

Introduction

The *Malleus Maleficarum* is undoubtedly the best known (many would say most notorious) treatise on witchcraft from the early modern period. Published in 1486 (only a generation after the introduction of printing by moveable type in Western Europe), the work served to popularize the new conception of magic and witchcraft that is known in modern scholarship as satanism or diabolism, and it thereby played a major role in the savage efforts undertaken to stamp out witchcraft in Western Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (a series of events sometimes known as the “witch craze”). The present work offers the reader the only full and reliable translation of the *Malleus* into English,¹ and this introduction has a very specific purpose: to set out for the reader the general intellectual and cultural background of the *Malleus*, which takes for granted and is based upon a number of concepts that are by no means self-evident to the average modern reader, and to explain something of the circumstances of the work’s composition and the authors’ methods and purposes in writing it. That is, the aim here is the very restricted one of giving the reader a better insight into how the work would have been understood at the time of its publication. Hopefully, this will help not only those who wish to understand the work in its own right but also those who are interested in the later effects of this influential work.

At the outset, a word about terminology. As is explained later (see below in section e of the “Notes on the translation”), for technical reasons relating to the Latin text, male and female practitioners of magic are called “sorcerers” and “sorceresses” respectively in the translation,

¹ There is another modern English translation in the form of P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, *The Malleus Maleficarum* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007). This is only a partial translation (it merely summarizes large portions of the text in order to stay within some arbitrary length prescribed by the publisher) and is based on a late edition of the text (Frankfurt, 1588).

and the term for their practices is “sorcery.” In the preceding paragraph, the term “witchcraft” was used, but this term comes with a lot of unwelcome modern baggage that can only serve to confuse the strictly historical discussion that follows. Accordingly, “sorceress” and “sorcery” will henceforth be used in place of “witch” and “witchcraft” to emphasize the point that what we are dealing with are the notions that were held about magic and its practitioners in the late medieval and early modern periods.

In view of the intended audience, the material here is largely laid out very briefly as a straightforward discussion without elaborate footnotes or citation of relevant authorities. Apart from the further reading given at the end, the reader who wishes to learn more detail about the various topics or to find out specific citations of sources is directed to the far more elaborate General Introduction to be found in volume 1 of my bilingual edition entitled *Malleus Maleficarum* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

AUTHORS

According to the Author’s Justification of the *Malleus*, there were two authors – Jacobus Sprenger and an unnamed collaborator – whose respective roles in the composition of it are not specified. In the public declaration that constitutes the Approbation of the work, Henricus Institoris indicates that he and his colleague as inquisitor, Jacobus Sprenger, wrote the *Malleus*. There is some dispute about this joint authorship in modern scholarship, but, before turning to this, we should look at what is known of these two men.

As both men were Dominican friars, a few words about this institution may be helpful. The Order of Preachers (the official name of the order) was founded in the early thirteenth century to combat heresy. Though Dominicans took the same sort of vows of poverty as monks, these friars did not withdraw from the secular world by joining a monastery, but lived in society as part of their mission to root out heresy and enforce orthodoxy among the laity. Since the Order was intended to subvert heretical opposition to Church teachings, the Dominicans soon became involved in theological studies in order to sharpen their skills in spotting and rebutting heretical views. Hence, there was often a close connection between the local Dominican convent and the theological faculty at a neighboring university. These skills made it natural for the papacy to appoint Dominicans as inquisitors into heretical depravity.

Jacobus (the Latinized form of Jacob) Sprenger was born in about 1437, and presumably came from the area of Basel, as he is first attested joining the Dominican convent in that city in 1452. He went on to become an important figure in the Dominican Order, and was mostly associated with the convent of Cologne and the university of that city. Sprenger eventually became a professor of theology, serving as an administrator in both the theological faculty and the university as a whole. Sprenger was also interested in practical piety. He actively promoted the reform movement within the Order, which advocated a return to a simpler way of life among the residents of Dominican convents, and he was assigned the task of imposing reform in a number of these, even in the face of opposition from the residents. Sprenger would have been most famous in his lifetime for playing a prominent role in the spread of the practice of reciting the Rosary. Though he was appointed as an inquisitor in the Rhineland in 1481, there is no evidence for any active participation in this activity on his part (he is attested as being consulted in a few cases). Sprenger also showed little inclination for writing. Apart from an unpublished theological commentary written in connection with his early academic studies, his only composition was a short work about the society he founded to promote the Rosary. He died in 1495.

Henricus Institoris (the Latinized form of the German name Heinrich Kramer) was born around 1430 in the Alsatian town of Schlettstadt (modern Séléstat). He joined the local Dominican convent, but went on to be attached to a number of other convents in the southern German-speaking lands. Like Sprenger, he became a professor of theology, but unlike Sprenger he did not pursue an academic career. Instead, Institoris was more interested in missions among the laity, and he tended to work on his own. He was deeply involved in the sale of indulgences, and in particular he undertook a number of tasks connected with the defense of papal privileges and the enforcement of orthodoxy. He spent his last years combatting the Hussite heresy in Bohemia, where he died in 1505.

Institoris clearly had a strong personality, and was something of an individualist. He got into a certain amount of strife with his fellow friars, and at one time went so far as to rebuke the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III in a sermon, for which he himself was censured by the Order. But none of this undermined the clear trust that was placed in Institoris by his superiors, who continued to employ him on important tasks. Institoris was a respected figure, who preached before the king of

Bohemia, was entertained by the wealthy Fuggers family in Augsburg, and was consulted by the city council of Nuremberg on the correct method of prosecuting sorceresses. Institoris was apparently a man who enjoyed writing. In addition to the *Malleus*, the *Memorandum* written for the bishop of Brixen, and the *Nuremberg Handbook* (for the latter two works, see below), he composed works in defense of papal supremacy and against the Hussites.

