human behaviours and any group that participated in such activities were perceived as evil. As a result these attributes were applied to other heretics and ultimately it became a 'hostile stereotype.'²⁶ Cathars, Waldensians and Fraticelli were all accused of engaging in such 'anti-human' activities. And one must agree with Ginzburg that it appears that over time the targets changed, not the content.²⁷

One of the first instances that we can see this 'stereotype' being applied to heretics in a very similar format that it would later be applied to witches is in the decretal letter *Vox in Rama* (1233) by Pope Gregory IX. Pope Gregory IX was writing to the archbishop of Mainz, the bishop of Hildesheim, and to Conrad of Marburg. His description of the behaviour of the heretics resembles the behaviour of later witches, and included many activities that would become assimilated into witchcraft belief over time, such as the obscene kiss, the incestuous orgy, the abuse of the sacraments and the worship of the Devil. They practice the complete opposite of Christianity: 'They acknowledge all acts which are not pleasing to the Lord, and instead do what he hates.'²⁸ The pope explained that when a new novice was received among them and entered the 'sect of the damned for the first time' a toad appeared in front of them, some had to kiss the creature on the mouth, exchanging saliva, while others kissed it on its hind-quarters.²⁹ Novices also had to kiss a black cat on its back side. The concept that witches had to perform an obscene kiss, a kiss on the hind-quarters of the animal that the Devil appeared as, evidently derived from this, and although the Devil appears to witches more commonly as a goat, toads and frogs featured frequently in descriptions of the witches' gatherings. But when did witches become the target of this stereotype and furthermore when did this

²⁵ Cohn, *Europe's inner demons*, p. 1.

²⁶ Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, pp 74-5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ 'Pope Gregory IX: *Vox in Rama* (1233)' in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 116.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

stereotype merge with the belief in transvection?

These two separate concepts were first combined throughout the course of the fifteenth century. Johannes Nider was one of the first authors on witchcraft to accuse witches of cannibalism, particularly the killing and eating of children at a special gathering. In his *Formicarius* he stated that he had been informed that certain witches even eat their own children and that: ‘the witches came together in a certain convocation, and through their efforts, they saw a demon visibly in an assumed human form, to whom the disciple had to pledge that he would deny Christianity, would never adore the Eucharist, and would secretly trample on the cross...’³⁰ They horrifically killed and cooked and consumed unbaptised babies. However, although Nider believed that such witches really existed and that they really were guilty of infanticide and cannibalism, he denied the reality of the witches’ flight. Significantly he included a story relating to the night-flight, not in the fifth part of the *Formicarius* that dealt with witches and their deceptions, but in the second book of the work which discussed false dreams and visions.³¹ This makes sense as ultimately this is what Nider held them to be, and hence he was in keeping with the *Episcopi* tradition.

Nider told a story about a woman who believed that she flew at night with Diana and many others. According to Nider a Dominican friar heard the woman speak about such flights and asked if he could observe her during a ‘supposed’ flight, and she consented. The woman placed herself in a small cauldron on top of a stool and then covered herself with unguents. She murmured some magic words and then fell asleep. During her sleep she dreamt that she was flying with Diana and her body rocked so violently that she fell from the stool. The friar, when she awoke, was able to convince her that her visions were only illusions caused by the Devil as she physically did not travel anywhere. This story would be repeated by sceptics of the sixteenth century. Nider also recounted the story of St. Germain from *The Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine. The story of St. Germain was consistently referred to by both believers and sceptics of the night-flight, and therefore it is worth including the original story as told by de Voragine in the thirteenth century here:

³⁰ Translation from Bailey, *Battling Demons*, p. 43. Original Latin: ‘..quod malefici in certam concionem venerunt et opera eorum visibilitier Daemonum in assumpta imagine viderunt hominus, cui discipulus necessario dare habebat fidem de abnegando Christianismo, de Eucharistia nunquam adoranda, et de calcando super crucem ubi latenter valeret’. Johannes Nider, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602), book 5, chapter 3, pp 350-1.

³¹ Bailey, *Battling demons*, p. 47.

Germain was once a guest in a certain household when after supper he was surprised to see the table being laid afresh. He asked for whom they were making these preparations, and was told that they were for the 'good women' who came in the night. That night St Germain decided to keep watch, and he saw a whole crowd of demons coming to the table in the shape of men and women. He ordered them not to leave, then woke the whole household and asked them if they recognized these people. They replied yes, of course, they were all neighbours. Again ordering the demons to stay where they were Germain sent to each of the neighbours' houses, and they were all discovered to be asleep in their beds. Then, when he adjured the men and the women at table to tell the truth, they admitted that they were demons, and confessed that this was the way they fooled humans.³²

The story of St Germain echoes back to the women we spoke about earlier, particularly Diana and Holde, who were supposed to be 'good' women unless they were angered. The fact that Nider included his discussion on night-flight in a separate section suggests that he drew a distinction between folkloric belief in the night ride and the new sect of witches who held 'anti-human' assemblies. However, at around the same time, in 1437, the anonymous author of the *Errores Gazorium* included the idea of the night-flight as part of the stereotype for the first time. The fact that both works were published within a few years of each other and that one merged the two concepts together, while the other did not, reveals that in the 1430s night-flight was not yet an established part of the Sabbath, but could be included or omitted depending on the author.³³

The *Errores Gazoriorum* contained this revolutionary mix of concepts. After being persuaded and seduced by the Devil, it noted that the Devil gave the newcomer 'a container for the journey to the synagogue, filled with the ointment pertaining to this, and he teaches him how to anoint the staff as well as anything else he needs.'³⁴ It is at this point that the folkloric belief in nocturnal flying women led by Diana, or others, evolves into something quite different. It is no longer Diana who leads the women 'in spirit', but the Devil who transports them bodily. They are transported by the Devil after applying an unguent to a staff. This unguent was supposedly made from 'the fat of small children who have been cooked and with other things.'³⁵ Furthermore the description of the witches' meeting or 'synagogue' displays a fairly complete picture of the witches' Sabbath and all its heinous activities. The account includes the appearance of the Devil in the form of an animal, a description of how

³² Jacobus De Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, translated by Christopher Stace (Penguin Classic ed., London, 1998), p. 187.

³³ Bailey, *Battling Demons*, p. 47.

³⁴ 'The *Errores Gazoriorum* (1437)' in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 159.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 160-1.

the witches worship the Devil, particularly an account of how ‘as a sign of homage [the witch] kisses the Devil, whether the Devil appears as human or some kind of animal, on the anus or the ass...’³⁶ The author explained how the witches had to kill children and take them to the synagogue where they would be devoured in the ‘most evil of banquets.’³⁷ Following their monstrous feast, the presiding Devil called out ‘Mestlet, Mestlet’³⁸, and an incestuous orgy followed: ‘they join themselves carnally, a single man with a woman or a single man with another man, and sometimes father with daughter, son with mother, brother with sister, and the natural order is little observed.’³⁹ The people at this ‘synagogue’ also desecrated the Eucharist before returning home. The term ‘synagogue,’ as used here, was used to refer to these nocturnal meetings quite often in the fifteenth century but eventually such gatherings became known as ‘sabbaths’ or the *Hexensabbat* (the witches’ Sabbath), however in the sixteenth century it was mostly referred to as an assembly, *Versammlung*, or, quite simply, as the witches’ dance. Both the terms, ‘synagogue’ and ‘sabbath,’ were borrowed from Judaism, which was traditionally regarded as anti-Christian.⁴⁰ All in all, the author of the *Errores* believed that the heretics’ activities were real, but not all authors thought so.

Indeed many learned authors still thought that such assemblies happened only in the imagination. Claude Tholosan, a lay magistrate and senior judge of Briançonnais wrote in his *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37) that the ‘synagogue’ was only imagined in dreams. However the content of the dreams that Tholosan claimed witches had conformed to the already established stereotype of the sabbath. In these dreams, the witches travelled bodily at night with the Devil, most often on Thursdays and Sundays, in order to ‘suffocate children and strike them with illness.’⁴¹ They also imagined that they used the fat of dead children to travel to the place where they held their synagogue.⁴² The idea that the witches’ assembly took place on certain days in different regions became a popular idea in the later period.

It should be apparent by now that there was a real issue with the concept of

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 160.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 161.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰ Cohn, *Europe’s inner demons*, p. 148.

⁴¹ ‘Claude Tholoson: *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (1436-37)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, pp 164-5.

⁴² Ibid.

women and men flying at night to devilish synagogues or gatherings. The dilemma that faced contemporary authorities was whether such meetings were real or imagined.⁴³ It has been shown that the Catholic Church had adopted a sceptical view, and the *Canon Episcopi* of tenth century denied the reality of night-flights with Diana. However, from second half of the fifteenth century some members of the church began to deny the applicability of the *Canon Episcopi*, arguing that ‘modern day witches’ were, in fact, really travelling at night. Two of the most influential texts in this regard were *Flagellum haereticorum fascinariorum* (A Scourge for Heretical Witches), written by Nicholas Jacquier in 1458, and the *Malleus Maleficarum* by which was first printed in 1486. These two texts marked a firm break from the *Canon Episcopi*. Nicholas Jacquier was a Dominican inquisitor in Tournai in 1465, in Bohemia from 1488-68, and in Lille until 1472 when he died. In his work he blatantly denied that the new sect of witches had anything in common with women of whom the *Canon Episcopi* spoke of. He described four main differences between the two sects. Firstly Jacquier claimed that the fact that carnal activities took place at the gatherings meant that they had be real as ‘venereal practices and the passions of carnal voluptuousness cannot be accomplished or consummated by sleeping people’⁴⁴ and that ‘this is very different from those of whom the *Canon Episcopi* speaks...’⁴⁵ His second point is that ‘the new sect or synagogue of witches’ did not ride in obedience to Diana or Herodias but instead met and spoke with demons. Furthermore he argued that the new sect was even worse as men were also involved. Thirdly, he argued that contrary to Diana and her followers the new heretics ‘assemble in reality and bodily with demons, appearing visibly and really speaking...’⁴⁶ Lastly he stated that these new witches were different as they were obliged to perform actual homage to the Devil and he summed up by saying ‘None of these preparations and oblations are done by those deluded, sleeping women of whom *Episcopi* speaks.’⁴⁷

The *Malleus Maleficarum* similarly challenged the *Episcopi* rendering it irrelevant in part two, question one, chapter three, ‘On the method by which they are

⁴³ It is important to note here that imagined does not mean that ‘unreal’ but rather that such imaginings were devilish illusions/trickery.

⁴⁴ ‘Nicolas Jacquier: *A Scourge for Heretical Witches* (1458)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 171.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 171-2.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

transferred in location from place to place.’⁴⁸ Kramer noted that the transportation of witches by the Devil was subject to difficulty on the basis of a single passage found in the *Canon Episcopi*. Kramer believed that the Devil had the ability to transport a witch from place to place, albeit with the permission of God. He described the method of transporting as follows: ‘...they have to make a paste from the limbs of children especially those killed by them before Baptism, and by the demon’s instructions they smear it on some seat or piece of wood. When this has been done, they are immediately carried into the air, whether by day or by night...’⁴⁹ However he believed that the Devil did it this way only to deprive babies of baptism. He also noted that sometimes the witches were transported by devils in the guise of animals, or sometimes they were transported with out any help, and it was just the ‘demon’s virtue’ that transported them invisibly.⁵⁰ He argued with those who used the Canon Episcopi to prove that witches could not be transported stating simply: ‘where it is stated that they are transported only in fantasy and imagination, who is so unintelligent that he would conclude that they cannot also be transported bodily?’⁵¹ He argued this case further:

‘Also, in the case of that Canon being understood straightforwardly without any explanation, who is so stupid that he would on these grounds affirm that all the acts of sorcery and harm committed by sorcerers are figments of fantasy and imagination, when the opposite is clear to everyone’s senses....’⁵²

Ultimately Kramer concluded that the transportation of witches took place in both in body and in fantasy ‘according to what is made clear on the basis of their confessions.’⁵³ Many subsequent authors would adopt Kramer’s point of view. He cited an example of a witch who confessed that she could do both:

One of these was in the town of Breisach, and when asked whether they are able to be transported in fantasy and imagination or in body, she answered that they can in both ways. For if by chance they did not wish to be transported bodily but still wished to know everything that was being done by their associates at the gathering, then the method followed by them was that in the name of all the devils she would place herself on her left side propped up by her elbow, then there would come forth from her mouth something like a kind of grey steam, which would allow her to observe clearly the individual activities going on there. But if she wished to be transported bodily, it would be necessary to follow the method discussed above [ie.

⁴⁸ Mackay, (ed. & trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, pp 298-302.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 301.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

by using paste made from dead children].⁵⁴

However, Kramer not only tried to prove that the *Episcopi* did not mean witches could not travel in reality but he also argued that the message and ‘illustrations’ from the *Life of St. Germain* could also be incorrect.

Kramer argued that the story from St. Germain about the ‘good women’ who visited at night did not prove that such visitings were unreal. In the story St. Germain, St. Germain discovered that the visitors were only demons taking the form of neighbours, thereby making the neighbours innocent. However Kramer contends that ‘it was clearly possible for the demons to set themselves alongside their husbands, during the intervening period of time when the search for the wives was being conducted.’⁵⁵ That is, Kramer believed that it was possible for the said women to have travelled bodily to the feast in the neighbours’ house, while the devils, in the form of the women, took their place at home. This literally reversed the argument that St. Germain had put forward. Kramer, however, showed some fastidiousness on the treatment of matter and did not neglect to say that: ‘Out of respect for the Saint, however, it is not asserted that this happened, but this proposition is laid out so that no one will believe that the opposite of what is laid out in the *Life* is impossible.’⁵⁶

Interestingly, while the *Malleus* discussed the transportation of witches in detail it did not describe the witches’ gathering at any great length. The author proposed that they held a ‘certain assembly’ on a fixed day when they wished ceremonially indoctrinate a new member.⁵⁷ At this assembly the demon appeared to them in human guise. The women who attended then commended to the demon the female novice who was to be accepted. The novice then had to renounce ‘the Most Christian Faith and Worship,’⁵⁸ and promise not to adore the Blessed Virgin Mary and the sacraments. Finally the novice pledged themselves to the Devil with their signature, as was the case in many pacts with the Devil. Other than this, there are few elaborate descriptions of any kind of witches’ assembly in the *Malleus*. It took nearly one hundred years until the witches’ sabbath became almost the focal part of witchcraft, with authors such as Bodin, Remy and Del Rio all recording highly detailed accounts of the witches’ sabbath in their respective works. Kramer placed

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 301.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 283.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

more focus on the apostasy of the individual witches and the pact they made with the Devil, and believed they should be executed for their spiritual crime. While he did hint that they acted collectively under the guidance of the Devil, he did not envisage that they met in tens of thousands together as a sect – this idea evolved over time.

Although Kramer did not deal with the witches’ ‘assembly’ in detail, Ulrich Molitor’s *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* of 1489 did. Molitor’s work included two chapters that dealt with the witches’ gatherings and how they travelled to them. The Latin editions by Pruss and Otmar call the witches’ gatherings *conuinia* or meetings, while the German translation uses the term *wollust* which can be roughly translated as meaning their ‘pleasure.’ One chapter asked whether witches could travel to their gathering on a stick or by riding a wolf. Interestingly the Latin text just asks simply if they can ride upon a stick or wolf to their meetings, while the German text adds that the stick is ‘*gesalbten*’; that is, that it is covered in their special unguent.⁵⁹ A later chapter in the work asks if the witches eat and drink and talk with each other at these meetings, and also if they can recognise one another. In the Latin editions by Otmar and Prüss the stick here is said to be anointed ‘*baculū vnctum.*’ The Latin title for this chapter can be roughly translated as ‘If they come to meetings upon a wolf or an anointed stick and eat and drink with each other and speak with one another and recognise each other.’⁶⁰ This later chapter in the German edition is titled slightly differently and specifically mentions women: ‘If such women ride on a wolf or on a smeared stick and can drink, eat, and speak with one another, and if they could recognise each other.’⁶¹ In 1575, the same chapters were translated by a contemporary slightly differently, the translator questioned if ‘they could also travel on a fork (*gabel*) to their pleasure (*wolleben*).’⁶² The witch was now said to travel on a fork rather than a stick, and the wolf was omitted, furthermore, the ‘*wollust*’

⁵⁹ ‘Ob die hexen künden auff ainem gesalbten stecken oder uaff ainem wolff reyten zu irem wollust,’ in German translation of Ulich Molitoris, *Won den Unholden oder Hexen* (Costentz, c. 1489). The Latin editions of 1489 title the chapter as follows, ‘Utrū prokiciscantur ad conuinia super baculūvel lupū equitādo’ in Prüss edition (Strasbourg, 1489) and ‘Utrum prokiciscantur ad conuinia super baculū vel lupū equitando’ in Otmar edition (Reutlingen, 1489).

⁶⁰ The two Latin headings for this chapter are identical: ‘An super Lupuz vel baculū vntum ad conuinia veniantz mutuo cōedant et bibant et sibi mutuo loquantur ac se inuicez agnoscant’ (Prüss edition), and ‘An super lupū vel baculum vnctū ad conuinia veniant et mutuo comedant et bibāt et sibi mutuo loquantur ac se inuicem agnoscant’ (Otmar edition).

⁶¹ This is the translation of the title for this chapter from the German 1489 Zainer edition: ‘Ob sölliche weiber auff ainem wolff oder auff ainem gesalbten stecken reyten vnd si mit ain ander trinken vnd essen vnd redder künden vnd sich selbs vnder ainander erkennen mögen.’

⁶² Ulrich Molitor, *Von Hexen und Unholden*, translated into German by Conrad Lautenbach (Strasbourg, 1575).

became ‘*wolleben.*’ It can be argued that in the subsequent translations and editions of Molitor one can see how the translators, and indeed illustrators were influenced by the developing witchcraft discourse.⁶³ Nowhere is this more obvious, than in the German edition printed by Jakob Cammerlander in Strasbourg in 1545.⁶⁴ Cammerlander’s edition also titles the chapters slightly differently by replacing wolves with cats; asking if they could ride on anointed sticks or cats to their *wollust*.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the images in the Cammerlander edition are strikingly different from the earlier editions of Molitor’s work. However, before one considers the visual aspects the witches’ gathering and flight in the various editions of Molitor it is important to understand the textual context.

Molitor, as has been shown in the previous chapters, was more sceptical of the reality of witchcraft. His discussion of witches’ assemblies was no different. At the beginning the dialogue on how witches travelled to their gatherings, the character of Sigismund immediately argued that Devil could not carry them to their ‘*versammlung*’⁶⁶ (gathering/assembly). He claimed: ‘We know the Devil is a spirit and an inanimate and impenetrable creature. Therefore he has neither hands nor feet. Also he is in no condition apprehensible (*begriffelich*), how can he then carry a living person (*ainen gelübten menschen*).’⁶⁷ Conrad responded by saying that perhaps the spirit went in a body or assumed a body to do such things. He refers to book of Daniel,⁶⁸ and the story of Habakkuk who was supposedly transported to Daniel when he was in the lion’s den. Habakkuk was a prophet in Judea who was carried to Babylon by an angel of the lord to bring a meal to Daniel who was in the lion’s den. The passage in the bible states that ‘...the angel of the Lord seized him [Habakkuk] by the top of his head, and set him in Babylon, over the den by the force of his spirit.’⁶⁹ Conrad believed this was proof that the Devil, although a spirit, could also do such things. However Sigismund remained unconvinced and conceded that

⁶³ Natalie Kwan has noted that the images changed over time. See Kwan, ‘Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor’s *De lamiis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669’, pp 493-527.

⁶⁴ *Hexen Meysterey / Desz hochgeboren Fürsten / Hertzog / Sigmunds von Osterreich mit D. Vlrich Molitoris / vnd herr Cunrad Schatz / weilant Burgermeister zu / Costentz / ein schoen gesprech von den Onholden...* Printed by Jakob Cammerlander (Strasbourg, 1545).

⁶⁵ Ibid., Capitel V. ‘Ob die hengst vnd hexen künen auff einem gesablten stecken / oder auff einer katzen reitten zü ihrem wollust.’

⁶⁶ Ulrich Molitor, *Won den unholden oder hexen*, printed by Johann Zainer (Constentz, 1489?).

⁶⁷ Ibid.: Sigmudus: ‘Wir wissen das der teuffel ain geist ist. vnd ain vngelibte oder vnbegriffenliche creatur deßhalber weder haend noch fuß hat. auch von kainer statt begriffelich ist. wie künde dann er ainen gelübten menschen tragen.’

⁶⁸ Daniel 14:34, Catholic Public Domain Version

⁶⁹ Daniel 14:35, *ibid.*

while this may be possible for good angels, who have more power, it may not be the case for evil spirits.

The question remained somewhat unresolved when they move on to the second issue at hand, that is, whether such evil women meet together to eat and drink. Conrad immediately states that those imprisoned confess to such meetings under interrogation and that these confessions prove that the witches must really meet. Sigismund rejoins by questioning whether the *Canon Episcopi* itself did not also say that the meetings were only imagined, and quotes a large excerpt from the Canon itself. Conrad replies that if the witches were only deceived then how did the women and people from other towns and lands recognise those who were at the *wollust*. However at this point they conclude the discussion and state that they will discuss the point further in another part of the work.

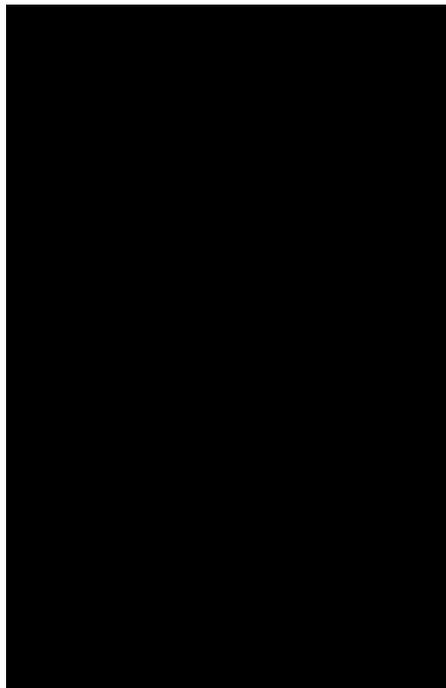


Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1. Man riding wolf, Otmar (1489) in Ulrich Molitoris, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Otmar, (Reutlingen, 1489), available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek: (<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/179-2-quod-2/start.htm>) (2 Jan. 2013).

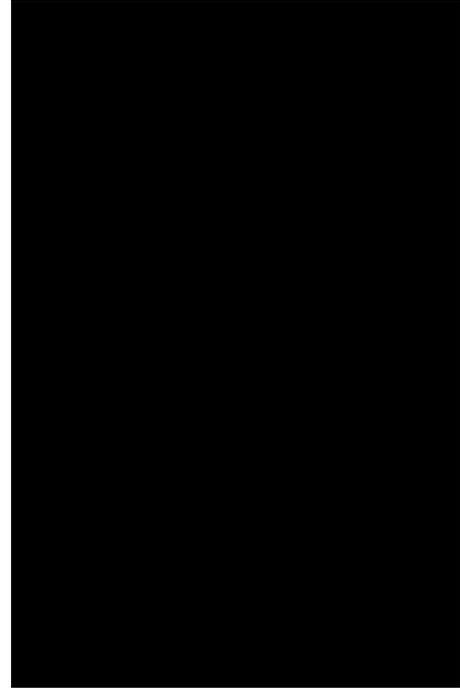


Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2. Woman riding wolf, Zainer, (c. 1489) in Ulrich Molitor, *Won den unholden oder hexen* printed by Johann Zainer (Constentz, 1489?), available online on the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: (http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0003/bsb00033852/image_23) (2 Jan. 2013).

The images that accompany the section in various editions are interesting. As has been shown in the previous chapter, different sets of woodcuts representing the same theme appeared in different editions of *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*.⁷⁰ In most versions of this woodcut a man is shown riding a wolf as shown below (figure f.1), the only exceptions are the Zainer (German edition) which shows a woman riding a wolf instead (figure 4.2) and the Cammerlander edition which shows both a man and a woman travelling the witches' gathering (figure 4.4).⁷¹ Zika believes that because the witch riding the wolf was male the image illustrated a story told by Conrad about a person who was made lame by a peasant riding on a wolf.⁷² However, since neither the Latin editions nor the German edition specified the sex of the witch in the title of this chapter, it could also be that the illustrator wanted to show that men also attended the gatherings. In this context it is also noteworthy that the while Latin editions included an image of a man, the German translation of the same year included an image of a woman. This provides evidence that both men and women were suspected of attending witches' assemblies at the time. Indeed by 1545 when Jakob Cammerlander was producing his edition of Molitor's treatise both sexes were simultaneously shown travelling to their *wollust* (see figure 4.4).

The images from the 1489 editions are very simple and showing a person travelling on the back of wolf. However, there was another image in the earlier editions that depicted the flight of witches – but this woodcut was the one that accompanied the section that discussed metamorphoses (figure 4.3). This woodcut showed the flight of transformed witches through the sky. The image appeared with very few differences in each edition of Molitor, below is the woodcut of this flight from the Johannes Otmar edition. This is the first time that the cooking fork was depicted as an implement for riding to the witches' gathering and Zika argues that by using the cooking fork the artist was trying to make clear that the subjects in the woodcut were not animals, but witches in the shape of animals.⁷³ The witches appear as an ass, a rooster and a dog. These animals would have reminded the contemporary reader of the animal masking traditions of carnival, where the ass was associated with folly and the rooster represented the 'exhibitionism, transgression

⁷⁰ For more details on Molitor's woodcuts see Kwan, 'Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor's *De laniis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669', pp 493-27.

⁷¹ Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p 25.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Zika, *Appearance of witchcraft*, p. 24.

and sexual masquerading of carnival time.’⁷⁴ Dogs were also associated with witchcraft, as they were the traditional companions of Hecate, the Greek goddess of witchcraft.⁷⁵ Yet again the images in Molitor depict what the text disputes as reality. While the three participants debate whether flight can happen, this image clearly shows transformed witches flying through the sky.

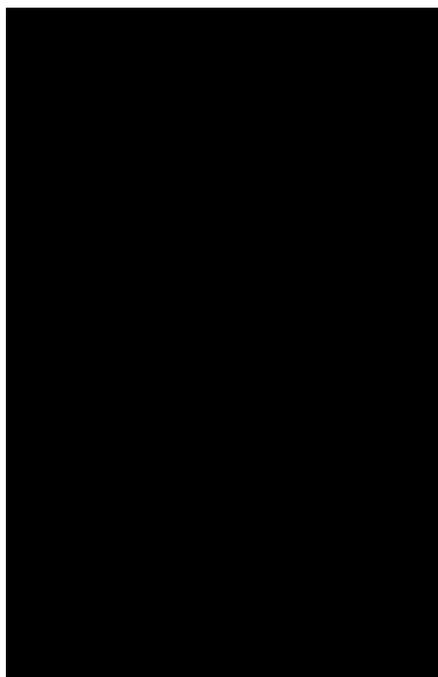


Figure 4.3. Flight of witches through air, from Ulrich Molitoris, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Otmar, (Reutlingen, 1489), available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek (<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/179-2-quod-2/start.htm>) (2 Jan. 2013).

Juxtaposed to the earlier editions the Cammerlander edition (1545) shows both the wolf ride and the witches’ flight at the beginning of the chapter that discusses how they travel to their gatherings. The images (figure 4.4) in the Cammerlander edition are quite sensational. In the left image we can see a female witch flying on an oven fork, literally being pulled upwards by a demon. On the right, a man is shown riding a cat backwards pulling the cat by its tail. This image is most unusual as backward rides usually involved women. The backward ride itself had sexual allusions and furthermore, the wild flowing hair was also closely associated with sexual promiscuity. These images suggest that the illustrator of the Cammerlander edition firmly believed that men were equally involved in witchcraft and all its heinous, and promiscuous, activities.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Jane P. Davidson, ‘Dogs’ in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, i, 288-9.

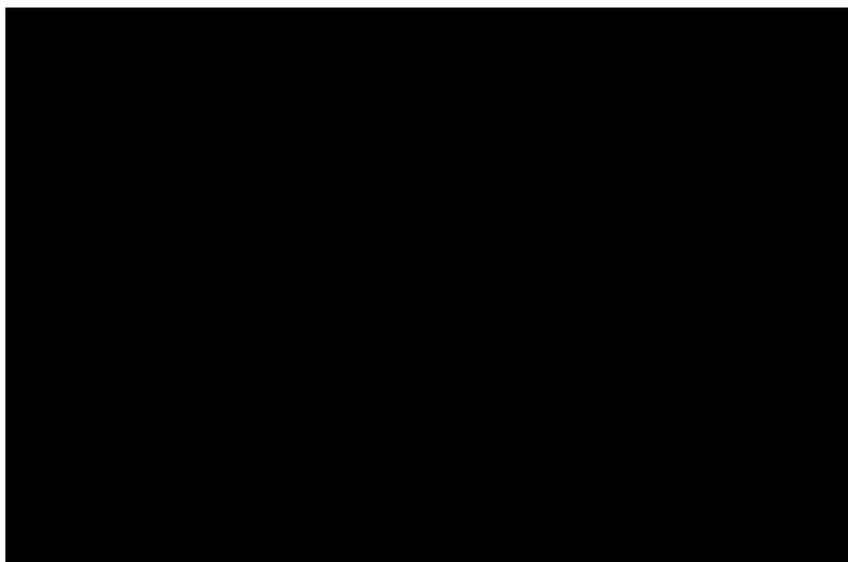


Figure 4.4. Male and female witch travelling to the witches' gathering from *Hexen Meysterey* printed by Jakob Cammerlander (Strasbourg, 1545), Digital copy provided for dissertation by the Herzog Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel.

Molitor continued the discussion of the *wollust* later in the text in a section the questioned whether witches rode on a wolf or a smeared stick and if they could drink and eat and talk with each other and if they could recognise each other. In discussing whether the journey to the *wollust* happens in reality or only in dreams, Molitor refers to the story from Saint Germain. He uses the story to illustrate how it is possible for a person to be in one place, while the Devil appears as the same person in another place simultaneously. Ultimately Molitor concludes that such travels are not real and he argues that the Devil imprints such images of people into the minds of the witches in such a great way that the witches believe that they have seen the people in real life. Overall the text deduces that witches cannot and do not travel on various implements to special gatherings, but that such gatherings are only imagined, fantasies caused by the Devil himself.

This chapter also contained an image depicting three women at a *wollust*. When we think about the witches' sabbath we think about sex with devils, cannibalism, dancing and incestuous orgies – however none of these scenes are shown in the woodcut (figure 4.5). The woodcut is very simple; it shows three women sitting in conversation. This scene varied very little in the earlier editions; hence I only include a copy of the woodcut from Otmar's 1489 edition. It could be argued that such simplicity was used to render the idea that such meetings were altogether possible. Natalie Kwan appears to have misinterpreted this image as she

claims that the sabbath was not depicted in the early woodcuts of *De laniis*.⁷⁶ This is not true. This woodcut clearly represents a witches' gathering. However, it can be said that the representation does not match our twenty-first century expectation of what a witches' sabbath should look like—but this does not mean it is any less of a 'sabbath'. As Willem de Blécourt points out in his forthcoming article, the sabbath itself was never a unified, coherent construct.⁷⁷ Descriptions of witches' gatherings do not always conform to the elaborate sabbath narratives contained in later demonological works or to the sometimes equally elaborate sabbath narratives included in modern historiography.⁷⁸ The witches gathering could also be portrayed as an ordinary affair and this woodcut highlights just how ordinary the sabbath was believed to be at the end of fifteenth century.

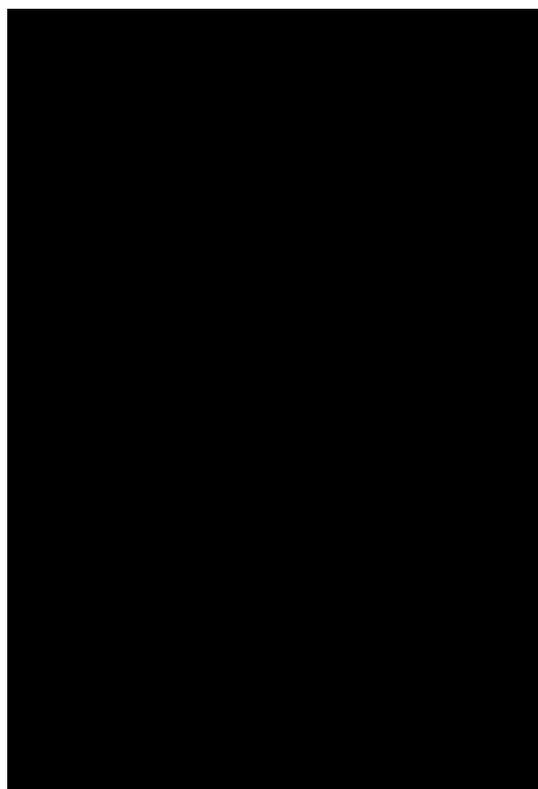


Figure 4.5. Women at the *wollust* from Ulrich Molitoris, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Otmar, (Reutlingen, 1489), available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek: (<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/179-2-quod-2/start.htm>) (2 Jan. 2013).

⁷⁶ Kwan, 'Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor's *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669', p. 510.

⁷⁷ Willem de Blécourt, 'Sabbath Stories: Towards a New History of Witches' Assemblies', forthcoming in Brian Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*.

⁷⁸ Ibid. De Blécourt points out that when the sabbath is presented in general terms it easily verges on the extreme.

However, by 1544, the image that accompanied Cammerlander's edition (4.6) marked a significant change. The image of the witches gathering was very different, no longer a feminine affair, three women, one man, and two lover demons are shown sitting around a table. The image of the gathering was also used as the woodcut for the title page of the tract. The artist cleverly plays with the scene, by showing the devils as men above the table, but revealing their true nature under the table, where we can see their webbed feet and claws. A male witch can be seen on the left filling up a large tankard with drink. Unlike his female counterparts, however, he is not shown to be in dialogue with the demons present. How did the earlier image of the three witches and, indeed, the concept of the witches' assembly or gathering develop from an ordinary to an extraordinary scene by the end of the sixteenth century?

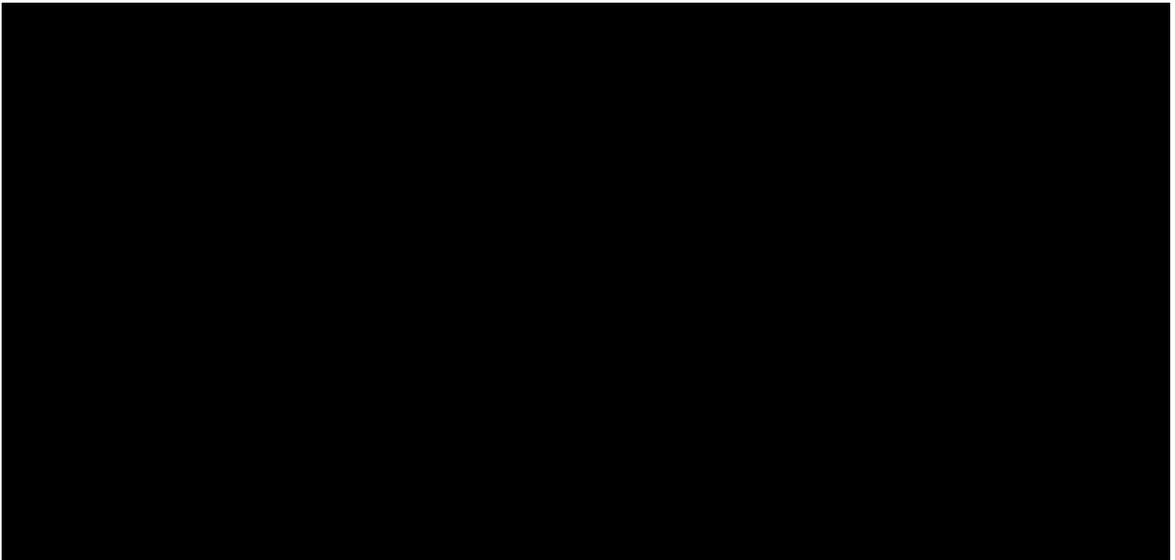


Figure 4.6. The witches' eating and drinking together, from *Hexen Meysterey* printed by Jakob Cammerlander (Strasbourg, 1545). Digital copy provided for dissertation by the Herzog Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel.

It has been shown that by the end of the fifteenth century the concept of evil witches' assemblies had firmly taken root but there was evidently, as of yet, no conclusive agreement on what happened at such gatherings and whether or not they were real or imagined. Whether they were real or imagined, however, artists of the early sixteenth century began to explore the theme of witches' flying, gathering and acting collectively in their artwork. For example in about 1500 Albrecht Dürer completed his work 'The Witch.' This was a powerful image showing an individual female witch flying backwards on a billy-goat (see figure 4.7).

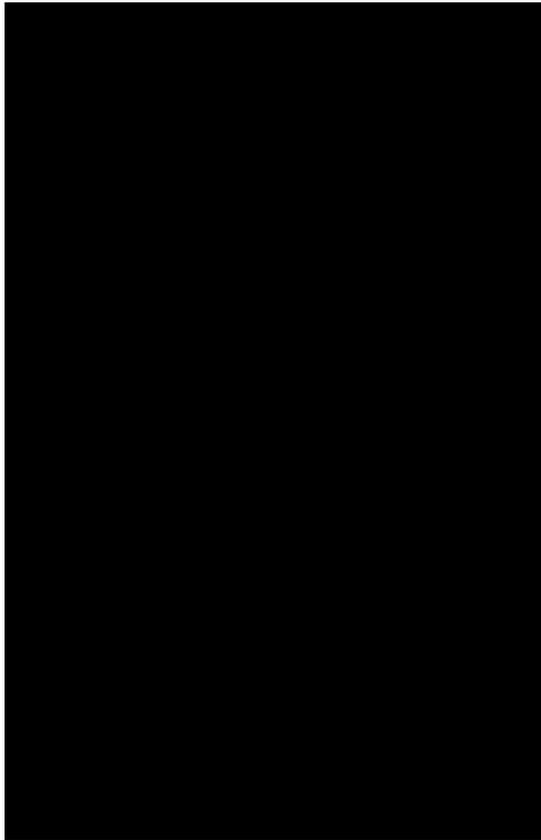


Figure 4.7. Albrecht Dürer, *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* c. 1500, ARTstor

The backwards ride itself was symbolic as it had a history in customary law as a humiliating punishment, and visually it was also seen to represent death, evil, and sin.⁷⁹ This backward ride would have also established an allusion to sexual inversion for sixteenth century viewers.⁸⁰ The witch's dishevelled flying hair further alludes to this sexual disorder, while the goat, which was seen as a symbol of lust, adds to this allusion. Dürer's image is arguably much more powerful and sexually charged than the earlier images of witches flying that were included in Molitor's work.⁸¹ One can also see how Dürer's image possibly influenced the artist of the Cammerlander edition of Molitor's treatise, which was printed in 1545. Other artists depicted groups of witches. Both Albrecht Altdorfer and Hans Baldung Grien produced pieces representing witches' acting collectively. Albrecht Altdorfer's *Witches' Scene* (1506) was one of the first representations of witches gathering together, portraying female witches riding through the sky together alongside a group of women practicing some

⁷⁹ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 19.

⁸⁰ Zika, *Appearance of witchcraft*, p. 28.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.27.

form of ritual in the foreground.⁸² Altdorfer's work reflects how the concept of the witches' gathering was still developing from earlier beliefs, such as the Wilde Ride, and the Furious Horde. However it is evident that the artistic imagination was more focused on the activities of the female witches, rather than their worship of the Devil.

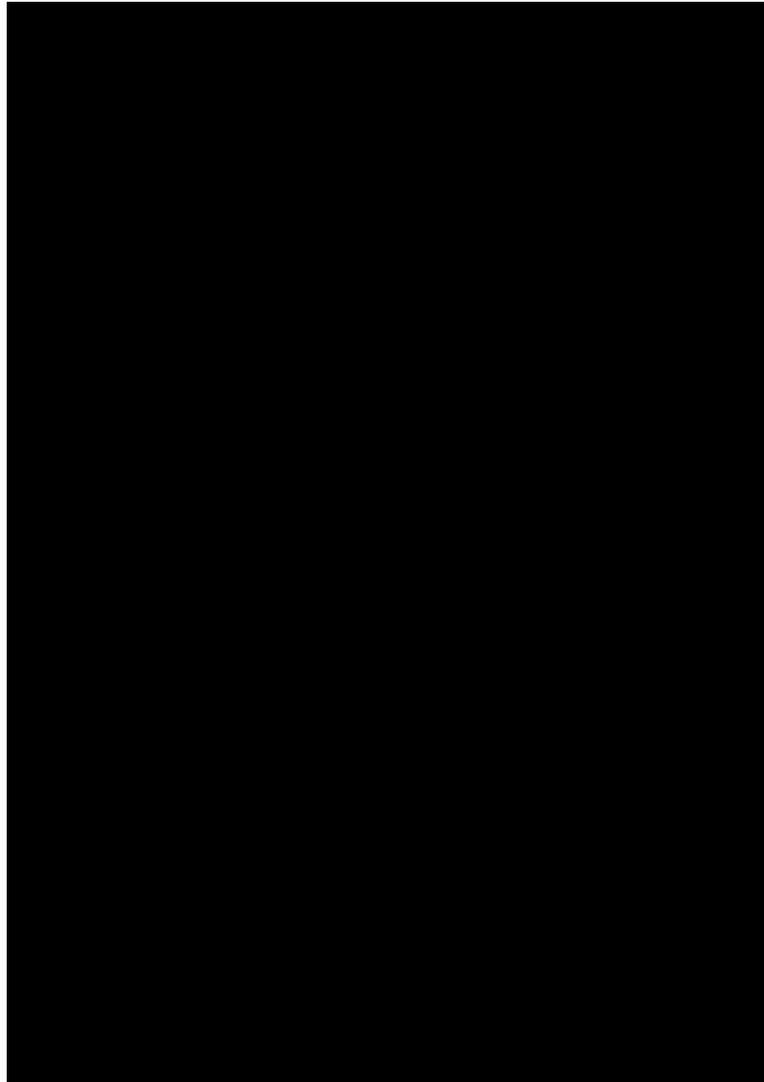


Figure 4.8. Hans Baldung Grien, *Witches Scene* ARTstor

For example Hans Baldung Grien produced an image representing a group of witches acting together without the direct presence of the Devil in 1510: *Group of Female Witches* from 1510 (figure 4.8). Modern scholarship, according to Charles Zika, has 'commonly and misleadingly' entitled Baldung's 1510 chiaroscuro woodcut as *Witches' Sabbath*, or *Witches Preparing for the Sabbath Flight*. He argues that this goes against the logic of the print which 'makes little reference to the

⁸² Ibid., p. 30.

key elements of the Sabbath such as homage to the Devil, communal dancing and feasting and orgiastic sex.’⁸³ One could argue, however, that because the sabbath was not yet a fixed concept, and was still only in its formative years, the print could be seen to represent Baldung’s contemporary understanding of witches’ gathering. This could very well be the case, as Richard van Dülmen argues that the idea of witches’ sabbath as some sort of black mass where homage to the Devil, and promiscuous orgies were the defining characteristics did not come fully into fruition until the end of the sixteenth century.⁸⁴ Linda C. Hulst has argued that Baldung’s choices about what to depict and how to depict it can contribute to our understanding of the witch-craze in its formative stages.⁸⁵ Also it is important to note, the goats and cats depicted in the image could easily be demons that have been transformed, therefore, although it looks as though there are only women in the scene, there could also be demons among them.

Around the same time that Baldung was creating these images of witches, a famous preacher from Strasbourg was delivering sermons on the popular understanding witches and their nightly travels—this preacher was Johann Geiler of Kaysersberg (1445-1510). Geiler’s sermons were subsequently printed posthumously in 1516 as *Die Emeis* (The Ant-Colony). One particular sermon was accompanied by an image that was titled: ‘About the Sorcerers or about the Witches’ (‘Von den Unholden oder von den Hexen’). This sermon began with a question posed by Geiler: ‘Now you ask me, what do you say, preacher, about those women who travel through the night and meet at assemblies?’⁸⁶ From reading this sermon it becomes clear that while Geiler believed that those convicted of witchcraft should be executed he did not believe every charge made against the witches, denying that the nocturnal assemblies were real. He spoke to his audience saying:

⁸³ Ibid., p. 13.

⁸⁴ Richard van Dülmen, ‘Imaginationen des Teuflichen: Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate’ in *Hexenwelten: Magie und Imagination* (Frankfurt, 1987), p. 119. Similarly, de Blécourt argues that the sabbath was never a unified construct. Willem de Blécourt, ‘Sabbath Stories: Towards a New History of Witches’ Assemblies’, forthcoming in Brian Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*.

⁸⁵ Linda C. Hulst, ‘Baldung and the Witches of Freiburg: The Evidence of Images’ in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, xviii, no. 2, (Autumn, 1987), p. 250.

⁸⁶ Translation by Kors and Peters in ‘Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg: Die Emeis (1508)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 237, see also the original Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg *Die Emeis oder Quadragesimale* (Strasbourg, 1516): ‘Was sagstu vns aber von den weiber / die zu nachts faren und zusammen kumen.’

You ask me if there's something to all this. When they travel with Lady Venusberg, or the witches, when they go thus hither and yon, do they really travel, or do they remain? Or are they there in spirit? And what should I think about them? I will give you the answer to your questions.⁸⁷

Geiler argued that the witches did travel 'hither and yon' but that they also remained where they were, because they only dreamt that they travelled 'since the Devil can create an impression in the human mind, and thus a fantasy, that they dream with others that they travel, and when they go with each other and see other women and dance, feast, and eat, and he can do all that to them (by an interior or exterior pact.)'⁸⁸ He concluded that the Devil only deceived witches with dreams, and in support of this argument he included the story that was originally told by Johannes Nider about the woman who believed she could fly and the preacher who proved her wrong. The preacher asked that if she could fly that he would like to see it. Geiler tells the story like this:

When it was night, and she wished to go, she called him and then lay down on a bench of the kind they have in village house. Then she sat down and anointed herself with oil and spoke a word that she was used to speaking, and she fell asleep sitting up. Then she began waving her hands and feet around so wildly that she fell off the bench and lay under it and bumped badly herself on the head.⁸⁹

He also included the story of Saint Germain, as further evidence that such nightly visitations were purely devilish deceptions. These stories were repeated again and again by authors discussing the reality, or indeed, the unreality, of the witches' assemblies throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As I mentioned this sermon was accompanied by an image of witches gathering together. This image, shown in Figure 4.9, is very interesting, and it is worth discussing as it was copied, and subsequently influenced later artists for example in 1571 and in 1582.⁹⁰ It also inspired the woodcuts that appeared in a new

⁸⁷ English translation from Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p 237. Original German: 'Du fragest ober was daran sie. Wen sie faren in fraw fenus berg oder die hexen wenn sie also hin vnd her faren / faren sie oder bleiben sie / oder ist es ein gespenst oder was sol ich darvon halten' from Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg *Die Emeis oder Quadragesimale* (Strasbourg, 1516).

⁸⁸ English translation from Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p 237.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 237. Original German: 'Da es nacht ward da sie faren wolt da rufft sie im / da sie faren wolt da legt sy ein molten vff den banck / da man deck in macht in den dörffern / vnd befund in dem land bachet jederman selber. Da sie in der molten also saß vnd sich salbet mit dem öl vnd sprach die wort die sie sprechen solt. Da entschliess sie also sitzen / da wont sie sie für / vnd het semliche freud in wendig dz sie fechtet mit henden vnd mit füßen vnd facht also fast das die mült vber den banck ab fiel vnd lag sie vnder der molten vnd schlug ir ein loch in den kopff.

⁹⁰ A variation of this scene can be found in Reinhard Lutz's . *Warhafftige Zeitung / Von Gottlosen hexen / Auch ketzerischen vnd Teuffels Weibern/ die zu Schlettstadt / deß h. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen*

translation of Molitor's work in 1575 by Conrad Lautenbach and in a short treatise by Paulus Frisius, *The Devil's Hoodwink* in 1583.⁹¹

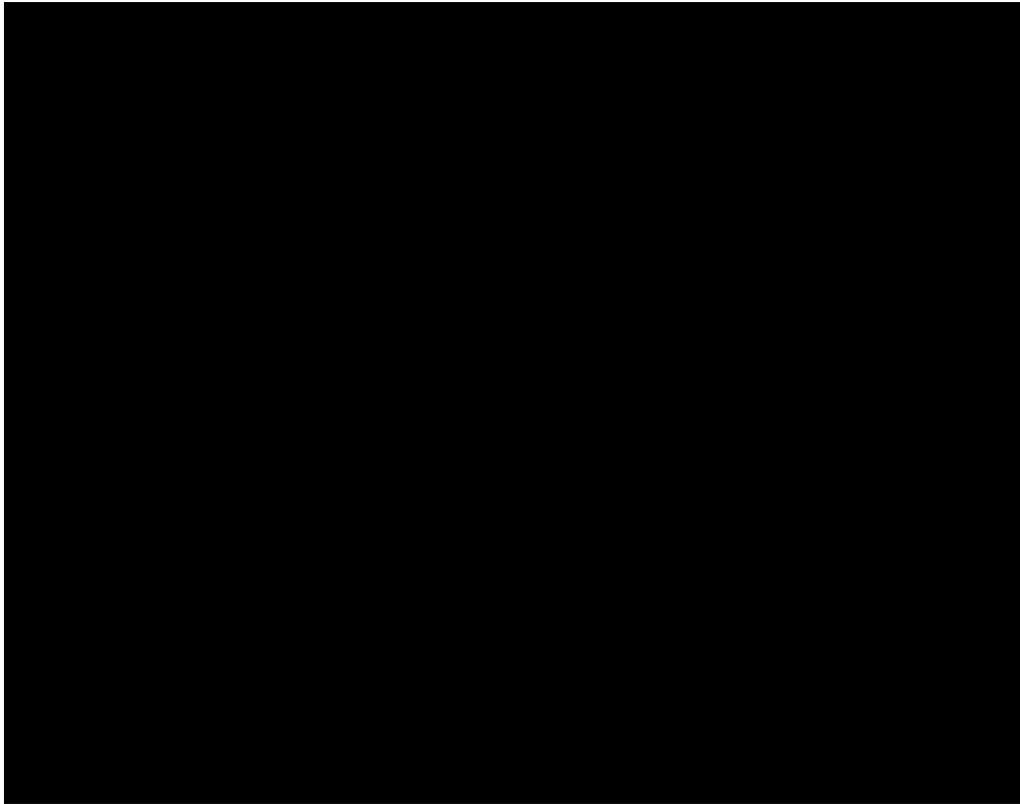


Figure 4.9. 'Von den Unholden oder von den Hexen' in Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg, *Die Emeis* (Strasbourg, 1516), available online on the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München: (http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0001/bsb00014717/image_70) (30 Jan. 2013).

Three women sit together scantily dressed, as in the art by Altdorfer and Baldung. In the centre of the image there is a pot that is magically raising liquid or smoke into the air. It is held by the woman on the left, who has flowing wild hair. In the background another woman on the ground similarly holds up a pot or cauldron in the air. On the ground there are the remains of skulls and other items that the witches have probably used in concocting their magical salves. The third witch, seated on the bench, is the one that is of special interest. It is believed that this woman on the bench was supposed to be an artistic representation of the woman who believed she could fly, but was really just asleep on a bench. She sits astride the bench as if she were riding it. She holds a strange banner in the air. It is a codpiece or pair of hose

Teuffelsverpflichtung / rc. sindt verbrennt worden. (1571) and in Abraham Saur's *Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht: Ob auch zu dieser vnser zeit vnter vns Christian / hexen / zäuberer / vnd Vnholden vorhanden...* (1582).

⁹¹ Zika, *Appearance of witchcraft*, p. 72.

tied to a two-pronged fork. Zika argues that this probably alluded to ‘the struggle over the pants’ and the ‘stealing of the codpiece’ which were common metaphors in this period for gender conflict.⁹² This hints that the entire scene could be just an illusion; it could be a representation of the scene that woman on the bench imagined, while in reality she was still at home on her bench. It has been noted that the male figure in the tree could be an allusion to Saturn.⁹³ The god-planet identified with Saturnine or melancholic temperament was believed to be responsible for providing entry for diabolical fantasies into the human imagination, and therefore the Saturn figure aided in helping the audience understand the scene as the product of diabolical fantasy.⁹⁴ Therefore this is a very complex image, at a first glance one could believe that witches’ are attending a real devilish meeting. However, a deeper reading of the scene reveals the scepticism that was inherent in Geiler’s text.

By the early sixteenth century, the concept of witches flying on animals or inanimate household objects, to meetings with other witches and demon-lovers had been firmly established as a basic stereotype. However this new stereotype, it has been shown, evolved over a long period of time from a combination of earlier beliefs, or stereotypes, about nocturnal flying cannibalistic women, and the belief in an anti-human sect. Indeed, it was not until the 1430s that the two concepts mingled fully and incorporated devil serving witches. It was at this time that people began to claim that witches carried out nocturnal flights to anti-human assemblies led by the Devil himself, at which they performed horrifying deeds. However, in the background, there was still major controversy amongst learned authors, both secular and religious, as to whether such flights and meetings were real or imagined. The idea of witches’ acting together under the guidance of the Devil was both simultaneously terrifying and fascinating, and although there was no consensus on the reality of the assemblies they soon became an inspiration for artists such as Dürer and Baldung. Today we know that the belief in the witches’ sabbath became an integral part of witchcraft belief, and that it was this belief that enabled the large scale witch persecutions, as people were forced and tortured into confessing the names of others that they had seen at the witches’ gathering. The name given to this gathering, and indeed the stories of what they did there, fluctuated over the years.

⁹² Ibid., p. 72.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 72 and pp 217-8.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

This fluctuation continued in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it is reflected in the popular and learned media, in both the *Hexenzeitungen* and the demonological treatises.

The Witches' Sabbath in the Hexenzeitungen

This section investigates the reportage of witches' nocturnal gatherings in the *Hexenzeitungen*. In particular, it examines the stories of witches' gatherings in the news-reports, looking at the type of activities witches were said to perform at these malevolent meetings. It is evident that *Hexenzeitungen*, especially from 1580 onwards, repeatedly made references to witches' dances (*Hexentänzen*), assemblies (*Versammlungen*) and meetings (*Zusammenkünften*). This section will not only investigate how the witches' gatherings were imagined in the news reports, but also assess how these representations compared to the elaborated witchcraft narratives that were evident in contemporary demonological literature and art. It is important to understand how the *Hexenzeitungen* communicated the idea of the sabbath and flight (to the sabbath) to their readers as large persecutions only happened when people accepted the belief in witches' sabbaths. On the basis of the belief in a witches' sabbath, which was visited by individual witches, torturers and authorities extracted the names of alleged accomplices from individual suspects, which resulted in further arrests and torture.⁹⁵

Over time there was a gradual shift towards the idea of witches acting together as a group in the *Hexenzeitungen*. Early traces of this shift are visible in broadsheets from 1540 and 1555.⁹⁶ In 1540 a group of witches were executed at Wittenberg and a broadsheet was printed reporting their execution and misdeeds.⁹⁷ The ring leader of the group was a 50 year old woman who had given herself to the Devil; however, she did not work alone. The old woman was said to have had three accomplices whom she taught herself. This highlights that the idea of witches' working together collectively was beginning to take shape. Furthermore the author

⁹⁵ Behringer, *Witchcraft persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 14.

⁹⁶ *Paul. zun Rom XIII. Die Gewaltigen oder Oberkeiten sind nicht den die gutes / sunder den die böses thun / zufürchten / Denn sie tregt das Schwert nicht umb sonst / Sie ist Gottes dienerin / eine Racherin uber den der böses thut* (Gotha, 1540) and *Ein erschrockliche geschicht/ so zu Derneburg in der Graffschafft Reinsteyn/ am Harz gelegen / von dreyen Zauberin [...]*, printed by Georg Merckel (Nuremberg, 1555).

⁹⁷ *Paul. zun Rom XIII* (Gotha, 1540).

of the report refers to the criminals at being part of a harmful sect, (*schedlichen Rotten*) that was conspiring against good Christians.⁹⁸ He emphasises this by referring to Bible, quoting Psalm 83, which is written here as ‘They make cunning attacks against your people and deliberate against your followers.’⁹⁹ This is evidence that the idea of witches’ as an anti-human sect, and as an inversion of Christianity had begun to spread. In 1555, another broadsheet was published this time relating the crimes of three witches from Harz, although it focused primarily on two witches, Gißlerische and Gröbische.¹⁰⁰ While the broadsheet tells us very little about the witches crimes, and even less about the witches’ sabbath, it does shed light on how the idea of witches’ acting collectively was taking hold. The two witches were supposed to have come back from the dead to kill Gißlerische’s husband. A neighbour supposedly heard something and ran to their house and saw through the door the two women dancing fervently around the fire. This might not seem significant, but it is these small details that allow us to understand how little by little the concept of witches’ acting together was taking shape. In addition this report also shows how dancing was becoming associated as an activity carried out by evil witches. Another report published in 1563 about sixty-three witches in Wiesensteig also recounted stories of witches working together to create bad weather – however in all of these earlier publications there was still no mention anything resembling a witches’ sabbath.

The first pamphlet I have come across that gives a detailed account of witches’ gatherings is from 1571.¹⁰¹ The pamphlet written by Reinhard Lutz, a preacher in Sélestat (in the Alsace), contains an interesting section on the witches’ flight and their gatherings. Significantly, the pamphlet contained an image representing a witches’ gathering on its title page (4.10). Straight away one can see that it is an extended variation of the image that was printed in Geiler von Kaysersberg’s *Die Emeis* (1516) (Figure. 4.9). Many of the elements from the earlier woodcut are re-used. For example, the cauldron in the centre of the image, the naked male figure up in the tree, the woman riding the bench with the codpiece flying

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.: ‘Sie machen listige anschlege wider dein volck / vnd ratschlagen wider dein verborgene.’

¹⁰⁰ *Ein erschrockliche geschicht/ so zu Derneburg in der Graffschafft Reinsteyn/ am Harz gelegen / von dreyen Zauberin...*, printed by Georg Merckel (Nuremberg, 1555).

¹⁰¹ Reinhard Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen / Auch ketzerischen vnd Teuffels Weibern/ die zu Schlettstadt / deß h. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung / rc. sindt verbrennt worden.* (S.l., 1571). Lutz’s work was also later printed in the *Theatrum de Veneficis* or *Theatre of Witches* (Frankfurt, 1586) which was a folio volume produced by the Frankfurt publisher Nicolaus Basse.

through the air. However, the order of these elements is changed, with the man up the tree now on the right, and the witch sitting astride the bench now on the left. A new figure is also added into the scene: a naked witch riding a goat through the sky. As aforementioned the image in Kaysersberg could be interpreted as representing the witches gathering as a diabolical illusion, with the witch riding the bench and male Saturn figure revealing the author's scepticism about the reality of the gathering. While this image made perfect sense in *Die Emeis*, where the author discussed the story of the witch who rode upon a bench but in reality travelled nowhere, it has a more ambiguous meaning in the context of Lutz's text as Lutz maintained that such gatherings were indeed real.

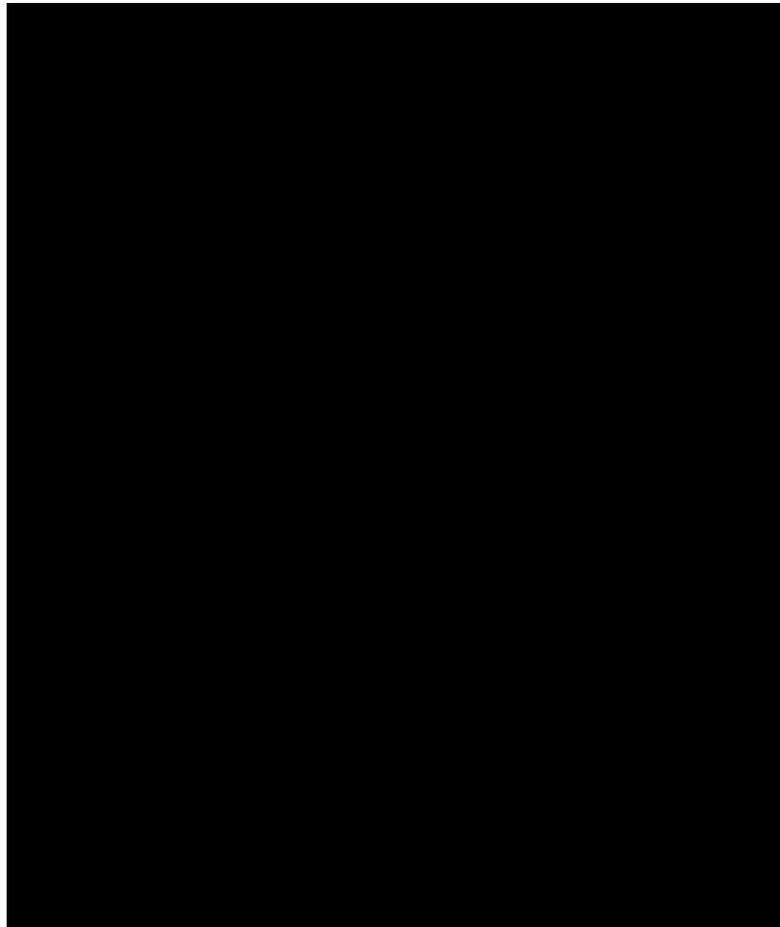


Figure 4.10. Witches' gathering, image from title page of *Warhafftige Zeitung / Von Gottlosen hexen / Auch ketzerischen vnd Teuffels Weibern/ die zu Schlettstadt / deß h. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung / rc. sindt verbrennt worden.* (S.l.,1571). Digital copy provided for the dissertation by the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel.

Following the tradition of the *Malleus Maleficarum* Lutz believed that the evil spirit could lead witches ‘through the air, over towns, villages, mountains and valleys’ to meet in secret places (*heimliche örter*) together.¹⁰² Like Kramer, he asserted that they used certain ceremonies to travel and used a salve made from animals and boiled children.¹⁰³ At such a gathering (Lutz literally refers to it as an assembly, ‘*Versammlung*’) the witches performed acts that they had not been able to at home. They discussed what horrors they wished to cause and they also discussed what evil deeds each witch had accomplished by themselves. In this form the gathering appears like some sort of organisational assembly or an annual general meeting, where they convene and set themselves their evil tasks for the next year. However there was also a suggestion that cannibalism and infanticide took place at such gatherings: ‘There were some women found, who killed children and salted their bodies, and I have seen one sentenced, who committed this horrible deed.’¹⁰⁴

Lutz firmly believed that the witches really could fly and supported his belief by referring to the Bible and the story of Habbakuk who visited Daniel while he was in the lion’s den.¹⁰⁵ He attacked those who did not believe in the reality of the witches’ flight noting that ‘there are many who suppose, that it is all a vain fable or a Melancholic fantasy, a special imagining and fancy.’¹⁰⁶ Lutz corrected them, and argued that the witches’ correlating testimonies of times and locations for gatherings were sufficient proof that they really met and therefore it was not just a ‘*fabelwerck*’. Such correlations could not be possible, Lutz argued, if it only happened in the imagination. However, it is at this point that Lutz concluded his discussion of their gathering. All in all while he agreed that they could fly to special gatherings, he did not go into detail about what they did at such gatherings, other than discuss their evil deeds.

All four of the witches that he reported about confessed that they met together in the garden of St. Leonhardt’s. The first witch, Anna, the wife of Nicolaus Strauben, confessed that she went four times with her accomplices to such a meeting.

¹⁰² Ibid.: ‘Wiewol das nichts zu dem faren thut / denn die bösen Geister führen sie zusammen durch die Lufft / vber Stett / Dörffer / Berg vnnnd Thal.’

¹⁰³ Ibid.: ‘Deßgleichen salben / etwas von Thieren / oder gesottenen kindern / so sie gmacht haben’.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.: ‘Man hat etliche Weiber gefunden / welche die Kinder getödtet / vnnnd jr fleisch eingesalzen haben / vnnnd ich hab eine gesehen richten / die diese grawsame that begangen.’

¹⁰⁵ Daniel 14:34.

¹⁰⁶ Lutz, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen hexen...* : ‘Nun aber daß viel vermeynen / Es sey dieses alles eitel fabelwerck / oder ein Melancholisch Phantasey / besonder imagination vnnnd einbildung.’

Her demon lover took her by her arm and travelled with her there. She claimed that she danced outside and that one of her *gespielen Bulen* played the pipes. While there the witches dug a hole, but the other witches did not tell her what it was for. The second witch, Trüwel Greischerin, also stated that there were six of them that came together at night in the garden of St. Leonhardt and that had dug a hole together in order to make weather. The account of the third witches' confession gives a much lengthier description of the meeting. Ameley, the wife of furrier, supposedly confessed that she too had attended a nocturnal gathering in Saint Leonhardt's, where they dug this hole in order to create bad weather. She claimed that she had 'a good time and had a dance.'¹⁰⁷ She said that they had 'beautiful silver dishes, plenty of wine and food but there was no bread there.'¹⁰⁸ She confessed that her Devil had given her a small jar containing a salve and if she used it she would be transported there. She also reported how one time they held a dance on the mountains, where a shepherd played the pipes, and how another time there were more than twenty people in attendance, all of whom were dressed beautifully in white. Anna explained how they held banquets if a new accomplice (*Gespielen*) joined them. However, flying through the air was not without its dangers and Anna reported how one time she missed and did not get where she was supposed to go and when she woke up she was in her garden, with no clue as to how she got there. The last witch that Lutz reported on, Barbel, also confessed that she went to these meetings at Saint Leonhardt where they 'danced, ate and drank and lived well without bread.'¹⁰⁹

Immediately one can see that dancing, music, eating and drinking were the foremost activities at the witches' gathering according to these witches' confessions. The absence of bread at the feast is worth noting as both bread and salt were both associated with Christianity and the sacraments and therefore were thought to be intolerable to the Devil.¹¹⁰ This idea, we will see, was subsequently further elaborated by demonologists such as Jean Bodin and Nicholas Remy.¹¹¹ Overall the meeting appears as frivolous and fun. The role of music at the gathering is also important, as this became a very prominent feature in later years. The pipes more than any other instrument were associated with the nocturnal dances, and this is the

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.: '...sonst haben sie ein gut mahl vnnd ein tanz gehabt.'

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. There was 'schöne Silbergeschirr / wein vnd essen gnug / aber kein brot sey da gewesen.'

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.: '...haben sie getanzt/ gessen vnnd getruncken / vnd ohn Brot / wol gelebt.'

¹¹⁰ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 115.

¹¹¹ Jean Bodin, *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris, 1580); Nicolas Remy, *Daemonolatreiae libri tres* (Lyon, 1595).

first instance that the pipes are specifically mentioned in the *Hexenzeitungen*. The importance of music at the sabbath is a topic that has perhaps been understudied and is an area that could be further developed and researched.¹¹² The gathering is more like a regular feast, and there is no mention of devil worship or incestuous orgies. These ideas were still not central to the idea of a gathering. However this was to change dramatically with the publication of Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* in 1580.

In Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* the witches gathering began to transform from a nocturnal feast into an inverted mass, or black mass, with devil worshipping becoming one of the most prominent features. Bodin recounts the confession of Jean Harvillier and what she said about the 'witches' assemblies' in the preface to his work:

After her sentencing she confessed that she had been transported by the Devil to the witches' assemblies, after using ointments which the Devil gave her. She was carried up so fast and so far that she was quite tired. She had seen a great number of people at the assemblies who were all worshipping a man in black in a high place, about thirty years old, whom they called 'Beelzebub.' After that they had carnal relations. Then the Prince preached to them to trust in him, that he would take revenge on their enemies and that he would make them happy.¹¹³

In book two of the same work he dedicated chapter four to discussing the witches' flight and their assemblies entitled: 'On those who renounce God and their religion by express agreement, and whether they are bodily transported by demons.'¹¹⁴ Bodin relates older narratives about witches who attended assemblies, such as the story of Guillaume Edeline, Doctor of the Sorbonne, who was condemned as witch on Christmas evening, 1453. Edeline, Bodin wrote, confessed that he had been transported many times at night to witches' assemblies, where he renounced God,

¹¹² The only literature that I have come across that deals specifically with music at the witches' sabbath is: Harvey B. Gaul, 'Music and Devil-Worship' in *The Music Quarterly*, xi, no. 2 (April, 1925), pp. 192-5. However, Gaul believed that the witches held real assemblies, *Esbats*, and performed actual rituals (a position also maintained by Margaret Murray in her work *Witch Cult in Western Europe* (Oxford, 1921) ; it is probable that Gaul read her work and accepted her hypotheses).

¹¹³ Translation from Scott (trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, pp 36-7. Original French: 'Depuis la condamnation elle confessa a qu'elle auoit esté transportee par le Diable aux assemblees des Sorcieres, après auoir usé de quelques gresses, que le Diable luy bailloit, estant guindee d'une si grande vistesse, & si loing, qu'elle estoit toute lasse & foulee, & qu'elle auoit veu aux assemblees grand nombre de personnes, qui adoroient tois vn homme noir, en haut lieu, de l'age comme de trente ans, q'ils appelloient Belzebub. Et après cela ils se couploient charnellement: & puis le Prince leur faisoit sermon de se s'ier en luy, & qu'ils les vengeroit de leurs ennemis, & les feroit bien heureux.' Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), preface.

¹¹⁴ Translation from Scott (trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 112. Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 79^f: 'De cevx qui renoncent à Dieu, & à leur religion par convention expresse, & s'ils sont transportez en corp par les Demons.

and worshipped the Devil in the form of billy-goat, kissing its rear. Edeline was not the only one guilty of committing the obscene kiss as another group of sorcerers from Poitiers confessed in 1564 that they went to a general assembly three times a year.¹¹⁵ The Poitier witches claimed that the general assembly took place at crossroads. At the assembly there was a black goat who could speak, and they all danced around it. Then each kissed his rear while holding a burning candle. After that the billy goat was consumed in fire and each witch took some of the ash to kill a steer or a cow belonging to their enemy. Some used it to kill sheep and horses, but others used to cause harm to people. Afterwards the Devil said to them with a terrible voice these words, ‘Take revenge or you will die!’.¹¹⁶ Bodin claimed that they specifically met three times a year to sacrifice to the Devil in order to mimic the sacrifice of the he-goat described by God’s law in Leviticus, Chapter 16 and the commandment from the book of Exodus that stated that all males had to appear before God three times a year, at three solemn feasts.¹¹⁷ This highlights the demonologists growing preoccupation with trying to see the witches’ gathering as a direct inversion of Christianity itself. The confession, however, contained a mix of new and old ideas. The idea that the Devil himself would burn to ashes, which could then be used as a magical ingredient was a new idea. The idea that witches worshipped the Devil in the form of a goat had a much longer history, rooted in beliefs about other earlier heretics, such as the Waldensians. Bodin also claimed that the dance was significant and purported that there was no assembly carried on where they did not dance.¹¹⁸ So much so that the witches of Longny confessed that there were special words that they cried while dancing:

har, har, Devil, Devil, jump here, jump there, play here, play there.’ And the others would chant, ‘Sabbath, Sabbath,’ that is to say, the feast and day of rest, raising their hands and brooms up high to testify and give a sure witness of gladness and that willingly they serve and worship the Devil, an also to mimic the worship which is due to God.¹¹⁹

While dancing had therapeutic powers to confer order and virtue, and could cause

¹¹⁵ Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 86^v: ‘...qu’ils estoient trois fois l’ans à l’assemblee generale’.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. p. 86^v: ‘Vengez vous ou vour mourez’.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. Also see Exodus 23:14.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p. 87^v: ‘Mais il faiet bien à noter que il ne se faiet point d’assemblee, où l’on ne danse.’

¹¹⁹ Ibid.: ‘har, har, Diable, Diable, saute icy, sauté là, iouë icy, iouë là: Et autres disoiēt Sabath, Sabath, c’est à dire la feste & iour de ropos, en hussant les main & ballets en haut, pour testifier & dōner vn certain tesmoignage d’allegresse, & quede bon Coeur ils feruent & adorent le Diable, & aussi pour contrefaire l’adoration qui est deuë à Dieu’.

harmony, the witches dance was of course a complete inversion of this.¹²⁰ The witches' dance was frantic and even homicidal. According to Bodin they had the power to make men frenzied and cause women to miscarry.¹²¹ The witches are also frequently described at dancing backwards, anti-clockwise or in another strange ways. For example Bodin includes the confession of peasant who said that the dance was performed in a circle with their faces turned outward from the circle so that the people could not recognize each other and denounce each other if they were caught.¹²²

If the witches' assembly was an inversion of Christianity then anything associated with Christianity was forbidden at the gathering. For this reason, bread and salt were usually absent. Moreover no one could mention the name of God. Bodin tells the story of how a peasant attending an assembly complained that there was no salt. The man complained so much that he was brought salt, and when he got it, he exclaimed 'praised be God the salt has come.'¹²³ But as soon as he said the name of God everything disappeared. Another aspect of the sabbath that became widely believed was the idea that the witches had to give an account of their evil deeds to the Devil. In contrast to Christian confession, the witches were punished only if they did not do evil, in the words of Bodin, 'each witch must render an account of the evil he did, on pain of being soundly beaten.'¹²⁴

As for the method of transportation and whether it was real or not, Bodin believed it was indeed real. He stated that it could be done sometimes with the help of an ointment and sometimes without, and that the witches travelled sometimes on a billy goat, sometimes on a flying horse, sometimes on a broom, sometimes on a pole, other times without any pole or beast.¹²⁵ He claimed that some travelled to the assembly naked, as this allowed them to apply grease to themselves, while others travelled fully clothed. Some went at night, and others went by day. However, he argued that they went usually at night and 'most often between Monday and Tuesday night.'¹²⁶ The idea that witches held their gatherings on certain days and on dates in

¹²⁰ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, pp 91-2.

¹²¹ Jean Bodin, *De la démonomanie des sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 87^v.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 82^v.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 83^r: 'hor laudato sia Dio, pure venuto questo sale, Or loué soit Dieu puis que le sel est venu.'

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84^r.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*: '...mais ordinairement la nuit, le plus souuent entre la nuit du Lundi & Mardi'.

the calendar (usually dates associated with particular Saint's feast days) and at specific locations also evolved during the sixteenth century. The end of Bodin's discussion is quite interesting. To conclude his chapter he refers to the work of Ulrich Molitor. However Bodin claimed that Molitor's work determined through innumerable examples and judgements, that Satan really could transport witches in body and soul.¹²⁷ However, having studied Molitor's *De laniis* in detail this statement is incorrect. Molitor's dialogue concludes that such transportations were only devilish delusions. Perhaps Bodin focused solely on the dialogue spoken by the character of Conrad who was the firm believer in witchcraft in Molitor's treatise, either way he was certainly twisting Molitor's text to suit his own ends.¹²⁸ To strengthen his argument that witches could be transported by the Devil, Bodin argued further that to believe otherwise would be mocking the Gospel, and a form of heresy as because it is stated in the Gospel that Satan transported Jesus Christ to the top of the temple, then onto a mountain.¹²⁹

Overall Bodin's work marks a shift in the paradigm of the witches' sabbath. It began to be transformed from a nightly feast and dance into an anti-Christian, devil-worshipping sect, and from 1580 onwards trace of this shift can also be seen in the *Hexenzeitungen*. In the same year that Bodin's work was published, two different reports were printed about witches who attended nightly gatherings, the 'Two New Reports' and the 'New News from Bereburgk.'¹³⁰ The 'Two New Reports' contained a report on the witches burned in various towns from the 7 February until the 20 July 1580. The author reported that the witches confessed to attending a 'Landtag' or assembly at a castle high on a mountain one German mile from Colmar. He stated that:

Nearly 500 persons came from many lands and from far away, riding on cats and on calves. Many of them were dead, and yet they too had strange adventures at the place. They danced and jumped over sticks and stones. And each one brought along his lover-demon, who had strange names.¹³¹

The devils then instructed the witches to create a huge storm that would wreak

¹²⁷ Ibid. p. 89r.

¹²⁸ Natalie Kwan has also noted Bodin's strange references to Molitor, see Kwan, 'Woodcuts and Witches: Ulrich Molitor's *De laniis et pythonicis mulieribus*, 1489-1669', p. 516.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ *Zwo Neue Zeittung, was man für Hexen oder Unholden verbrandt hat* (Hof, 1580); *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk, Schrecklich und abschewlich zu hören vnd zu lessen, Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin, Hexen oder Zauberinnen* (S.l., 1580)

¹³¹ *Zwo Neue Zeittung* (Hof, 1580), the translation here is by Erik Midelfort and can be found in Kingdon (ed.), *Transition and revolution*, pp 211-2.

destruction. On the other hand the other pamphlet from 1580 about witches from Bernburg claimed that such meetings had a certain order. One of the witches Curt Köchin, confessed that they met twice a year on the Blocksberg, on Walpurgis night and the night of John the Baptist. Old Köchin reported that she travelled to the Blocksberg on her son's white goat with her lover, while the other two witches, Black Gertrude and long Euphemia, rode on brown calf and on a ram. She confessed that while they were on the mountain 'they danced and learned new magical herbs, and also ate and drank, namely, cheese, eggs and butter...'¹³² Both reports include and endorse the witches' flight, with an emphasis on animals as their primary mode of transport. There is no mention of any salves that need to be applied before they can fly. The idea that witches met on specific mountains became a paramount concept, and the Blocksberg or Brockenberg, the tallest mountain in the Harz mountain range, became one of the main locations for the witches' nocturnal meetings. The Blocksberg became so renowned that in the seventeenth century a book was written by Johannes Praetorius about the mountain and its demonological gatherings, titled, *Des Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*.¹³³ Similarly, the idea that witches met on St. Walpurgis night (the night of the 30 April) became commonplace overtime. The gathering of witches was found to be held on important Christian feast days, likewise on the night of St. John (*Johannisnacht*) which also coincided with mid-summer's eve.¹³⁴ However, there is no discussion or mention of outward devil worship in this pamphlet and the obscene kiss and incestuous orgies remain absent.

In 1582, the Marburg attorney, Abraham Saur, penned a report about witchcraft: 'A short, true warning, report and explanation, whether witches, magicians and sorcerers exist amongst us Christians at this time.'¹³⁵ His report was printed alongside a new report about a witch who was executed at Marburg on the 25 May 1582. The content of this pamphlet is interesting in that it expresses juxtaposing ideas about the reality of the witches gathering. In the short report that precedes the

¹³² *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk...* (S.l., 1580): 'Auff dem Berge getanzet / Zauberkreuter kennen gelernet / und darauff gessen vnd getrunken / nemlichen / Kese / Eyer vnd Putter...'

¹³³ See Gerhard Scholz Williams, *Ways of knowing in Early Modern Germany* (Vermont, 2006) for more information on Johannes Praetorius and his work.

¹³⁴ Van Dülmen, 'Imaginationen des Teuflichen: Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate,' p. 109.

¹³⁵ Abraham Saur, *Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht: Ob zu dieser vnser zeit vnter vns Christian / hexen / zäuberer / vnd Vnholden vorhanden : Vnd was sie außrichten können / rc. Einfältig vnd kürzlich Durch M. Abraham Saur beschrieben vnd an Tag gegeben.* (Frankfurt am Main, 1582).

tract we are told how a witch herself supposedly confessed (according to the report) that she went to devilish dances in real life: ‘When she wanted to travel to the dances, she smeared her forehead with a salve, and lay a broom beside her husband, and she was at the dance place.... And she did not travel on the back of Unflat (her lover demon), but smeared herself, so that she came up through the chimney.’¹³⁶ There is no discussion in this part of the report as to whether this flight was real or imagined, and the reader is left with the impression that such travels truly occurred. However, in the main body of the pamphlet Saur goes into detail debating and discussing all the major concepts of witchcraft, including the witches’ flight and gatherings. Like many before him he repeated and quoted the excerpt from the *Canon Episcopi* that stated that the evil women were only deluded by the devil into believing that they travelled with Diana at night. Saur argued along the same lines as the canon and insisted that witches only thought that they went to meetings and knew other witches through the deception of the Devil: ‘*Betrug vnd verblendung deß Teuffels.*’¹³⁷ He argued that the devil could make them imagine something so powerfully when they were asleep, that the witches ‘think nothing other, than that they see the people in person, eat and drink, speak and exist bodily with them, similar to as when one lies in a dream, eating and drinking with people, doing this and that, and when one wakes up, it is an obvious fantasy and dream, etc., upon which nothing can be built upon.’¹³⁸ At this point Saur refers to the Old Testament to the Book of Sirach as a means to prove that dreams are lies. In the Bible Sirach states that:

The hopes of a senseless man are empty and false; and dreams extol the imprudent. Like one who chases a shadow and pursues the wind, so also is one who pays attention to lying visions. In the vision of dreams, one thing represents another, as when a mask is before the face of a man. What can be cleansed by the unclean? And what truth can be spoken from a lie? Erroneous divinations and false signs and the dreams of evil doers are emptiness....¹³⁹

This reference speaks volumes and helps us understand Saur’s perspective on the

¹³⁶ Ibid.: ‘Sagt /Wann sie zun Tänzen fahren wöllen / so hab sie sich mit Salben vmb die Stirn geschmieret / vnnd einen Besem neben jren Mann gelegt / Es seyen auff den Tänzplätzen gewesen Vnnd es führe sie der Vnflat nicht auff dem Rucken / Sonder sie schmiere sich / daß sie zum Schornstein außfahre /rc.’

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.: ‘...daß sie nicht anders meynen / dann sie sehen die Leut persönlich /essen vnd trincken / redten / vnd lebten leiblich mit jnen / gleich als wann einer in einem Traum liget / eß vnnd trinck mit den Leuten / thet diß vnd das / vnd wann einer erwacht / so sinds lauter Fantasey vnd Träume / rc. Darauff nichts zu bauen.’

¹³⁹ Sirach 34: 1-5 Catholic Public Domain Version (http://www.sacredbible.org/catholic/OT-26_Sirach.htm#34) (12 Dec. 2012).

reality of the witches' journeys. In addition to this reference, Saur also backs up his argument by retelling the story found in Geiler von Kaysersberg about the woman who thought she was travelling while in reality she was astride a cow trough that did not move (which was originally told by Nider) and the story of from the legend of St. Germain. However, Saur's news report is the only one that I have come across that in the sixteenth century that explicitly believed the witches' gatherings to be nothing more than devilish trickery and illusion, all the other reports that mention witches' flying or congregating provide no discussion as to whether such happenings were real or imagined.

In the same year Nicolas Wiriod published a report about many witches who had done great harm 'against people and animals and made, with their sorcery, terribly large weather in the last summer in Germany.'¹⁴⁰ Interestingly, as shown in the previous chapter this weather was created by the witches collectively. There is also a report of how an apothecary from Mumpelgart held a wedding on the top of a mountain where she gave her daughter to be the devil's wife. Following the wedding 'more than two and a half thousand gulden of silver jewellery was found and three tables with all sorts of food, with only bread and salt.'¹⁴¹ When one reads between the lines, it becomes evident that there was a connection between weddings and the witches' sabbath, and traces of wedding celebrations can be found in the description of witches' gatherings. The witches' gathering Van Dülmen argued was often described as a crude farmer's celebration, as a wedding celebration, or as a feast, at which there was plenty of eating, drinking and dancing rather than as 'Black Mass.'¹⁴² Jonathan Durrant similarly found that the wedding motif occurred frequently in the Eichstätt confessions especially when the suspects told of the seduction into the sect and when they described the atmosphere of the clandestine nocturnal gatherings.¹⁴³ In 1589 another wedding between a witch and the Devil was

¹⁴⁰ *Warhafft vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung: Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr; wol in die 200. und fünf vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekandt haben / Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan, vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wetter ... gemacht haben* printed by Nicolas Wiriot (Strasbourg, 1582).

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 'Es hat auch auff demselbigen Berg / die Appoteckerin von Mümpelgart hochzeit gehalten / und ihre Tochter dem Teuffel zu einem Weib geben / man hat auch mehr als in die drithalb tausent Gulden Silbergeschmeid gefunden / und drey Tisch mit allerley spies / ohn allein kein Brot und kein Salz.'

¹⁴² Van Dülmen, 'Imaginationen des Teuflichen: Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate,' p. 109.

¹⁴³ Jonathan B. Durrant, *Witchcraft, gender and society in early modern Germany* (Boston, 2007), p. 57.

reported in a pamphlet printed by Nicolaus Schreiber. The description of this wedding feast is strikingly similar to the witches' gathering. Once again as was the case in Wiriot's report, the bride was given to the Devil by her own mother who was an 'old evil woman.' After they married they held a dance that was attended by 'many devils in the form of young men and women, a bunch of old witches, strange and wonderful musicians, one of which played on a horses head, the others still on strange instruments, each person danced with their lover and after they had danced together (as I shall say with embarrassment) they had sex.'¹⁴⁴ This highlights how the development of and imagining of the witches' sabbath was somewhat reliant on drawing from feast days and celebrations that people experienced in everyday life, such as weddings. However over time, it also became possible for people to project the evil activities of witches' gatherings onto wedding celebrations, and wedding's between humans and devils became an example of devilish festivities.

By the 1580s it is clear that the media was reporting frequently about a growing sect of witches that met together to create harm and devastation. A striking example of how this sect was believed to be growing bigger and bigger is a report from 1588 which claimed that over 18,000 witches came to meet together. All the witches, poor and rich, young and old, from Saxony and Westphalia supposedly gathered at 'a mountain in Saxony, called the Blocksberg.'¹⁴⁵ When they were gathered they swore together that they would harm people and animals through their magical art. The report was written in rhyming couplets, so that it could be easily sung and remembered. Furthermore, the same report was reprinted, albeit with slight alterations, in 1589, 1591 and 1596.¹⁴⁶ This interest in the Blocksberg (also referred

¹⁴⁴ *Warhafftige vnd erschröcklich Beschreibung / von einem Zauberer Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können machen...* printed by Nicolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589): 'zu welchem Tanz komen viel Teuffel / in Jünglings vnd Jungfrauen gestalt / ein hauffen alter hexen / seltzamen vnd wunderbarliche Spielleute / der eine hatte gepielet auff einem pferdskopffe . die andern sonst auff selzamen Instrumenten / ein jede tanzete mit jrem Bulen / vnd nach geschehenem Tanz zusammen (wie ich auff's züchtigst sagen soll) vermischten.'

¹⁴⁵ *Warhafftige: Neue Zeitung Aus dem land Westuahlen / von der Stat Ossenbruck / wie man da hat auff einen Tag. 133. Vnholden verbrandt ./ auch was sie bekandt vnd getreiben haben / gesangs / weiß gestalt.* (S.l., 1588).

¹⁴⁶ *Zwo Warhafftige Neue Zeytung... Die ander Neue Zeytung aus dem landt Westualen / von der statt Osenbruck / allda hat man den 9. April in diesem 1589. Jar / auff einen Tag hundert und drey ind dressig...* (S.l., 1589); *Warhafftige Neue Zeitung / aus dem Landt Westphalen / von der Statt Ossenbruck / Allda hat man den 9. Tag Hornungs / in dem 1591. Jar auff einen Tag 133 Vnholden verbrandt / Auch was sie Bekandt vnd getriben haben ...*, printed by Johann Beck (Erfurt, 1591); *Dreyerley Warhaffte neue zeittung ... Die dritte / Auß dem Landt Westuahlen / von der Statt Ossenbruckh / wie man auff einen Tag 133. Vnholden verbrent hat / geschehen den 9. Aprilis diß 96. Jars* (Regensburg, 1596).

to as Brockersberg and Brocken) is obvious in another pamphlet printed in 1596 which had the sensational title: ‘Two terrible and outrageous stories, which happened on the Brockersberg in 1596, on which nearly one hundred thousand sorcerers or witches gathered, and held counsel with the devil...’¹⁴⁷ The report states that female witches (*Hexenweiber*) from near and far met together on the Brockersberg. Furthermore the author claimed that they held this meeting on St Walpurgis Night: ‘In this year on Walpurgis Night, they deliberated there and held counsel, at the time there were also present as many devils as the witches young and old.’¹⁴⁸ The witches were advised by the Devil that they should damage everything ‘in the whole of the German land’¹⁴⁹ through bad weather. The report then moves swiftly away from the description of the massive gathering and discussed instead the weather magic and other *maleficium* that witches wreaked. It is clear that the amount of witches believed to be attending these gatherings increased dramatically. In 1571 Lutz’s witches confessed to small gatherings, the biggest was said to have had twenty people at it. In 1580 there was a report of a Landtag with over 500 witches. But by 1596, this report states that startling 100,000 witches came together to convene with Satan. That is a significant increase. Furthermore, the Blocksberg or Brockenberg and Walpurgis night were quickly becoming the stereotypical location and date for such gatherings. However, although the scale of the gathering reported is gigantic, the author of the report does not go into detail as to what activities, bar weather-magic, were conducted at the gathering.