Institoris enjoyed the support of Popes Sixtus IV and Innocent VIII, and was appointed by them as inquisitor into heretical depravity in a number of German dioceses. Unlike Sprenger, Institoris enjoyed the task of acting as an itinerant inquisitor. In the *Malleus*, he claims to have had 48 women condemned for the crime, and in the later *Nuremberg Handbook* the number rises to 200. Oddly, there is little evidence for this activity, even in the *Malleus*. There are several references in the text to the trial and execution of Agnes the bath keeper and Anna of Mindelheim for sorcery as the result of an inquisition conducted in Ravensburg in 1484. As it happens, a report on this inquisition written by the burghermasters and city council of the town is preserved, and this indicates that the inquisition was conducted by a "Brother Heinrich," and confirms the general outline of events as laid out in the *Malleus*. Another inquisition that is reported in some detail in the *Malleus* took place in Innsbruck in late 1485 and early 1486. Institoris investigated sorcery among the population of Innsbruck and neighboring towns, and eventually laid charges against eight women. There were objections to his handling of the case from the start, and eventually Bishop George of Brixen, in whose diocese Innsbruck lay, took over the proceedings. At first, Bishop George took the line that, even though he took some exception to his methods, Institoris's credentials as inquisitor meant that there was no choice but to assist him. In late October, however, the bishop had to intervene directly in the case, which was basically allowed to lapse. Even though the bishop made it clear to Institoris that there were objections to his involvement, he did so diplomatically, and Institoris turned over to the bishop the protocol of his investigations and a memorandum (the *Memorandum* cited above) on the legal method of prosecuting sorceresses, apparently under the assumption that the bishop would go on with prosecuting the cases. In February, the bishop had to write a letter demanding that Institoris leave the diocese. Nonetheless, he wrote in such a way as to avoid direct criticism of the friar, who, to judge from the positive terms in which the bishop is mentioned in

the *Malleus* (95A, 136D²), bore the bishop no ill-will as a result of his dealings with him.

The argument is frequently made that the description of the work as a joint composition is a falsehood perpetrated by Institoris, who in fact wrote the whole thing himself. For this claim, there is little solid evidence. The argument was first made by the nineteenth-century German historian Joseph Hansen, who took a dim view of the late medieval and early modern *Hexenwahn* ("witch craze") and of those who carried it out. He based his case on certain procedural irregularities in the drawing up of the Approbation, the fact that the Approbation was initially published separately from the main text of the *Malleus*, and an unsubstantiated statement in a later source that two of the signatories of the Approbation asserted that they had not in fact signed it. The procedural irregularities signify nothing (after all, if the text were a forgery, why would it include proof of its own falsehood?) and the separate publication is easily explained (see below). As for the evidence of a later disavowal on the part of some signatories, this is indeed interesting, but since we know of this only from a short and much later remark and the records of the university have mostly been lost, there is not much that can be made of this (even if true, the two men may have had their own reasons for dissociating themselves from the proceedings that had nothing to do with a forgery on the part of Institoris). Later scholars have attempted to add small pieces to the argument, but it is fundamentally nugatory. Only an imbecile would have fabricated a claim to joint authorship in a sworn document that would be included with the forgery and which it would be impossible to keep from coming to the notice of the man who was being falsely associated with the work. In any event, what good would it do Institoris? He was clearly a man of no little prominence in his own right as both inquisitor and theologian, and he did not need to steal the name of a scholar from Cologne who was most noted for his propagation of the Rosary to validate his work about sorcery.

Is it then possible to divide up the composition among the two authors? Comparison with the *Memorandum* shows very close parallels with Pt. 3, which clearly must be attributed to Institoris. The numerous references in Pt. 2 to the prosecutions in Ravensburg and Innsbruck also suggest that it too is the work of Institoris. In addition, that part deals mainly with the practices of sorcery and the cures for these, and such topics are far more likely to be ascribable to the inquisitor

² For the method of citing the text used here, see below in section a of the "Notes on the translation."

Institoris than the academic Sprenger. That leaves Pt. 1, which is mainly taken up with the demonstration of the existence of sorceresses and of a particular theological interpretation of sorcery, a demonstration that is presented in the special form of argumentation (the “disputed question,” which is discussed below) characteristic of contemporary academic practice (scholasticism). While Institoris’s academic background must have made him familiar with the discourse of scholasticism, surely this mode of argumentation would have been most familiar to the academic Sprenger (one might also note that the question at the start of Institoris’s Pt. 3 is drawn up in a clumsy manner). As already noted, Sprenger was not particularly given to writing, so it is conceivable he either restricted himself to Pt. 1, or perhaps simply vetted the arguments. This is mere speculation, but whatever the exact nature of Sprenger’s participation, the arguments adduced in support of Institoris’s supposed concoction of such participation out of whole cloth are not at all cogent.