One report that gave much more detail on the activities carried out at witches’ gatherings was a pamphlet detailing the crimes of Walpurga Hausmännin in 1588. As mentioned previously, an account of her confession was also included in the Fugger newsletters in 1587.¹⁵⁰ According to the 1588 pamphlet Walpurga had confessed that she ‘often and much rode on a fork at night with her demon-lover to different

¹⁴⁷ *Zwo erschreckliche vnd vnerhörte Geschicht / welches in diesem XCVI. Jar geschehen ist auff den Brockersberg / Dar sich ahn die hundert tausent Unholden oder hexen versamlet. Vnd rath mit dem Teuffel genommen...* Printed by Bertran Büchholz (Cologne, 1596).

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘In diesem Jahr an Walpurga Nacht / haben sie sich dahin bedacht / vnd einen Rath gehalten / es sind auch da gewesen zu mal / der Teuffel so viel an der zahl als der hexen jung vnd alten.’

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘im ganzen Teutschen Lande’

¹⁵⁰ See original German in Victor Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen: Ungedruckte Briefe an das haus Fugger aus den Jahren 1568-1605* (Munich, 1923), pp 103-10. Or English translation in George T. Mathews (ed.), *News and rumor in Renaissance Europe: the Fugger newsletters*, pp. 137-43. There is very little difference in the narratives so here I will use my own translations from the 1588 pamphlet.

places’¹⁵¹ to attend special ‘Devilish meetings’ (*Teüffelischen zusammenkunfft*). These meetings were presided over by a great devil with a grey beard, who sat in a chair dressed in black like ‘a great prince’.¹⁵² At the meeting she had to honour the Devil, and she had to promise herself to him again, through re-baptism (which was discussed in chapter one). The author revealed that Walpurga further confessed that as these devilish gatherings ‘she ate and drank and fornicated with her lover-demon.’¹⁵³ She allegedly ate a good roast and innocent children at their feast along with red and white wine—but no salt.¹⁵⁴ While later demonologists, particularly De Lancre¹⁵⁵ believed witches ate children at their sabbaths, this is the only time in the *Hexenzeitungen* that witches are said eat children at their gathering. This pamphlet is striking as it is one of the very few examples that include devil worshipping and cannibalism in the representation of the sabbath. It appears that by the end of the 1580s the elaborate sabbath concept, evident in Bodin, was beginning to take hold in the popular discourse.

Another report that shows how this elaborate sabbath narrative was trickling down into popular media was printed by Nikolas Schreiber in 1594. It was titled: ‘A terrible story and the confessions of sorcerers and female sorcerers that were recently burnt...’¹⁵⁶ As shown in the previous chapters, the author of Schreiber’s report was evidently familiar with the work of Jean Bodin and he was not afraid to plagiarise. In fact, the anonymous author took the story of Jean Harvillier directly from Bodin’s work. The story of Johanna and her account of the witches’ gathering in the report is an amalgamation of all the narratives about the sabbath that were found in Bodin’s work. For example the author reported that Johanna confessed to attending the witches’ gathering at least three times a year:

¹⁵¹ *Urgicht und verzeichnuß / so Walpurga Hausmännern zu Dillingen / inn ihrer peinlichen Marter bekennt hatt / was sy für vbels vnd Jamers mit ihrer hexerey / so sy biß in die 30. Jar getriben / angericht vnd gestüfft hat [...]*, (S.l.,1588): ‘Ferners bekennt obgedachte Walpurga / das sie offft vnd vil mit jhrem Bülteüffel Nachts auff einer Gabel an vnderschiedliche örter...’

¹⁵² Ibid.: ‘...wie ein grosser fürst’.

¹⁵³ Ibid.: ‘...Bey sollichen Teüfflichen zusammenkunffen / hab sie gessen vnnnd getruncken /auch mit jhrem Bühlteüffel hürey getriben’.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.: ‘..in jhrem essen hetten sie etwan ein güten Bratten /ein vnshuldiges kindlein so auch gebraten gewesen darneben gelegt...’

¹⁵⁵ De Lancre believed witches ate the liver of unbaptised children at their feast. Gerhild Scholz Williams (ed.), *On the Inconstancy of Witches: Pierre de Lancre’s Tableau de l’inconstance des mauvais anges et demons (1612)*, translated by Harriet Stone and Gerhild Scholz Williams (Arizona, 2006), p. 252.

¹⁵⁶ *Erschreckliche Erzehlung / Unnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welce kurzlich verbrandt sein worden / daronder ein Badstöber vnd ein hebel oder hebam ist gewest....* Printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1594).

They gathered around dancing around a black dirty billy goat, and worshipped him and lit lights and when they saw that they kissed the goat on its behind, the kissed billy goat would go on fire and from the same ashes, one and all took some, and with it they killed their enemies cows and calves, sheep, horses or what they could reach with it or they also killed people with it.¹⁵⁷

This story is a copy of the account Bodin gave of the witches from Poitiers, who confessed to having a ‘general assembly’ three times a year.¹⁵⁸ There is no doubt about it, the author of the news report lifted this story from Bodin, and claimed that it was part of Johanna’s confession even though this narrative was not even confessed by Jean Harvillier but by the Potiers witches in 1564. However the author of the news report also included the description of the gathering that was really confessed by Jean Harvillier. In the report we are told she confessed that they offered and burned frankincense for Satan and that they knelt before him. They prayed to Beelzebuck and after that had happened they then had sex with each other. Following their sexual escapades, the Devil held a grand speech, about how they should depend on him that he would stand by them.¹⁵⁹ This narrative corresponds to the one in Bodin’s preface, in which Bodin reported that Jean worshipped a devil called ‘Beelzebub’ at the gathering. Jean, according to Bodin, also reported that they had ‘carnal relations’ and that their ‘Prince’ promised to seek revenge on their enemies.¹⁶⁰

The account of the witches’ dance from the report can also be traced back to Bodin. This time the author of the pamphlet copied the story from the witches of Longny. According to the author of the report Johanna confessed that while dancing ‘all sorcerers yell with cheering and clear voices:

‘Harr, harr, Devil, dance here, dance there, play here, play there,’ others shout only ‘Sabbah, Sabbah, that is our feast day. Thereafter they raise their arms and fist up, and strike the air with sweeping brushes, that they had in their hand and they do all of such for the honour of Satan.’¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.: ‘Sie massen vmb einen grossen schwarzen zotigen Bock ringes rumb tanzen / vnd in Anbetten / vnnd Lichten brennen / vnd wan das gesehen / jme den hinder küssen den hadt sich der geküste Bock in einem Feiwer selbst verbrant / vnd von derselben Asche ein jeder vnd jede nimpt / vnd damit jrer Feinde kühe vnd kälber / schaff / pferdt / oder was sie ankommen mögen / getötet oder auch die Leute damit vmbgebracht.’

¹⁵⁸ Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 86v.

¹⁵⁹ *Erschreckliche Erzehlung / Unnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin* (Cologne, 1594): ‘Nach dem thut er j nein Staliche Rede / das sie sich auff jn verlassen sollen / er wolle jhn bey stehen.’

¹⁶⁰ Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), preface.

¹⁶¹ *Erschreckliche Erzehlung / Unnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin* (Cologne, 1594): ‘Aber vnder dem tanzen / haben sie bekent / schreyen alle Zäuberinnen mit jauchzen vnd mit heller stimme / harr / harr / Teuffel / tanze hieher / tanze dorthin / spiele hie / spieled ort / Etliche aber schryen nür Sabbah / Sabbah / das ist vnser Feyer tag. Darnach hüben sie die arm vnd fauste empor / vnd

In Bodin, this narrative of the sabbath was associated with the witches' of Longny. This is one of the only times that the witches' gathering is called the sabbath in the *Hexenzeitungen*, and what is interesting is that the word 'Sabbat' was lifted *directly* from Bodin's work. Thus one must question whether the term sabbath was mostly a term used by demonologists, as nearly all the news reports refer to it in other terms, either as a dance (*Tanz* or *Hexentanz*), or as a gathering or assembly (*Versammlung*). Also the witches' gathering that is described here, is closer to the concept of the inverted (or Black) mass, alongside dancing there is devil-worshipping, the obscene kiss and sexual promiscuity. These elements were missing in most of the other reports up until this point. It is very worthy of note, however, that all of these elements were stolen from Bodin, quite literally, and reprinted here. This would suggest that the idea of the witches' gathering as an inverted form of Christianity with devil-worship, and incestuous orgies came from top down, that is, the idea filtered into the popular understanding of witchcraft from learned sources.

The author of the 1594 pamphlet also included other sabbath narratives that were not drawn from Bodin. He reported that in Swabia, over 600 witches were burned who confessed to many wonderful things ('*vil wunderbarliche sachen*'), he continued:

How they each behaved with their lover as their dance, that one there might be terrified, also what they did, when they travelled, how they stroke their husbands with a salve in their sleep, so that the husbands could not wake up until they were back from the dance. They confessed further, when they sit and carouse, that they have all plenty of all sorts of meat but no bread or salt, how the rich sorcerers sit alone, and the poor also alone, the rich drinking out of silver goblets, the poor from a trough (*kühfissen*).¹⁶²

One particular sorceress confessed that six devils had sex with her at the gathering. Furthermore, she added, that those who went before Satan without having done any harm with sorcery were badly beaten, while the ones that pleased Satan the most were the ones who offered him children. This narrative is interesting and it contains some recognizable elements. The idea that witches put a salve on their husband to make them stay asleep until they returned, or that they lay a broom in their own

strichen in die Lufft mit Staupbesem / so sie in handen hetten / vnd solchs alles thun sie zur Ehre des Sathans.'

¹⁶² Ibid.: '...wie sy es auff jrem danc ein jede mit jrem Bülen betriben / das einem dar vor graüsen mocht / auch wy sy thun / wan sie außfaren / wy sie jren mener ein salbe im schlaffen an den schlaff strichen / das die mener nicht erwachen können / biß sie wider von dem danc kommen / weiters haben sy bekandt / wan sie sitzen vnd zechen / das sie allerley rost genugsam haben aber kein brodt vnd salt / wie man die Reichen Zeberischen allein setz / vnd die Armen auch allein / die Reichen drincken auß silbern bechern / die armen auß kühfissen.'

place to trick them into thinking they were still there had become widespread. The idea that there was a hierarchy at the witches' dance was also coming into fruition. We can see here that the author reports a divide among the rich and poor. This idea was to be further reinforced by the demonologist Nicholas Rémy in his *Daemonolatreiae libri tres*, or, *Demonolatory* which was written only one year later in 1595.¹⁶³

Interestingly, the 1594 pamphlet also included the story of a musician who attended and played music at the witches' gatherings. The musician had confessed, the report stated, that the last time he played there were so many there that he earned twenty-four gulden, with each witch giving him three pennies. He said that 'many old witches at the dance, come from an age that require a stick to walk, but at the dance they were straight, as if they were barely twenty years old, so gaily they leaped with their lovers.'¹⁶⁴ The report included the musician's description of how they travelled to the dance and what they did there. The musician claimed that:

They arose in the air on brooms, travelling there over mountains and valleys, several came on dead horses and many rode on goats and sticks, and on strange horses, some don't smear themselves when they travel to the dance but their lover comes and brings them to the dance, after the dance the cooked all sorts of bones and strange herbs, soon they made a storm....¹⁶⁵

Whether they travelled by smearing themselves or whether they were collected by their lover-demons, this narrative clearly insinuates that the witches' travelled to these gatherings in reality. It has been shown in chapter three that weather-making played a popular role at the gathering, and many news reports claimed that weather magic was carried out at the meetings. This was probably a result of weather magic being seen as something the witches did collectively, juxtaposed to usual *maleficium* which the witch usually carried out alone. The importance of music at the gathering is also highlighted by this narrative and it is even suggested that the witches paid the musicians for their performances. Schreiber's 1594 publication is really fascinating, as it provides us with an insight into how the learned concept of the sabbath

¹⁶³ E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Nicolas Remy: Demonolarty, an account of the historical practice of witchcraft* (Dover Publications, New York, 2008), pp 58-9.

¹⁶⁴ *Erschreckliche Erzehlung / Unnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin* (Cologne, 1594): '...etliche alte zaubers an danz komen von alters an eim stecken gangen / aber am danz waren sy so gerade / als weren sy kaum 20. jhar alt / so lüstig konden sie springen / mit jrem bülen.'

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Kamen auff besem in d Lufft daher fahren / vber berck vnd tall / Etliche kamen auff Todten Pferden / vnd etliche auff Bocken / vnd stecken gritten / vnd auff selzamen pferdten / etlich schmeren sich nicht wan sie zum danz faren / sonder jr büle holet sie auff den danz / nach den danz / kochten sy allerley gebeins / vnd seltzam kreüter / balt machen sy ein Vngewitter / das er schlüch win vnd korn.'

gradually merged with the popular ideology. Through reading this news report many people who may have never read Bodin, suddenly became acquainted with the narratives of the witches' assembly that were included in his work. Thus, it is evident that authors of *Hexenzeitungen* were familiar with the work of demonologists.

This research also discovered a pamphlet printed in 1596 in which an author directly told his audience to consult demonological works. The report printed by Jost Müller told the story of ten witches that had been burnt in Rottenberg am Neckar.¹⁶⁶ Regarding the witches' gathering that author gave an account of how the witches were able to go to the dance without their husbands knowing: 'It happens to their own husbands, that they think they [their wives] lie in bed, however the Devil has them at the dance.'¹⁶⁷ The author explained that these affairs are hidden (*verblendt*) by the power of the Devil who was a great deceiver. However, he claimed that although such gatherings were invisible they were real and that this was revealed by the witches' confessions: 'A sightless affair, but from themselves [the witches] it is revealed to be certainly true.'¹⁶⁸ The author then advised his readers that whoever did not believe such could read about it in 'the many books' (*der Bücher vil*). In particular he directed them to read 'Binßfeld / Springer / and Bodin / Likewise Gramineio.'¹⁶⁹ This is highly significant as the author of a *Hexenzeitung* supporting his belief in the sabbath by citing demonological literature. But what do we know about the work he was citing? This chapter has already shown how Bodin and Springer (Sprenger was the highly questionable co-author of the *Malleus Maleficarum*)¹⁷⁰ treated the witches' sabbath. However, the author of the pamphlet also refers to two other publications that were printed around the same time as the report: Peter Binsfeld's work *Tractatus de confessionibus maeleficorum et sagarum* (Augustae Trevirorum, 1589) and Dietrich Graminaeus' *Inductio sive Directorium* (Cologne, 1594). The date of these two publications shows that author of the report (written in 1596) was well informed on the most recent (Catholic) demonological discourse.

¹⁶⁶ *Warhafftige Zeitung / Vnd gruendliche beschreibung / von zehn Hexen / Vnhold weibern / so man zu Rottenburg / am Neckar / den 9. May diese 96. jar*, printed by Jost Müller (Strasbourg, 1596).

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Jr eignen Mennern auch geschicht / Das sie meinen sie ligen zu Bett / Doch der Teufel sie beim Tanz hett.'

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: 'Ein blinde sach / doch gwißlich wahr von ihnen selb wird offenbar',

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Binßfeld / Springer / vnnd Bodins / Dergleichen den Gramineo.'

¹⁷⁰ See comments in the introduction.

It is not surprising that the author was familiar with Binsfeld's book. Peter Binsfeld's work *Tractatus de confessionibus maeleficorum et sagarum*, first published in Latin in 1589, was quickly translated into German in 1590, and was reprinted in German in 1591 and 92.¹⁷¹ Like Bodin, Binsfeld maintained that the flight and the sabbath really took place.¹⁷² He quoted the existing authorities such as Kramer and Bodin as evidence, and similarly suggested the *Canon Episcopi* did not mean that witches' could not fly. In addition to this he believed that witchcraft trials themselves proved the reality of the flight and the sabbath (this argument was also used in the pamphlet in 1596). While Binsfeld's work emphasises of the 'realness' of transvection and the gathering, he did not provide as many illustrative examples. However the title page of the German edition did include a woodcut displaying the witches' activities that is worth examining.

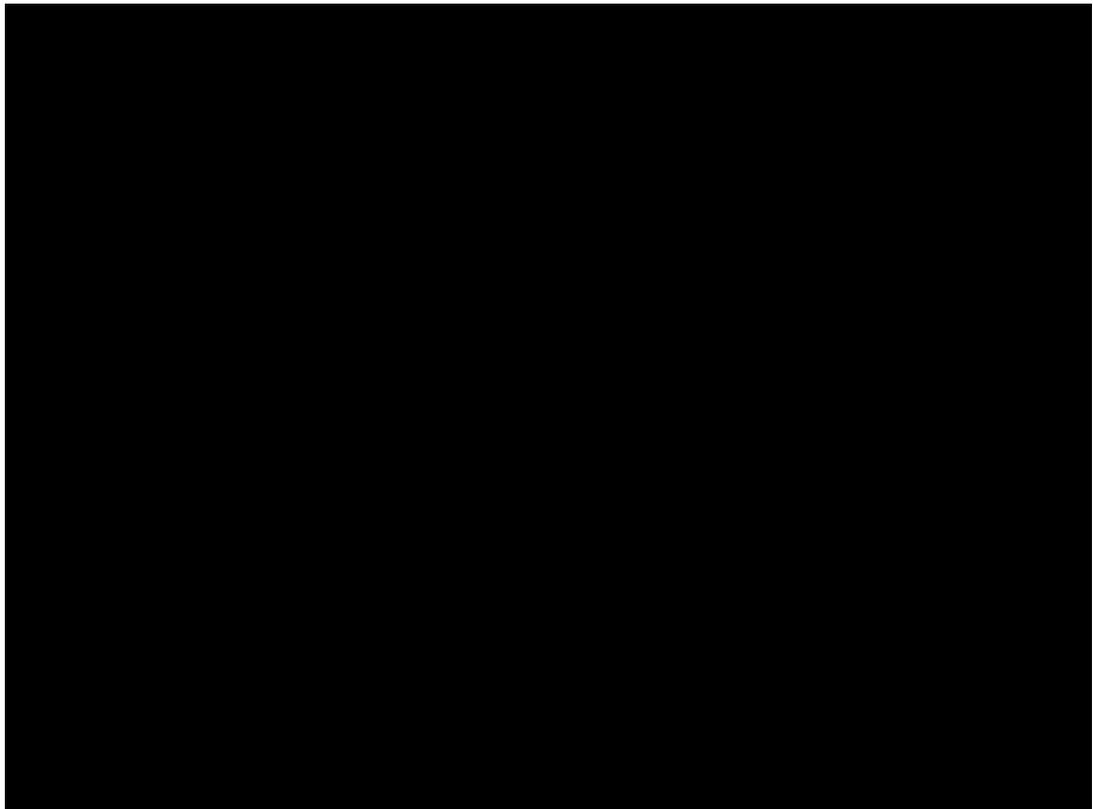


Figure 4.11 Image from title page of Peter Binsfeld, *Tractat von Bekanntnuß der Zauberer vnd Hexen Ob vnd wie viel denselben zu glauben* (Munich, 1592), available online on the Bayerisches Staatsbibliothek München (http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10199678_00004.html) (31 Jan. 2013).

¹⁷¹ Johannes Dillinger, 'Binsfeld, Peter' in the *Encyclopedia of witchcraft the western tradition*, i, 123.

¹⁷² Peter Binsfeld, *Tractat von Bekanntnuß der Zauberer vnd Hexen Ob vnd wie viel denselben zu glauben* (Munich, 1592), p. 29^v.

The image clearly portrays a number of witches taking part in various devilish activities. In the foreground on the left, there is a woman kneeling down before a devil to worship him. In the middle foreground a child is being lowered into a cauldron by a well dressed woman—how the child will be consumed is unclear.¹⁷³ Beside this scene, on the right-hand side, a woman is holding hands with a devil. The position and movement of his feet suggests that they are dancing together. In the background two women are shown flying to the sabbath. One is travelling on an oven fork (iconography of oven fork harks back to Molitor), while the other is travelling on a goat. Below the goat another witch is depicted making weather, raising her fork into the air, from whence there comes a great shower. This image represents a number of the major features of the sabbath: devil worship, flight, dancing, weather making and killing/cooking of infants. But were any of these activities depicted in the *Hexenzeitungen*?

The sabbath narrative was represented in its totality in a spectacular broadsheet from c. 1600, titled ‘Listen to a new frightful adventure of the monstrous sorcerers’ (figure 4.12).¹⁷⁴ According to Rita Voltmer this broadsheet first appeared in 1593 in a small tract by Thomas Sigfrid which was printed in Erfurt.¹⁷⁵ The tract was titled: ‘The right answer to the question: Whether the sorcerers and sorceresses can bring about illnesses and death with their magical powder / what to think of their salves, their meetings and confessions ... with a copperplate engraving placed before your eyes.’¹⁷⁶ It was then printed again in 1594 and 1603. There are some minor differences between the editions. The earliest print had an unusual key to the legend, instead of having it in alphabetical order it was A, C, D, H, I, O and P. This was rectified in the later editions. The title also changed. In 1593 and 1594, the title of the broadsheet claimed that the adventures happened in the Bishopric of Trier only –

¹⁷³ Chapter two has shown how infants were boiled so that witches could use their fat to make salves. However there were references to witches’ eating children in various demonologies during this period. For example see Remy or De Lancre.

¹⁷⁴ *Hört an new schrecklich abentheur* (c. 1600): ‘Hört an neu schrecklich abentheur / von den unholden ungeheur.’

¹⁷⁵ Rita Voltmer, “‘Hört an neu schrecklich abentheur / von den unholden ungeheur’—Zur multimedialen Vermittlung des Fahnungsbildes ‘Hexerei’ im Kontext konfessioneller Polemik’ in Karl Härter et al (eds), *Repräsentation von Kriminalität und öffentlicher Sicherheit: Bilder, Vorstellungen und Diskurse vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 2010), p. 112. In this article Voltmer provides a thorough analysis of this broadside.

¹⁷⁶ ‘Richtige Antwort auff die Frage: Ob die Zeuberer und Zeuberin mit irem zauber Pulfer / krankheiten / oder den todt selber beybringen können / was von ihren Salben / zusammenkunfft und Bekändtnuß zuhalten mit eim kupfferstück vor augen gestellet.’ See Rita Voltmer, “‘Hört an neu schrecklich abentheur / von den unholden ungeheur’—Zur multimedialen Vermittlung des Fahnungsbildes ‘Hexerei’ im Kontext konfessioneller Polemik’, p. 112.

‘Im Bisthumb Trier der werden stat’, this was changed in another edition that was also printed in 1594 to include other cities too—‘Im Bisthumb Trier unde ander stett.’¹⁷⁷ The latter version was reprinted again 1603.¹⁷⁸

The image and the accompanying text are truly remarkable. This broadsheet tries more than any other of its contemporary sixteenth century counter-parts to record all aspects of witchcraft as if it were an encyclopaedia. The image is far larger than the text, and is marked with alphabetical keys that link specific scenes to the text. The broadsheet endeavours to show the complete spectrum of the Devil’s evil, including the witches’ dance and feast. The text is written in rhyming couplets that define the letter marked scenes, and it ends somewhat piously with the warning of God’s wrath and the conjuration of eternal fire for those who do not avoid Satan’s influence. The first couplet, A, refers to the witches in the top of the image that are travelling on brooms in the air ‘over high mountains and cliffs.’¹⁷⁹ The witches can be seen almost floating in the sky, their flight appears to be real, and there is no suggestion that it could be imagined. Their hair is wild and flowing, as in the earlier images by Dürer and Baldung. The next key in the legend, B, points the reader’s attention to the king of the witches who can be seen on the top left-hand side, ‘That is their King great and worthy / And travelling on a gold carriage.’¹⁸⁰

The witches dance and their journey to the dance are also depicted and described in part C and D. The witches dance around a pillar with a toad on top of it. The toad, as aforementioned, was long associated with evil and the Devil with Pope Gregory IX claiming that heretics belonging to the ‘sect of the damned’ had to kiss a toad on the mouth or on its hindquarters as early as 1233.¹⁸¹ The witches appear lively and scantily clad, behind the dancers two people appear to playing music for the congregation. It is interesting that the dance here is combined with apostasy, as they appear to be worshipping the enthroned toad. To the right of the dance place more witches are arriving in large numbers, led by a witch riding a dead horse. According to Voltmer this can be seen as a parody of a procession or of a ride to the place of sentencing, especially as the witch on the horse has her hands bound behind

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ *Hört an new schrecklich abenthewr* (1594): ‘Etlich auf bessemen in der Lufft / Farn uber hoche berg und klufft.’

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.: ‘Das ist ihr Konig gros vnd werth / Vnd uf eim gulden wagen fehr.’

¹⁸¹ ‘Pope Gregory IX: *Vox in Rama* (1233)’ in Kors and Peters (eds), *Witchcraft in Europe*, p. 115.

her back.¹⁸² The dead horse also reminds one of the procession of the dead, the theme of the ‘wild hunt’ or ‘furious horde.’ The witches following have brooms and other household implements in their hands, this alluded to the fact that many travelled there on such objects. The image also depicts sexual intercourse between a woman and a lover-demon (H) just in front of the dance place.

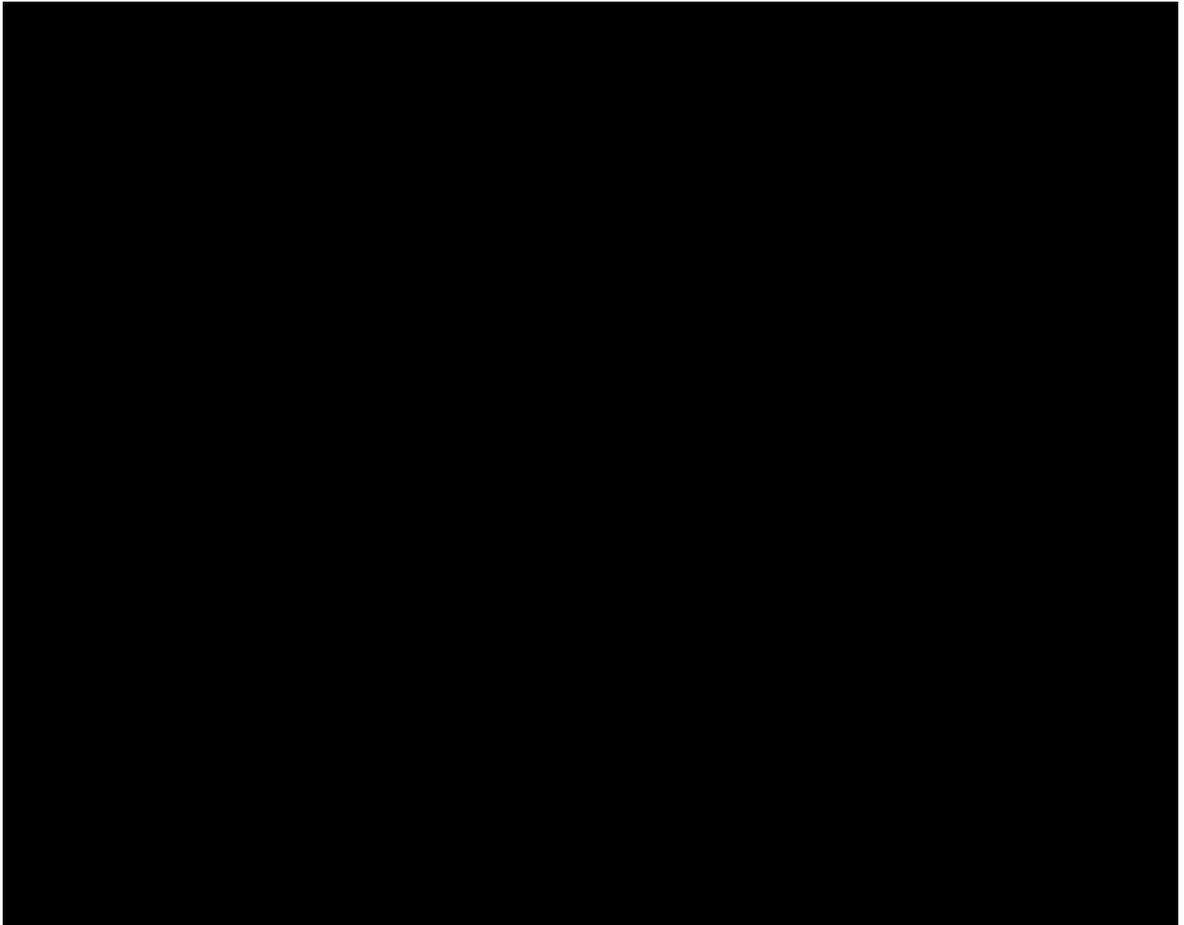


Figure 4.12. *‘Hört an neu schrecklich abentheur, Von den vnholden vngehewr: In Bisthumb Trier, unde ander stett man ihrer vil gefangen hat...’*(c. 1600). Printed in the dissertation with permission from the British Museum.

This sexual licentiousness is further alluded to by the two mating cats, which appear beside the trail of witches. Beside the woman and her demon-lover, another witch is being groomed for a goat that is waiting for her. The idea that witches mostly travelled up through chimneys had also taken hold, as the artist displayed witches emerging from chimney tops with brooms in their hands, two in the right foreground

¹⁸² Voltmer, “‘Hört an neu schrecklich abentheuer / von den unholden ungeheuer’—Zur multimedialen Vermittlung des Fahnungsbildes ‘Hexerei’ im Kontext konfessioneller Polemik’, p. 134.

(one going up, and another coming out) and one in the right background.¹⁸³ The witches' feast (*Zechplatz*) is also portrayed in the image on the left hand side. They are sitting around a round table, and appear to be enjoying themselves. One person seems to have over indulged and is getting sick on the table while another member of the party is shown relieving themselves only a short distance away from the table. They are being served by a naked woman. Above them there is a musician playing the pipes in a tree. The king of the witches can be seen sitting towards the front of the table, in such a way that he faces towards us, with his crown and sceptre. The text describes the scene as follows:

‘The feast place and their good musician
Sits over them in a tree:
The rich drink out of golden heads
The poor drink out of cow hooves.’¹⁸⁴

Although the image displays an array of other scenes, the ones that I have listed here are the ones that relate directly to the witches' nocturnal gathering. From looking at the text and image, but particularly the rich image, one can see that nearly all the characteristics of the fully developed witches' sabbath myth are present. The witches fly to the gathering in the air, or ride on strange animals, when they get there music is performed and they dance, and have sexual relations with their demon-lovers. All of this is shown graphically. Furthermore, their feast is depicted in detail. The text also further endorses the concept, previously mentioned in *Hexenzeitungen* and demonologies that a divide or hierarchy between rich and poor existed at the witches' sabbath. Traces of the witchcraft iconography first created by Baldung and Dürer are also abundant in the image, although the main difference is that the Devil now appears alongside the witches.

By the turn of the seventeenth century the sabbath myth was becoming fully developed. All of the various elements were brought together to the point of fusion:

¹⁸³ This idea that witches flew up through chimney was reported in Remy's *Daemonolatreiae libri tres* (1595). Remy argued that witches sometimes travelled in reality and that when they did the most common practice was for witches to fly up through the chimney. He refuted anyone who believed that chimneys were too small and narrow stating that 'by virtue of that Demonolatreia which makes all things monstrous and portentous, they are first bidden to exceed their natural limits.' He argued further that the chimney's in the peasants' cottages were square and wide and 'that it is from this class that the vile rabble of sorcery is mostly derived.' See E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Nicolas Remy: Demonolatreia, an account of the historical practice of witchcraft* (Dover Publications, New York, 2008), pp 52-3.

¹⁸⁴ *Hört an new schrecklich abentheur* (1594): 'Der Zechplatz und ihr spilman gut / Uff eim baum oben sitzen thut: Die reichen saussen aus gulden kopffen / Aus kuklawen die armen tropfen.'

flying, dancing, feasting, orgies, and Devil worshipping. In fact later demonologists added very little to the sabbath stereotype and drew their examples mostly from earlier works. For example Martin Del Rio's work, which was first published in three separate tomes between 1599 and 1600, *Disquisitiones Magicae (Investigations into Magic)* added very little to sabbath myth narrative, instead one could say that his work provided a thorough summary or compilation of all the elements of the sabbath myth that had been developed and discussed by earlier demonologists, such as Kramer, Bodin, and Remy. Del Rio argued that the Devil allowed the journey to the sabbath to be sometimes real and sometimes imagined so that judges and princes might think that the witches were lying and therefore the witches may be saved from execution.¹⁸⁵ This is an interesting argument, as it highlights the cunning of the Devil in his attempt to deceive even the judges. Like nearly all demonologists before him, he claimed that they travelled to their meetings by smearing an ointment, made from the fat of dead children, on the object they wished to travel upon, such as a reed or a stick. He then described their meeting as follows:

There, on most occasions, once a foul, disgusting fire has been lit, an evil spirit sits on a throne as president of the assembly. His appearance is terrifying, almost always that of a male goat or dog. The witches come forward to worship him in different ways. Sometimes they supplicate him on a bended knee; sometimes they stand with their back turned to him; sometimes they even throw their legs in the air and hold their head, not forwards but tilted right back so that their chin points up to the sky. They offer candles made of pitch or a child's umbilical cord, and kiss him on the anal orifice as a sign of homage. What more can one say?¹⁸⁶

After worshipping the Devil in such a way Del Rio claimed that the witches sat down at a table and enjoyed food. Like most descriptions of the feast, he stated that the food was 'tasteless and unsalted.'¹⁸⁷ Furthermore he believed that each witch was allotted their place at the feast 'according to their station or wealth.'¹⁸⁸ Sometimes they held a ritual dance before the feast and sometimes after. They dance in a frenzied manner, sometimes with a mask, sometimes without but 'usually with a

¹⁸⁵ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*, p. 92.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 93. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608):

'deferri vbi ignis vt plurimū accēsus, teter & horridus. Ibi dēmon cōuentūs preses in folio fedet, formā terrificā; vt plurimū hirci vel canis.ad illū accedere adornadi gratia, non eodem modo, interdum complicatis genibus supplices; interdū obuerso tergo stantes, interdum crurib.etiam in altum iactis, nec capite in anteriorē partē prono, sed refupinato, adeō vt mētum ad caelum feratur..tum candelis piceis oblatis, vel vmbilico infantuli, ad signum homagii euum in podice osculantur. Quid?'

¹⁸⁷ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*. p. 93. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 90: 'valdè insipidis & insulsis'.

¹⁸⁸ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*. p. 93. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 90: 'quibus pro dignitate; aut opibus, singuli locantur'.

mask.¹⁸⁹ The motif of disguise, specifically the wearing of masks had inversionary implications, and was linked to the festive and the masquerade, but also to the demonic.¹⁹⁰ In popular culture masking and disguise were forms of communication because they turned everything upside-down.¹⁹¹ Stuart Clark argues that in the demonic world the mask did similar work, helping women transform into witches.¹⁹² Del Rio provided an animated description of the obscenity of the witches' dance:

After the feast, each evil spirit takes by the hand the disciple of whom he has charge, and so that they may do everything with the most absurd kind of ritual, each person bends over backwards, joins hands in a circle, and tosses his head as frenzied fanatics do. Then they begin to dance. Sometimes they hold lighted candles in their hands, with which they worship the evil spirit, and exchange kisses in his presence. They sing very obscene songs in his honour, or jump up and down to a drum or a pipe which is played by someone sitting in the fork of a tree. They behave ridiculously in every way, and in every way contrary to accepted custom. Then their demon-lovers copulate with them in the most repulsive fashion.¹⁹³

It is significant that Del Rio described the witches as doing everything 'ridiculously' and 'contrary to accepted custom' as contrarities were indispensable to understanding witchcraft. One must understand, as Stuart Clark points out, witchcraft persecutions took place at a time when most routine discussions of psychology and good conduct drew constantly from simple dichotomies, for example; between right and wrong, and reason and passion.¹⁹⁴ Thus if communication theory and literary practice used contrariety as a highly favoured strategy, it was even more indispensable in religious and witchcraft discourse.¹⁹⁵ And in the primary opposition of good and evil, evil is as necessary as good. In the words of Clark: 'Demonic witchcraft made sense, then, in a world of meanings structured by opposition and inversion; these were the general conditions for 'knowing' witches.'¹⁹⁶

¹⁸⁹ Maxwell Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*, p. 93. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 91: 'Sic etiam personati frequentius'.

¹⁹⁰ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 19.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ Maxwell-Stuart (ed. and trans.), *Martín Del Rio*, p. 93. Del Rio, *Disquisitionvm magicarvm libri sex* (Lvgdvni, 1608), p. 91: '...post conuiuium quisque daemon suam quam custodit discipulam manu prehendit; & vt omnia fiant ritu quàm possunt absurdissimo, dorsis iniuicem obuersis, & in orbem iunctis manib.iactantes capita more fanaticorum, choreas ducere; nonnunquam candelas accensas manu tenentes, quibuscum ante daemonem osculantes adorant, & cantare sescenninos in honorem daemonis obscaenissimos, vel ad tympanus fiftulámve sedentis alicuius in bifeda arbore saltare, omniáque ridiculè & contra ceterorum morem peragere.tum suis amasiis daemonibus foedissimè commisceri.'

¹⁹⁴ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, pp 48-49.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 48-49 and p. 61.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80

It is noteworthy that while the learned texts focused on the dates and days that the witches preferred to gather, the news reports appear to have focused more on where they gathered, much more so than the demonologists. Perhaps this is because the reports were local, and therefore naming particular mountains in the locality would resonate with the local populace and the detail would add to the ‘reality’ of the report. The Blocksberg, although a popular location for the witches’ gatherings was not the only place mentioned in the reports, other mountains such as the Spessart and the Heuberg are also mentioned. Furthermore the reports in which the Blocksberg was mentioned were generally referring to witches that were actually from areas that were near the mountain in Sachsen-Anhalt such as Westphalia and Bernburg.¹⁹⁷ In 1603, a new report was published in Frankfurt about witches who had been recently burned in the Archbishopric of Mainz.¹⁹⁸ In this report the witches are said to have gathered in the local Spessart Mountains. The author claimed that young and old witches gathered on the mountains to freeze everything, and that the Devil ordered them to kill many children. However like so many other reports, it did not go into any more detail on the rituals or activities that were carried out at the gathering, and instead continued on to detail the individual confessions. Similarly the Heuberg or Heuchelberg in Württemberg was the local witch meeting point mentioned in reports from that area. For example in 1596 a pamphlet reporting on witches from Rottenberg am Neckar, a town located in modern day Baden-Württemberg stated that the witches went to a dance on the Heuberg: ‘Auff dem Hewberg bey eim Tanz / Damit ihr hexenwerck wer ganz.’¹⁹⁹ In 1616 a report about the witch-burnings in the Duchy of Württemberg similarly named the Heuberg as the location for the witches’ meeting, and claimed that the witches ‘poor and rich, young and old’ held a ‘convent’ on the ‘Heuchberg’ five times a year.²⁰⁰ In 1630 a report printed in Bamberg about witches from the archbishopric of Bamberg and from

¹⁹⁷ *Neue Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abschewlich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin...* (S.l., 1580); *Warhafftige: Neue Zeitung Aus dem land Westuahlen / von der Stat Ossenbruck / wie man da hat auff einen Tag. 133. Vnholden verbrandt ./ auch was sie bekandt vnd getreiben haben / gesangs / weiß gestalt.* (S.l., 1588).

¹⁹⁸ *Ein Warhafftige Zeitung. Von etlichen hexen oder Vnholden / welche man kürzlich im Stifft Mäntz zu Ascheburg / Dipperck / Ostum / Könßhoffen / auch anern Orten / verbrandt / was Vbels sie gestifft / vnd bekandt haben.* (Frankfurt, 1603).

¹⁹⁹ *Warhafftige geschicht / vnd eigentliche Beschreibung / Von den Hexen weybern / so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar / vnd inn Westfahlen / Prißgew vnd anderswo /rc. verbrand hat /dise 1596. Jar / in Reimen weiß verfast,* printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596).

²⁰⁰ *Zwo hexen Zeitung / die Erste: Aus dem Bißthumb Würzburg.... Das Ander: Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg. Wie der Herzog zu Württemberg / in vnterschiedlichen Stätten das hexenbrennen auch angefangen...*(Tübingen, 1616).

Wuertzburg, reported that a witch confessed that in Würzburg 3,000 witches met on Walpurgis Night at a dance on the Kreidenberg.²⁰¹ It stated that she confessed that they stole wine from the bishop's cellar for the same dance. It is a known fact that every locality had a certain dance place, as Richard Van Dülmen explained, the position of these places have been passed down to us, such places were the Staffelstein for Bamberg, the Kreidenberg for Würzburg, the Heuberg and Heuchelberg in Württemberg or the Fellerberg in Trier.²⁰² While these places play a prominent role in the *Hexenzeitungen* they are featured much less frequently in the learned treatises, which were more interested in when the meetings happened and what happened at them.

Most *Hexenzeitungen* in the seventeenth century did not go into elaborate detail on what the witches did at their gatherings (other than stating when and where they gathered). However, one report in 1627 underlined that main reason that the witches met together was to pay homage to the Devil. This pamphlet provided an account of the witches that were executed in the bishopric of Würzburg and Bamberg.²⁰³ According to the unknown author the witches from Bamberg confessed to meeting together on Walpurgis Night on the 'Frau Venus Berg'. The witches' claimed that they were led to their gathering by a flag/banner (*Fahnen*) in which the Devil was painted. The picture on the flag clearly showed the Devil trampling the image of Christ under his foot. The Devil then told the witches that 'God shall have no more power.'²⁰⁴ They then greatly 'glorified their god Lucifer showing him great honour.'²⁰⁵ In particular the witches are said to have rejected the true God once again by performing a 'new' denial of the Holy Trinity. This reflects the demonological understanding of the sabbath, which -by the seventeenth century- believed Devil worship was an integral part of the witches' gathering.

²⁰¹ *Kurtzer und wahrhaftiger Bericht und erschreckliche Neue Zeitung Von sechshundert Hexen, Zauberern und TeuffelsBannern.....* (Bamberg, 1630), in Behringer, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland*, pp 261-4.

²⁰² Richard Van Dülmen 'Imaginationen des Teuflischen: Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate' in Richard Van Dülmen (ed.), *Hexenwelten: Magie und Imagination* (Frankfurt, 1987), p. 111.

²⁰³ *Ein Warhafftige vnd gründliche Beschreibung / Auß dem Bistumb Würtz vnd Bamberg / Deßgleichen von dem ganzen Fränkischen Kraiß / wie man alda so vil hexen Mann vnd Weibspersohnen verbrennen laßt / vnd was sie nur für schröckliche sachen bekannt haben / ist mit fleiß auß glaubwürdigen schreiben zusammen getragen / Vnd inn das Lied versetzt.* (S.l., 1627). The same report was printed with minor changes in 1629: *Eine Warhafftige und Gründliche Beschreibung. Auß dem Bisthumb Würtzburgk und Bambergk / deßgleichen von dem gantzen Fränkischen Kreyß / wie man allda so viel Hexen / Mann- und WeibesPersonen verbrennen lest...* (Würzburg, 1629).

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*: 'Gott soll kein Gewalt mehr han'.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Deßwegen sie sehr preysen / jhren Gott Luciferr /jhm grosse Ehr beweisen...'

For example Maria Francesco Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* included a lengthy description and woodcut of witches worshipping the Devil in his chapter concerning witches' assemblies.²⁰⁶ Guazzo's work was first published with a large selection of woodcuts in 1608, however, a second, extended edition was subsequently printed in 1626. It is not known if Guazzo had any role in witchcraft trials himself; however, he evidently displayed an interest in possession and witchcraft; and he was one of the many who tried to help the mad Duke Johann Wilhelm of Cleve-Jülich.²⁰⁷ However in his work, Guazzo refers very little to his own experiences, and instead draws heavily from other demonological works, particularly from Remy's *Demonologie* and Del Rio's *Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex*. There are a number of wood cuts that illustrate the text, that can help us understand how the sabbath was imagined by contemporaries. Interestingly all of the woodcuts in 1608 edition were reprinted in the 1626 edition, bar one, the image of witches roasting a child over a fire.²⁰⁸ There are over twenty different woodcuts in Guazzo's work, many of which appear multiple times throughout the text. It is worth noting, that many witchcraft historians today still use these woodcuts to illustrate their texts, however, very few authors actually discuss the context of the images, or Guazzo's text.

Guazzo discussed the witches' assemblies, in book one, chapter twelve, 'Whether Witches are Really Transported from Place to Place to their nightly gatherings.'²⁰⁹ He agreed with Del Rio that sometimes such trips were illusions, 'but it is not proved that this is always so.'²¹⁰ The anonymous artist made a woodcut depicting a witch just about to take flight to accompany this chapter (Figure 4.13). Other woodcuts in this chapter display the obscene kiss, the witches' dance and their

²⁰⁶ Montague Summers (ed.), E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Francesco Maria Guazzo: Compendium Maleficarum* (Dover Publications, New York, 1988).

²⁰⁷ Guazzo was sent to Düsseldorf by Duke Charles III of Lorraine on behalf of his daughter Antoinette, Duke Johann Wilhelm's wife, in order to exorcise the Duke in 1604. At first Guazzo diagnosed possession, but he subsequently changed the diagnosis to bewitchment after spiritual healing failed help the Duke. Guazzo had also exorcised some members of the house of Lorraine at an earlier date, including the bewitched Cardinal Charles of Lorraine (1567-1607) and the bishop of Verdun, Eric de Lorraine. Cf. Wolfgang Behringer, *Witches and witch-hunts*, p. 106; P. G. Maxwell Stuart, 'Guazzo, Francesco Maria' in Robert M. Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition* (Santa Barbara, 2006), p. 464; Erik Midelfort, *Mad princes of Renaissance Germany* (Charlottesville, 1994).

²⁰⁸ See Charles Zika, 'Cannibalism and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Reading the Visual Images' in *History Workshop Journal*, xlv (Autumn, 1997), pp 80-1.

²⁰⁹ Montague Summers (ed.), E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Francesco Maria Guazzo: Compendium Maleficarum* (Dover Publications, New York, 1988), p. 33.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

feast. Like Del Rio, Guazzo stated that the witches travelled to their gatherings by using unguent made ‘chiefly from murdered children’²¹¹ which allowed them to travel on lots of different things, such as brooms, reeds or shovels. He also noted that they could also travel to their assemblies on oxen, goats, dogs or sometimes even on foot. The artist, however, chose to depict a naked female witch riding a strange diabolical goat, with wings.

The witches’ in the woodcuts that accompany this text are dressed in finery, and suggest that wealthier people were part of the witchcraft sect. For example one only has to look at the crowd that are observing the obscene kiss (Figure 4.14). Devil worship was, by now, an integral part of the witches’ sabbath, and Guazzo reiterated much of what Remy and Del Rio had already stated, saying that the Devil often sat on a throne, as a goat or dog to be worshipped. Interestingly, the image of the obscene kiss shows the Devil as a winged demon with a long tail, rather than as a goat which was more generally associated with the *osculum infame*. Many of the witches in the image are holding onto pitch black candles, which Guazzo claims they offer to Satan.²¹²

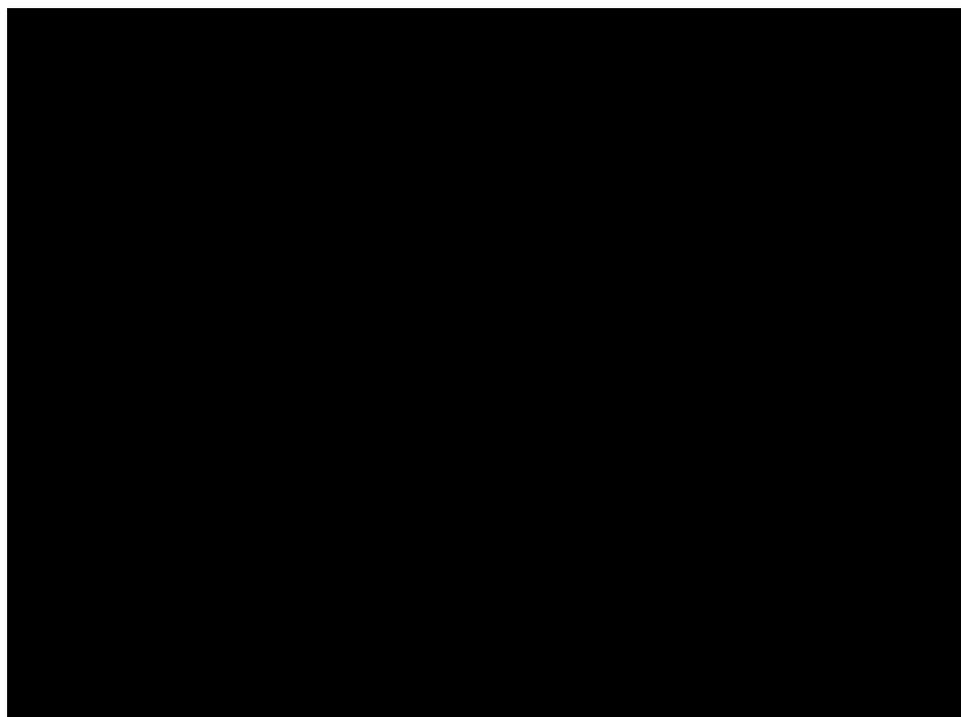


Figure 4.13. ‘Witch riding to Nocturnal Assembly’, in Francesco Maria Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum*, image shown here is from 1626 edition, available online in the digital Witchcraft Collection of Cornell University Library (<http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=witch;idno=wit055>) (10 Oct. 2011).

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 34.

²¹² Ibid., p. 35.

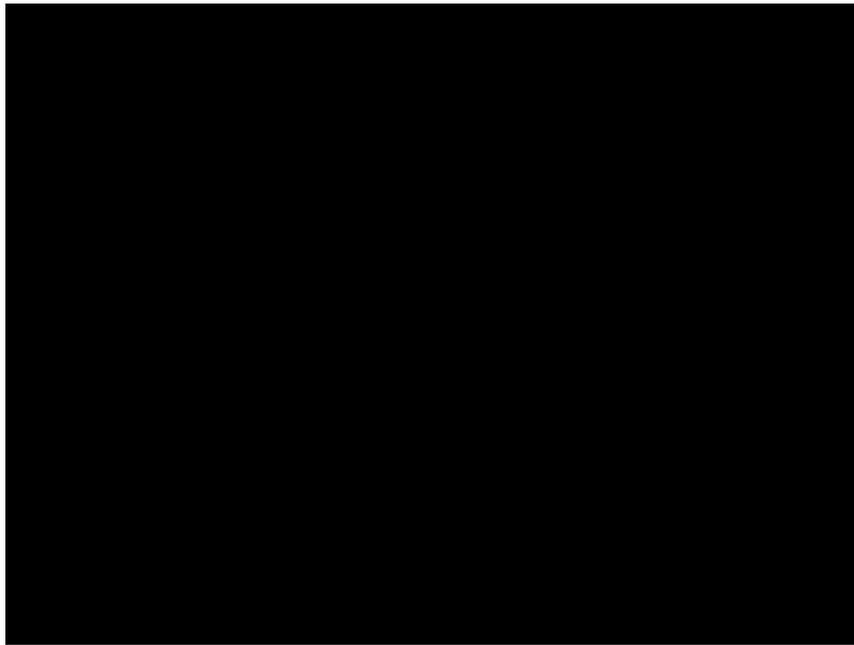


Figure 4.14. The Obscene Kiss, in Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*, image shown here is from 1626 edition, available online in the digital Witchcraft Collection of Cornell University Library (<http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=witch:idno=wit055>) (10 Oct. 2011).

Similarly, Guazzo, added very little to the description of the witches' dance, agreeing that the dance could happen before or after the feast, and that such dances were 'performed in a circle but always round to the left; and just as our dances are for pleasure, so their dances and measures bring them labour and fatigue and the greatest toil.'²¹³ It is interesting to note that the artist who created the woodcuts for Guazzo's work, included men in all of the witchcraft scenes. Men can be seen participating actively in the two dance scenes (Figure 4.15 and 16). In the first dance scene, there are two men and one women dancing in a circle with two demon figures. They are dancing beneath a tree, in which a male musician is sitting playing a stringed instrument.²¹⁴ All of the witches are facing inward. The second woodcut of the witches' dance is quite striking, insofar as the artist actually tries to capture the bodily movement of the witches as they dance; the positions of their hands and feet suggest sprite and quick movements, indeed the fabric of the woman's dress is practically swishing in the air behind her as she dances.

²¹³ Ibid., p. 37.

²¹⁴ This is unusual as usually the bag pipes and drums were the instruments most associated with the Devil and the witches' dance. There is nothing evidently strange about this instrument. Was the artist trying to render a very believable scene?



Figure 4.15.

Figure 4.16.

Figure 4.15 and Figure 4.16: Images of witches dancing from Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*, images shown here are from 1626 edition, available online in the digital Witchcraft Collection of Cornell University Library (<http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=witch;idno=wit055>) (10 Oct. 2011).

Guazzo's work also included a woodcut portraying the feast itself. There are three tables laid out, and witches and demons are seated at each one. Demons can be seen bringing the witches' food to their tables. Guazzo's text once again provided a summary of what was already believed about the witches' feast. For example, he restated that there was plenty of food, but that it was foul and 'scarcely worth eating' and that no bread or salt was allowed. He said that the food did not actually satisfy hunger, and purported, like those before him, that the witches ate and gorged on human flesh.

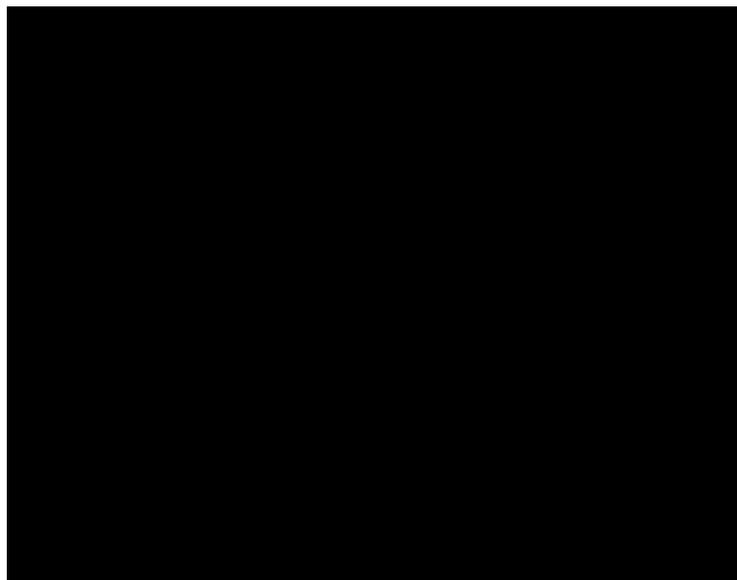


Figure 4.17. The witches' feast from Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*, image here from 1626 edition, available online in the digital Witchcraft Collection of Cornell University Library (<http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=witch;idno=wit055>) (10 Oct. 2011).

The text of Guazzo did not add any new content to the established sabbath narrative, however, it can be said that the images can give us an insight into how contemporaries visualised the witches' sabbath. In fact many of the characteristics in Guazzo's representation of the sabbath are evident in a woodcut that was produced for two *Hexenzeitungen* in the 1660s.

In 1666 and 1669 the printer Elias Wellhöffer printed two separate reports about witches who had been recently executed.²¹⁵ The report in 1666 recounted the confession and subsequent punishment of the male witch Simon Altsee. According to the text in the report Simon confessed to visiting the witches' dance (*Unholden Tänz*). The textual account of the confession was accompanied by a sequence of six woodcuts portraying Simon's story from when he first met the Devil to when he was publicly executed. One of these woodcuts (figure 4.18) represents Simons account of the *Unholden Tänz*. Like the broadside about the witches from Trier (figure 4.12) the author utilised an alphabetic key to link the text to specific scenes in the woodcuts. He claimed to travel there at a certain time that was relayed to him by a Devil. Like many other accounts Simon confessed to using a salve to travel.²¹⁶ The flight to the dance is shown in image (B). Like the image that adorned the title page of Binsfeld one witch is on an oven fork, while another rides a goat. Simon confessed that at this dance he attended the 'Devilish Feast'²¹⁷ (D) and 'committed damnable vices and improprieties.'²¹⁸ The dance itself is marked with the letter C. The image of dance with the Devil up the tree is noticeably similar to the representations of the dance included in Guazzo (figure 4.15 and 4.16). Male and female witches are shown dancing alongside a demon, while another devil plays music from a nearby tree. The image of the meal is reminiscent of the depiction of the feast in the Cammerlander edition of Molitor (figure 4.6), albeit with less people present. It is interesting that the woman at the table is receiving a demon's attention while Simon (sitting on the far right) does not.

²¹⁵ *Warhafft Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfürstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666); *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschröcklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen....*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

²¹⁶ *Warhafft Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666...*: 'angeschmirbter Salben außgefahren'.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*: 'Teufflischen Malzeiten'.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*: '...vnd bey solchen abscheülichen Lastern vnd Ungebühr veyebt.'

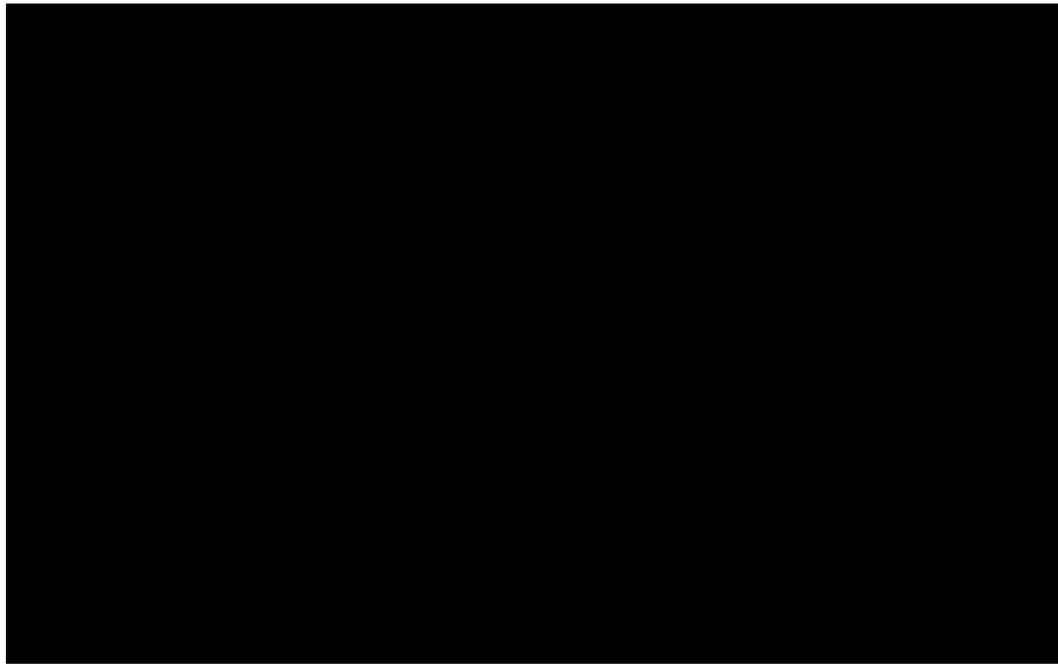


Figure 4.18. Simon Altsee at the witches' dance and feast from *Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfürstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666). Photograph of broadside taken for the purpose of this dissertation with permission of the Stadtmuseum München.

This exact same woodcut was reused three year later in a report detailing the crimes and punishment of Anna Ebelerin.²¹⁹ According to the report Anna confessed to attending the witches' dance and assembly (*Hexen Tänzen vnd Versammlung*) a number of times. At the dance she kneeled before the Evil Spirit and gave him the same honour that was due to God the Almighty alone.²²⁰ This report does not include any further description of the dance or the feast. The visual iconography that this woodcut drew from for its depiction of the sabbath underscores the influence that woodcuts in the preceding demonologies had in helping authors and artists of the reports in their imagining of the Sabbath.

During the seventeenth century there were also some very detailed artistic broadsides printed that included representations of the witches' sabbath. Two of these, one from 1626 and another from 1630, stand out significantly. It is important to note that these two broadsides were not *Hexenzeitungen* as they did not report on any particular witch or execution. Instead these works sought to visually and

²¹⁹ *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschröcklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen [...]*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

²²⁰ *Ibid.*: '....darbey dem bösen Geist mit kniebeigen vnd dergleichen solchen Ehr bewisen die sonsten Gott dem Allmächtigen alleingebühre.'

artistically represent the concept of sorcery and the devilish sect of witches through the medium of the broadside. However as they were broadsides, and thus inform one of the popular perception of the witches' gathering it is worth including a short analysis of them in this chapter. Far from being crude woodcuts, the images in these broadsheets were complex and well executed. The first broadsheet that will be discussed was printed in 1626, entitled: 'Zauberey' contained a detailed etching by Matthaeus Merian the Elder, from a drawing by Michael Herr (see Figure 4.21).²²¹

The etching displays various aspects of witchcraft, many of which relate directly to the witches' sabbath. In the image we are confronted with various scenes, but what strikes the audience first is perhaps the sheer number of witches involved, and how they are conspiring together. The witches' flight, their procession to the Blockesberg (here labelled B. Berg.), their sexual relations with the Devil, along with their horrendous potion or poison making are all displayed to the viewer. Most unusually, the broadside contains some Latin text alongside the vernacular. The Latin text is by Johann Ludwig Gottfried, and explains to the spectator that the *tabellam* or image displays a fearful black theatre for them to examine and to see how the *Cacodaemons* rage through the night.²²²

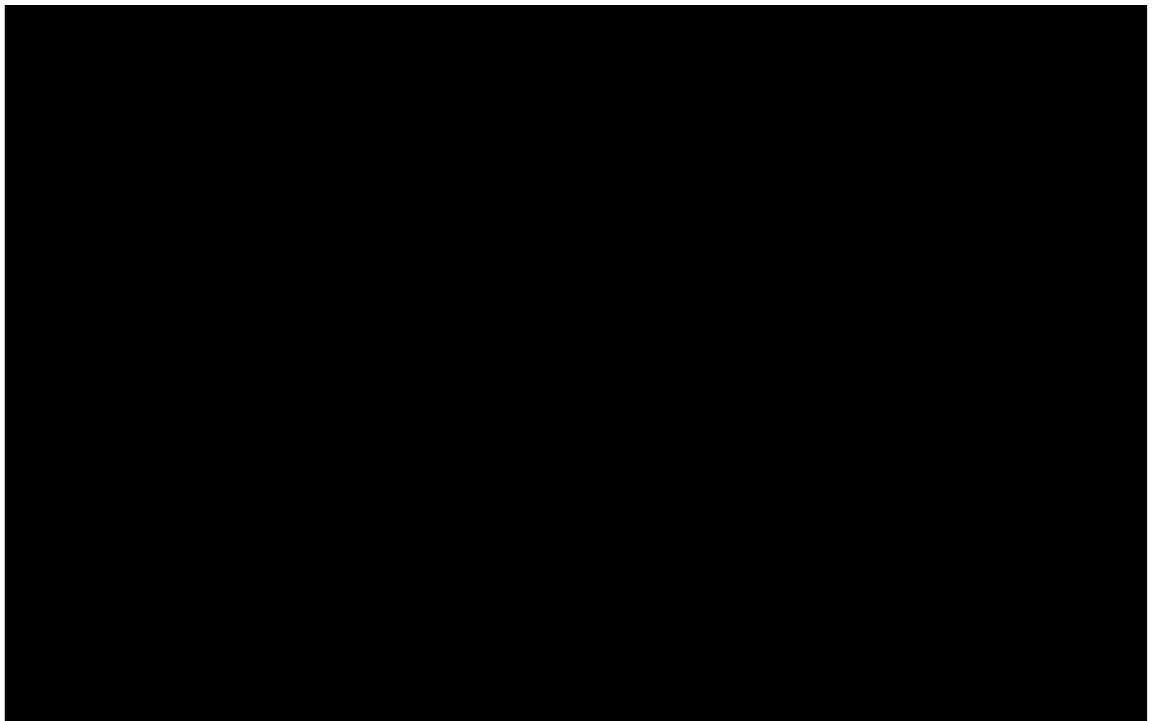


Figure 4.19: Image from 'Zauberey' (1626), used in dissertation with permission of The British Museum.

²²¹ *Zauberey* (c. 1626).

²²² *Ibid.*

Gottfried (1584-1633) was a Protestant theologian and pastor, as well as a translator and editor. He studied theology at the university of Heidelberg, before becoming deacon and then pastor to four parishes on the left side of the Rhine in Kurpfalz from around 1603 until 1624.²²³ From 1624 until his death he was pastor for the parish of Offenbach. He worked as a translator for many publishing houses in Oppenheim and Frankfurt, including Johann Theodor de Bry and his son Matthaeus Merian the Elder. Therefore it is possible that Merian approached Gottfried and asked him to provide a Latin text to accompany the image. However, as the German text does not bear Gottfried's initials, one cannot be sure that he wrote both texts.

Unlike the title page images that usually illustrated part of a longer text, the purpose of the text in broadsheets was largely to help explain the image to the viewer. Indeed the German text of this broadsheet, literally describes what can be seen in the scene above. It begins by directing the reader to look at the image: 'See this picture, O reader, so terrifying, strange, wild and savage.'²²⁴ The author explains that in this image the 'greatest misery in the world'²²⁵ will be placed before their eyes. He tells the readers that how the 'raging devilish horde'²²⁶ gathers together after disowning God and giving themselves to Satan. Together they meet during the night and seek 'sordid pleasure.'²²⁷ Interestingly, the author felt compelled to remind people that the witches' gathering was real stating: 'It is of course no fable or poem, But a true story.'²²⁸ This suggests that there were people who were sceptical of the reality of the witches gathering at this time. However the author explains that it is not to be doubted as many have seen such things, and written about such assemblies. The text continues on to describe the image more closely, beginning by pointing the reader's attention to the witches' flying in the air: 'Quite a few on forks in the air / Travel over high mountains and cliffs / Others are transported by goats.'²²⁹ When they arrive he claims that they 'dance, leap, shout' and 'rage' under the gallows and on the knackers' yard. He adds that just as the Galliard²³⁰ had its own style, the

²²³ Lucas Wüthrich, 'Gottfried, Johann Ludwig' in *Neue deutsche Biographie/6 : Gaál – Grasmann* (Berlin, 1964), p. 677.

²²⁴ *Zauberey* (c. 1626): 'Sieh an O Leser dieses Bild, So schrecklich / seltzam, wüst und wild.'

²²⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Der größte Jammer in der Welt.'

²²⁶ *Ibid.*: 'Wie sich die rasend Teufflich Rott / Nach dem sie hat Verleugnet Gott ...'

²²⁷ *Ibid.*: 'elende Freud.'

²²⁸ *Ibid.*: 'Ist doch kein Fabel noch Gedicht / Sondern ein warhafftig Geschicht.'

²²⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Ettlich auff Gabeln in der Lufft / Fahrn über hohe Berg vnd klufft / Andre werden vom Bock verzuckt / An diesen schnöden Ort verruckt.'

²³⁰ The Galliard was a famous dance during the Renaissance period. Cf. Peter Walls, '16th-Century

witches dance also had a style of its own, with Satan taking lead as the ‘Tanzmeister.’ He then draws our attention to the women in the image in the foreground. He points out the old woman standing on the far right, who ‘has dead children in baskets.’²³¹ He then points our attention a second woman on the left who ‘whores with the Devil.’²³² The third witch he highlights is in the middle foreground and ‘eats and drinks herself full.’²³³ Like many other images of the witches’ gathering, men are also included in this one, indeed the author proclaims ‘Also men are found here / With that said the numbers are only quite.’²³⁴ And he describes the farmer in his protective circle, who can be seen in the right background, and how he is surrounded by ghosts and visions that he is trying to fend off. The text then concludes by stating that:

‘In general one learns sorcery there
All vice, dishonour, and devilment,
O the person, so completely wicked,
Seeks their own damnation with force,
And hastens with full spurs,
Into the infernal fire and Devil’s realm.’²³⁵

However, the text fails to describe the extra-ordinary detail of the image in full. When one looks at the image, it is striking how the artist structured their sorcery scene in a similar way to an earlier image of the sabbath that was created by Jan Ziarnko in 1613 (which had been designed to illustrate De Lancre’s demonology, see figure 4.20).

In both works the cauldron is the focal point of the image, and both artists use the smoke rising from the cauldron to draw our attention upwards to the witches flying in the air. The witches’ flight in the *Zauberey* broadsheet is depicted as rough and uncomfortable, with witches’ practically falling upside down; in fact one witch to the left of the smoke appears to have been thrown from her ram. The foreground shows various scenes, most of which were described in the text, such as the woman on the left who is being held by the Devil. The Devil’s leg is thrown over her and he licks her face in an obscene manner. Behind the carousing couple, another demon,

Dance Forms: Some Further notes’ in *Early Music*, ii, no. 3 (July, 1974), pp. 164-5; Anthony Rooley, ‘Dance and Dance Music of the 16th Century’ in *Early Music*, ii, no. 2 (April, 1974), pp 78-83.

²³¹ *Zauberey* (c. 1626): ‘Hie sieht man alte Weiber stahn / Die tod Kinder in Körben han...’

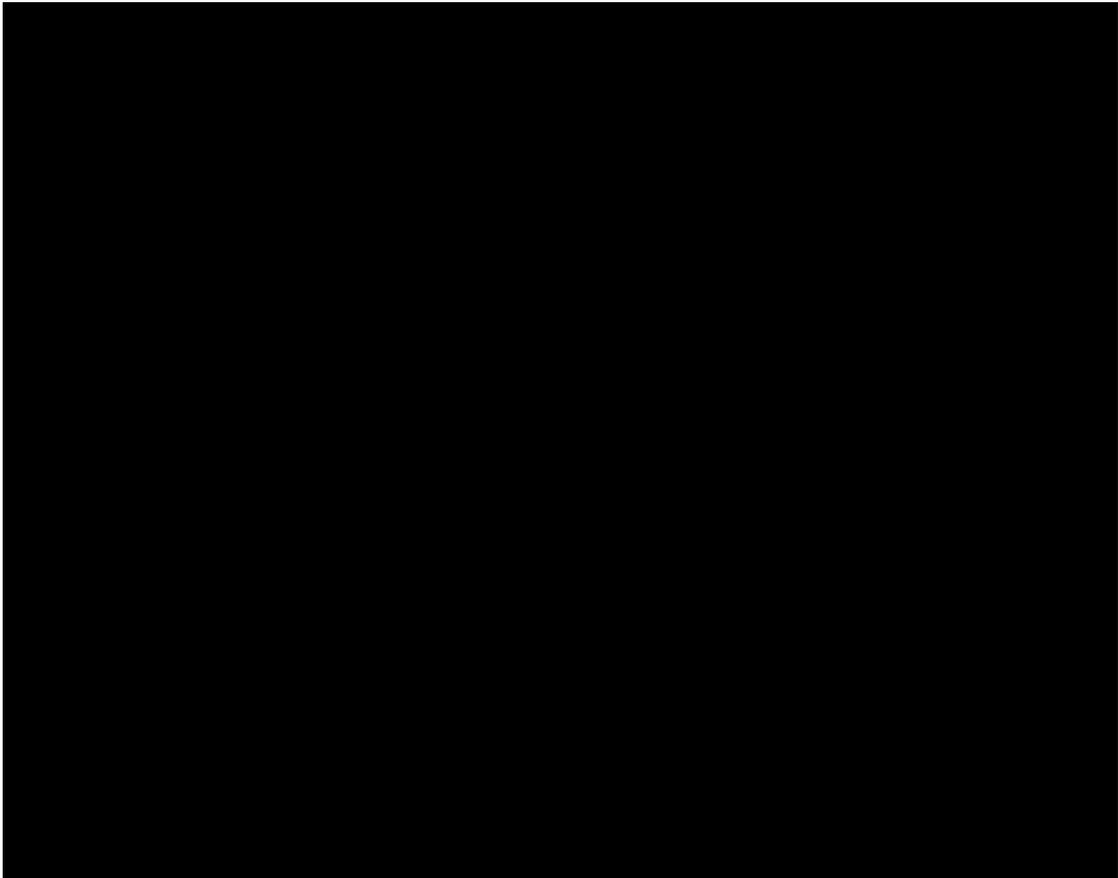
²³² *Ibid.*: ‘Ein andre mit dem Teuffel huhrt...’

²³³ *Ibid.*: ‘Die dritte frißt vnd säusst sich voll / Wird von höllischem Tranck ganß toll.’

²³⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘Auch finden sich Männer herbey / damit der Reyhen nur ganz sey.’

²³⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Ins gmein lehrt man da Zauberey / An Laster Schand vnd Schelmercy / O daß der Mensch so gar verrucht / Mit Macht seine Verdamnuß sucht / Vnd eylt mit vollem Sporen streich / Ins höllisch Feuer vnd Teuffels Reich.’

with horns, wings and a tail, can be seen jumping about. Next to him in the middle, there are two witches who have had their fill of drink and food, one of which is huddled up over the body of dead horse. In the right foreground, we are confronted with a group of witches preparing some sort of spell or poison. There is a round table with various objects upon it: an adult hand, a skull, a sword, a candle, and the arm of a small child. A woman stands above the table, raising her hands in the air as if she is chanting a spell. Beside her, there are both men and women who are also assisting in the preparations. Interestingly it is the women who are reading and studying the magical signs and characters in books and manuscripts. Beside the women who are reading, a basket full of infants' bodies is on the ground, with some large skulls in front of it. Literature purported that witches' used children's bodies in their magical potions but it was only in the seventeenth century that such vivid images of witches with dead babies began to circulate.²³⁶ Older children were also beginning to be displayed as actively participating and attending the sabbath, and here the artist also included a much younger witch who can be seen on the far right foreground.



²³⁶ The earliest one being in Guazzo, followed then by Ziarnko's image in De Lancre, however Ziarnko's image is not very explicit, and suggests cannibalism instead.

Figure 4.20. Jan Ziarnko's 'Witches' Sabbath' from the 1613 edition of Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons*. Available through ARTstor.

The background of the broadside image (figure 4.19) is broken into two distinct scenes by the rising smoke—in a strikingly similar way to Ziarnko's (figure 4.20). On the right there is a man, who we know from the text is a farmer. He is standing in a protective circle with a sword in hand. Outside the circle swarms of ghosts and demons eagerly attack, some even flying over head. On the left side of the background we can see the witches' procession to the Blocksberg, here noted by 'B. Berg.' Loads of witches can be seen merrily jumping and dancing their way to the top of the mountain, following the Devil. At the top of the mountain there is a demon playing the bag pipes to accompany the dance. Overall the image gives one a good insight into how contemporaries might have imagined a witches' gathering. However, each artist depicted the witches' assembly in their own way; therefore it is worthwhile comparing this example to another broadsheet that was published around the same time c. 1630.

Around 1630 another broadsheet was published (Figure 4.21): 'Sih, wie die Teüfflich hexen rott...' Compared to the layout of Ziarnko's work and the *Zauberey* broadsheet, which both placed the cauldron in the centre, this image is quite different. The artist and author of the broadsheet are unknown; however the Curator of the British Museum believes that it was based on an engraving by Nicolaes de Clerck.²³⁷ The text of the broadsheet was also reprinted and referred to in Praetorius' book about the Blocksberg, *Blockes Berges Verrichtung*, in 1669. Overall the text of the document contains nothing unusual and reiterates various facts about the witches' gathering, that had, by now, become somewhat standardised. Using very similar language to the 'Zauberey' broadsheet, the author proclaimed, that the audience should look at how after the devilish sect of witches have disowned God, they seek sordid pleasure at night time.

'See how the devilish horde of witches
After they have renounced God,
Seek here sordid pleasure
Quite awfully by time of night.'²³⁸

²³⁷ See 'Sih, wie die Teüfflich hexen rott...' on The British Museum website (http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/search_object_details.aspx?objectId=1452389&partid=1&searchText=hexen&numpages=10&orig=%2fresearch%2fsearch_the_collection_database.aspx¤tPage=1) (10 Oct. 2011).

²³⁸ Ibid.: 'Sih wie die Teüfflich hexen rott / Nach dem sie hatt verleugnet Gott /Gantz schrecklich bey nächtlicher zeit /Süchet hie ein elende freüdt.'

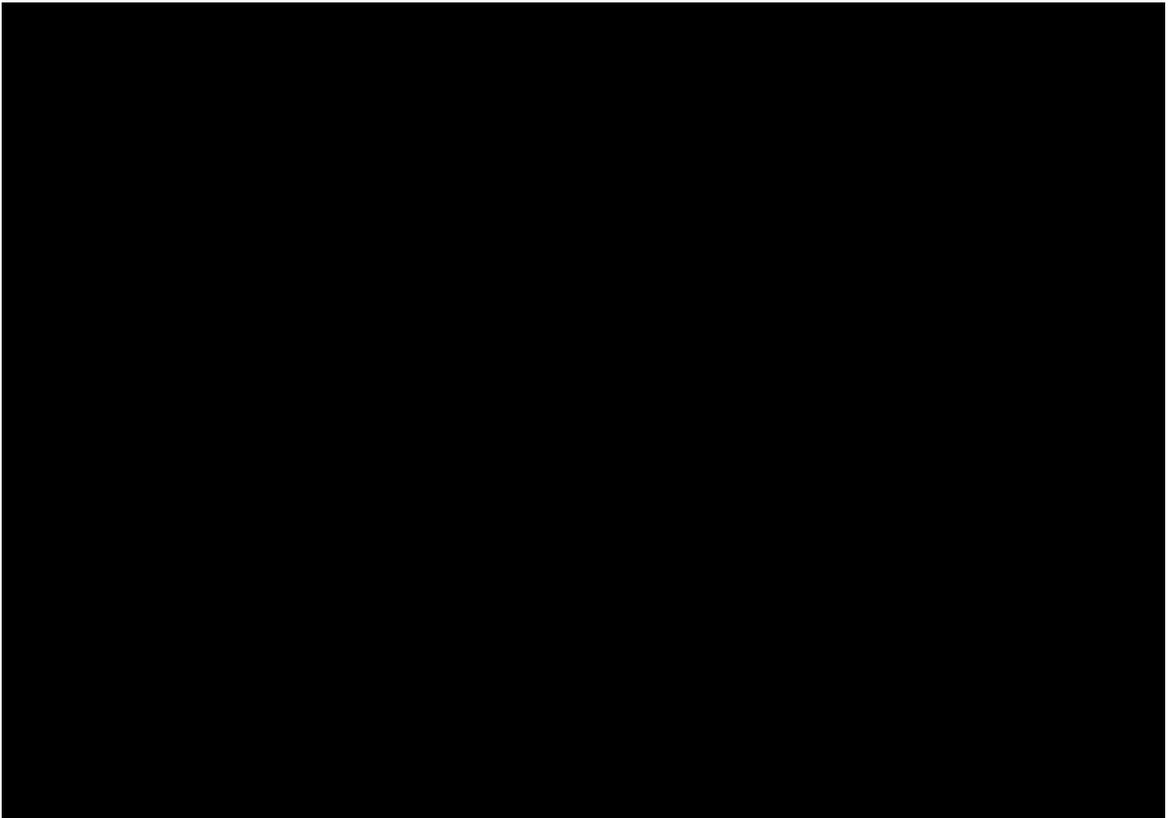


Figure 4.21: Image from the broadsheet ‘Sih, wie die Teüfflich hexen rott...’ (c. 1630), printed in dissertation with permission from The British Museum.

The author also agrees that the witches met everywhere, in mountains and valleys, and repeats the lines from the 1626 broadside: ‘Many on forks in the air, travel over high mountains and cliffs.’²³⁹ This use of language suggests that it is probable that the author had read the earlier broadside. However, unlike the earlier broadsheet, this author reports that the witches travelled on dragons, as well as goats. Other than that deviation he reports similar activities at the gathering. The witches are said to learn sorcery there and learn the meaning of magical characters, drink and eat their fill, dance and have intercourse with the Devil. All in all, the author only repeats popular ideas in the text. Similarly, although the image has a different layout to two other representations of the sabbath that have been discussed, it still draws from existing witchcraft iconography.

The focal point of the image is a group of female witches sitting around a circle practising magic. In the centre of the circle there is a human skull with a candle in it. More candles are laid around the circumference of the circle, and magical characters are also drawn. Out of the four witches who surround this circle,

²³⁹ Ibid.: ‘Etlich auff gablen in der lufft / Fahrn über hohe berg vnd klufft.’

only one is clothed. Two sit naked with their backs toward the viewer, while another naked with points a stick toward a manuscript that one of the seated witches is holding. This naked standing witch looks as though she is addressing the clothed member of the group. Her body is on display for the viewer, and our eyes are drawn to her naked sagging breasts, which are illuminated by the candlelight. Behind these witches another group of naked female witches can be seen, gathered around a candle. The group of witches are framed, to the left by a tree and to the right by a wall of a cave. This helps the viewer to distinguish the separate scenes.

For example, to the left beside the tree, we can see two witches brewing a concoction. One witch is gathering water from a well, while another stands behind the cauldron. As usual skulls, bones and other ingredients, such a swollen toad, can be seen strewn on the ground near the cauldron. What is more, the smoke billowing from the cauldron draws the viewer's eye upward, toward a black cat defecating in the tree. This smoke blows toward the right, behind the tree bringing our attention to woman flying on an oven fork. Interestingly, the woman is shown as being literally pulled by the hair by an evil spirit (this is reminiscent of the image of flight in the Cammerlander edition of Molitor, see figure 4.4, where the Devil pulls the witch through the air). In the right background in the sky, more female witches can be seen riding through the air on fire-breathing creatures, or dragons.

All of the witches are shown naked, with hair flowing violently through the air; however they are all riding forward facing. The sexual relations that took place at the sabbath are also hinted at in this image, although no explicit sexual act is shown. To the right of the witches at the centre of the image there is cave, from which a couple can be seen emerging. At the entrance to cave, a clothed woman is standing beside her demon lover. Her demon lover, who has the upper body of a man, but cloven feet, suggestively points toward the cave. Furthermore beside this couple, a naked witch riding the skeleton of dragon reminds the viewer of the sexual licentiousness of the witches. In the right background, the final element of the sabbath is displayed: the dance. As usual the witches are shown dancing in a circle, and a demon can be seen playing the bag pipe as accompaniment. However, there are some unusual elements in this illustration. Firstly, there are no men shown at the gathering. Unlike Ziarnko's image and the *Zauberey* broadsheet the artist chose to only include women in his rendition of the sabbath. Secondly, there is no representation of the witches' feast. As this was also the case in the *Zauberey*

broadside, it would appear that the dance was more prominent than the feast in visualisation of, and imagining of the witches' sabbath in the seventeenth century. Lastly, although animals always feature in artistic depictions of the sabbath, this image contains an exceptional amount of animals, including, a hedgehog, a snake, a rat, an owl, toads, and plenty of cats, indeed even the text states that 'Also several types of abominable animals, continually stand by them [the witches], such as cats, snakes, toads and owls, who make a terrifying howling.'²⁴⁰

From examining these two broadsheets it is clear, that witches' gathering had become somewhat standardised in the popular imagination. Most of the activities at the sabbath were well known and reported, and graphically displayed to contemporaries through *Hexenzeitungen* and through broadsides like those included here. Throughout the rest of the seventeenth century the idea of the witches' sabbath continued to be disseminated through art and literature. Artists continued to conjure up their own renditions of the witches gathering, with major artists such as Salvator Rosa, David Teniers the Younger and Cornelis Saftleven producing work inspired by the topic.²⁴¹ In fact, the idea of the witches' sabbath continued to attract the attention of individual artists well after the seventeenth century with one of the more famous examples being Francisco Goya and his 'Witches' Sabbath' of 1798. However, the myth of the witches' sabbath did not only influence the artistic tradition, overtime it also infiltrated into the literary world. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, in 1662, Johannes Praetorius printed book about the famous Blocksberg, *Des Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, which was essentially a geographical and demonological guide to the highest mountain in the Harz mountains.²⁴² It is important to note however, that references to the witches' sabbath also filtered into non-demonological literature. In fact one of the most famous picaresque novels from this period, *Der Abentheurliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* (1668), included a chapter in which the protagonist found himself transported to the witches gathering: 'How Simplicissimus travelled to the witches at the dance'.²⁴³ In this chapter Simplicissimus finds himself mysteriously

²⁴⁰ Ibid: 'Bey ihren auch stetig auffward / Scheütlicher their mancherley art / Als katzn schlangen krotten und eül / So machen ein schröcklich geheül.'

²⁴¹ See Salvator Rosa's, 'Scene of Witches' (1645-49) or 'Witches and their incantations' (about 1646), or the work by David Teniers the Younger, such as 'Witches' Sabbath' (1633) or 'The Witch' (1630s), also Cornelis Saftleven's 'A Witches' Sabbath' (c. 1650).

²⁴² Gerhild Scholz Williams, *Ways of knowing in early modern Germany*, p. 67.

²⁴³ Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, *Simplicissimus, Der Abentheurliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* (1668), Book Two, Chapter xvii, 'Wie Simplicius zu den Hexen auf den Tanz gefahren'.

transported to the witches' dance. In this work the author, Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, displayed a clear knowledge of the contemporary discourse of the witches' sabbath. Indeed, Grimmelshausen's discussion and inclusion of the witches' dance shows how the myth of the sabbath while still debated, became assimilated into the broader literary tradition.

Conclusions

By the sixteenth century, as the first part of this chapter has shown many of the key elements of the witches' sabbath had been developed, however, the idea of the sabbath continued to develop throughout the sixteenth century reaching its peak at the turn of the seventeenth century. One significant issue that was continuously debated in the demonologies was whether such gatherings were real or diabolical illusions. However, this debate rarely features in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

The witches' flight was widely debated in the demonologies, with many authors saying they could sometimes fly and sometimes that they could not. Nearly all demonological authors agreed that the witches made a salve from unbaptised children that could allow them to fly when smeared on an object such as an oven fork, but this salve is not mentioned very often in the *Hexenzeitungen*. The implements that the witches are most often said fly on are oven forks and sticks, however they are frequently said to ride animals such as goats and cats. In the *Hexenzeitungen* the witches are always said to fly to their gatherings and the reality of their flight is never doubted (except in the case of Saur). However the visual representation of flying witches in the *Hexenzeitungen* came much later than artistic representations of witches' flight. While artists such as Dürer were depicting flying witches in the early sixteenth century, it was not until the end of the sixteenth century that such graphic depictions of flying witches made it into popular broadsheets.

While demonological authors found it necessary to give an exact time for the meetings²⁴⁴ the authors of the news reports, placed a larger emphasis on the actual date and place of the gatherings. The authors of *Hexenzeitungen* frequently reported that the witches' gathered on Walpurgis Night or on the night of St. John the Baptist.

²⁴⁴ For example Remy argued that they took place mostly on Wednesdays and Saturdays between the hours of ten and one o'clock in the morning, while De Lancre believed that the hours between eleven and two in the morning were most suitable for the Devil. See E. A. Ashwin (trans.), *Nicolas Remy: Demonology, an account of the historical practice of witchcraft*, pp 54-5, Gerhild Scholz Williams (ed.), *On the Inconstancy of witches: Pierre de Lancre's Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons (1612)*, pp 90-1.

Many reports said exactly where the meetings took place, such as on the Blocksberg or on the Heuberg. The naming of regional locations in the reports would have enhanced the believability of the report.

Both the demonological literature and the *Hexenzeitungen* concur that feasting was an important element of the sabbath. However the learned sources undoubtedly go into more detail on what was consumed at the feasts alluding to cannibalism and other unsavoury items. However, the news reports mostly describe the feast in general terms, only sometimes adding the additional information that there was no bread or salt at the feast—the only exception being the pamphlet on Walpurga Haüsmannin. Both the learned and popular sources purport that there was a divide between rich and poor at the feast. In terms of visual portrayal, the feast was first featured in the visual representation of the sabbath in Molitors' work in 1489 as an unexceptional feminine affair. However by 1545 in the Cammerlander edition of the same work, the feast had developed dramatically to include both men and women, humans and devils. This representation of the feast continued in the later representation of the witches' feast in the broadside from c. 1600 and in the woodcut that adorned Wellhöffer's reports. However, it is noteworthy that feast is absent in the two artistic broadsides from 1626 and 1630, which focus more attention on the procession and dance.

Dancing is one of the most prevalent elements of the witches' sabbath throughout the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and is the only element that is treated with equal importance in both the learned texts and in the news reports. In fact many *Hexenzeitungen* refer to the gathering as the 'witches' dance'. Music is similarly alluded to in both sources, and there is reference to music players playing strange instruments frequently in the *Hexenzeitungen*. The dance and the music player/players are also one of the key scenes in every representation of the witches gathering from the end of the sixteenth century both in the popular visual representation (see the broadsheets in 1594, 1626, c.1630, 1666 and 1669) and in the learned representation (see Guazzo's images and Jan Ziarnko's 'Witches' Sabbath').