PURPOSE OF THE WORK

There was no single audience for whom the *Malleus* was intended, and the three parts served different purposes. Numerous references in Pt. 1 indicate that it was meant to provide material for the correct method of preaching on the topic of the reality of sorcery. The reason for this was the perceived need to counteract the preaching of priests who denied this reality. Though it may have been thought that any priest could benefit from reading the work, presumably the main audience foreseen for the scholastic argumentation of the *Malleus* were other members of the Dominican Order, who were specifically obligated to study theology – unlike the rather poorly educated secular (i.e., parish) clergy of the time – and whose very purpose was to spread this learning through sermons. The case is not so clear with Pt. 2, which deals with the procedures of the sorceresses and the ways to counteract these. At one point, it is stated that a certain explanation has been provided for the purposes of preaching (106D), but at another it is indicated that some of the matter should not be preached (142C). Finally, Pt. 3 seems to have a distinct and separate purpose of its own. It lays out the method of prosecuting heretical sorceresses, and an introductory passage (193D) indicates that it is addressed to both ecclesiastical and secular judges for their practical use.

Thus, the general purpose of the work is to demonstrate the view about sorcery held by Institoris (and presumably also Sprenger), against

the opposition of unspecified critics both secular and ecclesiastical. The work attempts to prove the reality of sorcery, delineates the practices of sorceresses, and lays out the way to directly counteract those practices and to deal with the problem as a whole by exterminating the practitioners of sorcery through their conviction in court and execution. This overall conception is reflected in the title of the work.

The phrase *malleus haereticorum* ("hammer of heretics") was a term of approbation dating back to antiquity to designate those zealots of orthodoxy who were noteworthy for their efforts to "smash" heretics (adherents of Christian doctrines rejected by the Church). The term was transferred to a literary work with the *Malleus Judeorum* ("Hammer of Jews") of the inquisitor John of Frankfurt, which appeared around 1420. This set the precedent for the title of our *Malleus*, with the heretical sorceresses (*maleficae*) replacing the traditional heretics as the object of its attack. The *Malleus Maleficarum* is thus a hammer to be used to smash the conspiracy of sorceresses that was thought to be threatening the very existence of Christendom (this belief is treated below).

COMPOSITION AND PUBLICATION OF THE WORK

By a happy coincidence, it was discovered in the 1950s that some internal business records of Peter Drach, the man whose press in the western German town of Speyer issued the first edition of the *Malleus*, had been reused as part of the backing of a book, and some of these records relate to the *Malleus*. The book was already being dispatched for sale in February 1487, and another record refers to an unnamed treatise on sorcery being dispatched in an unspecified December; since the later records refer to the work by name, it would seem that the December in question was in 1486. The *Malleus* itself refers to events from 1485 pertaining to Institoris's abortive inquisition in Innsbruck. Since the task of typesetting and actually printing the work would have taken some time, it would seem that the clean copy must have been submitted by the fall of 1486. The actual composition of the work may date to an earlier period, with the anecdotes about Innsbruck being added in a final revision (it's hard to imagine such a long work being put together in just a few months in 1486).

The first edition of the *Malleus* is peculiar in that two short sections from the front of what was meant to be a single work were actually published separately and were added to the main text only with the second edition. Before discussing the reason for this seemingly odd procedure,

it would be useful to discuss the content of the various sections of the work in the order in which they appear here.

Justification

The first section of the main body of the first edition is the Author's (Self-)Justification (*apologia*). This section is the equivalent of a modern introduction and/or preface. Here, it is stated in the first person plural that Jacobus Sprenger and an unnamed co-author had produced the work because of their realization that sorcery forms a particular element in Satan's final assault on God during the End Times. The fact that the word "author" appears in the singular has been cited as evidence that Institoris was the real author and made up Sprenger's participation, but not much should be made of this. In the first place, it may simply be a clumsy conversion into Latin of a German form (note the confusion in English as to whether it's Veterans' Day or Veteran's Day). In any event, Institoris would have been a pretty clumsy forger if he himself left such blatant evidence of his own fraud.

Bull

A papal bull is a form of official letter issued by the pope and authenticated with a special seal (*bullae*). The bull reproduced here (known as *summis desiderantes* after its opening words in Latin) was issued by Pope Innocent VIII in 1484 to help Institoris and Sprenger overcome opposition that they had met in connection with exercising the office of inquisitor. This bull follows the standard format. After the stereotyped salutation, the document lays out the situation that led to its issuance, and then specifies the actions that the pope authorizes or mandates. In this instance, the general harm that sorceresses are inflicting in Germany is first described at some length, and the connection of these activities with Satan is emphasized. It is then noted that Institoris's and Sprenger's efforts to stamp these activities out had met with opposition in the form of technical objections relating to the specific offenses that were covered by their appointment as inquisitors, which the pope then overrides by reiterating and amplifying the terms of the inquisitors' appointment.

Why was this document included? Clearly, Institoris believed it to be a papal validation of the view of sorcery that he advocated. Not only is the bull cited several times in the *Malleus* in these terms, but he still

referred to it for the same purpose in the *Nuremberg Handbook* of 1491. For the same reason, modern critics who wish to ascribe the views in the *Malleus* to the Catholic Church (and censure the Church for approving these views) not surprisingly cite this bull. Given the procedures for the production of papal bulls, the body of the text giving the background to the order at the end was taken more or less verbatim from the petition in which the bull was requested.³ This means that both the conception and phraseology go back to Institoris. The pope presumably knew nothing independently about the matter, though obviously he raised no objections since he granted the request (and borrowed its language).

Approbation

The “Approbation” is an official certification of the orthodoxy of the *Malleus* plus a validation of four specific points relating to sorcery that represent the general thrust of the work’s argument. This approbation takes the form of a public document drawn up on May 19, 1487, at the request under oath of Institoris, on behalf of himself and Sprenger as the authors of the *Malleus*. The proceedings are then carried out under the careful guidance of Lambertus de Monte, the head of the theological faculty of the University of Cologne, who first states his own approval of the questions to be approved, and is then followed with greater or lesser enthusiasm by other members of the faculty who were present. The proceedings were based on the faculty members’ prior reading of the work.