Devil worshipping appears to be more significant in the learned discourse of the sabbath, with many authors referring to the *osculum infame*. However there are very few references to Devil worship in the *Hexenzeitungen*. This is also the case with the visual sources. While Guazzo's work contained images showing scenes of devil worship, devil worship is not a key element in the broadsheet images. For

example it does not feature explicitly in either the woodcut from 1666, or the broadsides from 1626 and 1630, and it is only hinted at in the earlier broadsheet about witches from Trier, when the witches dance around an enthroned toad.

All in all, the sabbath narrative was treated differently and imagined differently in the learned and popular sources. Increasingly from the sixteenth century onwards demonologists began to portray the witches' gathering as a black mass and as an anti-Christian devil worshipping cult. It has been shown that, in contrast, the devil worshipping element of the sabbath was not one of the main features emphasised by the *Hexenzeitungen*. Instead, the *Hexenzeitungen* focused more on the witches' dance, the music that was played and the feasting that took place. Furthermore, the *Hexenzeitungen* never refer to the gathering as a sabbath (*Hexensabbat*) but rather refer to it as a dance (*Tanz*) or an assembly (*Versammlung*). In fact, the only time that the word 'sabbat' was used, the author of the report had borrowed the term from a demonologist.

It could be argued that both media served a very different purpose. The demonological treatises intended to make sense of witchcraft in 'a world of meanings structured by opposition and inversion.'²⁴⁵ And thus it made sense to present the witches' gathering as the opposite to mass: if Christians had mass and worshipped God, then witches had a black mass and worshipped the Devil. The *Hexenzeitungen*, on the other hand, had a very different audience and a different agenda. The *Hexenzeitungen* were reporting *known* and *accepted* facts. That is, they were not arguing whether such things took place or not—but reporting on 'actual' occurrences. Hence the emphasis on dates and exact locations and the reporting of elements that the wider audience could relate to: feasting and dancing. This examination and its findings lend further credence to Richard Van Dülmen's thesis that when it came to the idea of the sabbath there was a 'considerable discrepancy'²⁴⁶ between the demonological literature and the confessions of actual witches. In the words of Van Dulmen:

There are many confessions, in which elements of an explicit idea of the Sabbat appear, like the Devil's kiss or infanticidal activities, but there are few in which a relative complete structure of the Sabbat is visible with devil worship, sodomitical orgies, let alone the southern French idea with the detailed description of a Black Mass.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ Clark, *Thinking with demons*, p. 80.

²⁴⁶ Van Dülmen, 'Imaginationen des Teuflichen: Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate' in *Hexenwelten: Magie und Imagination* (Frankfurt, 1987)p. 127.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126: 'Es gibt zwar viele Bekenntnisse, in denen Elemente einer expliziten

Just as Van Dülmen found this to be true for the confessions, so it is also true for the *Hexenzeitungen*, which, it has been shown, very rarely provided a full complete picture of the sabbath as a ‘Black Mass,’ but rather included and reported on various elements of the sabbath concept, such as dancing and feasting.

The ‘reality’ of the sabbath was continuously debated in the demonological discourse. While some contemporary authors argued that the sabbath was real, others claimed that it was all diabolical trickery and illusion. Like the concepts explored in the previous chapters, the witches’ gathering was represented as a reality in the *Hexenzeitungen*. According to the reports witches *really* flew, they danced, feasted, and are generally depicted as having a ‘real’ good time. The sabbath was a fantastical crime, however, through the news-sheets and pamphlets this fictional crime was transformed and communicated as a real life transgression. The *Hexenzeitungen* played a significant role in communicating fictional crimes of witchcraft to the wider public as matters of fact, as they claimed to ‘truthful’ accounts of events that recently happened—in this way *Hexenzeitungen* contain an unusual fusion of fact and fiction.

Sabbatvorstellung auftauchen, wie der Teufelskuß oder kindsmörderische Aktivitäten, aber nur wenige, in denen eine relative vollständige Struktur des Sabbats mit Teufelsverehrung, sodomitischen Orgien, geschweige denn die südfranzösischen Vorstellungen mit der genauen Beschreibung einer Schwarzen Messe, sichtbar wird.’

CHAPTER 5

Fact and Fiction in the *Hexenzeitungen*

‘A terrifying truthful new report...’¹

The *Hexenzeitungen* claimed to be both ‘truthful’ (*warhafftige*) and ‘new’ (*neue*) accounts of events that really happened. While we know today that the majority of crimes attributed to witchcraft were impossible, we must not disregard the fact that many contemporaries perceived these crimes as ‘real’ transgressions and that they were punished as such. The *Hexenzeitungen* played an important role in reinforcing the ‘reality’ of witchcraft, presenting news of witches and their sordid crimes as matters of fact. However, we need to investigate how the authors acquired their ‘facts’. From whence did the stories and details included in reports originate? Were reports ‘truthful’² in the sense that they corresponded with actual criminal prosecutions? In order to answer these questions, this chapter explores whether the narratives and information in the *Hexenzeitungen* showed any fidelity to official court records or to events recounted by others.³

It is important to note that while official records may contain historical facts such as the names of those tried, place names and the dates/methods of execution, they also contained accounts of purely fictional crimes.⁴ Through the judicial ritual of reading, publicly, the witches’ confessions at the place of execution and because of the contemporary association of ‘confession’ with truth, these fictional

¹ This particular title was from the *Erschreckliche, warhafftige, neue Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen, in einem Dorff Knylingen genand ... von einer alten Zeuberin, welche irem eignen Töchterlein ... Teuffelskunst und Zeuberey gelehret [...]* printed by Melcher Sachsen (Erfurt, 1581). However one must only look at Appendix A to see how common it was for reports to use the words ‘warhaffte’ or ‘warhafftige’.

² According to the Oxford English Dictionary ‘truthful’ is defined as something that is ‘characterized by truth; corresponding with fact or reality; true accurate, exact.’ ‘truthful, adj.’ in Oxford English Dictionary Online (<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/207029>) (23 Feb. 2013).

³ Wolfgang Behringer conducted a thorough examination into the authenticity of a witch news report that was printed in 1590. Through comparing the information in the report to other archival evidence, he discovered that the author reported on a number of actual events (‘tatsächliche Geschehen’). See Behringer, ‘Hexenverfolgungen im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Publizistik: Die “Erweyterte Unholden Zeytung” von 1590’, pp 339-360. The problematic relationship between ‘real’, ‘historical’ and ‘fictional’ narratives is also discussed in Natalie Zemon Davis’ *Fiction in the archives: pardon tales and their tellers in sixteenth century France* (Oxford, 1987). Davis focuses on the narratives contained in pardon tales. She similarly investigated how the narratives told related to ‘real events’ or the same events recounted by others.

⁴ Roper, *Witch craze*, p. 45. In the words of Roper: ‘Witchcraft confessions do not report real historical events. They do, however, tell us what their hearers believed that witches did, and so they help us to understand why the interrogators were so passionately determined to root out the terrible sect of witches.’

narratives transferred fantasy into the realm of the 'factual'.⁵ In a similar way the news reports also converted fiction to fact. This has been, and continues to be, a complex issue for witchcraft historiography. Therefore this present study does not intend to investigate the reality of the crimes in media. Instead it investigates if the *Hexenzeitungen* narratives can be corroborated through other contemporary accounts.

When studying the news media of any period one is confronted with certain challenges. News reports are produced not only to provide information but also serve as a commercial commodity. As a result printers and editors select stories that they believe will sell. Furthermore they are likely to print stories compatible with their own political or religious agendas. This was no different in the early modern period, and therefore it is crucial to thoroughly investigate, when possible, the verisimilitude of the *Hexenzeitungen*. In the early modern period the printing of *Neue Zeitungen* proved a lucrative business, with many printers using reports as a way to generate income while they were compiling more complex works in the press.⁶ In the words of Andrew Pettegree: 'No publisher could make their reputation with works of this sort. But they could make money.'⁷ As to the authorship of the reports print-shop workers and owners were possible authors, as well as 'hack journalists, roving students and clerks and underemployed teachers'.⁸ Churchmen, lawyers and magistrates were also responsible for penning reports about miracles, crimes and punishment.⁹ However, it has been discovered that the *Zeitungssänger*, or news-song performers, sometimes authored their own ballads, got them printed, and then distributed them themselves.¹⁰ Like most news reports from this period, the majority of *Hexenzeitungen* claimed to be 'true' and to have really happened.¹¹ While some authors endeavoured to recount the exact details from official trial narratives (*Urgichten*), other authors were quite content to copy stories from others texts either partially or in totality. The willingness of authors to fabricate stories during this

⁵ Tom Robisheaux, 'The Queen of Evidence: The Witchcraft Confession in the Age of Confessionalism' in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700: essays in honor of Bodo Nischan* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 181. See also Roper, *Witch craze*, pp 45-7.

⁶ Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance*, p. 135.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

⁸ Cheesman, *The shocking ballad picture show: German popular literature and cultural history*, p. 48.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 46-8.

¹¹ Allyson F. Creasman, "'Lies as Truth": Policing Print and Oral Culture in the Early Modern City' in Plummer and Barnes (eds), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany*, p. 258.

period is highlighted in a fictional *Knittelvers*¹² (about the annual market fair in Frankfurt) by Marx Mangold in 1594. In this rhyme a seller of reading-glasses (*Brillenkrämer*) reflects:

<p>I ought to change my line: I'm going to buy in more news-sheets, since there's such demand for them now. I can compose them myself on occasion. It doesn't matter much whether the story's true. The world wants to be deceived, they buy lies for good money. The more outrageous the lie, the better the sales, as all singers know very well.</p>	<p><i>Ich solls forthin wol ander machen: wil mer new Zeitung kaufen ein Dieweil die jetzt so angnemd seyn. Kan sie selber tichten zu zeiten obs war, hat nicht vil zu bedeuten. Betrogen seyn wil jetzt die Welt Kaufen Lügen umb gutes Geld. Je feister Lüg, je besser Kauff, Das weiß gar wol der Sängler hauff.</i>¹³</p>
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Indeed the historian Gerhild Scholz Williams has claimed that during this period 'writers combined facts and fiction in textual strategies that went beyond the straight and accurate reporting of the daily news to what one might call the fictionalizing of news.'¹⁴ Can traces of this type of reporting be found in the *Hexenzeitungen*?

In 1581 an Erfurt printer by the name of Melchior Sachse printed a 'Terrifying truthful new report' concerning an old sorceress who had taught her own daughter the Devil's art.¹⁵ Melchior Sachse was an active printer in Erfurt from 1554-86.¹⁶ Sachse was a Lutheran and his father Melchior Sachse the Elder had also been a printer and had keenly published many of Martin Luther's works during the Reformation period.¹⁷ Following Melchior Sachse the Elder's death in 1551, his widow Barbara Sachse took charge of the business until her own death in 1553. It was at this point that their son Melchior Sachse the Younger took over. The first work that the son printed was Luther's *Kleinem Katechismus* in 1554.¹⁸ There are nearly fifty titles attributed to Melchior Sachse the Younger's period in charge. The majority of the books and pamphlets that made their way through Sachse's press appear to be religious in nature, and there are very few examples of news reports. In

¹² *Knittelvers* (or doggerel) is a type of Germanic verse that was popular from the fifteenth to eighteenth century.

¹³ Translation by Tom Cheesman, Cheesman, *Shocking ballad picture show*, pp 46-7. For the full *Knittelvers* see Ernst Kelchner, 'Sechs Gedichte über die Frankfurter Messe' in *Mittheilungen des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde in Frankfurt am Main*, vi (1881), 319-48.

¹⁴ Gerhild Scholz Williams and William Layher (eds), *Consuming news: newspapers and print culture in early modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Amsterdam, 2008), p. 5.

¹⁵ *Erschreckliche, warhafftige, neue Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen, in einem Dorff Knylingen genand ... von einer alten Zeuberin, welche irem eignen Töchterlein ... Teuffelskunst und Zeuberey gelehret [...] printed by Melcher Sachsen (Erfurt, 1581).*

¹⁶ Christoph Reske, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Wiesbaden, 2007), p. 207.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 204

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

fact, there is only one other title to be found printed by Sachse that is explicitly labelled as a ‘*Neue Zeitung*.’ This earlier report, which was printed in 1572, detailed a known historical event, namely the assassination of the admiral of the King of France, which happened during the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre.¹⁹ It would seem from the evidence that remains today that Sachse did not publish *Neue Zeitungen* very frequently, which is why the witch news report printed by his press in 1581 is worthy of investigation. In 1581 Sachse was busy publishing two works by Martin Luther, namely *Der Psalter mit den Summarien. D. Martin Luther. Mit einem Register / von vnterscheid der Psalmen* and *Das Ander Teil des Alten Testaments. Auffs neue zugericht. D. Mart. Luth.*²⁰ However, the report from 1581, which is now held at the British Library, proves that Sachse was also interested in printing news. It is suggested that overall less than 1 per cent of the total copies of books printed in the sixteenth century have survived to the present day, and that for pamphlets the figure is even lower.²¹ So it could be possible that other reports were printed by Sachse at the time.

The report that Sachse published about the ‘old sorceress’ is significant as it demonstrates how authors were willing to turn existing witchcraft narratives into new news-ballads, and in turn, how publishers, such as Sachse were willing (perhaps unknowingly?) to publish false reports. At first glance this report appears to be very similar to other reports of the period. It was a short *Flugschrift* printed in verse, to be sung to the tune of ‘Come unto me, says the son of God.’²² The title page did not include an image and was predominately taken over by the long winded title (such long titles had become a feature of the *Neue Zeitungen*):

A terrifying truthful new report, what happened in the Margraviate of Baden, in a village known as Knylingen, which lies one mile away from Ettlingen, about an old sorceress who taught the devil’s art and sorcery to her own daughter, who was only 8 years of age, which afterwards was revealed when the little girl made weather magic for her father in the fields (because the father wished for rain) and the old sorceress

¹⁹ *Ein erschreckliche vnnd Erbärmliche Neue Zeitung / was sich hat zugetragen dieses M.D.LXXII. Jar den 24. Augusti in Franreich zu Paris / Wie der Amiral des Königs aus Frankreich oberster Feldshaubtman ermordt vnnd umbracht ist worden / mit allem seim Hoffgesind / vnnd sonst vil gewaltige Graffen vnnd Herren die bey im gewesen sind / Auch ein theil der Bürgerschaft / vnd was sich mehr sonst zugetragen hat,* printed by Melchior Sachse (Erfurt, 1572).

²⁰ *Der Psalter mit den Summarien. D. Martin Luther. Mit einem Register / von vnterscheid der Psalmen* and *Das Ander Teil des Alten Testaments. Auffs neue zugericht. D. Mart. Luth* printed by Melchior Sachse the Younger (Erfurt, 1581).

²¹ Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance*, p. 334.

²² *Erschreckliche, warhafftige, neue Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen, in einem Dorff Knylingen genand ... von einer alten Zeuberin, welche irem eignen Töchterlein ... Teuffelskunst und Zeuberey gelehret [...]* printed by Melcher Sachsen (Erfurt, 1581): ‘Im Thon / Kompt her zu mir / Spricht Gottes Sohn.’

was thereafter given to the authorities by her own husband, and was sentenced from life to death.²³

As mentioned previously the emphasis on the ‘truthfulness’ was very common in the *Neue Zeitungen* genre. Joy Wiltenburg argues that this claim of truth was an essential element in these works, as it highlighted that the content was not trivial or recreational like fiction, but rather should be taken seriously.²⁴ It has also been argued that the appeal of ‘true’ crime stories in this period can be interpreted as a forerunner of our own modern day fascination with ‘true crime’ series and documentaries.²⁵

It is noteworthy that unlike most other reports which included the date of the execution on the title page, this author shied away from providing such detail. It is only in the second paragraph that the audience are told when this event took place. The author claims that ‘it is true’ (*das ist war*) that the farmer went to check on his crops on the 3 August 1580, thus implying that events took place the previous year.²⁶ However he refrains from giving the exact date that the execution of the mother took place. This is strange as most authors utilised dates to help add to the authenticity of the report. So why did the author not include it? Most likely it was because this particular story was *not* based on recent trial from Margraviate of Baden—but copied from no other source than the infamous witchcraft persecution manual the *Malleus Maleficarum*. There is no doubt about it, the author of the pamphlet stole the entire narrative told in this pamphlet from the *Malleus* and deceptively described it as a current event. The author retold a story originally included at the end of chapter thirteen in book two of the *Malleus Maleficarum*.²⁷ The texts when translated into English are glaringly similar. For the purpose of this investigation I have included in the Appendix the story from the original Latin

²³ Ibid.: ‘Erschreckliche / Warhafftige / Neue Zeitung / so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen / in einem Dorff Knylingen genand / ein Meyl weg von Ettlingen gelegen / Von einer alten Zeuberin / welche irem eignen Töchterlein die nur acht Jahr alt gewesen / Teuffelkunst vnd Zeuberey gelehret / welchs darnach das Megdlein dem Vater auff dem felde durch ein Wetter machen (weil der Vater ein Regen wünschte) offenbaret / Vnd ist solchen alte Zeuberin hernach durch ihren eignen Mann bey der Oberkeit angeben / vnd vom Leben zum Tode verurtheilt worden.’

²⁴ Joy Wiltenburg, ‘True Crime: The Origins of Modern Sensationalism’ in *The American Historical Review*, cix, no. 5 (Dec. 2004), p. 1383.

²⁵ Cheesman, *The shocking ballad picture show*, p. 8.

²⁶ *Erschreckliche, warhafftige, neue Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen...*

²⁷ Mackay (ed. and trans.), *The hammer of witches: a complete translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*, pp 374-5.

edition of the *Malleus* as well as a transcription of the original German pamphlet printed by Sachse (Appendix B).

It is interesting that over one hundred years after its publication, the *Malleus Maleficarum* was being used as a source to make a false news report, and that an author chose this particular narrative to print as a report. Also it must have taken a certain amount of skill to translate the original Latin into vernacular verse. It could be argued that the author believed that nobody would notice his blatant plagiarism for two main reasons. Firstly he probably reckoned that the target audience for the pamphlet were probably not familiar with the lengthy Latin text of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (which had still not been translated into the vernacular by this stage). Secondly, the author possibly assumed that the audience in Erfurt would know very little about what really happened in the small town of Knylingen in the Margraviate of Baden. Indeed, the printer Melchior Sachse may not have even been aware himself that this report was false, but it is impossible to know. The moral of the story was perhaps more significant than the reports relation to ‘real events’. The message of this text was summed up in the concluding paragraphs of the German pamphlet as follows: ‘Therefore my loving Christians, rear your little children in fear of God forsooth, that they like to listen to the word of God / and do not reach such a place / as this sorceress did.’²⁸

Melchior Sachse was not the only printer to run an invented news report through his press; other printers were also guilty of simply copying or reprinting pamphlets that were printed elsewhere. Sometimes authors copied contents from other sources, but re-wrote them, making some changes, while other times they reprinted other works word for word. It has been suggested that most news-ballads from this period were based on previous shocking ballads and that copyright laws offered little protection in this area.²⁹ This is also the case with a number of *Hexenzeitungen*. For example, in 1583 a printer from Wesel named Jakob Schotten³⁰ printed a witch news report in ballad format that was strikingly similar to two

²⁸*Erschreckliche, warhafftige, neue Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen, in einem Dorff Knylingen genand ...*: ‘Darumb jhr lieben Christen mein / ziehet auff ewer liebe Kinderlein / in Gottes furcht fürware / Das sie gern hören Gottes Wort / vnd nicht kommen an solchen Ort / als diese Zeuberinne ware.’

²⁹ Cheesman, *The shocking ballad picture show*, p. 47.

³⁰ There is little information on the printer Jakob Schott and only two reports exist that were printed by him. See ‘Jakob Schott 1582-1583’ in Christoph Reske, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutsche Sprachgebiet*, p. 961.

previous news reports that had been printed by Nicolaus Wiriod³¹ in Strasburg in 1582 and 1583. From the titles it is not obvious that there is anything in common between the reports in question. Wiriod's report from 1582 was titled 'A terrifying and credible report: how in this year of 1582, well over 225 women were burnt: and what terrible things they confessed; Also what great harm they caused among people and animals....'³² As a side note, it is worth mentioning that the number cited in the title did not correspond to the number of witches mentioned in the text which was not 225 but 180. In the 1583 reprints (there were two separate reprints, both had same text/narrative but slightly different spellings) of this pamphlet the publisher changed the title but still failed to correct this figure. The new title read: 'A truthful and credible report, about one hundred and thirty-four sorceresses that were arrested for their sorcery in the past year 1582 and on the 15. 19. 24. 28. October were lawfully sentenced to the to infernal fire and were burnt as a result of their inhumane deeds and horrid confession...'³³ The title of Schotten's report bears no resemblance to either of these titles. Written as a ballad, it was called: 'A new piteous ballad about the great harm of the sorcerers that they have committed in Westphalia to Aschenbrügk and in other places in the current year 1583, also how 180 of them were miserably burnt etc. To be sung to the tune, Come here to me speaks God's son.'³⁴ Despite the very different titles a closer inspection of the contents reveals, notwithstanding the author's best efforts to rewrite the text, that Schotten's pamphlet is a knock-off and re-working of the content of Wiriod's report with the only major change being the place names.

³¹ Wiriod was an active printer in Strasbourg from 1572-1583, over 170 works are still extant that were printed in his press. 'Nikolaus Wyrriot d. A' in Reske *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutsche Sprachgebiet*, p. 894.

³² *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung : Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr, wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekendt haben ; Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan, vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wetter ... gemacht haben* printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582).

³³ *Warhafftige vnd glaubwürdige Zeyttung / von hundert vnd vier vnd dreyssig vnhulden / so vmb / irer Zauberey halben / diß verschinen 1582 Jars / zu Gefencknus gebracht / und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October / auff jhr vn menschliche thaten vnd gräwliche außag unnd Bekandtnus, mit rechtem Urtheyl, zum Feuer verdampt vnd verbrennet worden...* printed by Nikolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583) and *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung. Von hundert vnd vier vnd dreyssig Unholden, so umb ihrer Xauberey halben, diß verschinen LXXXII. Jars, zu Gefencknus gebracht, und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October uuff ihr unmenschliche thaten vnd grewliche aussag und Bekandtnus, mit rechtem uhrtheil, zum Feuer verdampt unnd verbrennet worden..* printed by Nikolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583).

³⁴ *Ein New kläglich Lied / von dem grossen schaden der Vnholden / so sie in Westphalen zu Aschen brügk vnd andern orten begangen haben / in dem jetztwerenden 1583 jar / wie auch jrer 180 jemmerlich verbrenndt seind worden...* printed by Jakob Schotten (Wesel, 1583).

Table 5.1. List of the amount of witches burnt at each place according to each report.

Wiriod 1582	Wiriod 1583	Schotten 1583
1 Neckarsulm	1 Neckarsulm	1 Klienbach
10 Darmstadt (including 1 girl and 1 boy)	10 Darmstadt (including 1 girl and 1 boy)	10 Aschenbruegk (including 1 girl and 1 boy)
47 Mimpelgart (44 women and 3 men)	47 Mimpelgart (44 women and 3 men)	47 Aschenbruegk (44 women and 3 men)
42 Rottenberg am Neckar	42 Rottenberg am Neckar	42 Thornhaim
38 Reit near Waldkirch (4 midwives)	38 Reit near Waldkirch (4 midwives)	38 Waldkirch (2 midwives)
36 Duercken, Elsas (2 midwives)	36 Duercken, Elsas (2 midwives)	36 Thuercke, Koeln (2 midwives)
6 Colmar	6 Colmar	6 Arrested (no place)

However, the author of the ballad managed to get the number of witches listed as executed in the report correct, citing 180 in the title, while the original Strasbourg reporter added them up incorrectly both times, first in 1582, when he cited 225 witches, and again in 1583 when he cited 134 witches. To complicate things further it appears that the first part of Wiriot's report, that described the bad weather in detail, was itself a variation (the names of the places were changed) of another weather report that was printed in Dresden by Gimel Bergen the same year,³⁵ which in turn may have been a copy of one by Hans Ringer that was also published in 1582.³⁶

As to the authenticity of details concerning the number of witch executions in Wiriod's original 1582 report, while it has not been possible to verify all of the accounts that he gave,³⁷ quite a few of the author's facts can be traced back to other archival records and contemporary accounts. To begin with, the Stadtarchiv Neckarsulm has verified that there is corroborating evidence that there was a trial for

³⁵ *Warhafftige und erschreckliche neue Zeitung von einer jungen Dienern, welche sich dem Teufel sechs Jahr lang ergeben (...), Item von gewlichen ungestümen Wettern, so den 12. Maii dieses 1582. Jars in Baiern (...) grossen Schaden an Menschen und Viehe gethan haben* printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1582).

³⁶ *Warhafft vnd Erschröckhliche Neue Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter vnd Schawr so geschehen den 12. Tag May des 82. Jars im Hochlöblichen Hertzogthumb Obern Bayern drey Meyl von der Fürstlichen Hauptstatt München vber der Jser ergangen vnd für was schaden es gethon dergleichen in Teutschland vor nie erhört worden* printed by Hans Ringer (S.l., 1582).

³⁷ For example the author of the news-report claimed that forty-seven witches were burned in Mimpelgart/Mümpelgart in October 1582 (today Montbéliard), however there are no records to be found in the Archives Municipales Montbéliard relating to this event. Likewise it was not possible to verify the number of witches burned at Colmar and Duercken (modern day Turckheim in the Alsace).

witchcraft, of one Rosina Walch, from Neckarsulm in 1582.³⁸ In relation to Darmstadt, where the report claimed ten witches, including a young boy and girl were burnt, Thomas Lange has found the official confessions of an eleven year old boy, Wolf Weber, and a sixteen year old girl, Anne aus Dreieich, who were executed for witchcraft in the territory of Count Georg I of Hessen-Darmstadt in 1582.³⁹ It appears the remaining eight witches that were said to be executed at Darmstadt in the pamphlet were possibly witches that had been prosecuted by Count Georg's brother, Count Wilhelm IV of Hessen-Kassel. Count Wilhelm IV himself claimed in a letter to his brother that he had burnt eight witches in Hessen-Kassel 'since Easter past'.⁴⁰ There are also contemporary accounts of persecutions at Rottenburg am Neckar⁴¹ and Breisgau⁴² during the year in question, however the exact numbers of executions are unknown. From this corroborating evidence, we can conclude that quite a few of the 'facts' that were communicated in Wiriod's witchcraft report alluded to actual contemporary prosecutions.

Wiriod's decision to print the same report again, not only once, but twice, in 1583, indicates that the pamphlet must have been a successful seller. News reports were affordable and the stories contained within them were most likely passed on to one person and then to another and so on. The fact this report published in Strasbourg became the foundation for a ballad printed in Wesel demonstrates that news did travel. It is impossible to know how the author of Schotten's report acquired a copy of Wiriod's pamphlet, perhaps he had heard the tale from one of the

³⁸ I would like to thank archivist Barbara Löslein of the Stadtarchiv Neckarsulm who informed me that records of this trial are available in the Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg in Bestand B 262 and B 267. However, I have yet to visit Ludwigsburg to view these records personally.

³⁹ The two confessions were found in the correspondence between Count Georg I of Hessen-Darmstadt and his brother Count Willhelm IV of Hessen-Kassel. See Thomas Lange 'Wolf Weber, 11 Jahre, Anne aus Dreieich, 16 Jahre - hingerichtet im August 1582 in Darmstadt. Zwei exemplarische Quellen zur Hexenverfolgung (mit Transkription: Urgicht und Bekandtnus der alten Weberin / Der Dreieicherin gütlich Bekenntnis / Landgraf Georg I. von Hessen)' available on historicum.net: (http://www.historicum.net/no_cache/persistent/artikel/917/) (01 Jan. 2013).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ See Midelfort, *Witch hunting*, p. 96. The chronicler Martin Crusius made a reference to the witches burned in Rottenburg in 1582 in his *Schwäbische Chronik*. Crusius claimed that four witches were executed in June: 'Den 22. Jun. sind vier hexen, darunter eine 90. Jahr alt war, zu Rotenburg am Neccar verbrannt worden.' However he added that many witches were burned again later that year: 'Zu Rotenburg wurden abermal viel hexen verbrant'. See Martin Crusius, *Schwäbische Chronik, worinnen zu finden ist, was sich von Erschaffung der Welt biss auf das Jahr 1596 in Schwaben...zugetragen*, edited and translated into German by Johann Jacob Moser (2 vols, Frankfurt, 1733), ii, 350-1.

⁴² See Midelfort, *Witch hunting*, p. 205.

travelling *Zeitungssänger* or *Gässensänger*,⁴³ who sold and recited ballad and news sheets in inns, taverns and marketplaces, or perhaps he had been travelling through Strasbourg himself when the pamphlet was on the market. Wherever he heard the story, his decision to re-print it in ballad format suggests that there was a sizable market interest in witch reports at this time. What is most remarkable in this case, however, is the lengths that the author went to in order to make it seem as if it was a different report. By changing the place names the author showed that he was willing to surrender ‘facts’ for fiction. In other instances printers simply ran the same story through the press, making little or no alternations.

For example a witch-report published in 1588, titled: ‘A truthful new report from the county of Westphalia, about the city of Ossenbruck, how on one day 133 sorcerers were burnt, also what they confessed and did,’⁴⁴ was copied and printed by different printers multiple times. The report was written as a ballad with rhyming couplets, so that it could be easily sung and remembered. This ballad proved to be popular as it was reprinted, albeit with very slight alterations, in 1589, 1591 and 1596.⁴⁵ However it is clear that the later reports were not ‘truthful’ or ‘new’ as their titles suggested, as each report claimed that the 133 witches were executed on one day in Westphalia *that* year, for example in 1589 the report stated that everything happened in 1589 even though it is obviously a copy of the report that was published in 1588. In fact, it has been argued that there was no factual basis for this report whatsoever and that the original song itself was an excessive exaggeration, as there is no archival evidence for the execution of so many witches on a single day.⁴⁶

It is worth noting that the copying of earlier prints and passing them off as current news was not only a problem for *Hexenzeitungen* but for all *Neue Zeitungen*

⁴³ Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance*, p. 136.

⁴⁴ *Warhafftige: Neue Zeitung Aus dem land Westuahlen / von der Stat Ossenbruck / wie man da hat auff einen Tag. 133. Vnholden verbrandt ./ auch was sie bekandt vnd getreiben haben / gesangs / weiß gestalt.* (S.l., 1588).

⁴⁵ *Zwo Warhafftige Neue Zeytung... Die ander Neue Zeytung aus dem landt Westualen / von der statt Osenbruck / allda hat man den 9. April in diesem 1589. Jar / auff einen Tag hundert und drey ind dressig...* (S.l., 1589); *Warhafftige Neue Zeitung / aus dem Landt Westphalen / von der Statt Ossenbruck / Allda hat man den 9. Tag Hornungs / in dem 1591. Jar auff einen Tag 133 Vnholden verbrandt / Auch was sie Bekandt vnd getriben haben ...*, printed by Johann Beck (Erfurt, 1591); *Dreyerley Warhaffe neue zeittung ... Die dritte / Auß dem Landt Westuahllen / von der Statt Ossenbruckh / wie man auff einen Tag 133. Vnholden verbrent hat / geschehen den 9. Aprilis diß 96. Jars* (Regensburg, 1596).

⁴⁶ Herbert Pohl, ‘Ein *Blutige Catastrophen vnnd Ende*: Osnabrücker Hexenprozesse im Spiegel frühneuzeitlicher Publizistik’ in the *Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte*, lxii (1990), pp 305-9.

in general, indeed Paul Roth in his book *Die Neuen Zeitungen in Deutschland in 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* said that:

In addition to the usual form of reprints, in the last decades of the sixteenth century yet another emerged, that can only be described as a scam of the public, namely the repeated printouts of long since outdated 'new' reports from previous years, whereby the publisher sought to purport that actual [current] news was published through the alteration of the date.⁴⁷

Needless to say, the reports were not re-printed in the same place each time. Although the locations of the first two reports from 1588 and 1589 are unknown, the one from 1591 was printed in Erfurt, and the copy from 1596 was printed in Regensburg. While this highlights the unreliability of the news-reports, as 'truthful' sources, it simultaneously highlights how stories about witches were in demand, and shows that printers were willing to reproduce and circulate this particular report. In the words of Allyson F. Creasmen, 'above all, news vendors focused on what would sell, not necessarily what was true.'⁴⁸

One of the major printers of *Neue Zeitungen* in this period was Nicolaus Schreiber in Cologne.⁴⁹ Schreiber was an active printer in Cologne from 1563-1598. Before becoming a printer he studied at Cologne university. In 1559 he enrolled in the faculty of arts and he achieved his *Lizentiat* (academic degree) in a short period, obtaining his degree on the 3 March 1561.⁵⁰ Schreiber was first awarded printing privileges from the city of Cologne on the 27 August 1563. From that point on he printed a large body of work. Doris Stoll in her study of Schreiber has ascribed at least 135 works to Schreiber in this period, the majority of which are *Neue Zeitungen*, still in existence today.⁵¹ This project has located at least four witch reports that were printed in his press.⁵² Interestingly two of the reports that I have

⁴⁷ 'Außer gewöhnlichen Form des Nachdrucks taucht in den letzten Jahrzehnten des 16. Jahrhunderts noch eine andere auf, die nur als Betrug des Publikums bezeichnet werden kann, nämlich der nochmalige Abdruck längst veralteter 'neuer' Zeitungen aus früheren Jahren, wobei aber der Herausgeber durch Veränderung der Jahreszahl den Anschein zu erwecken suchte, daß eine wirkliche Neuigkeit vorliegt' in Paul Roth, *Die neuen Zeitungen in Deutschland in 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1914), p. 33.

⁴⁸ Creasman, "'Lies as Truth': Policing Print and Oral Culture in the Early Modern City", p. 259.

⁴⁹ Karl Schottenloher, *Flugblatt und Zeitung: ein Wegweiser durch das gedruckte Tagesschrifttum. Band I Von den Anfängen bis zum Jahre 1848* (Munich, 1985), p. 162. Doris Stoll, *Die Kölner Press im 16. Jahrhundert: Nikolaus Schreibers "Neue Zeitungen aus Cöllen"* (Wiesbaden, 1991), and Christoph Reske, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Munich, 2007), pp 449-50.

⁵⁰ Stoll, *Die Kölner Press im 16. Jahrhundert*, p. 3.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² *Warhafftige vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von einem Zauberer Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können machen..... Auch / wie man hin vnd wider / viel Zäuberschen*

found are not included in Stoll's bibliography.⁵³ Schreiber printed three news reports about witches in 1589, and one more in 1594. Of the three reports printed in 1589, two of them contained narratives that can be verified.⁵⁴

These two reports, which were very similar, recounted the execution of the werewolf Peter Stumpf in Cologne, as well as accounts of witch executions that had allegedly taken place at Ellwangen, Mergenthal (Mergentheim), Walterstatt (Wallerstein), Trier and Mosel. The text of the two pamphlets was almost identical. However, one provided more detail and emphasis on the Stumpf case,⁵⁵ while the other offered a fuller account of the executions in Trier (this report also briefly mentions Saxony, Westphalia and Rhein).⁵⁶ The story of Peter Stumpf was also reported in a number of contemporary broadsides and reports, however there is no official trial record detailing the Stumpf trial and the historical reality of his trial has been disputed by historians.⁵⁷ It is possible that the author of Schreiber's report acquired the information on Stumpf from the broadsides that were also in circulation. As to the other 'facts' in the report, there is evidence that verifiable witch trials took place in all of the places mentioned. For example, the report stated that twelve women along with a boy were burned for witchcraft in Ellwangen and there is evidence that between seventeen and twenty persons were executed in Ellwangen in 1588.⁵⁸ Both news reports claimed that the executioner from Biberach was sent for to deal with the witches imprisoned in Ellwangen. Indeed, it is now known that the experienced executioner Hans Vollmair from Biberach did in fact conduct

verbrandt hat (Cologne, 1589); *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hun vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre* (Cologne, 1589); *Zäuberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülfflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen* (Cologne, 1589); *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnn bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden* (Cologne, 1594).

⁵³ *Zäuberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülfflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen* (Cologne, 1589); *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnn bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden* (Cologne, 1594).

⁵⁴ I was unable to locate any corroborating accounts for the third pamphlet from 1589, the *Magical Report* (*Zauberische Zeitung*).

⁵⁵ *Warhafftige vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von einem Zauberer Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können machen..... Auch / wie man hin vnd wider / viel Zäuberschen verbrandt hat* (Cologne, 1589).

⁵⁶ *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hun vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre* (Cologne, 1589).

⁵⁷ For more information see Willem de Blécourt, 'The Werewolf, the Witch and the Warlock', pp 196-7.

⁵⁸ Wolfgang Mährle, 'Ellwangen' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iii, 308.

Ellwangen's juridical proceedings.⁵⁹ Similarly there had been witch persecutions in Mergentheim since 1582.⁶⁰ Furthermore both reports stated that eight witches were burnt in Wallerstein and this number conforms to a contemporary diary account from Bamberg, which claimed eight witches were burned in Wallerstein attracting a crowd of 30,000 people.⁶¹ It is also historically recognised that substantial persecutions took place in Trier⁶² and the Prince-Abbey of St. Maximin⁶³ around this time. One of the reports even included a short description of the trial of Dr Dietrich Flade in Trier.⁶⁴ Again this narrative harked back to a 'real event' as the corresponding trial manuscript for Flade's case is still extant.⁶⁵ Thus it can be said that all of the 'facts' reported in these two *Hexenzeitungen* possessed a degree of fidelity to actual prosecutions and other contemporary accounts. Interestingly, it appears that a number of the narratives and facts included in Schreiber's pamphlets were also reported (in strikingly similar detail) in another witch-report printed in Ulm in 1590, the 'Expanded Witch Report'.⁶⁶ This highlights further how authors of news pamphlets potentially acquired their information from previous news reports.

Five years later, in 1594, another *Hexenzeitung* was printed by Schreiber, this report was sensationally titled:

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Midelfort, *Witch hunting*, p. 205-7.

⁶¹ Behringer, 'Hexenverfolgungen im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Publizistik: Die "Erweyterte Unholden Zeyttung" von 1590', p. 345. Also see Behringer, *Witchcraft persecution in Bavaria*, p.132.

⁶² See Dillinger, "Evil People", p. 205.

⁶³ See Rita Voltmer, 'St. Maximin, Prince-Abbey of' in *Encyclopedia of witchcraft: the western tradition*, iv, 1082.

⁶⁴ *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberin oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hun vnd wider / verbrant / in diesen 1589 Jahre* (Cologne, 1589).

⁶⁵ See George L. Burr, 'The Fate of Dietrich Flade' in *Papers of the American Historical Association*, v,(1891), pp 189-243.

⁶⁶ In particular the same accounts/narratives of the witches from Ellwangen, along with an account of a sorceress from Mergenthal, plus details about the witches from Wallerstein, Trier and the Abbey of St. Maximin were all included with little alteration as part of the 'Expanded Witch Report' in 1590. The anonymous author of the 1590 report claimed that he had gathered his information from three sources. Firstly through an 'exemplar' printed in Ulm; secondly, from what he witnessed himself; and, thirdly, from what he had heard from other 'trustworthy people' (*glaubwürdigen leuthen*). Perhaps one of these 'trustworthy people' were familiar with one of Schreiber's reports. See *Erweyterte Vnholden Zeyttung. Kurtz Erzelung wie viel Vnholden hin und wider / sonderlich inn dem Obern Teutschland / gefänglichlich eingezogen / was für grossen schaden sie den Menschen / vemög jhrer vrgicht / zügefüget / vnd wieviel vngefehrlich deren / inn disem 1590. Jar / biß auff den 21. Julj von dem Leben zum Todt hingerichtet vnd verbrandt worden seyen* (Ulm, 1590). A transcription and in-depth analysis of this pamphlet is also available in Behringer, 'Hexenverfolgungen im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Publizistik: Die "Erweyterte Unholden Zeyttung" von 1590', pp 339-60. Behringer had previously suggested that the author of the report possibly had an informer in Ellingen providing information on the persecutions that took place further north (p- 355-6). This new evidence shows that it is also possible that the anonymous author may have gotten the information from Schreiber's report or somebody who was familiar with it.

‘A terrifying story and confession of the sorcerers and sorceresses who were recently burnt, under which there was a barber and a midwife, whom between them both, had killed over 900 young and old people, together with a werewolf, what wonders he practiced.’⁶⁷

The title continued on to state that the sorcerers in the report were recently (*in kurzer zeit*) sentenced in ‘Hernsseun, Lanstein, Engers, Gudensberg, Siburg, Blankenberg and other places.’⁶⁸ The author also chose to end the title with two biblical references to witchcraft, Exodus 22 and Leviticus 20, before adorning the title page with a woodcut. However the woodcut that illustrated this text was not original, and was a replica of the woodblock used in Johannes Knoblochs edition of Thomas Murner’s *Narrenbeschweerung* (Strasbourg, 1518).⁶⁹ It was quite common for printers to re-use woodblocks that had been used to illustrate other works. However in this pamphlet the image was not the only thing that was recycled. Like the report from 1581, this pamphlet contained narratives stolen from a well known demonology.

The anonymous author packed this pamphlet to the brim with shocking bite-sized narratives. These narratives detailed the crimes of multiple persons including an account of: a witch named Johanna Harrweilerin; an anonymous *Badstöber* (Barber) from Nörlingen; a werewolf sorcerer named Jacob; an anonymous midwife; a musician; and an oculist from Siburg. The pamphlet also included minor references to the confessions of five other anonymous *Zeuberin* (sorceresses). However following a careful analysis of the text I discovered that, in fact, the anonymous author stole some of these narratives from Jean Bodin’s *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris, 1580). The author of Schreiber’s report chiefly copied the stories relating to Johanna Harrweilerin from Bodin, and also stole many of Bodin’s sabbath narratives incorporating them into Johanna’s confession. Some of the other narratives, for example the one told by the musician, were also copied. It is known that Bodin’s work, unlike the *Malleus Maleficarum*, was desired and read by a German speaking audience, with a German author and translator, Johann Fischart, providing a German translation of the text only one year after its original publication

⁶⁷ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden / daronder ein Badstöber vnd ein hebel oder hebam ist gewest / welche vnder sich beiden / in die 9. hondert Menschen vmb Leben Junck vnd Alt gebracht haben / sampt einem Werwolff / was wunders der betriben hat* (Cologne, 1589).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘Derer in kurzer zeit zu Hernsseun / Lanstein / Engers Gudensberg Siburg Blankenberg vnd anders wo sindt gericht worden.’

⁶⁹ A reproduction of the woodcut ‘Woman in a Fool’s Cap Cooking up a Hailstorm’ from Thomas Murner, *Narrenbeschweerung* (Strasbourg, 1518) can be found in Zika, *The appearance of witchcraft*, p. 76.

in 1581.⁷⁰ Subsequent German editions of Fischart's translation were printed in 1586 and 1591.⁷¹ Thus it is not surprising that that anonymous author of the 1594 pamphlet was familiar with Bodin's text.

The pamphlet that was printed in 1594 began with the account of a Johanna Harrweilerin, whom he falsely claimed was persecuted in 1593. The story is taken from Bodin's account of Jeanne Harvillier, a witch that Bodin himself had seen tried for witchcraft in 1578. Bodin introduced his readers to the story of Jeanne in the preface of his work. It is worthy of note, that the German translator of Bodin's text, Johann Fischart, also changed Jeanne Harvillier's name to Johanna Harrweilerin in his German translation. However, the author does not tell the story using the exact same language as Fischart's translation, so one cannot tell whether the author was copying from the French or German edition of Bodin.

The pamphlet began by declaring the following:

A sorceress, with the name Johanna Haarweilerin, who was accused of killing many people and animals, how she then confessed the same without the use of torture. She confessed also, that her mother presented her, as soon as she was 12, to the Devil (who was at that time in the figure of a black man with black clothes) and gave her and handed her over for his own, announcing that she, the inhumane mother, had promised her little daughter, as soon as she was born, to the Devil, and he promised in return to keep her [the mother] well and to lend her luck in her business. She also confessed further, that she disowned God from that time on and promised to serve the Devil and then at that place performed fleshly intercourse with the Devil.⁷²

This is almost the exact same as the narrative written in the opening paragraph of Bodin's preface which stated:

La Sorciere que i'ay dict s'appelloit Ieanne Haruillier, natisue de Verbery prés Compieigne, accusee d'auoir fait mourir plusieurs hommes & bestes, comme elle confessa sans question, ny torture, combien qu de prime face elle eust denié opiniastrement, & varié plusiers fois. Elle confessa aussi, que sa mere dés l'aage de douzeans l'auoit presentee au Diable en guise d'vn grand homme noir, outre la stature des hommes, vestu de drap noir, luy disant qu'elle l'auoit, si tost qu'elle fut

⁷⁰ Jean Bodin, *De Daemonomania magorum: Vom Außgelassnen Wütigen Teuffelsheer der Besessenen* translated by Johann Fischart (Strasbourg, 1581).