Joseph Hansen made much of the fact that the notary public who drew up the document states that he had to leave at one point, and combined this with the now lost notice that two of the other theology professors later objected that they had not in fact been present. As already noted, we have no idea what these objections actually consisted of, and it hardly makes sense to use the evidence of the document itself to prove that the proceedings were invalid (why would someone who concocted such proceedings put in irregularities to undermine their credibility?). It is sometimes misunderstood that Hansen claimed that the document was a forgery, but what he actually claimed was that the proceedings were flawed. As it is, Hansen could give no explanation of why Institoris should have engaged in such an effort to produce a false document to

³ Interestingly enough, the text of the petition was recently found in the papal archives (this appears as an appendix to the bilingual edition).

claim Sprenger as a co-author, much less why the head of the theological faculty and the notary should have co-operated in such a pointless and dangerous fraud.

As for the actual purpose of the exercise, while Institoris could only produce implicit papal confirmation of the views propounded in the *Malleus* via the background information in the bull of 1484, here he acquired direct validation of the work itself in the form of the approval of one of the most prestigious theological faculties in Germany – one, moreover, that had a reputation as a staunch upholder of standard orthodoxy.

After an elaborate table of contents, the main body follows. This consists of three parts known as books. The work has a large number of cross-references, which for the most part hold true. There are, however, a few that indicate that there was some reordering of the material before the work reached its final form, and the table of contents shows a few deviations from the actual content. On the whole, such inconsistencies are few, and given the elaborate structure of the work and the conditions under which it was produced, it is commendable that the signposting of the work is so accurate.

Part 1

Part 1 is meant to demonstrate, against skepticism on the part of both laity and certain clergymen, the reality of sorcery. After a general proof of the reality of sorcery, the book is organized in three sections corresponding to the elements considered to be necessary in the commission of sorcery: the sorceress herself, the demon, and the permission of God. The argument in this book is mostly theoretical discussion based on Thomas Aquinas, and it consists almost exclusively of disputed questions characteristic of scholastic argumentation (see below).

Part 2

Part 2 treats the actual practices of sorceresses and is itself divided into two parts, the first dealing with the actions of the sorceresses themselves and the second with legitimate methods of counteracting them. There is some evidence that the original intention was that the second part of this book was to be combined with Pt. 3 as a general treatment of how to counteract sorcery by undoing the act in practical terms and by exterminating the sorceresses themselves judicially. There are still

a number of disputed questions in this book, but it gives the most anecdotal information about supposed contemporary reality.

Part 3

Part 3 is a discussion of the judicial method of investigating and convicting sorceresses, and is almost wholly based on the *Directorium inquisitorum* (Guide Book for Inquisitors) of Nicholas Eymeric. Eymeric dealt with the investigation of heretics in general by inquisitors, but Pt. 3 is meant to be a guide to secular judges. Given the heavily ecclesiastical nature of the procedures in Eymeric (particularly the long list of the final sentences set out at the end of the book), one has to wonder how useful any secular judge would have found this section. This book provides perhaps the least information about actual contemporary procedure because of its being such a close adaptation of the source material. In the *Nuremberg Handbook*, where Institoris speaks more directly in his own voice and is in a better position to shape the material to express his own views, he talks at much greater length about the way in which the investigator (*inquisitor*) is able, in fact obligated, to use his faculties of logical reasoning to divine the truth of an accusation of sorcery via conjecture on the basis of the supposed facts of the case. This conception of the investigator's role is certainly present in the *Malleus*, but it tends to get obscured amidst all the tiresome technical minutiae deriving from Eymeric.

Separate publication of the bull and approbation

Now we can return to the peculiarity of the bull and approbation being published separately in the first edition.⁴ This separate publication ends with the words "here follows the table of contents," which shows that the two sections contained in it were to intervene between the Author's Justification and the table of contents, the first two sections of the main body of the text in the first edition. Let us start by noting that, according to Drach's business records, the main body was clearly in existence by the winter of 1487 (and probably earlier), while the approbation was drawn up in mid May of that year. Now, the purpose of the approbation was not to secure an attestation of orthodoxy before publication (why should an inquisitor consider the orthodoxy of his own book dubious?),

⁴ Indeed, these sections were published in a small book by an entirely different (and inferior) press. Presumably, Drach (the publisher of the main text) was simply busy with other work when it came time to put out this small addition to the main work.

but to bolster the validity of its views. The approbation makes it clear that the whole text was available for consultation by the members of the theological faculty, so presumably the good theologians had been given a copy of the printed book (this would have been cheaper and easier than providing a manuscript version before publication). But even if the approbation was secured after the initial publication, why was the bull, which had been issued back in 1484, not published with the main text? Perhaps the explanation is simply a desire to make sure that it would be read before the approbation, which might otherwise seem more significant by virtue of its separate publication.

Hansen incorporated the separate publication of the approbation into his argument for a defective procedure in drawing it up,⁵ but now it can be seen that this odd procedure was dictated by the exigencies of giving the text to the theological faculty in the most convenient manner. Certainly, the second and third editions, both issued by Drach, give the unobjectionable order (a) author's justification, (b) bull, (c) approbation, (d) table of contents, (e) main text, and this order is adopted in the present translation as most representative of the authorial intention.

OUTLINE OF THE WORK

The *Malleus* has a very elaborate organization with each book being carefully divided into a number of "questions" (Pt. 2 is actually divided into two major subsections called "questions," which are in turn divided into "chapters" corresponding to the questions of the other two books). Though formally correct, this method of organization somewhat obscures the logical progression of the arguments made in the work as indicated by numerous introductory passages and cross-references. The following outline gives a better sense of the overall organization of the material.

- I) Proof of the existence of sorcery (1.1)
- II) The elements involved in the performance of sorcery
 - A) Demon
 - 1) Demons necessarily co-operate with sorceress (1.2)
 - 2) Demons beget humans to increase number of sorceresses (1.3)

⁵ Supposedly, the separate publication of the false approbation formed part of a plan to keep it out of Cologne, but this is an absurd theory. There is no way that the subsequent circulation of the small book could have been controlled (quite apart from the fact that the theory rests on inaccurate information about the locations in which the two sections were published). Also, given this theory, what sense did it make to incorporate the approbation into the second edition?

- 3) Only low-ranking demons have sex with humans (1.4)
- 4) Sorcery cannot be ascribed to astrological influences or to human evil or to the utterance of magic formulas, to the exclusion of demonic assistance (1.5)
- B) Sorceress
 - 1) Why women engage in sorcery more than men do (1.6)
 - 2) What sorts of sorcery women engage in
 - a) Women turn humans' minds to love or hatred (1.7)
 - b) They impede procreation (1.8)
 - c) They seemingly remove penises (1.9)
 - d) They seemingly turn people into beasts (1.10)
 - e) Midwives kill fetuses and newborns (1.11)
- C) God's permission
 - 1) Proof that God permits sorcery (1.12)
 - 2) Incidental discussion of why God allows sin (1.13)
 - 3) The sins of sorceresses are worse than those of Satan or Adam and than those of regular heretics (1.14)
 - 4) Why God allows the innocent to be harmed by sorcery (1.15)
 - 5) Sorcery is worse than other sorts of magic (1.16)
 - 6) Sorcery is a worse sin than the fall of the demons (1.17)
 - 7) Refutation of seven laymen's arguments against God allowing the existence of sorcery (1.18)
- III) The practice of inflicting and curing forms of sorcery
 - A) Certain people are exempted from being harmed by sorcery (unnumbered)
 - B) Methods of inflicting sorcery
 - 1) Recruitment and initiation of sorceresses
 - a) Methods of enticement of the innocent through sorceresses (2.1.1)
 - b) Avowal and homage to Satan (2.1.2)
 - c) How they move from place to place (2.1.3)
 - d) How they have sex with demons (2.1.4)
 - 2) Methods of infliction
 - a) The use of sacraments in sorcery (2.1.5)
 - b) Impeding procreation (2.1.6)
 - c) Removal of penises (2.1.7)
 - d) Turning people into beasts (2.1.8)
 - e) How demons can exist inside people (2.1.9)
 - f) How demons can possess people (2.1.10)
 - g) General method of inflicting illness (2.1.11)

- h) Specific methods of inflicting illness (2.1.12)
 - i) How midwives kill babies or offer them to Satan (2.1.13)
 - j) How sorceresses cause bad weather (2.1.14)
 - k) Harm to domestic animals (2.1.15)
 - l–n) Male sorcerers (archers, enchanters, users of grimoires) (2.1.16)
- C) Methods of curing sorcery
 - 1) Demonstration that curing sorcery is permissible (unnumbered)
 - 2) Cures for incubus/succubus demons (2.2.1)
 - 3) Cures for impeded procreation (2.2.2)
 - 4) Cures for irregular love/hatred (2.2.3)
 - 5) Cures for removed penises and for people turned into beasts (2.2.4)
 - 6) Cures for demonic possession (2.2.5)
 - 7) Cures for illnesses inflicted through sorcery (2.2.6)
 - 8) Cures for bad weather caused by sorcery (2.2.7)
 - 9) Cures for those who seek temporal gain (2.2.8)
- IV) Judicial extermination of sorceresses
 - A) That sorceresses and their accomplices are subject to both ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction, and that inquisitors do not have to involve themselves in such cases (unnumbered)
 - B) Initiating proceedings
 - 1) How to begin proceedings (3.1)
 - 2) Number of witnesses (3.2)
 - 3) How to examine the witnesses (3.3)
 - 4) Who is allowed to give testimony (3.4)
 - 5) Exclusion of mortal enemies (3.5)
 - C) Investigation
 - 1) Continuation of proceedings (3.6)
 - a) Non-legalistic nature of the proceedings
 - b) List of questions (Step 1)
 - i) General
 - ii) Specific
 - 2) Number of witnesses (3.7/Step 2)
 - 3) When the suspect is to be considered guilty (3.7/Step 3)
 - 4) Detention and arrest of suspects (3.8)
 - 5) How to conceal names of the witnesses from the accused (3.9/Step 4)
 - 6) Assigning a suitable advocate to the accused (3.10/Step 5)