⁷¹ *De Magorum Daemonomania*, printed by Berhard Jobin (Strasbourg, 1586) and *De Magorum Daemonomania*, printed by Berhard Jobin (Strasbourg, 1591)

⁷² *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden* printed by Nicolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1594) : 'Eine Zauberin / mit namen Johanna Harrweilerin / die wurde verklagt / das sie viel leute vnd vihe getodet hette / wie sie dann ohne peinliche frage dasselb bekandt Sie bekandte auch / das jre Mutter sie als bald / da sie nur zwölff Jahr alt gewesen dem Teuffel (welcher damals in gestalt eines schwarzen Mannes / in schwarzer kleidung ist erschienen) presentirt vnd für eigen hingeben vnd vberlieffert hette / mit vermeldung das sie / die vnmenschliche Mutter / das Töchterlein / gleich als es geboren worden / diesem / welche sie dem Teuffel habe versprochen / der da jhr wider verheissen / sie wol zu halten / vnd jhr viel Glücks zu jhren Geschefften zu verleihen. Sie hat auch weiter bekandt / das sie dem nach von der zeit an Got verleugenet / vnd dem Tueffel zu dienen sich versprochen hette / vnd als bald auff der stette mit dem Teuffel fleischliche Vermischung gepflogen.'

nee, promise à cestuy-là , qu'elle disoit estre le Diable, qui promettoit la bien traicter, & la faire bien heureuse: Et que dés lors elle renonça Dieu, & promist server au Diable. Et qu'au mesme instant elle eut copulation charnellement avec le Diable....⁷³

The rest of Johanna's confession, as shown in chapter four, was an amalgamation of many narratives about the sabbath that were found in Bodin's work. Likewise the narrative of the witches' dance, as described in the report, was also lifted from Bodin. This time the author of the pamphlet copied the story from Bodin's account of witches of Longny. Bodin claimed that the witches' dance was significant and purported that 'there is no assembly carried on where they do not dance.'⁷⁴ Bodin alleged that the witches of Longny used special words while dancing. The Longny witches confessed to shouting out:

har, har, Diable, Diable, saute icy, sauté là, iouë icy, iouë là: Et autres disoiēt Sabath, Sabath, c'est à dire la feste & iour de ropos, en hussant les main & ballets en haut, pour testifier & dōner vn certain tesmoignage d'allegresse, & quede bon Coeur ils feruent & adorent le Diable, & aussi pour contrefaire l'adoration qui est deuë à Dieu.⁷⁵

According to the author of the news report Johanna confessed that while dancing:

At the dance, she confessed, all the sorceresses shout with cheer and with clear voices: Here, here Devil, dance here, dance there, play here, play there. Others shout only Sabbat Sabbat that is our feast day. After they raise their arms and fists up, and strike the air with brooms, that they had in their hands, and they do all of such for the honour of Satan.

Aber vnder dem tanzen / haben sie bekent / schreyen alle Zäuberinnen mit jauchzen vnd mit heller stimme / harr / harr / Teuffel / tanze hieher / tanze dorthin / spiele hie / spieled ort / Etliche aber schryen nür Sabbat / Sabbat / das ist vnser Feyer tag. Darnach hüben sie die arm vnd fauste empor / vnd strichen in die Lufft mit Staupbesem / so sie in handen hetten / vnd solchs alles thun sie zur Ehre des Sathans.⁷⁶

This is a definite case of plagiarism. However, the question remains whether the anonymous author was robbing from the French text or from Fischart's German

⁷³ Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), Book One, Preface. An English translation of the preface is also available in *Jean Bodin On the demon-mania of witches*, translated by Randy A. Scott (Toronto, 1995), pp 35-44.

⁷⁴ Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580) , p. 87^v and 88^r: 'Mais il faict bien á noter que il ne se faict point d'assemblee, où l'on ne danse...' See also Scott (trans.), *Jean Bodin: On the demon-mania of witches*, p. 120.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden* printed by Nicolaus Schreiber: 'Aber vnder dem tanzen / haben sie bekent / schreyen alle Zäuberinnen mit jauchzen vnd mit heller stimme / harr / harr / Teuffel / tanze hieher / tanze dorthin / spiele hie / spieled ort / Etliche aber schryen nür Sabbat / Sabbat / das ist vnser Feyer tag. Darnach hüben sie die arm vnd fauste empor / vnd strichen in die Lufft mit Staupbesem / so sie in handen hetten / vnd solchs alles thun sie zur Ehre des Sathans.'

translation. It is noteworthy that the German translation worded this section differently to the report. Fischart translated the confession of the Longny witches as follows:

Aber es ist auch sonderlich zu mercken / daß keyne hexenversammlung geschicht / man dantz stäts darbei: innmassen die hexin von Longuy bekant haben / so pflegen sie / allweil sie dantzen/ zusagen / har /har / Teuffel / Teuffel / spring hie / spring da / hupf hie / hupf dort / spil hie / spil da. Etliche aber ruffen Sabath / Sabath : welchs so vil bedeu / als eyn fest vnd tag der Rhu. Heben darbei die händ vnd Kehrbäsem inn die höh / Erstlich zur Anzeyg ihrer grosen freud vnd Genüge / vnd daß sie dem Teuffel von herzen dienen vnd jn mit lust anruffen: vnd darnach / daß sie darmit die Anruffung / die Gott gezimmet / nachspilen.⁷⁷

The author of the pamphlet also copied an interesting narrative about weather magic from Bodin's text (which Bodin himself had acquired from the *Malleus Maleficarum*). In the pamphlet, the author recounted how a musician confessed that a certain sorceress, upon being excluded from a village wedding, was transported to a mountain by the Devil. A group of shepherds supposedly witnessed her transportation to the mountain. Once at the mountain she urinated in a hole to make bad weather and stirred it speaking some magical words. Soon after this the 'clear sky was bleak and black and great hailstones smashed the village.'⁷⁸ The musician confessed that afterwards 'through the denunciation of the shepherds the sorceress of the weather was arrested under suspicion and was burnt alive.'⁷⁹ This entire story was originally included in the *Malleus Maleficarum* and was then later incorporated into Bodin's demonological treatise. The similarities are quite astounding. For example at the end of Bodin's account of the witches he stated that '...les Bergers deposerent qu'ils l'auoyent veuë transportee en l'air, ce qu'elle confessa estant accusee, & conueincue, & fut bruslee toute viue.'⁸⁰

Some other shorter stories from the pamphlet concerning *maleficium* were also lifted from Bodin's text. For example one witch was said to have confessed how she buried a toad under a threshold, and by doing so caused seven miscarriages and harmed animals. By 1594 this narrative had been passed down from Nider, to

⁷⁷ Jean Bodin, *De Daemonomania magorum Vom Außgelassenen Wütigen Teuffelsheer der Besessenen*, translated by Johann Fischart (Strasbourg, 1581), book two, chapter four, p. 315.

⁷⁸ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche Kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden* printed by Nicolaus Schreiber: 'da ist als bald er klare himmel trüb vnnnd schwarz worden / vnnnd hat ein grosser hagel auff das dorff zugeschmissen.'

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Nach dem aber durch anzeigung der hirten die Zaberin des Wetters halben verdacht gefangen worden hat man sie lebendig verbrandt.'

⁸⁰ Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puy (Paris, 1580), p. 112^f

Kramer and then to Bodin.⁸¹ A strange account of how a witch killed three men ‘with a little powder, which she threw on a place in paper’⁸² was also taken from Bodin’s text. According to Bodin, Barbe Doré was condemned to be burned in 1577 for confessing that she had brought about the death of three men by tossing a bit of powder wrapped in paper on the spot where they would pass by.⁸³

This case, along with the first case that was discussed from 1581, indicate that authors of the *Hexenzeitungen* were willing to copy narratives from leading demonological treatises such as the *Malleus Maleficarum* and Bodin’s *De la démonomanie des sorciers* in order to formulate stories for their ‘new’ reports. In this way, it can be argued, demonological examples and ideology trickled down through the media reaching audiences that may have never heard of these narratives by any other means. For example, the only time the word ‘sabbath’ was used to describe the witches’ gathering in the news reports was when it was lifted from Bodin.⁸⁴

All of these cases combined underline that the ‘truthfulness’, or verisimilitude, of the reports was, for the most part, highly questionable. That said, the re-cycled stories told in the reports often came from another text, be it an earlier report, or a demonology, that had also claimed to the authenticity of such narratives or events. The examples above confirm that authors were sometimes responsible for deliberately fabricating the news, or in the words of Gerhild Scholz Williams ‘the fictonalizing of news’⁸⁵. Nonetheless, the fact that there was so much copying and recycling of witchcraft narratives in the 1580s and 90s is significant as it demonstrates that there was ample consumer interest in *Hexenzeitungen* during this period.

It is worthy of note, however, that some authors endeavoured to stick to the official story that was issued by authorities. In other words, they printed accounts based on the official court records. In order to ascertain the ‘truthfulness’ of reports this project searched for trial records and *Strafbuch* (Punishment Book) entries that corresponded to the cases reported in the media. While this proved fruitless in the

⁸¹ For further information see chapter two of this dissertation.

⁸² Shreiber 1594: ‘so hat auch ein zauberin bekandt / sie hette jr drey getödtet / mit eim wenig pülfer welchs sie in einem papir an einen Ort geworffen...’

⁸³ Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, printed by J. Du Puys (Paris, 1580), p. 115^r

⁸⁴ This was discussed in more detail in chapter four.

⁸⁵ Gerhild Scholz Williams and William Layher (eds), *Consuming news: newspapers and print culture in early modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Amsterdam, 2008), p. 5.

majority of cases, I did locate detailed corresponding archival sources for number of witchcraft reports that were printed in the imperial free city of Augsburg. The factuality of some of these reports, namely those by Elias Wöllhöffer/Wellhöffer, was previously considered by Ursula Maria Krah in an article published in 2003.⁸⁶ However Krah's study, while valuable, did not go into explicit detail about how the broadsides compared to the archival accounts. Similarly Lyndal Roper also briefly mentioned many of the reports that I will discuss here in her study of the witch trials of Augsburg; however the focus of Roper's investigation was not the reports themselves, but rather the trial records and the confessions that they recounted.⁸⁷ In her work Roper claimed that the summary of the witches crimes were recorded in the Punishment Book (*Strafbuch*) and then read out before their execution and 'this material formed the basis for the broadsheet and pamphlets that were written about the case.'⁸⁸ For the cases I have examined for Augsburg this appears to be an accurate description of how authors acquired their information. However, it has been shown already, that not all reports derived their 'facts' in this way. This part of the chapter will investigate cases where the reports *were* based on official court documents such as the Council Punishment Book (*Strafbuch des Rats*) and trial records (*Urgichten*). Four *Hexenzeitungen* will be examined: a pamphlet, printed by Andreas Aperger in 1654, and three broadsheets, one printed by Elias Wöllhöffer the Elder in 1654 and two by Elias Wellhöffer (the Younger) in 1666, and 1669.

Augsburg, unlike many of its neighbouring territories, executed no witches prior to 1625. In total only eighteen witches were executed in the city.⁸⁹ Therefore it is not surprising that when two witches were executed in 1654 their case attracted local media attention. The two witches that were executed were Barbara Fröhlin and Anna Schäflerin. Barbara, aged seventeen, and Anna, aged sixty-four, were both acting as carers (*Warterinnen*) for another young woman, Maria Pihlerin, who was supposedly possessed by a Devil that made her mute, when they were charged with witchcraft. Both Barbara and Anna were accused of having a pact with the Devil, but Anna was also charged with the murder of Maria by poisoning her soup and pillow.

⁸⁶ Ursula-Maria Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität in frühneuzeitlichen Kleinschriften (Einblattdrucke und Flugschriften)', in Katriin Moeller and Burghart Schmidt (eds), *Realität und Mythos – Hexenverfolgung und Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Hamburg, 2003), pp 77- 86.

⁸⁷ Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: witchcraft, sexuality and religion in early modern Europe* (London, 1994).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

The two women attended Maria while she was being exorcised in the church of St. Ulrich and Afra. The story was nothing short of sensational—demonic possession, exorcism, witchcraft and murder, and all in the one case. Two printers in the city decided to print reports about the spectacular case—Andreas Aperger printed a lengthy pamphlet,⁹⁰ while a *Briefmaler* named Elias Wöllhöffer printed a broadside which included detailed woodcuts representing the narrative.⁹¹ These two sources also provide an insight into how the same event could be treated in two distinct media, the *Flugschrift* (pamphlet) and the *Flugblatt* (broadside).

Andreas Aperger's pamphlet was titled 'What two witches were put in prison for many weeks in the holy imperial city Augsburg / known as Barbara Fröhlin from Rieden / and Anna Schläferin from Erringen / concerning their witchcraft confessed well and with pain [...] and how finally these two witches for their deserts, were executed on Saturday the 18th of April this year 1654.'⁹² Andreas Aperger had been a printer and book dealer in Augsburg for many years and there are over 350 works attributed to Aperger's press. He began printing in Augsburg in 1617, at the address 'Auf Unserer Lieben Frauen Thor.' He had acquired the print shop from a Chrysostomus Dabertzhofer for the sum of 500 Gulden.⁹³

During the period of the Thirty Years War he was the only Catholic printer in bi-confessional Augsburg.⁹⁴ Indeed much of what he published was characterised to a large extent by Jesuit writings.⁹⁵ He had very good contacts with the Jesuit order and also with Catholic patricians and he used these connections to obtain numerous

⁹⁰ *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhafft gelegne zwo hexen / benandtlich Barbara Fröhlin von Rieden / vnnnd Anna Schläferlin von Erringen / wegen ihrer hexereyen güit vnd peinlich bekent / auch was gestalt die alte Anna Schäflerin / im Lobl.ReichsCloster vnd Gottshauß S. Ulrich vnd S. Afra daselbst / die von einem stummen Teuffel besessen gewests Mariam Pihlerin von haußstetten / .../ auff Sambstag den 18. Aprill diß 1654 Jahre hingericht worden. Gedruckt zu Augspurg / durch Andream Aperger / auff unser lieben frawen thor. Anno M. DC. LIV* printed by Andreas Aperger (Augsburg, 1654).

⁹¹ *Warhaffte Historische Abbild: vnd kurtze Beschreibung / was sich vnlangst in deß Heyl: Reichsstatt Augspurg / mit einer ledigen / von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn,* printed by Elias Wöllhöffer the Elder (Augsburg, 1654).

⁹² *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhafft gelegne zwo hexen / benandtlich Barbara Fröhlin von Rieden / vnnnd Anna Schläferlin von Erringen / wegen ihrer hexereyen güit vnd peinlich bekent / auch was gestalt die alte Anna Schäflerin / im Lobl.ReichsCloster vnd Gottshauß S. Ulrich vnd S. Afra daselbst / die von einem stummen Teuffel besessen gewests Mariam Pihlerin von haußstetten / .../ auff Sambstag den 18. Aprill diß 1654 Jahre hingericht worden. Gedruckt zu Augspurg / durch Andream Aperger / auff unser lieben frawen thor. Anno M. DC. LIV* printed by Andreas Aperger (Augsburg, 1654).

⁹³ Helmut Gier and Johannes Janota (eds), *Augsburger Buchdruck und Verlagswesen: von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Wiesbaden, 1997), p. 1237.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

imperial privileges, such as the privilege of printing calendars.⁹⁶ He printed works for publishers from Munich and Augsburg. In addition, he was a *Ratsdrucker*, that is, a printer for the town council. For example in 1656 he printed the ‘Renewed Policy and Tax Order’ for the city council (Figure 5.2).⁹⁷ He married a Veronica Gottlieb, with whom he had eleven children. It is noteworthy that one of his daughters Susanna married the *Briefmaler* Elias Wellhöffer, a printer of the broadsheets that will also be examined here.

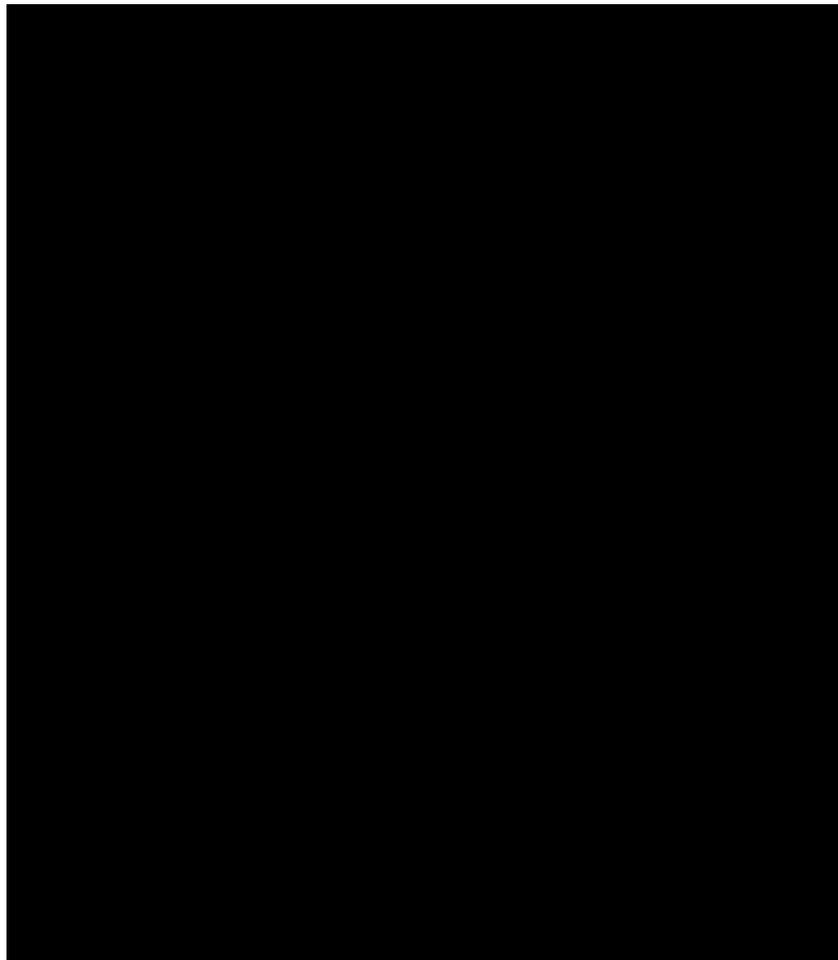


Figure 5.1. Title page from Andres Aperger’s pamphlet *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhafft gelegne zwo hexen....* (Augsburg, 1654) available on VD17: (<http://www.gbv.de/vd/vd17/23:253394W>) (21 Nov. 2012).

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ *Ernewerte Policy: und TaxOrdnung Eines Ehrs: Raths deß Heyl: Römischen ReichsStatt Augspurg* printed by Andreas Aperger (Augsburg, 1656).

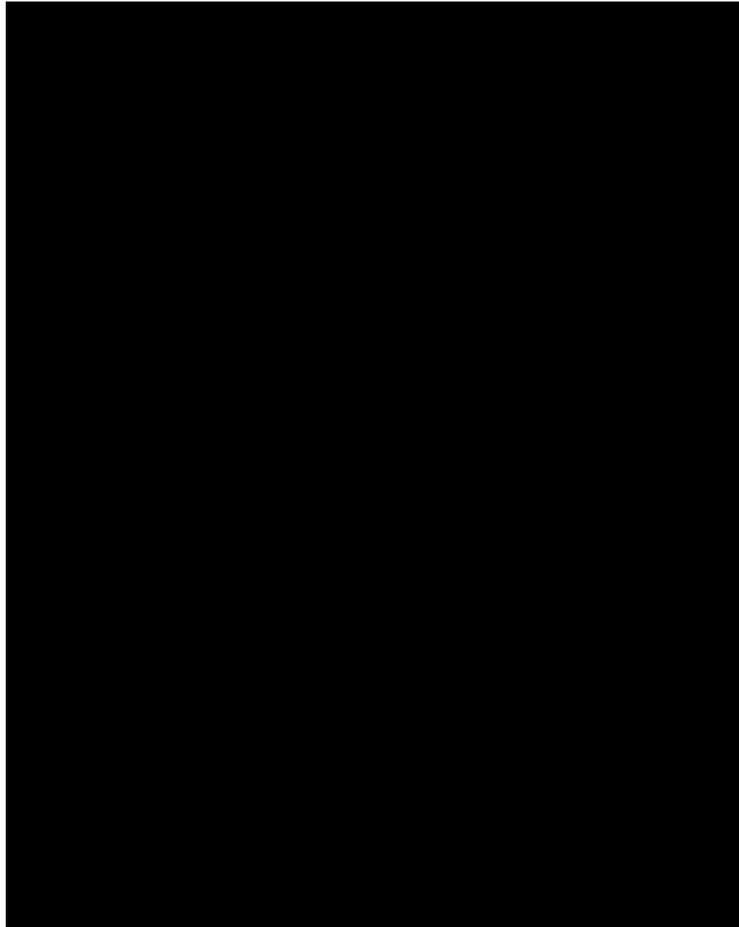


Figure 5.2: Title page from *Ernewerte Policey und Taxordnung Eines Ehrs: Raths deß Heyl: Römischen ReichsStatt Augspurg* printed by Andreas Aperger (Augsburg, 1656) available online on VD17 (<http://www.gbv.de/vd/vd17/384:710621D>) (21 Nov. 2012).

The pamphlet that Aperger printed about the trial, confessions and final execution of the witches was both lengthy and detailed—but did it convey the official facts of the exceptional case? Unfortunately the original trial manuscripts for the case of Barbara Fröhlin and Anna Schläferlin are not available in the Stadtarchiv Augsburg; however, two complete entries exist for each of them in the *Strafbuch des Rats* (the Council’s Punishment Book).⁹⁸ From examining and comparing these records it can be confirmed that Aperger’s pamphlet was based closely on the council’s authoritative account. Moreover, it appears that Aperger printed the majority of both *Strafbuch* entries faithfully in the pamphlet. In the text Aperger included the *Verrueff* (magisterial proclamation) for both Barbara and Anna, and this investigation can verify that these proclamations were practically an exact copy,

⁹⁸ Stadtarchiv Augsburg: *Strafbuch des Rats* 1654-99, 18 April 1654, pp 3-4 (Barbara Fröhlin) and pp 4-7 (Anna Schöfflerin).

almost word for word, of the entries contained in the *Strafbuch des Rats*.⁹⁹ In his capacity as *Ratsdrucker* it is probable that Aperger had direct access to the *Strafbuch* and possibly to the trial manuscripts as well. His report included further evidence and details that were not included in the *Strafbuch*, however given the authenticity of the *Vorreuff* it is quite likely that these facts were established from the trial records themselves.

The author of the pamphlet claimed to print the report so that so that people could read about the truth of the ‘the wonderful Case’ (*wunderlichen Casum*) themselves.¹⁰⁰ He stated that the witches were apprehended by the city magistrate, and how, following their arrest, the town council members of the Catholic religion and of Augsburg considered the ‘distinguished main points’,¹⁰¹ of the case. Furthermore, he emphasised that the trial was conducted according to law. The author declared that the witches confessed their crimes under threat and use of torture, but added that they confessed to the same two further times of their own free will unthreatened. Thus the final confession that the city secretary recorded was consistent and of good ‘quality’¹⁰². Most pamphlets do not go into great detail about how the city magistrate, secretary and council members dealt with the investigation of witches. It appears that the author felt the need to validate the sentence and the actions of the *Rat* to the general public by publishing the established facts of the case.¹⁰³ Indeed Roper argues that the reiteration of these points fixed the details until there could be no doubt about the narrative.¹⁰⁴

On the whole the main focus of the pamphlet was the crime of witchcraft. While the author mentioned the various attempts of the clergy to help the possessed Maria Pihlerin, for the majority of the document he comprehensively discussed the confessions of the two witches. The author gave a thorough account of each witch’s

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhaftt gelegne zwo hexen / [...] wegen ihrer hexereyen güet vnd peinlich bekent [...] auf Sambstag den 18. Aprill diß 1654 Jahre hingericht worden....* printed by Andreas Aperger (Augsburg, 1654).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.: ‘die jenige vornembste hauptpuncten’.

¹⁰² Ibid.: ‘qualitet vnd beschaffenheit’

¹⁰³ It is important to note that witches’ confessions were considered authoritative during this period and the public proclamation of their confession created an air of authenticity surrounding the stories that they confessed to. In the words of Tom Robisheaux: ‘When completed and publicly presented, the confession therefore acted as a single official narrative which superseded all other accounts and was pronounced with official fanfare at the trial and executions. They achieved this official effect by stringing revealed ‘facts’ into compelling narrative form.’ From Tom Robisheaux, ‘The Queen of Evidence: The Witchcraft Confession in the Age of Confessionalism’ in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700: essays in honor of Bodo Nischan* (Aldershot, 2004), p. 197.

¹⁰⁴ Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, p. 205.

crimes and their relationship with the Devil. Interestingly the Catholic author did not miss the opportunity to glorify the power of holy objects, explaining to his readers how after imprisonment Barbara was given a scapular to keep the Devil at bay, and there is a religious undertone throughout the document. He claimed that the scapular miraculously worked and that the Devil was greatly troubled by its use. Overall the pamphlet provided a candid summary of the trial and the confessions of the two witches as per the official court documentation.

As previously mentioned, Aperger was not the only printer who published an account of this remarkable case; a *Briefmaler* named Elias Wöllhöffer also printed a broadside reporting the event. It is known that one of Aperger's daughters, Susanna, married an Elias Wellhöffer (but the date of their marriage is not known), and from 1657 Wellhöffer printed his broadsides at the same address of his father-in-law, at 'Unserer Lieben Frauen Tor.'¹⁰⁵ However, the broadside that was printed in 1654 was published at a different address 'Zu Augspurg bey Elias Wöllhöfer dem ältern / Brieffmahler im Pfaffengäßl'.¹⁰⁶ This leads me to believe that the 1654 pamphlet was printed by Aperger's son-in-law's father, Wöllhöffer the Elder. From 1657 onwards there were eleven broadsides printed by an Elias Wellhöffer (who I believe was Wellhöffer the Younger), all at Aperger's workshop: 'Auf Unserer Lieben Frauen Tor.' In addition to this, in the broadside from 1654 the printer spelt his surname as 'Wöllhöffer', while every report from 1657, which I believe to be printed by the son, were signed as 'Wellhöffer' every single time with no variation, also the title 'dem ältern' was not used in any of the Wellhöffer reports from 1657 onwards. There are no other broadsides recorded as being printed at the address of Pfaffengäßl, or by a Wöllhöffer the Elder.

The broadside in question here is itself remarkably detailed. It was titled:

'A truthful historical effigy and short description of what took place recently in the holy imperial city of Augspurg, with a unmarried woman, who was possessed by a mute Devil, and her two magical attendants, also how finally through a special act of God all was disclosed and hence frightfully witnessed with amazement.'¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Helmut Gier and Johannes Janota (eds), *Augsburger Buchdruck und Verlagswesen: von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Wiesbaden, 1997), p. 1247.

¹⁰⁶ *Warhafftige Historische Abbild: vnd kurtze Beschreibung / was sich vnlangst in deß Heyl: Reichstatt Augspurg / mit einer ledigen / von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn [...]*, printed by Elias Wöllhöffer the Elder (Augsburg, 1654).

¹⁰⁷ *Warhafftige Historische Abbild: vnd kurtze Beschreibung / was sich vnlangst un deß Heyl: Reichs Statt Augspurg / mit einer ledigen / von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn / vnd jhren zweyen zauberischen Wartterinnen zugetragen / auch wie endlich durch sonderbahre schickungs Gottes alles offenbar worden / vnd daher mit verwunderung erschröcklich anzuhören ist* (Augsburg, 1654).

The top half of the sheet was dominated by a detailed pictorial representation of the case. The majority of the woodcuts illustrated the various attempts to exorcise Maria Pihlerin (B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I). However the witches' flight (L, N) and the trial and execution of the two witches (Q,S,T,V,W) were also depicted in the images, along with an image that portrayed Anna's poisoning of Maria, with the Devil at her back (M). Immediately, from looking at the images (Figure 5.3), it is obvious that this print was meant for a much more general readership, as the detailed visual story board made the narrative accessible to a wider illiterate audience. The accompanying text was also written in an accessible style. The text is dotted with alphabetic keys throughout in order to link specific narratives in the text to their corresponding representation in the image. In contrast to this the text from the Aperger's pamphlet was much more demanding and would have required a higher level of literacy.

It is noteworthy that the broadside placed more emphasis on the demonic possession of the unmarried, twenty-seven year old, Maria Pihlerin and the physical struggles she encountered when being exorcised. The story of the two witches, who were Maria's attendants, was also included, but their narratives were considerably less detailed. That said all of the information that was presented about the two witches match the official records. All of the dates and crimes that are mentioned correspond closely to the entries from the *Strafbuch des Rats*. The specific crimes that author chose to report were the witches' pact and their sexual relations with the devil, the desecration of the host, and the witches' flight. He also reported how Anna, out of the Devil's encouragement, murdered Maria. His description of their sentence and punishment is accurate. The author asserted that they were sentenced on the 18 April 1654; he claimed that Barbara was beheaded, and that Anna was torn with red hot pincers twice on the breast before being beheaded. Following this both of their bodies were reported as being burnt to ashes. This corresponds with the sentence that was recorded in the *Strafbuch*. Thus Wöllhöffer the Elder's broadside, while overtly sensational, remained true to the 'established facts' of the case.

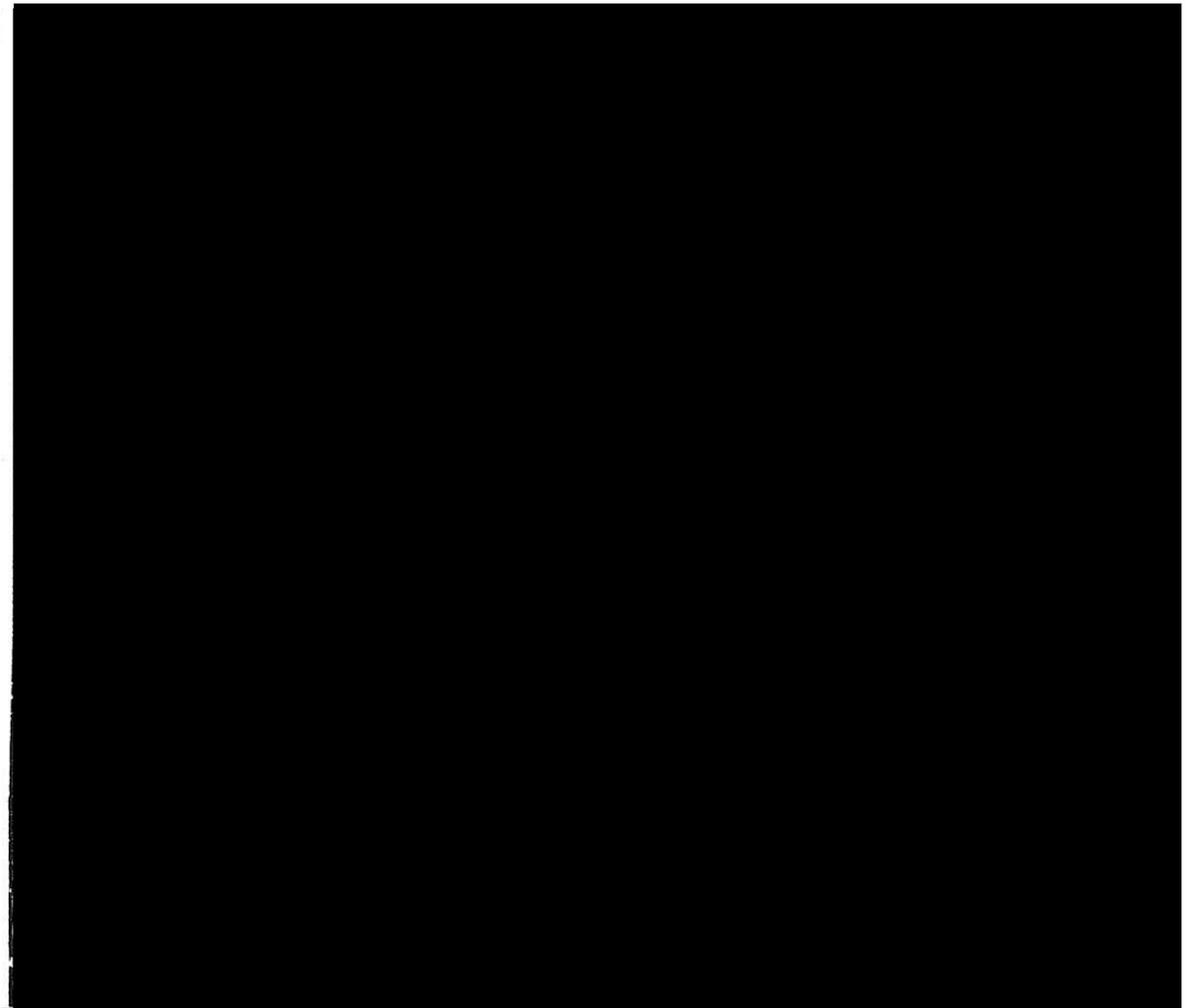


Figure 5.3 The woodcuts from the broadside printed in 1654, *Warhafftige Historische Abbild:vnd kurtze Beschreibung / was sich vnlangst in deß Heyl: Reichstatt Augspurg / mit einer ledigen / von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn [...]*, printed by Elias Wöllhöffer the Elder (Augsburg, 1654) available online on VD17 (<http://www.gbv.de/vd/vd17/23:675370B>) (21 Nov. 2012).

Three further broadsides were printed about witchcraft in Augsburg, two in 1666¹⁰⁸ and one in 1669.¹⁰⁹ Each of these reports pertained to verifiable witchcraft trials. The three broadsides were all printed by Elias Wellhöffer at his father-in-law's premises, 'Auf Unserer Lieber Frauen Tor.' In total there are eleven extant broadsides that were printed by Wellhöffer at this address from 1657-1680. Nearly all of the broadsides printed by him communicated information concerning

¹⁰⁸ *Warhafftige Beschreibung dess Urtheils / so Anno 1666. den 15. Aprilis / in deß Heiligen Römischen Reichs-Statt Augspurg / an einer alten Weibs-Person Namens Anna Schwayhoferin hat begeben vnd zugetragen* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666); *Warhafftige Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem erschrecklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden.* Printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).

¹⁰⁹ *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschrecklicher Hexerey vnd Verkreungen der Menschen [...]*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669)

significant contemporary events. For example in 1657 he printed a broadside about the death and funeral of Emperor Ferdinand III.¹¹⁰ Similarly he printed a broadside upon the death of Empress Margaret Theresa of Spain in 1673¹¹¹ and another on the death of Empress Claudia Felicitas in 1676.¹¹² Disasters and catastrophes also caught his attention for example in 1662 he printed an account of the terrible fire that destroyed the city of Passau on the 27 April¹¹³ and in 1669 he printed a broadside that reported the devastating landslide that occurred in Salzburg.¹¹⁴ Besides printing current news Wellhöffer also printed Catholic paraphernalia. For example in 1659 he printed a broadside that featured a replica representation of the miraculous image of the Madonna of Lechfeld,¹¹⁵ which included a prayer for the Madonna. Wellhöffer undoubtedly wished to sell the sheet to the pilgrims that visited Lechfeld chapel.¹¹⁶ Wellhöffer also printed an account of the visit of the famous Capuchin friar Marcus de Aviano to Augsburg in 1680.¹¹⁷ De Aviano conducted preaching tours during this period healing and driving out devils.¹¹⁸ There was a Catholic undertone throughout a lot of the publications that Wellhöffer printed.

¹¹⁰ *Aigentliche Warhafft Relation, von dem höchst nachdencklichen trawrigen hintritt deß Weylandt Allerdurchleuchtigsten / Großmächtigsten / Unüberwindlichisten Fürsten vnd herrn / herrn FERDINANDI deß Dritten / Erwöhlten Römischen Kayzers / zu allen Zeiten Mehrer deß Reischs....* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1657).

¹¹¹ *Aigentliche Warhafft Relation, von dem Höchst nachdencklichen traurigen Hintritt Der Allerdurchleuchtigsten Fürstin und Frauen/ Frauen Margaritae Weiland regierenden Römischen Kayserin/ auch zu Hungarn und Böhaimb Königin/ [et]c. Ertzhertzogin zu Oesterreich/ Hochgebohrnen Königlichen Infantin zu Hispanien. Welche im 21. Jahr Ihres Alters zu Wienn den 12. Martij Morgens zwischen 2. und 3. Uhr in Gott Christ seeligst entschlaffen/ Anno 1673.....* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1673).

¹¹² *Klägliche Abbildung / Deß Allerdurchleuchtigsten Christmildest Endtseelten Leichnambs der Alldruchleuchtigsten regierenden Röm: Kayserin / auch zu hungarn und Böhaimb Königin /gebohrt Ertz Herzogin zu Oesterreich ClaudiaeFoelicitae, Welche zu Wienn in dem 23. Jahr Ihres Alters den 8. Aprill Anno 1676.....* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1676).

¹¹³ *Wahrhafft in Grund gelefts Statt Passaw / in welcher den 27. Aprill Anno 1662. ein fewr außkommen / dieselbige ganz jämmerlich vnd erbärmlich abgebrande / vnd anjetzo erschrecklich anzusehen ist.* Printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1662).

¹¹⁴ *Warhafft vnd erbarmliche Relation, oder Beschreibung deß traurigen vnd erschrecklichen falls deß grossen Stainbruchs in der hoch fürstl. Vnd weitberuembten Statt Salzburg / So geschehen den 16. July Anno 1669.* Printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

¹¹⁵ *Aigentlich Abbildung / der groß berühmten andächtigen vil Wunderthätigen Bildnuß... Maria hilff auff dem Lechfeld.....* printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1659).

¹¹⁶ Pilgrimages to the Lechfeld chapel, had begun in 1604, and although such pilgrimages were interrupted during the Thirty Years War, they flourished again afterwards. See Bridget Heal, *The cult of the Virgin Mary in early modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 160.

¹¹⁷ *Die wahre Abbildung der hochfürstlichen / Bischofflichen Residenz zu Augspurg auff dem Fronhof / da der Wohl Ehrwürdige P. MARCUS de Aviano Capuciner Prediger / welche er den 18. November Nachmittag zwishen 2. vnd 3. Ur vom Ercker der hochfürstlichen Pfalz auff dem genandten Fronhof zu vil tausent gegenwertigen Personen gehabt hat...printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1680).*

¹¹⁸ Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze: terror and fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London, 2004), p. 186.

As aforementioned, Wellhöffer printed three broadsides that reported the execution of witches: two in 1666, and one 1669. For the purpose of this investigation I will look at two of these reports in detail. Firstly I will examine a report detailing the trial and confessions of Simon Altsee in 1666, before moving on to report concerning Anna Ebelerin from 1669.

In 1666 a 78 year old man from Rottenbuch, named Simon Altsee, was executed in Munich for sorcery. The crimes that he confessed to were manifold. He claimed to have crippled and harmed, and to have even killed people, to have desecrated the host, and to have wreaked bad weather and hail multiple times as a means to seek revenge on those who had incensed him. An account of the trial proceedings from Altsee's case is still extant and preserved in the manuscript collection of the *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek*, Munich.¹¹⁹ Thus we have an excellent opportunity to see how Elias Wellhöffer constructed his news report from the facts that were available about Simon.¹²⁰

Wellhöffer printed the report the same year as the trial and titled it: 'A truthful description of the sentence that was issued for a most famous and frightful sorcerer, in the year 1666 on the 9th of January in the Electoral city of Munich.' It is worthy of note, that the author chose to use the term 'weitbeschreiten' (most famous) to describe this male sorcerer, as the same term was first coined and used in the title of the tale of Dr Johann Faustus: *Historia von D. Johann Fausten / dem weitbeschreyten Zauberer vnnd Schwarzkünstler*.¹²¹ The broadside (figure 5.4) was formatted in the similar way to the broadside from 1654 (figure 5.3).

An alphabetical key connected the images to the text, and vice versa. After looking at both the trial proceedings and the text of the report I can confirm that this broadside, like the majority of broadsides printed by Wellhöffer, extensively mirrored the information from Altsee's trial. All of the information corresponded to Altsee's actual confession. But what aspects of Altsee's confession did the author of the report choose to emphasise?

¹¹⁹ Die Münchener Handschrift Cgm 2625.

¹²⁰ Simon Altsee's trial proceedings were previously the focus of a study by Hermann Hörger in the 1970s; however Hörger did not examine the broadside publication by Wellhöffer Hermann Hörger, 'Wirtschaftlich-soziale und gesellschaftlich-ideologische Aspekte des Hexenwahns. Der Prozeß gegen Simon Altseer aus Rottenbuch 1665' in *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte*, xxxviii (1975), pp 945-66.

¹²¹ *Historia von D. Johann Fausten: Text des Druckes von 1587*, edited by Stephan Füssel and Hans Joachim Kreutzer (Stuttgart, 2006).

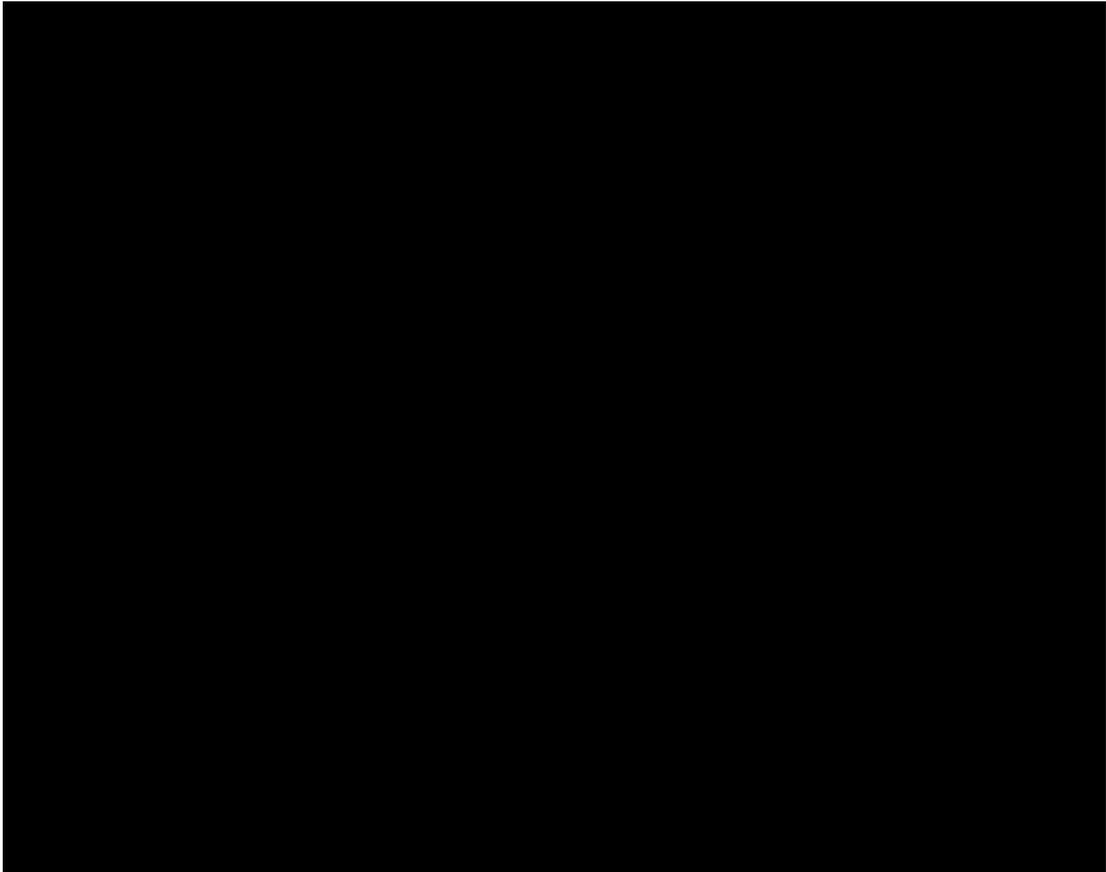


Figure 5.4. Broadsheet reporting the sentencing of Simon Altsee in 1666: *Warhafftige Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden.* Printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666), image taken with permission from the Münchner Stadtmuseum.