- 7) The advocate is not allowed to cite any defense apart from enmity on the part of the witnesses (3.11/Step 6)
 - 8) Investigating such charges of enmity (3.12/Step 7)
[Omitted issue of demand by the accused that the judge recuse himself (would have been 3.13/Step 8)]
 - 9) Considerations of the feasibility of extracting a confession through torture (3.14/Step 9)
 - 10) Sentencing the accused to questioning under torture and initiating it (3.15/Step 10)
 - 11) Precautions against the sorcery of silence (3.15/Step 11)
 - 12) Ruses to facilitate confession (3.16/Step 12)
- V) Twenty methods of passing sentence
- 1) (1) Rejection of judgment by ordeal (3.17)
 - 2) (2) Generalities about how to pass sentence (3.18)
 - 3) (3) The kinds of suspicion that result in passing of sentence (3.19)
 - 4) Methods of passing sentence if the accused is found:
 - a) (4) to be innocent (3.20/Method 1)
 - b) (5) to have a bad reputation (3.21/Method 2)
 - c) (6) to be subject to questioning under torture (3.22/Method 3)
 - d) (7) to be lightly suspected of heresy (3.23/Method 4)
 - e) (8) to be vehemently suspected of heresy (3.24/Method 5)
 - f) (9) to be violently suspected of heresy (3.25/Method 6)
 - g) (10) to have a reputation for heresy and to be generally suspected of it (3.26/Method 7)
 - h) (11) to have confessed to heresy and to be penitent but not relapsed (3.27/Method 8)
 - i) (12) to have confessed to heresy and to be penitent and relapsed (3.28/Method 9)
 - j) (13) to have confessed to heresy and to be impenitent but not relapsed (3.29/Method 10)
 - k) (14) to have confessed to heresy and to be impenitent and relapsed (3.30/Method 11)
 - l) (15) not to have confessed but to be legally convicted (3.31/Method 12)
 - m) (16) to have confessed to heresy but to be a fugitive (3.32/Method 13)
 - n) (17) to have been denounced by a convicted sorceress and not to have confessed (3.33/Method 14)

- o) (18-20) not to have inflicted but to have broken sorcery unlawfully; to have inflicted death through affecting weapons with sorcery; to have offered babies to Satan as a midwife; also how to deal with those who obstruct the inquisition (3.34/Method 15)
- 5) How to deal with legal appeals (3.36)

SOURCES

The *Malleus* contains citations by name of seventy-eight authors (sometimes cited for multiple works) or anonymous works. This gives a sense that the work rests on a wide-ranging reading of orthodox authorities. After all, the Justification claims that the content of the work is largely borrowed from earlier writers. As it turns out, this plethora of citations gives an entirely misleading sense of the sources used in the composition of the work.

Despite the flurry of names that are cited through the work, there are basically three main authors whose works form the basis of the vast majority of the text. The distribution of these three sources corresponds roughly to the three main divisions of the work. Pt. 1 is a demonstration of the reality of sorcery, and as this is basically a philosophical, metaphysical and theological issue, it is not surprising that the main source here is Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas wrote his monumental corpus of works on theology-cum-philosophy in the thirteenth century, and later he became the most respected representative of one of the two schools of late-medieval scholasticism, namely realism, which was associated with the Dominicans (Aquinas himself was a Dominican). Aquinas was a very widely read man, and the large majority of the many citations in the *Malleus* come from him. These range from philosophers such as the ancient Greek Aristotle and the medieval Jew Maimonides through the gamut of Church Fathers from Jerome and Augustine into figures of the middle ages. These are purely tralatitious citations. That is, they are merely carried over from the earlier text, and this procedure means, of course, that it is unlikely that Sprenger or Institoris ever read a word of any of those authors directly.

In Pt. 2, which discusses the deeds of sorceresses, Aquinas continues as the sources for theoretical issues, but the main source is Johannes Nider. He was a prominent Dominican reformer from the early

fifteenth century, and two works of his are used. The main source is the *Formicarius* or *Ant Hill*, which was a work advocating a moral and spiritual reformation in Christendom. Book Five of this work deals with sorcery, and this is one of the four works (and the only one to appear in print) prior to the *Malleus* that describes the satanic interpretation of sorcery (see below). Nider also treated some of the same topics in his *Praeceptorium*, a textbook on divine law, which is also quoted. While a lot of the material from Nider discusses his own personal knowledge of sorcery, he also has argumentation, which sometimes includes Aquinas. Thus, in such sections, where both the ultimate and the immediate source may not be indicated as such, we can have a passage that gives a philosophical argument that goes back to Aquinas but is copied out of Nider and cites earlier authorities (including Aquinas) in the expected way.

Part 3 is based on yet another Dominican, the Spanish inquisitor Nicholas Eymeric, who lived in the middle of the fourteenth century and wrote a handbook, the *Directorium inquisitorum*, that was meant to show other inquisitors how to track down and deal with heretics. The *Directorium* provides the great majority of the content of Pt. 3 (with appropriate adaptation to show how to deal specifically with the “heresy of sorceresses”). Eymeric is never mentioned by name, and in only one instance does the title of the *Directorium* appear in the text. Eymeric cites large amounts of canon law, and mentions numerous canon lawyers by name. Once more it is very unlikely that Institoris directly saw any of this material himself.

The one other substantial source is another Dominican, Antoninus of Florence, who wrote an encyclopedic handbook on ecclesiastical matters in the early fourteenth century. He is responsible for the large section (Pt. 1, Q. 6) explaining the character flaws of women that is so unappealing to modern tastes.

A list of all the sources cited in the *Malleus* is given below in section b of the “Notes on the translation.”

DISPUTED QUESTIONS

Now that the sources have been discussed, this is a good place to look at a major effect of one source on the mode of argumentation, namely the scholastic methodology of Thomas Aquinas. The “disputed question” (*quaestio disputata*) was a standard mode of discourse in the scholastic

tradition and had its origins in actual debates that took place under the presidency of a senior scholar. After an oral debate on a specific topic, the presiding scholar would formally summarize the debate. This mode of argumentation was a very convenient way to lay out an issue, and hence came to be used without reference to any actual oral debate as a formal way to present an issue in a written work. In the *Malleus*, the purely conventional nature of these disputed questions can be seen in the fact that the so-called question is sometimes phrased not as a question but as a statement. The *Malleus* uses the form of the disputed question that appears in the works of Aquinas. Failure to understand the conventions of the disputed question can make the method of argumentation hard to follow.

The disputed question normally begins with an indirect question, which describes the issue at hand, and this is called the “title” of the question. This title gives the correct answer to the question, which starts by giving the incorrect negative answer that the author will eventually refute and then presents one after the other various arguments in favor of this false initial answer. Each argument is at most a few sentences long and is generally based on or corroborated with a quotation from some authority, though sometimes it appeals to some principle of reason or to an observation from the natural world. The arguments after the first one typically begin with the words “also” or “besides which.” After the arguments in favor of the false answer comes contradictory evidence in the form of a quotation or quotations from relevant authorities who indicate that the initial answer to the question was not correct. This section begins with the phrase “but to the contrary.” After the various arguments pro and con have been set out in this way, the presiding scholar (or author) gives his “determination” of the issue. Here he gives a discussion of some length explaining his reasoning in rejecting the false answer to the question and then answering the question affirmatively. This section is called the “body” of the question, and is introduced with the word “response” or a statement beginning “the response is given that . . .” After this, the question is concluded with a direct refutation of the individual arguments made in favor of the false conclusion at the beginning of the question, and these refutations are termed the “solutions of the arguments.”

In the translation, the various sections of each disputed question are marked out with the symbols used in modern editions of Thomas Aquinas (these symbols are explained below in section d of the “Notes on the translation”).

INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT

Satanism

The great persecutions of sorcery that lasted from the fifteenth until the early seventeenth centuries were based upon a new notion of sorcery that can be termed “satanism” (or “diabolism”). This view saw the supposed “witch” as participating in a malevolent society presided over by Satan himself and dedicated to the infliction of malevolent acts of sorcery (*maleficia*) on others. This new conception is known in modern scholarship as the “elaborated concept of witchcraft,” which is characterized by six basic beliefs about the activities of those considered guilty of this form of sorcery:

- (1) A pact entered into with the Devil (and concomitant apostasy from Christianity),
- (2) Sexual relations with the Devil,
- (3) Aerial flight for the purpose of attending:
- (4) An assembly presided over by Satan himself (at which initiates entered into the pact, and incest and promiscuous sex were engaged in by the attendees),
- (5) The practice of maleficent magic,
- (6) The slaughter of babies.

The general area and time in which this concept arose are clear enough, but the process by which this new conception developed from earlier interpretations of sorcery and magic is still obscure. The new conception is first attested in four works written in Latin and German within a decade or so of the 1430s. There is, however, some indication that already in the late fourteenth century certain supposed activities associated with sorcery were being conceived of in terms of the elaborated theory.

The new conception of sorcery as a form of direct worship of Satan that involves the infliction of harm though sorcery can be derived from the revolting lies told about the heretical sect known as the Waldensians by their orthodox foes.⁶ The logical development seems to have been

⁶ The origins of the Waldensians can be traced to a spiritual movement that was started in the late twelfth century by Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant in the French city of Lyon. Waldo gave away his possessions and began to preach without ecclesiastical authorization. He was condemned for this, but nonetheless gathered a number of adherents. At first, the dispute between them and the established Church concerned authority rather than doctrine, but the rejection of the movement by the Church as heresy led to a radicalization of its adherents, who for their part refused to recognize the universal pretensions of the established Church. At the same time, the Waldensians were grossly misrepresented by their orthodox opponents as practicing heinous crimes in their rites, and they were bitterly persecuted by Catholic officialdom. The Waldensians

as follows. First, the heretical Waldensians were conceived of as tools of Satan, and thus the traditional calumnies about heretics, including the murder of babies and the practice of maleficent sorcery, were ascribed to the Waldensians. Eventually, the Waldensians became so associated with sorcery that deformed versions of their name could become terms for “witch” in Romance languages. In the next step, the sect that practices witchcraft was no longer associated specifically with the Waldensians. Instead, the notion developed that there was a deviant group of renegade Christians who renounced Christianity in favor of the worship of Satan, who were led by him, and who practiced the most extreme form of maleficent sorcery for its own sake. The texts cited above present the earliest attestation of this new conception.

One might ask whether it is not possible that there were in fact satanic sects that subjectively believed that they were carrying out the will of Satan (whatever the metaphysical truth of the matter). To this the simple answer is no, on the basis of the following considerations.

(1) There is absolutely no independent corroboration of any such activity on the part of anyone. The sole evidence for this activity comes from the theoretical discussions and judicial investigations conducted by men who believed in the existence of a form of maleficent sorcery.

(2) All confessions to such activity are of no evidentiary value as they were extracted through the use or the threat of (often extreme) torture.

(3) The stories told about the practitioners of the elaborated concept of witchcraft were also told about any number of previous heretics in the past, and there is no reason to believe that anyone actually engaged in these activities. Rather, the self-image of the official forms of Christianity necessitated the corollary notion that any deviation from orthodoxy could only be based on adherence to Satan, and thus it was natural to imagine that the most unspeakable crimes were being carried out by perceived heretics.