Simon Altsee's crimes were diverse and multifarious. As the broadside had limited space for text, the author had to carefully select which elements of the confession he would include in the report. So what did the author include, or indeed, exclude? The author began the report by giving a quick introduction to the character of Simon, citing his age, his familial status and his origins. This was then directly followed by a description of the pact that Simon made with the Devil. He informed his readers that Simon has renounced God joined with the Devil; however he does not elaborate on how Simon met the Devil, or give specific details of how the pact was sealed. From reading the trial record it is noticeable that Simon Altsee consolidated the pact with the Devil in the most unusual way. According to Simon's confession when the Devil asked him to make the pact he retorted that he could not write. Following this the Devil then beat him in the face so badly that his nose bled

and then he took some of his blood to seal the pact.¹²² However, the writer of the report omits this narrative.

The news report then described the witches' dance and feast, albeit only briefly, and explained how Simon flew to these meeting using a salve that he had been given by the Devil. The author continued to report that the Devil had also given Simon a root that could make him strong and that could also cripple and kill humans and animals. The report then moved straight on to outlining the harm that Simon caused. Interestingly, according to the trial record, Simon also used the root to heal. In addition he provided magical items to people to protect themselves. For example, he gave a woman a piece of parchment that had the power to help against the weather 'when one held it before them and said ten Our Fathers and Hail Marys together' and lit three candles.¹²³ However, none of his magical healing is mentioned in the news report. There are a few other striking stories to be found in the trial manuscript that were not included in the report, such as how Simon confessed to trying to cripple his own sister so that he would receive a larger inheritance, or how Simon had used the root given to him by the Devil to protect him from gunfire during the Thirty Years War. The author of the news report obviously had to narrow down what narratives could be included in the short text, and opted to leave these ones out. It is possible to surmise that the inclusion of stories about magical healing and protection would have weakened the frightfulness of the report, and for this reason it was excluded.

One could argue that perhaps the author did not know the full details of the case, however there is evidence to suggest that the author of the report was especially knowledgeable about the minute details of the case, as some the accounts he gave were very specific and exact. For example the author recounted how Simon and three accomplices attacked a man on the road between Steinbach and Rottenbach, stripping him of his shirt, and forcing him to pay for his release. The reporter stated that they received 11 Thaler from the man and that Simon received 5 Thaler from this amount. All these figures are correct and the narrative mirrors the account recorded in Simon's confession.

By and large, the author of the news report placed the emphasis primarily on the crime of weather magic and Simon's desecration of the Eucharist. The

¹²² Die Münchener Handschrift Cgm 2625.

¹²³ Ibid.

descriptions of Simon's weather magic and his destruction of the host both match the descriptions included in his confession. The only discrepancy that is noticeable is the author's claim that Simon desecrated the host six times, while in his confession he admitted to harming the host five times. However, this error is rather minor; indeed it could have even been an early modern typographical error. Overall the information presented in Wellhöffer's report faithfully recounted stories from Simon's actual confession.

The final witch-report that will be considered, also printed by Wellhöffer, was also authentic, in that it gave a full account of the official narrative included in the city of Augsburg's *Strafbuch*. On the 23 March 1669 Anna Ebelerin was executed for witchcraft in the city of Augsburg, and her body was burnt to ashes. She had been apprehended in January, accused of murdering the wife of Benedict Widenmanuß.¹²⁴ Benedict's wife had been in child-bed and Anna had been employed by her as a lying-in-maid when she committed the alleged murder, by means of poisoning her soup. After being accused other women also come forward, claiming that Ebelerin had poisoned their children as well. Anna was interrogated six times, and the documentation of her entire case spans almost two-hundred pages.¹²⁵ Anna's trial caught the attention of the *Briefmaler* Wellhöffer and shortly after her execution a broadside was printed by him, titled:

A Relation or description of what happened in the year 1669 on the 23rd of March in the Imperial city of Augspurg / about a woman / who for gruesome and horrifying witchcraft and crippling of people / how also because of other evil deeds she committed, by a merciful sentence issued from a wholly virtuous council / was torn firstly with red hot pincers / and thereafter executed with the sword / the body was burnt to ashes.¹²⁶

The trial of Anna Ebelerin was studied by Lyndal Roper and a succinct overview of her trial is included in her book *Oedipus and the Devil*.¹²⁷ Roper examined the trial of Anna and other witches in Augsburg to ascertain the psychological role that motherhood played in witchcraft persecutions. Although her study was primarily focused on numerous trial manuscripts Roper did include a reproduction of the

¹²⁴ Stadtarchiv Augsburg, Urgichtensammlung, 28 January 1669, Anna Ebelerin.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ *Relation oder Beschreibung so Anno 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Stadt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs Person / welche ob grausamer and erschrücklicher hexerey vnd Verkrummungen der Menschen / wie auch wegen anderer verübten Vbelthaten durch ein ertheiltes gnädiges Vrtheil von eim ganzen Ehrsamen Rath / zuvor mit glüenden Zangen gerissen / hernach aber mit dem Schwert gericht / der Leib zu Aschen verbrennt.* (Augsburg, 1669).

¹²⁷ Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, p. 199.

broadside that was printed about Anna Ebelerin. She also commented, albeit briefly, on the role of media. Roper claimed that the reiteration of the crimes and confession ‘fixed the details until there could be no doubt about the narrative.’¹²⁸

Ursula Maria Krah also chose to use this broadside, detailing the crimes of Anna Ebelerin, to illustrate that some broadsides were truthful and presented real facts in her article ‘Fiktionalität und Faktizität in frühneuzeitlichen Kleinschriften (Einblattdrucke und Flugschriften).’¹²⁹ Krah claimed that in the case of this broadsheet there existed a distinct compliance between the underlying data and the facts from other sources (but she does not stipulate which sources exactly): ‘In the case of the broadsheet about Anna Ebelehr there is a definite conformity between the data and the surviving historical evidence from other sources, so it gives a marked factuality.’¹³⁰

Thus prior to researching this broadsheet I was aware that this report was corroborated with other historical evidence. However, when I compared the text of Ebelerin’s trial manuscript,¹³¹ her *Strafbuch* entry,¹³² and the broadsheet itself, I discovered that not only was it an authentic report, but an actual copy of the entry from the *Strafbuch des Rats* almost verbatim (see Appendix C). The printer simply reprinted most of the entry from the Council Punishment Book. He added a title for the report and a series of woodcuts that depicted Anna crimes and execution visually.¹³³ These woodcuts also utilised an alphabetic key so that the reader could better understand what each image represented. This suggests that Wellhöffer himself, or the author of this report had access to the *Strafbuch des Rats*, or perhaps they were connected with somebody who had direct access who was willing to send them a transcription of the entry.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 205.

¹²⁹ Krah, pp 78-9

¹³⁰ Krah, p 79: ‘Im Fall des Einblattdruckes über Anna Ebelehr liegt eine eindeutige Übereinstimmung zwischen diesen Rahmendaten und den aus anderen Quellen überlieferten historischen Erkenntnissen vor, es ist also eine deutliche Faktizität gegeben.’

¹³¹ Stadtarchiv Augsburg, Urgichtensammlung, 28 January 1669, Anna Ebelerin.

¹³² Stadtarchiv Augsburg, ‘Strafbuch des Rats 1654-99’, Saturday 23 March 1669, pp 312-314 (Anna Eberlerin).

¹³³ The woodcuts that were used in this broadside were woodcuts that had been previously used in broadsides printed by Wellhöffer in 1654 and 1666.

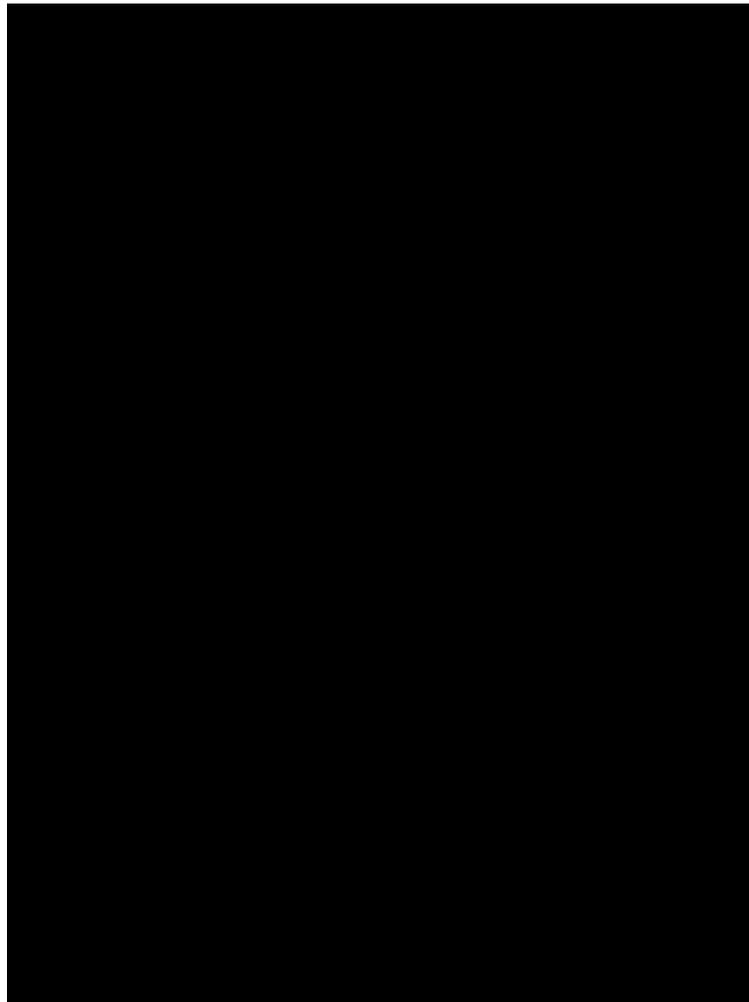


Figure 5.5. Elias Wellhöffer’s broadside depicting the case of Anna Ebelerin, see *Relation oder Beschreibung so Anno 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen...* (Augsburg, 1669) available online on Zeno.org (<http://images.zeno.org/Kunstwerke/I/big/HL80673a.jpg>) (25 Nov. 2012).

This discovery suggests that authors were using *Strafbuch* entries not only as the factual basis for news reports, but for the body of the reports themselves. Whether or not other news reporters copied *Strafbuch* entries verbatim could be an interesting research question for future investigation. Tom Robisheaux suggests, albeit without including examples, that the popular press printed stories of witchcraft confessions verbatim from local court records—however, this present investigation has found that this type of reportage was the exception, as opposed to the rule.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Robisheaux does not give any examples of reports that printed official confessions verbatim that can be or have been verified against original trial records. He cites the example of Reinhard Lutz’s pamphlet as evidence that authors reprinted the official confessions. However there is no proof that Lutz’s description of the witches’ confessions was a faithful rendition of the official confessions as the original trial records for the witches in question no longer exist. Furthermore, Robisheaux incorrectly states that Lutz’s ‘bundle of stories’ were brought together at the beginning of the large hunt in 1586. While Lutz’s report was indeed published as part of the *Theatrum de Veneficis* in 1586, the original pamphlet was printed many years earlier in 1571. See Robisheaux, ‘The Queen of Evidence: The

Conclusions

Overall this chapter has highlighted how cautious historians must be if they intend on using *Neue Zeitungen* as evidence for the number of trials or executions in early modern Germany. In the words of Voltaire: ‘In the matter of news we must always await the sacrament of confirmation.’¹³⁵ Likewise, historians should not assume that reports pertained to actual executions unless there is other contemporary evidence that confirms this to be the case. However, this does not mean that the narratives contained in the reports do not have historical value. On the contrary, stories told by reporters can help us understand better how the crime of witchcraft was crafted, and imagined in the popular media. Ultimately, in a number of cases, the reports’ were neither ‘true’ nor ‘new’. Authors had no qualms about stealing and re-using narratives that had been printed previously elsewhere and passing them off as current news; with authors stealing stories not only from earlier reports, but also from leading demonologists such as Bodin and Kramer. The fact that stories about witchcraft crimes were being copied demonstrates that stories about witches were in demand, and if authors could not get their hands on the details of recent persecutions (or perhaps if they lived somewhere where there were none), they gladly re-worked pre-existing narratives and ‘facts’ into their reports leading to a ‘fictionalisation’ of the news. That being said, some reporters’ accounts do correspond to other historical evidence, and at least two authors based their accounts fully on actual trials records and the official confession that was read out at the execution, and recorded in the *Strafbuch*.

In conclusion, while the authenticity of each news report ought to be assessed individually, I have found that the *Hexenzeitungen* also warrant a collective and comparative investigation. Indeed, it was only through the collective study of the reports that many points of overlap and exchange emerged. As a genre the *Neue Zeitungen* had the potential to be both factual and fictional. The reports about witches were no different. Authors chose ‘facts’ and narratives from an array of other sources, from demonologies, other news reports, and official records. This is what is evident from the limited remaining paper trail. However, it is likely that

Witchcraft Confession in the Age of Confessionalism’, p. 204 (footnote 95 in article).

¹³⁵ ‘Il faut toujours, en fait de nouvelles, attendre le sacrament de la confirmation’. François-Marie Arouet in a letter to comte d’Argental, 28 August 1760, in Thomas B. Harbottle and Philip H. Dalbiac, *Dictionary of quotations (French and Italian)* (London, 1904), p. 63.

authors also acquired their information orally; from witnessing trials themselves, or hearing stories and songs about witches, perhaps in their local tavern or marketplace, or on their travels elsewhere. The difficulty in studying early modern history is that one can never fully understand how these stories were exchanged and formulated. Therefore, in this regard, the *Hexenzeitungen* present historians with a unique perspective on the construction, transmission and communication of witchcraft narratives in early modern Germany.

Conclusion

In recent years historians have begun to focus their attention on how witchcraft, and indeed crime more generally, was portrayed and constructed in the media of the early modern period. Robert Scribner was one of the first scholars to argue that popular pamphlets and propaganda could provide insights into early modern culture and belief.¹ In 2002, Robert Walinski-Kiehl argued that a study of witchcraft pamphlet literature would enhance our understanding of Germany's witchcraft persecutions.² More recently Wolfgang Behringer also highlighted the important role that various media played in the construction, and, in fact, the deconstruction of witch stereotype in his article 'Witchcraft and Media.'³ This thesis views the non-periodical news reports as important mediators of meaning and argues that these reports provide 'mediations' of the contemporary experience of witchcraft.

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the representation of the crime of witchcraft in the *Hexenzeitungen*. It analysed what role this medium played in constructing and developing the cumulative concept of witchcraft in the period 1533-1669. A total of sixty-one reports were transcribed, translated and analysed for this purpose. The analysis of the documents focused on tracing the development of six concepts throughout the reports: the witches' pact with the Devil; the notion of sex with the Devil; *maleficium* (harmful magic); weather magic; witches' assemblies or sabbaths; and flight. This method of analysis was chosen as it allows one to clearly decipher how the major concepts that formed the cumulative concept of witchcraft were developed in the reports. This methodical approach also made it possible to track how certain concepts changed over time, and distinguish which ideas were most popular, or indeed, unpopular in the reports. The thesis then compared these findings to how the same ideas were considered within the broader demonological literature of the period.

By contextualising the reports and comparing the reports to other contemporary works on witchcraft the thesis sought to discover what role the newsheets and pamphlets had in communicating concepts of witchcraft to a wider audience. This comparative angle also permitted the thesis to trace the flow and

¹ Scribner, *For the sake of simple folk: popular propaganda for the German Reformation*.

² Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-hunting in Germany c. 1560-1630', pp 49-74.

³ Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', pp 217-239.

transmission of certain concepts, and indeed narratives, from one medium to another. This research also investigated the ‘truthfulness’ of the reports and examined a number of cases in order to shed light on their construction and discover if they related information based on actual criminal prosecutions (chapter five).

So how was witchcraft represented in the *Hexenzeitungen*? Did the representation of witchcraft in the reports differ to trial narratives or the image of witchcraft presented in demonological texts? Were some ideas more popular or less popular in the news? The first four chapters of this dissertation explored how six important concepts were portrayed in the reports and from this analysis a number of conclusions can be made.

The analysis of the pact with the Devil revealed that all reports from this period referred to the witches’ entering into a (often sexual) relationship with the Devil. Frequently the authors of *Hexenzeitungen* describe how the witches were required to disown God and all things holy. This investigation also discovered how many media reports, particularly in the sixteenth century, mirrored the formulaic pact-seduction narratives that were evident in the trial manuscripts. In the earlier pamphlets there is no mention of a written pact. Instead authors focused on how the witches met the Devil and how, especially female witches, had sexual intercourse with him. For women, sex was seen as the physical counterpart of the pact, and the reports implicate that demonic copulation signified an alliance with Satan in its own right. However, in contrast to this sexual intercourse was not represented as a significant element in male pact-seduction narratives in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

With regards to how the idea of the pact changed over time chapter one highlighted how the witchcraft trials themselves, and the books and pamphlets they gave rise to, helped to generate and modify content. For example after Bodin published his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* in 1580 there was an increase in *Hexenzeitungen* suggesting that the Devil’s member was ice cold, and stories about mothers giving their daughters to the Devil. Both of these ideas had been put forward in Bodin’s work. The publication of the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* similarly appears to have had an impact on the popular understanding of the pact with the Devil. Following its publication in 1587 there was a noticeable increase in reports of witches entering into written agreements with the ‘Evil Spirit’. Another noteworthy feature of the news reports’ representation of sex with the Devil is that the Devil was always portrayed as real. While even some of the main proponents of witch-hunting,

such as Heinrich Kramer, struggled to explain how sex with the Devil was possible the authors of the reports suggested such sexual encounters were real. Authors of reports rarely questioned how or why such physical intercourse was possible.

In fact only very rarely does an author of a *Hexenzeitungen* question the reality or possibility of any of the witches' crimes. For example when it came to the reportage of harmful magic and weather magic the authors presented the witches in their texts as beings that were capable of causing real harm. Most demonologists, however, believed and argued that the harm was only carried out by the Devil with the permission of God and thus the witches were powerless. They still upheld that the pact was real, however, and declared that the witches should be executed for their spiritual crime. In the pamphlets and broadsheets, although the witches' spiritual crime is considered, there is a striking emphasis on the physical harm that they performed. They are frequently portrayed as horrendous murderers, killing numerous innocent people, even small children. They are represented as dangerous individuals with the power to bewitch, blind, cripple and kill. The physicality and 'realness' of their crimes is further reinforced by the *Hexenzeitungen* by detailed descriptions of the ingredients and methods that witches used to cause harm.

The approach used in this thesis made it possible to trace how the understanding of witchcraft changed over time. One important issue that was addressed in a number of reports was the issue of God's permission. Why did God allow the witches to cause harm? The *Hexenzeitungen* reflected an important development in this regard. In earlier reports contemporary authors stated that God allowed such harm in the form of 'unnatural weather' to punish human sins, including the readers' sins, making the audience feel somewhat responsible for the crisis.⁴ However by 1596 another report suggests that people were beginning to project all of their guilt and responsibility on to the witches.⁵ In 1576 two separate reports claimed that God allowed the Devil to use witches to inflict injuries to punish humanity for their sins. They emphasised that it was human sins that had enraged

⁴ See *Neue Zeitung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breißgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrenndt hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn* (S.l., 1576) and *Neuezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unhulden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schreckliche ding bekent haben...*, printed by Hans Cudium (S.l., 1576).

⁵ *Warhafftige geschicht / und eigentliche Beschreibung / von den Hexen Weybern / so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar / vnd inn Westfahlen / Prißgew vnd anderstwo/ rc. verbrand hat / dises 1596. Jar / in Reimen weiß verfast*, printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596).

God and that as result he punished everyone ‘through the force of the devil in some places’⁶. Both of the authors of the reports highlight the inclusion of the audience in this sin by using the pronoun ‘we’ (*wir*): ‘We have all deserved such, that *we* have enraged God with *our* cursing, also gorging, boozing and gluttony...’⁷ and ‘Christ is very enraged / that *we* live in great sin’⁸. This interpretation made the reader reflect upon their own sins. However, in 1596 a report printed in Strasbourg suggested that the difficulties that contemporaries were experiencing were not a result of human sin. Instead the author placed all of the responsibility for God’s scorn upon the witches themselves, arguing that it was their very existence that was arousing God’s wrath. Thus the only way to appease God and restore order was to ‘uproot’ all witches from society.⁹ The audience were no longer required to reflect on their own individual sins, and thus were able to evade any personal guilt. The anger that they felt for the situation could then, in turn, be displaced on to the witches, who were represented as wholly blameworthy. This is an important ideological shift as it signifies the increasing scapegoating of witches.

The analysis of harmful magic in the *Hexenzeitungen* also drew attention to the crime of infanticide and the use of children’s body parts for magical purposes. The fascination with infanticide that is evident in the reports lends credence to Lyndal Roper’s hypothesis that maternal fears about the fragility of reproduction were central to witchcraft fantasies.¹⁰ Roper discovered that in Augsburg accusations were typically brought by mothers, soon after giving birth, against women who had cared for the child, most often the lying-in-maid and not the midwife.¹¹ In the reports it is mid-wives (and not lying-in-maids) that are repeatedly represented as heinous murderers. The historian David Harley argued that the idea of the ‘mid-wife’ witch

⁶ *Newezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unholden gefangen...* printed by Hans Cudium (S.l., 1576): ‘...hat die straff lassen kommen / durch teuffels zwang an manchen ort...’

⁷ *Newe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breißgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen* (S.l., 1576): ‘Solches alles wir verdienet hon das wir haben erzürnen thon / Go mit vnserem schwören / auch fressen sauffen vnd fillerey’.

⁸ *Newezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unholden gefangen...* printed by Hans Cudium: ‘Darumb ist Christus erzürner ser / das wir leben in sünden schwer’.

⁹ Harmut Lehmann discuss this contemporary approach to witchcraft in Lehmann, ‘The Persecution of Witches as Restoration of Order: The Case of Germany, 1590s-1650s’, pp 107-21.

¹⁰ Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, p. 203.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

was nothing more than a myth propagated by demonologists.¹² However this study has clearly shown that the myth of the mid-wife witch flourished in the *Hexenzeitungen* (see table 3.1) thus showing that it played an important role in the popular imagining of the witch. Although the number of prosecutions of mid-wives for witchcraft may have been considerably small, it appears when they did occur they attracted a lot of media attention.

The investigation of weather magic resulted in some insightful discoveries. Firstly the project found that climate anomalies were explicitly attributed to witches in the *Hexenzeitungen*. Secondly, the analysis revealed that weather magic was the top crime associated with witchcraft in reports from sixteenth century. The propagation of the idea that witches could be responsible for the weather is profoundly significant as accusations of weather magic could lead to large scale hunts.¹³ It has been noted that charges of weather making and crop destruction were directed against a fictive collective because it was hard to imagine a single person could cause such weather.¹⁴ This corresponds to the majority of the representations of weather making in the reports, which was portrayed as a communal affair. It is significant that while the concept of weather making was discussed by demonologists it was not a dominant theme in most demonological literature (which tended to focus more on the pact, general acts of *maleficium* and the witches' gathering). For example the chapter designated to weather magic in the *Malleus Maleficarum* was very short, while Bodin discussed the idea of weather magic in a chapter (book two, chapter eight) that also investigated whether witches could cause illness and sterility and kill men and beasts.

Christian Pfister has suggested that many historians have looked at 'history from above' focusing on intellectual and legal arguments without sufficiently taking into account popular perceptions and responses.¹⁵ If one were to look at just the intellectual and legal accounts one might conclude that weather magic did not play an important role. On the contrary, bad weather was popularly perceived as one of the major crimes of the witches, and authors of the *Hexenzeitungen* cited the

¹² Harley, 'Historians as Demonologists: The Myth of the Mid-wife witch', pp 1-26.

¹³ Pfister, 'Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts', p. 61

¹⁴ Behringer, 'Climatic Change and Witch-hunting: the impact of the Little Ice Age on mentalities', pp 339-40.

¹⁵ Pfister, 'Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts', p. 66.

witches' weather making as one of the main reasons that they had to be eradicated from society. It has been noted that since Behringer wrote his seminal article 'Weather, Hunger, Fear' in 1995 historians have still been reluctant to consider the impact of climate change on the witch-hunt.¹⁶ Like Behringer and Pfister, this thesis does not propose that there was a deterministic relationship between subsistence crises and witch hunts. However, it is important to remember that weather played an important role in both 'natural' and 'cultural' spaces.¹⁷ The weather alone was not responsible for the witch persecutions; a second important factor was the transformation of mentality towards a gloomy depressive world view.¹⁸ It is evident that the *Hexenzeitungen* played a key role communicating this world view to a wide audience and in disseminating the idea that the weather was being caused by the witches. Thus it was not the weather, but the cultural interpretation of the cause of the weather, propagated in the media, that plausibly had an impact on the witch hunt.

Weather magic was not the only concept that appeared to be treated differently in the reports. The representation of the witches' gathering in the *Hexenzeitungen*, on the whole, contrasted with representations portrayed in the demonological texts. This research found that the witches' sabbath was represented more like a festival, or a communal meeting where the witches came together to eat, dance and cause harm (mostly weather magic). The central elements were feasting and dancing, not Devil worship. Other historians have also noted that the witches' congregation was not always imagined as a religious ceremony in the trial records. Johannes Dillinger argues that in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier that the witch society of the Sabbath constituted a corporate festive event rather than a religious one.¹⁹ According to Dillinger witches' sabbath narratives sometimes reflected real social circumstances rather than the canon of motifs determined by learned demonological literature.²⁰ Richard Van Dülmen similarly found that a discrepancy existed between the representation of the sabbath in the demonological

¹⁶ Behringer, 'Weather, Hunger, and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality', p. 23.

¹⁷ Pfister, 'Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Climatic Extremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts' in *The Medieval History Journal* 10, (2007), p. 61.

¹⁸ Behringer, 'Weather, Hunger, and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-hunts in Climate, Society and Mentality' in *German History* Vol. 13 No.1 (1995), pp 1-27.

¹⁹ Dillinger, "Evil People", p. 50.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

texts and the confessions of actual witches.²¹ Demonologists, particularly Del Rio, often depicted the Sabbath as the world turned upside down, and focused on the blasphemous rituals of the witches as a direct inversion of Catholic mass²²—such representations rarely featured in the reports. In addition to this the authors of the *Hexenzeitungen* never refer to the witches gathering as a ‘sabbath.’ The terms used to describe the meeting are *Hexen Versammlung* (witches’ assembly) or *Hexentanz* (witches’ dance). The only time that the witches’ congregation is referred to as a sabbath (‘sabbat’²³) is in 1594 in a narrative that this research has shown was stolen directly from Jean Bodin’s *De le démonomanie des sorciers*. This is also one of the few instances that Devil worship features in a report. This is a prime example of how sometimes the demonological discourse could permeate into the media reports. This analysis also found that in the majority of cases the *Hexenzeitungen* only referred to the witches’ flight as a mode of transport to the witches’ gathering. Therefore it can be said that in the reports the concepts of flight and the sabbath became intertwined. Furthermore, while demonologists questioned the reality of such transvection the reports represent the witches’ flight as a reality.

In relation to the nature of the reports themselves, there have been some noteworthy discoveries, most of which reinforce many points that have hitherto been identified by scholars working on popular print culture in this period. For example the project identified that almost half of the reports were written in rhyme. This figure corresponds very closely to Joy Wiltenburg’s data for crime reports during the same period.²⁴ Like other *Neue Zeitungen* some of the reports on witches were reprinted in various locations, sometimes even years later. This characteristic was previously noted by Paul Roth as early as 1914.²⁵ This project also found that sometimes authors stole narratives from other works. Most notably this study has shown how two reports from 1581 and 1594 lifted narratives directly from two seminal demonological works, the *Malleus Maleficarum* and *De la démonomanie des sorciers*. With regards to the authenticity of the reports chapter five has demonstrated how some reports could be incredibly ‘truthful’, in the sense that they

²¹ Van Dülmen, ‘Imaginationen des Teuflichen: Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate’ in *Hexenwelten: Magie und Imagination* (Frankfurt, 1987), p. 127.

²² Dillinger, “*Evil People*”, p 51.

²³ *Erschreckliche erzehlung vnnnd bekenntnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden [...]*, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber, (Cologne, 1594).

²⁴ Wiltenburg, *Crime and culture*, p. 72.

²⁵ Roth, *Die neuen Zeitungen in Deutschland im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1914), p. 33.

related the exact details pertaining to actual trial proceedings that took place. It was found that some authors even quoted from the *Strafbuch des Rats* verbatim. Other characteristics that are associated with crime literature of this period, such as religious overtones and sensational language are also evident in the *Hexenzeitungen*.

The use of *Neue Zeitungen* as primary sources while historically enriching can also be somewhat problematic for the historian. The main problem the author faced was that the examples that remain today represent only a small fraction of those originally produced. Andrew Pettegree estimates that only about one *per cent* of the contemporary pamphlet literature has survived the ravages of time. Unlike more valuable books, the cheap broadsides and pamphlets were not usually collectors' items.²⁶ In addition to this the ones that did survive are scattered in collections world wide. Online catalogues such as VD 16 and VD17 have been a tremendous resource in locating *Hexenzeitungen*²⁷. However the catalogues are not fully comprehensive, and a number of reports were found that were not included in them. Thus while the best efforts were made to collect all reports detailing the crime of witchcraft systematically up until 1669 it is possible that other reports may exist in private collections or in lesser well known regional libraries. However, overall the author feels that this study is broadly representative of the surviving *Hexenzeitungen*.

In addition to this, it is important to note that the *Hexenzeitungen* represent only one medium out of a variety of media that existed in the period studied. Other media such as public and published sermons and periodical reports also had the potential to disseminate ideas about witchcraft in early modern Germany. It can be deduced that further analysis of how different types of media represented witchcraft would be rewarding, and allow for a comparative study of how various media contributed to the conceptualisation of witchcraft. As other countries, particularly England, also printed pamphlets pertaining to the crime of witchcraft a comparative study of pamphlets printed elsewhere in Europe could also produce interesting findings.

²⁶ That said, a large portion of crime reports from this period have only been preserved because of one notable contemporary collector: the Swiss pastor Johannes Wick. Wick collected all kinds of news reports during the sixteenth century.

²⁷ VD 16 (Das Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts) and VD 17 (Das Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts) are online databases of books published in German-speaking lands in the sixteenth (www.gateway-bayern.de/index_vd16.html) and seventeenth (www.vd17.com) centuries.

This project chose to focus on how specific concepts were treated in the reports by looking at both text and image. Thus where relevant images were considered and discussed. However, the author suggests that a more detailed analysis of the relationship between the image and the text could be an interesting subject for future research. Indeed the relationship between image and text in the pamphlets and broadsheets is an area that could be researched more broadly (including other crime reports from the period, not only those relating to witchcraft).

Hexenzeitungen from all over Germany were analysed for this thesis. The author chose to conduct a trans-regional investigation in order to detect broad trends and patterns in the reports. Indeed this broad geographical approach led to the discovery of copycat reports and many interesting similarities and trends in the *Hexenzeitungen* that may have not been discovered otherwise. However the author recognizes that closer regional investigations into the circumstances surrounding individual reports could unearth some interesting data, and thus the project hopes to provide a spring board for potential regional investigations. Moreover, the study of the transmission and transport of reports themselves could also be examined further. Two of the reports included in this project were accounts of German witchcraft trials that had been translated into English and printed in London. A study of what type of German news reports were translated into English during this period could also be a future avenue of research. An analysis of the translations themselves could also be worthwhile to see how accurately the English translators/authors produced the translations from the German original.

In summation this thesis has shown how the crime of witchcraft was represented by the contemporary *Hexenzeitungen*, from 1533-1669. It has provided a systematic investigation into how a number of key concepts were treated, and indeed developed, through this medium. It can be said, generally, that the *Hexenzeitungen* endorsed the witchcraft persecutions during the period, often thanking the just authorities for the eradication of witches. The main beliefs in witchcraft, the witches' pact with the Devil, the notion of sex with the Devil, *maleficium*, weather magic, and witches' assemblies and flight, were all represented in the news reports. These narratives reflected the contemporary discourse on witchcraft, both learned and popular. Authors of *Hexenzeitungen*, it has been shown, were often knowledgeable of the learned demonological works of the period, and sometimes the authors

included accounts and narratives from demonological literature. Similarly stories included in reports sometimes served as examples for demonological theories. In this way, the reports acted sometimes as a bridge bringing elements of 'learned' literature to a more popular audience. The narratives in the *Hexenzeitungen* were not only informed by demonologies but also by the trials themselves. In this way the reports examined provide historians with an important social dialogue and provide 'mediations' of the contemporary experience of witchcraft.

To conclude, it is evident from the *Hexenzeitungen* that witchcraft beliefs developed and evolved over time. Moreover, these pamphlets and broadsheets played a significant communicative role in this development, both being influenced by and influencing popular –and perhaps even learned– attitudes. The *Hexenzeitungen* made their own particular contribution to the popular witchcraft discourse and were an important part of the wider 'extended mediatization' of witchcraft that was evident in this period.²⁸ The *Hexenzeitungen*, with their songs and images, presented a point of intersection between oral and written culture. The main aim of the authors was to narrate and sell a story: the story of witchcraft. They represented the crimes of witches as a reality. According to the news-sheets and pamphlets witches were real criminals, enemies of Christendom, inflicting *real* harm, in league with the Devil himself. Therefore the *Hexenzeitungen* helped to both reaffirm and establish belief in, and fear of, witches in early modern Germany.

²⁸ Behringer, *Witchcraft and the Media*, p. 235.

APPENDIX A

Full list of *Hexenzeitungen* that have been identified from 1533-1669

This chronological list catalogues all of the 70 *Hexenzeitungen* that were located during the duration of this project, including ones that were not analysed for the current project. When known, the authors name precedes the title of the publication, and the name of the printer, if known, follows the title. The place and year of publication is also given when available.

- 1533:** *Ein erschrocklich geschicht Vom Tewfel und einer unhulden*, printed by Stefen Hamer (Nuremberg, 1533).
- 1533:** *Ein erschrocklich Warhafftige History wie es yetz auff den Gründonnerstag im Kintzgertal zü Shiltach im dreyunddreissigsten jar / der listig Teüfel die frumen leüt daselbs / mit falschen worten/ pfeiffen / allerey gesang / rc. Betrogen / zü lest die Statt gar verderbt / und verbrent hat [...] findestu gründlich in disem büchlin getruckt ston. M. D. XXXiii. (S.l., 1533).*
- 1533:** *Ein wunderbarlich erschrokenlich handlung / So sich auff den Grün Dornstag dis iars / inn dem Stedlin Schiltach / mit einer brunst durch den bösen geist gestift / begeben hat / im M. D. Xxxiii. (S.l., 1533).*
- 1540:** *Paul zun Rom. XIII. Die Gewaltigen oder Oberkeiten sind nicht den die gutes/ sunder den die böses thun / zufürchten / Denn sie tregt das Schwert nich umb sonst / Sie ist Gottes dienerin / eine Racherin uber den der böses thut*, printed by Lucas Cranach the Younger (Gotha, 1540).
- 1555:** *Ein erschrockliche geschicht/ so zu Derneburg in der Graffschafft Reinsteyn/ am Harz gelegen / von dreyen Zauberin [...]*, printed by Georg Merckel (Nuremberg, 1555).
- 1563:** *Warhafftige vnnd Erschrecklich Thatten vn hanglungen der LXIII. Hexen vnnd Vnholden so zu Wisentag / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seint*, printed by Friedrich Gutknecht (S.l.,1563).
- 1571:** Lutz, Reinhard, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen Hexen / Auch Ketzerischen und Teuffels Weibern / die zu Schettstadt / deß H. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung rc. sindt verbrennt worden (S.l., 1571).*
- 1576:** *Newezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unhulden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schrockliche ding bekent haben*, printed by Hans Cudium von Hof (S.l., 1576).

- 1576:** *Newe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breißgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrendt hat / auch wie sie schröckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn (S.l., 1576).*
- 1578:** *Warhafftige und ein erschrockliche neue Zeitung, des grossen Wasserguß so den 15. May diß lauffenden 78. Jahrs zu Horb geschehen [...] wie man hernach alda etlich Unhulden verbrent hatt wie sie schröcklich Ding bekendt haben, printed by Ambrosium Wetz (S.l., 1578).*
- 1579:** *Kuntz, Hans, Neue Zeitung von einer Erschrecklichen That / Welche zu Dillingen / von einem Jhesuwider / und einer Hexen / geschehen ist [...], printed by Niclaus Heinrich (Urssel, 1579).*
- 1580:** *Zwo Neue Zeittung, was man für Hexen oder Unholden verbrendt hat / von dem siebenden Hornung an biss auff den zwentzigsten Höwmonat diss MDLXXX. Jars / auch darbei angezeigt / an was ohrt und enden, auch was sie bekendt haben [...] (Hof, 1580).*
- 1580:** *Newe Zeitung. Von den Hexen oder Unhulden / So mann verbrend hat / von dem 7. Februarj an / biß auff den 25. Junij/ dises 1580 Jar. Auch wirt darbey angezaigt / an was ort und enden / auch was sie bekent haben (S.l., 1580).*
- 1580:** *Newe Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abschewlich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberinnen / was sich mit jnen am ende dieses verlauffenen 79. Jars begeben vnd zugetragen / darinnen kürzlich vnd warhafftiglich vermeldet / wie vnd wann sie zu diesem bösen handel gekomen / was für gewliche thaten sie begangen / vnd was sie auch endlichen den 2. Januarij dieses 1580. Jahrs vor lohn empfangen (S.l., 1580).*
- 1580:** *Newe Zeitung aus Berneburgk von dreyen alten Teufels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberinnen / ihren greulichen Thaten und Straffe (S.l., 1580).*
- 1580:** *Neue Zeitung. / Eine schreckliche Historia / so sich zu Stettin in Pommern mit / einer Zeuberinn zugetragen, printed by Johann Balhorn (Lübeck, 1580).*
- 1581:** *Erschreckliche / Warhafftige / Neue Zeitung / so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen / in einem Dorff Knylingen genand [...] von einer alten Zeuberin / welche irem eignen Töchterlein [...] Teuffelskunst und Zeuberey gelehret [...], printed by Melcher Sachsen (Erfurt, 1581).*
- 1582:** *Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung. Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr / wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekendt haben. Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan / vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wetter in diesem vergangen Sommer im Teutschlandt gmacht haben, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582).*

- 1582:** *Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht: Ob auch zu dieser vnser zeit vnter vns Christian / hexen / zäuberer / vnd Vnholden vorhanden : Vnd was sie außrichten können / rc. einfältig vnd kürzlich Durch M. Abraham Saur beschrieben vnd an Tag gegeben. Sampt einer vorachenden den jetzt neuwlich zu Marpurg auff den 25. tag Maij / deß jetzthwährenden 1582. jars hingerichten zäuberinnen bekandtnuß vnd Vrgicht, printed by Chrisoph Rab (Frankfurt am Main, 1582).*
- 1582:** *Warhafftige und erschreckliche neue Zeitung von einer jungen Dienern / welche sich dem Teufel sechs Jahr lang ergeben [...] Item von grewlichen ungestümen Wettern, so den 12. Maii dieses 1582. Jars in Baiern [...] grossen Schaden / an Menschen und Viehe gethan haben, printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1582).*
- 1583:** *Warhafftige vnd glaubwürdige Zeyttung / von hundert vnd vier vnd dreyssig vnhulden / so vmb / irer Zauberey halben / diß verschinen 1582 Jars / zu Gefencknus gebracht / und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October / auff jhr vnmenschliche thaten vnd gräwliche außag [...], printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583).*
- 1583:** *Warhaffte und glaubwürdige Zeytung. Von hundert vnd vir vnd dreyssig Unholden / so umb ihrer Zauberey halben / diß verschinen LXXXII. Jars / zu Gefencknus gebracht / und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October uuff ihr unmenschliche thaten vnd grewliche aussag und Bekandtnus / mit rechtem uhrtheil / zum Feuer verdambt unnd verbrennet worden, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583).*
- 1583:** *Ein New kläglich Lied / von dem grossen schaden der Vnholden / so sie in Westphalen zu Aschenbrügk vnd andern orten begangen haben / in dem jetztwerenden 1583 jar / wie auch jrer 180 jemmerlich verbrenndt seind worden, printed by Jakob Schotten (Wesel, 1583).*
- 1587:** *Gute vnd peinliche Bekenntnisse der Walpurga Hausmännin, gewesene vnd beschworene hebamme zu Dillengen, die fast dreißig Jahre lang in der hexerei gesteckt vnd am bösen Feind gehangen. Sie ist zu Dillingen am 20. September anno 1587 mit dem Feuer gerichtet worden, this is an unprinted report however it is included here as it is most like a copy of a printed report that no longer exists that was copied into the Fugger news-letters see Victor Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen . Ungedruckte Briefe an das haus Fugger aus den Jahren 1568-1605* (Munich, 1923), pp 103-10.*
- 1588:** *Urgicht und verzaichnuß / so Walpurga Hausmännin zu Dillingen / inn ihrer peinlichen Marter bekandt hatt / was sy für vbels vnd Jamers mit ihrer hexerey / so sy biß in die 30. Jar getrüben / angericht vnd gestüfft hat [...], (S.l.,1588).*
- 1588:** *Warhafftige: Neue Zeittung auß dem Land Westuahlen / von der stat Ossenbrück / wie man da hat auff einen Tag 133. Vnholden verbrenndt / auch was sie bekand und getrieben haben / gesang / weiß gestelt (S.l., 1588).*

- 1589:** *Zwo warhafftige Newe Zeytung [...] Die ander Newe zeytung / Auß dem Landt Westualen / von der Statt / Osenbruck / allda hat man den 9. April inn diesem / 1589. Jar / auff einen tag Hundert und drey vnd dreissig / Zauberin verbrenndt / auch was sie bekennt / vnd getriben haben printed by Donatum Richtzenhayn (Jena, 1589).*
- 1589:** *Wahrhafftige vnd wunderbarliche Newe zeitung / von einem Bawren / der sich durch Zauberey / deß Tags sibem stunt zu einem Wolff verwandelt hat / und wie er darnach gericht ist worden durch den Cölnischen Nachrichter / den letzten October 1589, printed by Johann Neagle (Augsburg, 1589).*
- 1589:** *Warhafftige und Wunderbarlich / Newe zeitung von einen pauren / der sich durch zauberey / des tags sibem stund zu ainen wolff verwandelt hat / und wie er darnach gericht ist worden durch den Colnischen Nachrichter / den letzten October Im 1589 Jar, printed by Lucas Mayer (Nuremberg, 1589).*
- 1589:** *Bey Bedbur in dem selben land / hab ich mich jn ein Wolff verwandt [...], by Philipp Uffenbach (S.l., 1589).*
- 1589:** *Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauberer / Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können machen / welcher zu Bedbur (vier meilen von Cölln gelegen) ist gericht worden [...] Auch / wie man hin und wider viel Zäuberschen verbrandt hat / in diesem 1589. Jahre / Was sie getriben vnd bekandt haben / männiglich zur trewen warnung gestellet, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).*
- 1589:** *Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberern oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hin vnd wider / verbrandt / in diesen 1589. Jahre [...] Auch von einem Werwolff / welcher zu Bepper ist gericht worden / den 31. October / dieses 1589. Jahrs / was böser Thaten er begangen hat, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).*
- 1589:** *Zauberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülfflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen [...], printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).*
- 1590:** *Erweytterte Vnholden Zeyttung. Kurtz Erzelung wie viel Vnholden hin und wider / sonderlich inn dem Oberrn Teutschland / gefängklich eingezogen / was für grossen schaden sie den Menschen / vemög jhrer vrgicht / zügefüget / vnd wieviel vngeföhrllich deren / inn disem 1590. Jar / biß auff den 21. Julj von dem Leben zum Todt hingerichtet vnd verbrandt worden seyen (Ulm, 1590).*
- 1590:** *A true discourse. Declaring the damnable life and death of one Stubbe Peeter, a most wicked Sorcerer, who in the likenes of a wolfe, committed many murders, continuing this diuelish practise 25. yeeres, killing and deuouring Men, Woomen, and Children. Who for the same fact was taken and executed the 31. October last past in the Towne of Bedbur neer the Cittie of Collin in Germany. Trulye translated out of the high Duch according to*

the Copie printed in Collin, brought ouer into England by George Bores ordinary poste, the xj. Daye of this present moneth of June 1590. who did both see and heare the same. At London, Printed for Edward Venge, and are to be solde in Fleet-street at the signe of the Vine (London, 1590).

- 1591:** *Warhafftige Neuwe Zeitung / aus dem Landt Westphalen / von der Statt Ossenbruck / Allda hat man den 9. Tag Hornungs / in dem 1591. Jar auff einen Tag 133 Vnholden verbrenndt / Auch was sie Bekandt vnd getriben haben / gesangweiß gestellt, printed by Johan Beck (Erfurt, 1591).*
- 1591:** *Erschröcklichen und zuvor nie erhörte neue Zeitung / welcher massen im Landt zu Gülch uber dreyhundert Weibs personen / mit dem Teuffel sich verbunden [...], printed by Georg Kress (Augsburg, 1591).*
- 1594:** *Erschreckliche erzelung vnnnd bekentnis der zeuberer vnd zeuberin / welche kurtzlich verbrandt sein worden [...], printed by Nikolaus Schreiber, (Cologne, 1594).*
- 1594:** *Drey warhafftige neue Zeittung / Die Erste / von vilen Hexen vnnnd Vnhulden / so wan newlicher zeit inn disem 94. Jar / im Trierischen Land / vnnnd am andern Orten verbrent hat [...], (Cologne 1594).*
- 1596:** *Warhafftige Zeitung / Vnd gruendliche beschreibung / von zehn Hexen / Vnhold weibern / so man zu Rottenburg / am Necker / den 9. May diese 96. jar, printed by Jost Müller (Strasbourg, 1596).*
- 1596:** *Dreyerley Warhaffte neue zeittung [...] Die dritte / Auß dem Landt Westuahlen / von der Statt Ossenbruckh / wie man auff einen Tag 133. Vnholden verbrent hat / geschehen den 9 Aprilis diß 96. Jars (Regensberg, 1596).*
- 1596:** *Zwo erschreckliche und unerhörte Geschicht / welches in diesem XCVI. Jar geschehen ist auff dem Brockersberg / Dar sich ahn die hundert tausend Unholden oder Hexen versamlet. Und rath mit dem Teuffel genommen / wie sie alle früchten der Erden und Bäumen durch ungewetter verderben möchten [...], printed by Bertram Böchholz (Cologne, 1596).*
- 1596:** *Warhafftige geschicht / und eigentliche Beschreibung / von den Hexen Weybern / so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar / vnd inn Westfahlen / Prißgew vnd anderstwo/ rc. verbrand hat / dises 1596. Jar / in Reimen weiß verfast, printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596).*
- 1599:** *Newe Zeitung : Welcher gestalt / zween falsche Juden /durch Zauberey zu wegen gebracht / daß vil tausend stück Vihe hingefallen vnd gestorben ist Welch auch in diesem Monat Juni dises 1599 Jahrs [...], printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1599).*
- 1599:** *Zwo Neue Zeitungen / Die erste welcher gestalt zween falsche Jüden / durch Zauberey zuwegen gebracht / daß vil tausent Stück Vihe hingefallen vnnnd gestorben ist. Welche auch in disem Monat Junij dises 1599. Jahrs / ihren*

gebürenden Lohn derentwegen empfangen haben. Die ander Zeitung [...]
printed by Johann Formick (Vienna, 1599).

- 1600:** *Hort an new schrecklich abenthewr / Von dem unholden ungehewr: in*
(c.) *Bisthumb Trier und ander statt / Man ihrer vil gefangen hat [...]* (S.l.,
c. 1600).
- 1600:** *Kurze Erzöhlung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs*
personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd
zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen / was massen sie auch / an dem
29. Tag dess Monats Julij / in dem 1600. Jar / in der Fürstlichen hauptstatt
München / von dem Leben zum Tod gebracht worden / den Bösen zu einem
Schröcken / den Frommen aber zur Wahrnung / für die Augen gestellt,
printed by Michael Manger (Augsburg, 1600).
- 1601:** *A Strange Report of sixe most notorious witches, who by their diuelish*
practises murdred aboue the number of hundred small children: besides the
great hurtes they committed vpon diuers other people (London, 1601).
- 1603:** *Ein Warhafftige Zeitung. Von etlichen hexen oder Vnholden / welche man*
kürzlich im Stiff Mäntz zu Ascheburg / Dipperck / Ostum / Könßhoffen / auch
andern Orten / verbrenndt / was Vbels sie gestiftt / vnd bekandt haben. Im
Thon: Pomey / Pomey / jhr Polen / rc. (Frankfurt, 1603).
- 1610:** Binder, Nicholas, *Drey warhafftige grundtliche Zeitungen / Die erste / Von*
ettlichen Hexen vnd Zauberin [...] *Die ander / Von einem Burger vnd*
Thuchmacher [...] (Freiburg, 1610).
- 1612:** *Zwo gründliche und warhafftige neue zeitung: die erste von den Hexen und*
Unholden Mann und Weibs personen, so man in der Churfürstlichen Statt zu
Aschenburg unnd auch aff dem Land mit dem fewer gestrafft unnd verbrandt
hat (Giessen, 1612).
- 1612:** *Zwo schröckliche Neue Zeitung / Die erste ist von dem gewlichen Elendt /*
so sich jetzund in der Churfürstlichen Stadt Aschenburck am Maynstrom
gelegen / vnd im den vmbliegenden Flecken von einer grossen anzahl Hexen
vnnnd Vnholten die man mit dem Fewer gestrafft vnd verbrand hat /...
geschehen.. 9. Aprilis 1612 (Giessen, 1612).
- 1615:** *Zwei hexenzeitung / die Erste / von dreyen hexen Pfaffen / unnd einem*
Organisten zu Ellwang / wie dieselben Christo abgesagt [...] *Die ander: Von*
einer Vnholdin oder hexen / wie sie mit jhren Gespilen alles zuverderben
vnterstanden [...], (Nuremberg, 1615).
- 1616:** *Zwo hexen zeitung / die Erste: Auß dem Bißthumb Würzburg [...]* *Das Ander:*
Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg [...] (Tübingen, 1616).
- 1618:** *Warhafftige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern, so man diß*
1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Häimburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen
grentz verbrennt hat (Vienna, 1618).

- 1626:** *Zwo Warhafftige / vnd doch Männiglich zuvor bekante Neue Zeitungen. Die Erste /Von dem grossen Jammer / Welcher sich begeben in der Marggraffschafft Baden / wie allda schon vber die fünffzig hexen / mann / weib / knaben vnd mädlein / sein verbrant worden [...], (Moltzen, 1626).*
- 1627:** *Zwo warhafftige neue Zeittung : die erste ist ein warhafftige Propheceyung, was sich diss tausent sechzehnhundert und 28. Jahr wird verlauffen und zutragen ... die ander Zeittung ist auss dem Bistumb Würtzburg und Bamberg, auch sonst auss andern Herrschafften, wie man viel Hexen unnd Gabelreutersen verbrennen lest, und noch viel gefangen liegen [...]* (Württemberg, 1627).
- 1627:** *Druten Zeitung / Verlauff / was sich hin und wider im Frankenland / Bamberg vnd Würzburg mit den Unholden / vnd denen so sich auß Ehr vnd Geltgetz muhtwillig dem Teuffel ergeben [...]* (Schmalkalden, 1627).
- 1627:** *Ein Warhafftige vnd gründliche Beschreibung / Auß dem Bistumb Würtz vnd Bamberg / Deßgleichen von dem ganzen Fränkischen Kraiß / wie man alda so vil hexen Mann vnd Weibspersohnen verbrennen laßt / vnd was sie nur für schreckliche sachen bekannt haben / ist mit fleiß auß glaubwürdigen schreiben zusammen getragen / Vnd inn das Lied versetzt. (S.l., 1627).*
- 1628:** *Gewiser Bericht deß Truten unnd Hexenbrennens Bambergischen gebiets [...], printed by Bartholomeo Rennern (Schmalkalden, 1628).*
- 1629:** *Eine Warhafftige und Gründliche Beschreibung. Auß dem Bistumb Würtzburgk und Bambergk / deßgleichen von dem gantzen Fränkischen Kreyß / wie man allda so viel Hexen / Mann- und WeibesPersonen verbrennen lest [...]* (Württemberg, 1629).
- 1647:** *Zwey warhafftige vnd erschreckliche Geschichten vnd Wunderzeichen hat vns Gott für Augen gestelt an vnterschiedlichen Orthen / das Erst zu Graven Hage [...] Das Ander: Warhafftige beschreibung / was sich bey der Statt Wilisaw jhn einem Dorff mit einer Zauberin begeben / wie sie das hochwürdig Sacrament empfangen vnd wider auß ihrem Mund gethan / in ein Dorn Necken geworffen [...], printed by Bartholme Schnell (Hohenems, 1647).*
- 1650:** *Erschreckliche Neue Zeitung / Welche sich begeben vnd zugetragen in diesem 1650. Jahr / in der Osternacht / im Schweizer Gebirge / bey der Stadt Dillhofen auff einem Dorffe Dimdurff genandt / in welchem drey hexen gewohnet [...], printed by Mattias Hammer (Dillhofen, 1650).*
- 1654:** *Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhafft gelegne zwo hexen / benandtlich Barbara Fröhlin von Rieden / vnd Anna Schläferlin von Erringen / wegen ihrer hexereyen güit vnd peinlich bekent / auch was gestalt die alte Anna Schäflerin / im Lobl.ReichsCloster vnd Gottshauß S. Ulrich vnd S. Afra daselbst / die von einem stummen Teuffel besessen gewests Mariam Pihlerin von haußstetten / [...] / auf Sambstag den 18. Aprill diß 1654 Jahre hingericht worden. Gedruckt zu Augspurg / durch*

Andream Aperger / auff unser lieben frawen thor. Anno M. DC. LIV, printed by Andream Aperger (Augsburg, 1654).

- 1654:** *Warhaffte Historische Abbild:vnd kurtze Beschreibung / was sich vnlangst in deß Heyl: Reichstatt Augspurg / mit einer ledigen / von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn [...], printed by Elias Wöllhöffer the Elder (Augsburg, 1654).*
- 1659:** *Kurzer und warhafftiger Bericht und erschreckliche Neue Zeitung von sechshundert Hexen, Zauberern und Teufels-bannern, welche der Bischof zu Bamberg hat verbrennen lassen [...] Auch hat der Bischof zu Würzburg über die neuhundert verbrennen lassen [...] Mit Bewilligung des Bischofs und ganzen Thum-Capitels in Druck gegeben (Bamberg, 1659), reprinted in Wolfgang Behringer, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland* (Munich, 2000), pp 261-4.*
- 1666:** *Ein erschrückliche jedoch warhafftige vnd erbärmliche Neue Zeitung / Von häxenmeisteren vnd zauberern [...], printed by Christoff Schmid (Augsburg, 1666).*
- 1666:** *Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschrücklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).*
- 1666:** *Warhaffte Bescheibung deß Urtheils / so Anno 1666. den 15. Aprilis / in deß heiligen Römischen Reichs-Statt Augspurg / an einer alten Weibs-person namens Anna Schwayhoferin hat begeben vnd zugetragen [...], printed by Elias Wellhöfer (Augsburg, 1666).*
- 1669:** *Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschrücklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen [...],printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).*

APPENDIX B

Weather Magic Story in *Malleus Maleficarum* and 1581 Report

*Original story about the girl creating weather for her father from Heinrich Kramer's Malleus Maleficarum (1486)**

E quibus gestis aliqua in medium producamus. In partibus enim Suevie dum quidam villanus segetes in campis cum filia paruula vix octo annorum conspiceret decreuisset et propter siccatem terre pluuiam apud se ruminans et conferens optasset, dicens: "Heu! Quando veniet pluuiam?" puella audiens verba patris ex simplicitate animi dixit: "Pater, si pluuiam desideras, faciam quod cito veniter." At pater: "Vnde hec tibi? Noscisne pluuiam procurare?" Respondit puella: "Vtique, et nedum pluuiam, set et grandines et tempestates concitare scio." Et pater: "Quisnam te docuit?" Respondit: "Mater mea. Verum quod mihi inhiuit ne alicui hoc indicarem." Tunc iterum pater: "Et quomodo te docuit?" Respondit: "Me commisit vni magistro, quem omni hora ad quecunque petita habere possum." At pater: "Vidistine istum?" Respondit: "Vidi interdum viros introeuntes et exeuntes ad matrem." Et cum interrogasset quiam essent, respondit: "Sunt nostril magistri, quibus etiam te tradidi et commisi, magni fautores et diuites." Territus pater anne illa hora grandinem citare posset inquisiuit, et puella: "Vtique, si modicum aque habuero, faciam." | Tunc pater puellam per manum ad torrentem deduxit. "Fac," inquit, "sed tantummodo super agrum nostrum." Tunc puella manum in aquam misit et in nomine sui magistri iuxta doctrinam matris mouit. Et ecce tantummodo pluuiam agrum illum perfudit. Quod cernens pater: "Fac," inquit, "et grandinem, sed tantummodo super vnum ex agris nostris." Quod cum iterum puella fecisset, pater de experientia certificatus uxorem apud iudicem accusauit, que capta et conuicta incinerata fuit et filia denuo baptizata et deo dicata amplius illi efficere non potuit.

This same story was translated into German and written in rhyme. It appeared as a new report about a witch from 'Knylingen' in 1581. Here is a full transcription of the report.

Erschreckliche / Warhafftige / Neue Zeitung / so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden
geschehen / in einem Dorff Knylingen genand / ein Meyl weg von Ettlingen
gelegen / von einer alten Zeuberin / welche jrem eigen Töchterlein / die nur acht Jahr
alt gewesen / Teuffelskunst vnd Zeuberey gelehret / welchs darnach das Megdlein
dem Vater auff dem felde durch ein Wetter machen (weil der Vater ein Regen
wünschte) offenbaret / Vnd ist solchen alte Zeuberin hernach durch jhren eigenen
Mann bey der Oberkeit angeben / vnd vom Leben zum Tode verurtheilt worden.

Im Thon / Kompt her zu mir / spricht Gottes Sohn.

Gedruckt zu Erffort / durch Mecher Sachsen.

1581.

* Excerpt taken from Henricus Institoris and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum* edited and translated by Christopher S. Mackay (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006), i, 472.

Nu höret zu jr Christen Leut / was sich inn dieser kurzen zeit / newlich hat
zugetragen / inn Marggraffschafft Baden ists geschehen / hat mancher Christe wol
gesehn / Knylingen heist es mit Namen.

Als man zelt Tausendt fünffhundert Jahr / im Achzigsten vnd das ist war / den dritten
Augstmon ists geschehen / von einem reichen Pauerßman / welcher thet auff sein
Acker gan / seinen Samen zubesehen.

In dem er nu hinaussen gieng / Sein Töchterlein er mit jm nimpt / von Acht Jahren
solches ware / Er spazieret wol hin vnd her / vnd sahe das es so dürre war / Er sprach
/ ein Regen war noth dare.

Da das Megdlein die rede vernam / bald sie zu irem Vater kam / auß einfalt fiengs
an zu sagen / Ey Valter wiltu Regen han / denselben ich wol machen kan / Darumb
wollen wir nicht klagen.

Sie sprach / Vater nicht regen allein / sonder hagel / Donner / Blitz in gemein / was
man darunter wil haben / wenn ich nur ein wenig Wasser han / damit ichs zu wegen
bringen kan / nu hört was ich weiter wil sagen.

Der Vater das Megdlein fragn thet / wo sie dasselbe gelernet het / Sie sprach / von
der Mutter eben / die mirs denn hart verboten hat / das ichs nicht solt sagen nach / es
kostet mir sonst mein Leben.

Der Vater weiter fraget nach / Wer hat dich es gelernet doch / Das Megdlein hub an
zu sagen / Sie schickt mich zu einem Meister stolz / dauon ich alles lernen solt / die
Wetter zusammen tragen.

Der Vater weiter noch anfieng / Er sprach: Töchterlein vnd liebes Kindt / hastu auch
den Meister gesehen / der dir es denn gelernet hat / so sag mir es zu der farth /
kennstu jn auch darneben.

Das Megdlein zu dem Vater sagt / Es kommen zur Mutter alle tag / Etliche Menner
gegangen / die gehn im hause auß vnd ein / die Mutter spricht: Es unser Meister sein
/ ich solt sie herrlich empfangen.

Darüber der Vater erschrack so hart / vber dieser erschrecklichen that / vnd fragt das
Kindlein mit lichen / Er sprach mein liebes Töchterlein / kanstu auch diese stund
allein / ein regen vnd vngewitter machn.

Sie sprach / Ja freylich / wenn ich wil / vnd führet mich nur zu eim Ziel / da ich
Wasser kan bekommen / damit ich alles machen kan / vnd solches bringen auff die
Ban / das es muß Regnen vnd Donnern.

Der Vater nam sie bey der hand / Er gieng da er ein Bächlein fand / vnd sprach zum
Kinde seine / Nu mach ein Wetter all zuhand / so wil ich sehen was du kanst / nur
auff usern Acker alleine.

Solchs alles das Megdelein that / was es der Vater geheissen hat / griff in das Wasser gar wacker / mit der hand in des Meisters Nam / darnach gar bald ein Wetter kam / allein nur auff's Vatern Acker.

Der Pawr von Herzen sehr erschrack / wol vber dieser schrecklichen that / dß er von dem kindt thet sehen / Er gedacht wol hin vnd her / wie der sachen zu thun wer / vnd thet zu Oberkeit gehen.

Hat ihr dasselbig gezeiget an / wie er hat wollen auff sein Acker gan / sein Korn vnd Saat zu schawen / das Kindt er mit genommen hat / vnd von jm gesehen solchen That / darüber jm hat thun grawen.

Darnach erzelt er jn die That / wie ers von sein Kind gesehen hat / ein Wetter allda zu machen / das es Regnen vnd Donnern solt / nur allein wo sie hin wolt / welchs ist wol zubetrachten.

Solchs sie die Mutter gelernet hat / welche gefangen ward zu fart / vnd peinlichen ward gefragt / Die denn schreckliche ding bekandt / darnach in dem Feuer ward verbrandt / da denn der Teuffel stets nach jaget.

Aber dasselbige Megdelein / welchs alles auß einfalt sein / solchen Zauberey thet Giessen / ist aussgezogen in der Zucht / vnd erlöset von des Teuffels fluch / welchs in denn thet verdriessen.

Darumb jhr lieben Christen mein / ziehet auff ewer liebe Kinderlein / in Gottes furcht fürware / Das sie gern hören Gottes Wort / vnd nicht kommen an solchen Ort / als diese Zeuberinne ware.

Die denn jr kind verführen wolt / das sie des Teuffels kunst lernen solt / dafür vns Gott behüte / denn er hat weder rast noch ruh / vnd setzet vns gewaltige zu / vns gern hett in der hellen glute.

Darumb jr lieben Christen Leut / betrachtet dieses grosses leid / vnnd fürchtet Gott allsamen / vnd bittet Jn vmb seine gnad / das er vns behüte früh vnd spat / durch Jesum Christum / Amen.

APPENDIX C

Sample of the similarities between a report and *Strafbuch* entry (1669)

*A transcription from the broadside printed by Elias Wellhöffer about Anna Ebelerin in 1669**:

‘....sie vor ungefähr 13. oder vierzehnen Jahren / sich mit dem bösen Geist / als er damahlen bey einer hochzeit in Manns-Gestalt zu jhr auff den Tanz / vnd hernach in jhr hauß kommen / der gestalt in ein heimlichen Pact vnd Verbündtnuß eingelassen / das sie nit allein demselben sich ganz vnd gar ergeben / sondern auch der Allerheyligisten Dreyfaltigkeit abgesagt / dieselbe verlaugnet / vnd dise zuevor Mündtliche gethane all zuegrausame vnd höchst Gottslasterliche Absag vnd Verlaugnung / auff begehren deß bösen Feinds / nach dem er selbige selbst zu Papier gebracht / vnd jhr die hand geführt / auch so gar mit jhrem Blut vnderscriben vnd bekreffiget / von welcher Zeit an sie mit dem laidigen Sathan auch manches mahlen Vnzucht getriben:

Deßgleichen auß antrib desselben durch eine von jhme empfangnes weisses Pülverleins wenigist 5. personen / vnd darunder 4. vnschuldige vnmündige Kinder elendiglich hingerichtet / vnd vmb Leben gebracht / nit weniger habe sie jhren leibeignen Bruder durch ein dergleichen jhme inn Trunck beygebrachtes Pülverleins verkrümbt...’

**Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Stadt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschröcklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremungen der Menschen [...]*, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

A transcription from the entry in the Council Punishment Book for Anna Ebelerin†:

‘.....sye vor vngefähr 13. oder 14. Jahren sich mit dem bosen Geist als er damalen bey einer hochzait in Mannsgestalt zu jr auff den Tanz vnnnd hernach in ihr hauß khomben, der gestalts in heimlichen pact vnnnd Verbindtnuß eingelassen, das sye nit allein demselben sich ganz vnd gahr ergeben, sondern auch der allerheiligisten Dreyfaltigkeit abgesagt, dieselbe verlaugnet vnnnd dise zuvor mündtlich gethon alzugrawsambe vnd höchst Gotteslästerliche absag : vnnnd Verlaugnung auff begeren des bosen feindts, nachdem er selbige selbst zue papier gebracht vnd Jr die hand gefuhrt, auch so gahr mit jhrem bluet vnderscriben vnd bekreffiget ; Von welchen Zeit an sye mit dem laidigen Sathan auch manchesmahl unzucht getriben, *vnnnd sich vermischt‡*,

desgleichen auch auß antrib desselben durch eine von Jme empfangnes weisses pülverlein wenigist 5. persohnen, vnnnd darunter 4. unschuldige vnmündige kind elendiglich hingericht vnnnd umbs leben gebracht / nit weniger habe sye Jrem bruder durch ein dergleichen jme ein Trunckh beigebrachtes pülverlein verkrumbt ...’

† Stadtarchiv Augsburg, ‘Strafbuch des Rats 1654-99’, Saturday 23 March 1669, pp 312-314, Anna Ebelerin

‡ Interestingly the author of the broadside excluded this part of the confession for his narrative.

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Druten Zeitung / Verlauff / was sich hin und wider im Frankenland / Bamberg vnd Würzburg mit den Unholden / vnd denen so sich auß Ehr vnd Geltgetz muhtwillig dem Teuffel ergeben [...] (Schmalkalden, 1627).

Ein erschreckliche vnnd Erbärmliche Neue Zeitung / was sich hat zugetragen dieses M.D.LXXII. Jar den 24. Augusti in Franreich zu Paris / Wie der Amiral des Königs aus Frankreich oberster Feldshaubtman ermordt vnnd umbracht ist worden / mit allem seim Hoffgesind / vnnd sonst vil gewaltige Graffen vnnd Herren die bey im

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Eine Warhafftige und Gründliche Beschreibung. Auß dem Bisthumb Würtzburgk und Bambergk / deßgleichen von dem gantzen Fränkischen Kreyß / wie man allda so viel Hexen / Mann- und WeibesPersonen verbrennen lest [...] (Württemberg, 1629).

Ein New kläglich Lied / von dem grossen schaden der Vnholden / so sie in Westphalen zu Aschenbrück vnd andern orten begangen haben / in dem jetztwerenden 1583 jar / wie auch jrer 180 jemmerlich verbrentt seind worden, printed by Jakob Schott (Wesel, 1583).

Ein vnerhörte selzame auch wunderbarlice Neue Zeittung / Von einem bösen weib / welche sich auff einer braitten haiden mit den Teuffeln hat geschlagen / gekratz / gerissen vnnd gebissen / vnd auch endtlich den Sieg gar behalten / darüber dich der Teuffel selbst verwundert hat / wie es doch könn müglich sein / auff der ganzen weitten Welt / das die Arme Männer / bey solchen Vnziffern wohnen können / Allen bösen weytern zu einem Glückseligen Newen Jar geschenckt. [...], printed by Mattheo Langewalter (Augsburg, 1627).

Ein Warhafftige vnd gründliche Beschreibung / Auß dem Bistumb Würtz vnd Bamberg / Deßgleichen von dem ganzen Fränkischen Kraiß / wie man alda so vil hexen Mann vnd Weibspersohnen verbrennen laßt / vnd was sie nur für schröckliche sachen bekannt haben / ist mit fleiß auß glaubwürdigen schreiben zusammen getragen / Vnd inn das Lied versetzt. (S.l., 1627).

Ein Warhafftige Zeitung. Von etlichen hexen oder Vnholden / welche man kürzlich im Stifft Mäntz zu Ascheburg / Dipperck / Ostum / Könßhoffen / auch andern Orten / verbrentt / was Vbels sie gestifft / vnd bekandt haben. Im Thon: Pomey / Pomey / jhr Polen / rc. (Frankfurt, 1603).

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Gute vnd peinliche Bekenntnisse der Walpurga Hausmännin, gewesene vnd beschworene hebamme zu Dillengen, die fast dreißig Jahre lang in der hexerei gesteckt vnd am bösen Feind gehangen. Sie ist zu Dillingen am 20. September anno 1587 mit dem Feuer gerichtet worden, this is an unprinted report however it is included here as it is most like a copy of a printed report that no longer exists that

was copied into the Fugger news-letters see Victor Klarwill (ed.), *Fugger-Zeitungen: Ungedruckte Briefe an das haus Fugger aus den Jahren 1568-1605* (Munich, 1923), pp 103-10.

Hexen Meysterey / Desz hochgeborenen Fürsten / Hertzog / Sigmunds von Osterreich mit D. Vlrich Molitoris / vnd herr Cunrad Schatz / weilant Burgermeister zu / Costentz / ein schoen gesprech von den Onholden... Printed by Jakob Cammerlander (Strasbourg, 1545).

Historia von D. Johann Fausten: Text des Druckes von 1587, edited by Stephan Füssel and Hans Joachim Kreutzer (Stuttgart, 2006).

Hort an new schrecklich abenthewr / Von dem unholden ungehewr: in Bisthumb Trier und ander statt / Man ihrer vil gefangen hat [...] (S.l., c. 1600).

Institoris, Heinrich and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, edited and translated by Christopher S. Mackay (2 vols, Cambridge, 2006).

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Klägliche Abbildung / Deß Allerdurchleuchtigsten Christmildest Endtseelten Leichnambs der Alldruchleuchtigsten regierenden Röm: Kayserin / auch zu hungarn und Böhaimb Königin /gebohrt Ertz Herzogin zu Oesterreich ClaudiaeFoelicitae, Welche zu Wienn in dem 23. Jahr Ihres Alters den 8. Aprill Anno 1676..... printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1676).

Kuntz, Hans, *Neue Zeitung von einer Erschrecklichen That / Welche zu Dillingen / von einem Jhesuwider / und einer Hexen / geschehen ist [...]*, printed by Niclaus Heinrich (Urssel, 1579).

Kurze Erzöhlung vnd Fürbildung der vbelthatten / welche von Sechs personen / als einem Mann / seinem Eheweib / zweyen jrer Söhnen / vnd zweyen anderen Jhren Gesellen / begangen / was massen sie auch / an dem 29. Tag dess Monats Julij / in dem 1600. Jar / in der Fürstlichen hauptstatt München / von dem Leben zum Tod gebracht worden / den Bösen zu einem Schröcken / den Frommen aber zur Wahrung / für die Augen gestellt, printed by Michael Manger (Augsburg, 1600).

Kurtzer und wahrhafftiger Bericht und erschreckliche Neue Zeitung Von sechshundert Hexen, Zauberern und TeuffelsBannern [...] (Bamberg, 1659), reprinted in Behringer, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland* (Munich, 2000), pp 261-4.

Luther, Martin, *Colloquia Oder Tischreden Doctor Martini Lutheri: er so in vilen Jaren, die Zeyt seines Lebens, gegen Gelerhten Leuthen, Auch frömbden Gesten und seinen Tischgesellen gefüret...* (Frankfurt am Main, 1568).

Lutz, Reinhard, *Warhafftige Zeittung / Von Gottlosen Hexen / Auch Ketzerischen und Teuffels Weibern / die zu Schettstadt / deß H. Römischen Reichstadt in Elsaß / auf den XXII. Herbstmonat deß 1570. Jahrs / von wegen ihrer schändtlichen Teuffelsverpflichtung rc. sindt verbrennt worden* (S.l., 1571).

Magnerum, Marcum, *Warhafftige/ schreckliche drewung vnd warnung/ der Allmechtigen/ ewigen/ guetigen Prouidentz/ vber des gantzen Menschlichen geschlechts Suende/ als/ daß ein Stein vom Himmel herab gefallen/ in einem grossen Wetter/ Neun vnd viertzig Pfundt wegende/ Anno Christi 1581. den 26. Julij/ in Dueringen/ im Fluhr/ des Dorffs Niderreussen/ nicht weit von Budstadt/ Sampt andern einfeltigen kurtzen Wun=derwercken [...] zusammen gefasset* (Magdeburg, 1582).

Marlowe, Christopher, *The tragicall history of D. Faustus As it hath bene acted by the right honourable the Earle of Nottingham his seruants* (London, 1604).

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Molitor, Ulrich, *Won den unholden oder hexen*, printed by Johann Zainer (Constentz, 1489?) available online the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00004293-4>) (2 Jan. 2013).

Molitoris, Ulrich, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, printed by Johann Otmar, (Reutlingen, 1489), available online on the Herzog August Bibliothek (<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/179-2-quod-2/start.htm>) (2 Jan. 2013).

Molitoris, Ulrich, *De lanijs et phitonicis mulieribus ad illustrissimum principem dominu[m] Sigismundu[m] archiducem austrie tractatus pulcherrimus* printed by Cornelis de Zierikzee (Cologne, c. 1500), available online on Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek (http://ora-web.swkk.de/digimo_online/digimo.entry?source=digimo.Digitalisat_anzeigen&a_id=5043) (2 Jan. 2013).

Newezeitung. Vnd ware geschicht/ dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breißgaw/ wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken / in die 55. unhulden gefangen und verbrent hat / auch wie sie schröckliche ding bekent haben... printed by Hans Cudium (S.l., 1576).

Newe Zeittung / Vnd wahre geschicht / dises Lxxvj Jars geschehen im Breißgaw / wie man da in etlichen Stätten vnd flecken / inn die 136. Unholden gefangen / vnd verbrent hat / auch wie sie schröckliche ding bekent haben / im thon kompt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn (S.l., 1576).

Newe Zeitung aus Berneburgk / Schrecklich und abschewlich zu hören vnd zu lesen / Von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin / Hexin oder Zauberinnen / was sich mit jnen am ende dieses verlauffenen 79. Jars begeben vnd zugetragen / darinnen kürzlich vnd warhafftiglich vermeldet / wie vnd wann sie zu diesem bösen handel gekomen / was

für grewliche thaten sie begangen / vnd was sie auch endlichen den 2. Januarij dieses 1580. Jahrs vor lohn empfangen (S.l., 1580).

Neue Zeitung. Von den Hexen oder Unhulden / So mann verbrend hat / von dem 7. Februarj an / biß auff den 25. Junij/ dises 1580 Jar. Auch wirt darbey angezaigt / an was ort und enden / auch was sie bekent haben (S.l., 1580).

Neue Zeitung : Welcher gestalt / zween falsche Juden /durch Zauberey zu wegen gebracht / daß vil tausend stück Vihe hingefallen vnd gestorben ist Welch auch in diesem Monat Juni dises 1599 Jahrs [...], printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1599).

Nider, Johannes, *Formicarius*, edited by Georges Colvener (Duaci, 1602).

Paul zun Rom. XIII. Die Gewaltigen oder Oberkeiten sind nicht den die gutes/ sunder den die böses thun / zufürchten / Denn sie tregt das Schwert nich umb sonst / Sie ist Gottes dienerin / eine Racherin uber den der böses thut, printed by Lucas Cranach the Younger (Gotha, 1540).

Relation oder beschreibung so Anno. 1669. den 23. Martij in der Römischen Reichs=Statt Augspurg geschehen / von einer Weibs=Person / welche ob grausamer vnd erschrocklicher Hexerey vnd Verkremmungen der Menschen [...],printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

Saur, Abraham, Ein kurze / treuwe Warnung / Anzeige vnd Vnderricht: Ob auch zu dieser vnser zeit vnter vns Christian / hexen / zäuberer / vnd Vnholden vorhanden : Vnd was sie außrichten können / rc. einfältig vnd kürzlich Durch M. Abraham Saur beschrieben vnd an Tag gegeben. Sampt einer vorachenden den jetzt neuwlich zu Marpurg auff den 25. tag Maij / deß jetztwährenden 1582. jars hingerichten zäuberinnen bekandtnuß vnd Vrgicht, printed by Chrisoph Rab (Frankfurt am Main, 1582).

Saur, Abraham (ed.), *Theatrum de Veneficis*, published by Nicolaus Basse (Frankfurt, 1586).

Schreckliche zeitung: Warhafftiger vnnnd gründlicher Bericht / was sich zugetragen hat / mit einem Armen hirten / im Düringerlandt / welcher mit mancherley anfechtung / vnnnd esserlichen leiblichen plagen / biß auff diesen tag / vom leydigen Teuffel angefochten wirt / Gott der herr wende es gnediglich nach seinem willen vnd wolgefallen / AMEN, printed by Georg Kreydlein (Nuremberg, 1560).

Uber die grossen und erschrecklichen Zeichen am Himmel und auff Erden / so in kurzter Zeit geschehen sind (Leipzig, 1562).

Unerhörte seltsame auch wunderbarliche neue zeitung von einem bösen Weib, printed by Steffan Pumpnickel (S.l., 1609).

Urgicht und verzaichnuß / so Walpurga Hausmännern zu Dillingen / inn ihrer peinlichen Marter bekandt hatt / was sy für vbels vnd Jamers mit ihrer hexerey / so sy biß in die 30. Jar getrüben / angericht vnd gestüfft hat [...], (S.l.,1588).

Vom Donner / Hagel / vnd allem Vngewitter / woher sie komen / wie sie zuuertreiben / vnd ob die Zauberin vnd Vnholden so mechtig seien / das sie einen hagel vnd Wetter machen können / Wein vnd Korn damit auff dem felde zuuerderben. Item / Warumb die Keyserliche Rechte solch Vnholden vnd Zauberin zustraffen / vnd vom leben zum todt zurichten / verordnet haben. Ein sehr nützliche Predig vnd Vnterweisung des Ehrwürdigen herrn Johan Brentzen. 1565. (S.l., 1565).

Von Zweyen bösen Weibern, printed by Rudi Löffelstelz (S.l., 1609).

Warhaffte Bescheibung deß Urtheils / so Anno 1666. den 15. Aprilis / in deß heiligen Römischen Reichs-Statt Augspurg / an einer alten Weibs-person namens Anna Schwayhoferin hat begeben vnd zugetragen [...], printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).

Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfürstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschrecklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1666).

Warhaffte Historische Abbild:vnd kurtze Beschreibung / was sich vnlangst in deß Heyl: Reichstatt Augspurg / mit einer ledigen / von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn [...], printed by Elias Wöllhöffer the Elder (Augsburg, 1654).

Wahrhaffte in Grund gelefts Statt Passaw / in welcher den 27. Aprill Anno 1662. ein fewr außkommen / dieselbige ganz jämmerlich vnd erbärmlich abgebrande / vnd anjetzo erschrecklich anzusehen ist, printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1662).

Warhaffte vnd erbarmliche Relation, oder Beschreibung deß traurigen vnd erschrecklichen falls deß grossen Stainbruchs in der hoch fürstl. Vnd weitberuembten Statt Salzburg / So geschehen den 16. July Anno 1669. Printed by Elias Wellhöffer (Augsburg, 1669).

Warhaffte vnd Erschröckliche Neue Zeittung von dem Grausamlichen Wätter vnd Schawr so geschehen den 12. Tag May des 82. Jars im Hochlöblichen Hertzogthumb Obern Bayern drey Meyl von der Fürstlichen Hauptstatt München vber der Jser ergangen vnd für was schaden es gethon dergleichen in Teutschland vor nie erhört worden, printed by Hans Ringer (S.l., 1582)

Warhaffte vnd glaubwürdige Zeytung. Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr / wol in die 200. vnd fünff vnd zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat: Vnnd was sie für Schröckliche ding bekendt haben. Auch was sie für grossen schaden vnter Menschen vnd Viech gethan / vnd mit jhrer Zauberey schröckliche grosse Wetter in diesem vergangen Sommer im Teutschlandt gmacht haben, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1582).

Warhaffte und glaubwürdige Zeytung. Von hundert vnd vir vnd dreyssig Unholden / so umb ihrer Zauberey halben / diß vershinen LXXXII. Jars / zu Gefencknus gebracht / und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October uuff ihr unmenschliche thaten vnd grewliche aussag und Bekandtnus / mit rechtem uhrtheil / zum Feuer verdambt unnd verbrennet worden, printed by Nicolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583).

Warhafftige geschicht / und eigentliche Beschreibung / von den Hexen Weybern / so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar / vnd inn Westfahlen / Prißgew vnd anderstwo/ rc. verbrand hat / dises 1596. Jar / in Reimen weiß verfast, printed by Johann Agricola (Innsbruck, 1596).

Warhafftige Neuwe Zeitung / aus dem Landt Westphalen / von der Statt Ossenbruck / Allda hat man den 9. Tag Hornungs / in dem 1591. Jar auff einen Tag 133 Vnholden verbrenndt / Auch was sie Bekandt vnd getriben haben / gesangweiß gestellt, printed by Johan Beck (Erfurt, 1591).

Warhafftige: Neue Zeittung auß dem Land Westuahlen / von der stat Ossenbrück / wie man da hat auff einen Tag 133. Vnholden verbrenndt / auch was sie bekand und getrieben haben / gesang / weiß gestelt (S.l., 1588).

Warhafftige Neue Zeittung, Von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs. zu Häimburgk in Oesterreich auff der Ungerischen grenzt verbrennt hat (Vienna, 1618).

Warhafftige und ein erschrückliche neue Zeitung, des grossen Wasserguß so den 15. May diß lauffenden 78. Jahrs zu Horb geschehen [...] wie man hernach alda etlich Unhulden verbrennt hatt wie sie schröcklich Ding bekandt haben, printed by Ambrosium Wetz (S.l., 1578).

Warhafftige / und erschrecklich Beschreibung von einem Zauberer / Stupe Peter genandt / der sich zu einem Wehrwolff hat können machen / welcher zu Bedbur (vier meilen von Cölln gelegen) ist gerichtet worden [...] Auch / wie man hin und wider viel Zäuberschen verbrandt hat / in diesem 1589. Jahre / Was sie getriben vnd bekandt haben / männiglich zur trewen warnung gestellet, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).

Warhafftige / vnd erschreckliche Beschreibung / von vielen Zauberern oder Hexen / wie und warumb sin hin vnd wider / verbrandt / in diesen 1589. Jahre [...] Auch von einem Werwolff / welcher zu Bepper ist gerichtet worden / den 31. October / dieses 1589. Jahrs / was böser Thaten er begangen hat, printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).

Warhafftige und erschreckliche neue Zeitung von einer jungen Dienern / welche sich dem Teufel sechs Jahr lang ergeben [...] Item von grewlichen ungestümen Wettern, so den 12. Maii dieses 1582. Jars in Baiern [...] grossen Schaden / an Menschen und Viehe gethan haben, printed by Gimel Bergen (Dresden, 1582).

Warhafftige vnd Erschrecklich Thatten vn hanglungen der LXIII. Hexen vnd Vnholden so zu Wisentag / mit dem Brandt gericht worden seint, printed by Friedrich Gutknecht (S.l.,1563).

Warhafftige vnd glaubwürdige Zeyttung / von hundert vnd vier vnd dreyssig vnhulden / so vmb / irer Zauberey halben / diß vershinen 1582 Jars / zu Gefencknus gebracht / und den 15. 19. 24. 28. October / auff jhr vnmenschliche thaten vnd gräwliche außgag [...], printed by Nikolaus Wiriod (Strasbourg, 1583).

Wahrhaftige vnd wunderbarliche Newe zeitung / von einem Bawren / der sich durch Zauberey / deß Tags sibem stntt zu einem Wolff verwandelt hat / und wie er darnach gericht ist worden durch den Cölnischen Nachtrichter / den letzten October 1589, printed by Johann Neagle (Augsburg, 1589).

Warhafftige und Wunderbarlich / Newe zeitung von einen pauren / der sich durch zauberey / des tags sibem stund zu ainen wolff verwandelt hat / und wie er darnach gericht ist worden durch den Colnischen Nachtrichter / den letzen October Im 1589 Jar, printed by Lucas Mayer (Nuremberg, 1589).

Warhafftige Zeitung / Vnd gruendliche beschreibung / von zehn Hexen / Vnhold weibern / so man zu Rottenburg / am Necker / den 9. May diese 96. jar, printed by Jost Müller (Strasbourg, 1596).

Warhaftige und schröckliche Bildnuß und gestalt zwoer neuer leydigen vngewonlichen Missgeburt ... Sampt der beschreibung des Erbärmlichen. Wassergusses/ jüngst zu Horb im Land Wirtenberg / den 15. Tag Maij dieses LXXVIII. Jars vorgangen (Strasbourg, 1578).

Was die in deß heyligen Röm: Reichsstatt Augsburg etlich Wochen lang in verhafft gelegne zwo hexen / benandtlich Barbara Fröhlin von Rieden / vnnd Anna Schläferlin von Erringen / wegen ihrer hexereyen güit vnd peinlich bekent / auch was gestalt die alte Anna Schäflerin / im Lobl.ReichsCloster vnd Gottshauß S. Ulrich vnd S. Afra daselbst / die von einem stummen Teuffel besessen gewests Mariam Pihlerin von haußstetten / [...]/ auf Sambstag den 18. Aprill diß 1654 Jahre hingericht worden. Gedruckt zu Augspurg / durch Andream Aperger / auff unser lieben frauen thor.Anno M. DC. LIV, printed by Andream Aperger (Augsburg, 1654).

Zauberische Zeitung / wie eine Hexin durch Teuffelskunst jren Sohn mit sonderlichen Aberglaubischen dingen zum Wildschiessen behülfflich gewesen / vnd wie es hernach wunderbarlich an tag kommen [...], printed by Nikolaus Schreiber (Cologne, 1589).

Zwei hexenzeitung / die Erste / von dreyen hexen Pfaffen / unnd einem Organisten zu Ellwang / wie dieselben Christo abgesagt [...] Die ander: Von einer Vnholdin oder hexen / wie sie mit jhren Gspilen alles zuverderben vnterstanden [...], (Nuremberg, 1615).

Zwey warhafftige vnd erschröckliche Geschichten vnd Wunderzeichen hat vns Gott für Augen gestelt an vnterschiedlichen Orthen / das Erst zu Graven Hage [...] Das Ander: Warhafftige beschreibung / was sich bey der Statt Wilisaw jhn einem Dorff mit einer Zauberin begeben / wie sie das hochwürdig Sacrament empfangen vnnd wider auß ihrem Mund gethan / in ein Dorn Necken geworffen [...], printed by Bartholme Schnell (Hohenems, 1647).

Zwo erschreckliche und unerhörte Geschicht / welches in diesem XCVI. Jar geschehen ist auff dem Brockersberg / Dar sich ahn die hundert tausend Unholden oder Hexen versamlet. Und rath mit dem Teuffel genommen / wie sie alle früchten der Erden und Bäumen durch ungewetter verderben möchten [...], printed by Bertram Böchholz (Cologne, 1596).

Zwo hexen zeitung / die Erste: Auß dem Bißthumb Würzburg [...] Das Ander: Auß dem herzogthumb Württemberg [...] (Tübingen, 1616).

Zwo Neue Zeittung, was man für Hexen oder Unholden verbrenndt hat / von dem siebenden Hornung an biss auff den zwentzigsten Höwmonat diss MDLXXX. Jars / auch darbei angezeigt / an was ohrt und enden, auch was sie bekendt haben [...] (Hof, 1580).

Zwo Neue Zeitungen / Die erste welcher gestalt zween falsche Jüden / durch Zauberey zuwegen gebracht / daß vil tausent Stück Vihe hingefallen vnnnd gestorben ist. Welche auch in disem Monat Junij dises 1599. Jahrs / ihren gebürenden Lohn derentwegen empfangen haben. Die ander Zeitung [...] printed by Johann Formick (Vienna, 1599).

Zwo Warhafftige / vnd doch Männiglich zuvor bekante Neue Zeitungen. Die Erste / Von dem grossen Jammer / Welcher sich begeben in der Marggraffschafft Baden / wie allda schon vber die fünffzig hexen / mann / weib / knaben vnd mädlein / sein verbrant worden [...], (Moltzen, 1626).

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