(4) The demonological works make much of the supposed fact that the confessions of the accused are concordant in the details given about the practices of maleficent sorcery, but it should be emphasized that

were forced to practice their religion in secret, and set up their own ecclesiastical organization. The Catholic persecution was largely successful, though a small group of Waldensians (later associated with Protestantism) survived in the Piedmont region of northern Italy. It was here and in the neighboring area of France (the Dauphiné) that the theory of sorcery first took hold on the model of Catholic beliefs about the Waldensians as members of a secret heretical cult that practiced magic. For the Waldensians in general, see Gabriel Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c. 1170–c. 1570*, trans. C. Davison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), and for the belief in particular that they were heretical practitioners of magic, see pp. 72–78.

there is in fact a great deal of variation in the specifics. While the general outline of the practices of the “sect of sorceresses” was known in various locations, the details were made up according to the notions held by the local investigators. That is, there was no single “elaborated theory,” but a number of local variations that reflect the overall notion. Unless there were a number of such sects that operated by different (physically impossible) methods, the logical conclusion is that the self-contradictory nature of the various versions of the elaborated theory derives from the fact that there was in fact no such sect at all, and that the variations reflect the fundamental disconnect between the theory and reality.

Elaborated theory of sorcery as described in the Malleus

The *Malleus* should be allowed to speak for itself in terms of the detailed version of the elaborated concept of witchcraft that is advocated in it, but a short summary of the views of Henricus Institoris on the subject is worthwhile.

First, a matter of terminology. In the German text of the *Nuremberg Handbook*, Institoris uniformly uses the term *Unhold* for a “witch” belonging to the “Heresy of Sorceresses.”⁷ This term is in turn always rendered in the Latin (of both the *Malleus* and the *Nuremberg Handbook*) as *malefica*. This terminology is significant in that this usage shows an invariable preference over the many synonyms for “witch” in both German (*Zauberin* and *Giftmischerin* in addition to *Hexe*) and Latin (*lamia*, *striga*, *venefica*). As noted repeatedly in the *Malleus* (in the form of the etymology of the word given by Isidore of Seville), the literal meaning of *maleficus* is “evil-doer,” and it is the inherent necessity to inflict evil through sorcery that distinguishes adherents of the sect from mere dabblers in magic. The “Heresy of Sorceresses” (*heresis maleficarum*) appears several times in the German in the literal translation *ketzerei der unholden*.

The characteristics of the elaborated concept of witchcraft all appear in the *Malleus*, but the *Nuremberg Handbook* gives a simpler definition: “this depravity of sorceresses consists of two elements: the heresy and apostasy from the Faith and the temporal loss that she inflicts.” The reference to heresy signifies adherence to the tenets of the sect as a result of the homage that they pay to Satan, while apostasy signifies the rejection of the Christian faith that the sorceress adopted at baptism.

⁷ In the cover letter to the *Handbook*, Institoris gives as a variant the term *Hexe*, which is the usual term that survives in modern German.

The second element consists of the harm that is obligatorily inflicted by the sorceresses as a result of their adherence to the sect. Thus, the other elements of the modern definition of the elaborated concept of witchcraft are simply subsumed into this twofold scheme. The pact with Satan is simply an element of giving allegiance to him, and the other elements (flying to attend meetings with Satan and the specific forms of sorcery) are aspects of belonging to the sect.

Sorcery is viewed as part of a constant war that is being waged between God and his fallen angel Satan.⁸ This bipolar struggle of good and evil is so pervasive in the *Malleus* that one could conceive of it as reflecting a form of manichaeism, that is, the view that the cosmos is divided between the opposing and equal forces of good and evil. Yet, such a view is fundamentally incompatible with the Christian view of the absolute omnipotence of God, and the *Malleus* reconciles the apparent incompatibility by emphasizing repeatedly that the practices of sorcery are themselves useless and seem to work only because God allows Satan to carry out the effects that are ostensibly “caused” by those practices. Not only is sorcery to be understood within the context of the titanic struggle between God and his arch-enemy, but the offense that God is said to suffer as a result of such practices is at once a prime motive in Satan’s promotion of them and a major argument in the effort to persuade the secular authorities to take all necessary (and drastic) steps to uncover and exterminate the Heresy of Sorceresses. In particular, sorcery was thought to play a special role in Satan’s war against God during the End Days.

The Book of Revelation (Apocalypse) was included in the canon of orthodox books of the New Testament because of the erroneous belief that its author was the same as that of the Gospel of John. In any event, the author of Apocalypse was steeped in the tradition of the prophetic books of the Old Testament like Ezekiel, Isaiah and Daniel, and thus Apocalypse follows them in giving a rather fanciful vision (with much bizarre imagery and numerology) of the End Days. First, Satan will triumph (as the Antichrist in later medieval interpretation), but after he is vanquished by Christ, there will be a thousand-year period of direct rule by the latter (the Millennium). Next, Satan will be released from his prison to wage a final, futile battle against God, at the end of which the world will end, Satan being cast into eternal torment and the Last Judgment taking place. The attempt to establish the thousand-year

⁸ Satan was thought to have an army of subordinate demons (lesser fallen angels), and the sorceresses are often conceived of as acting in collaboration with one of these demons rather than with Satan himself.

kingdom of God on earth is known as millenarianism, but what we are dealing with here is the somewhat toned down version of the End Days that prevailed in more or less official medieval dogma. For the sake of convenience I call this apocalypticism, and the understanding of sorcery in the *Malleus* is firmly set within the context of this apocalypticism.

This context is referred to from the very start of the work in the Author's Justification, which notes that while Satan has always attempted to undermine the church of Jesus with heresy, he is redoubling his efforts at the present, since he knows that he has little time left, as the world is now declining towards its end and human evil is increasing. The notion that Satan angrily realizes the shortness of his remaining time comes from Apocalypse 12:12, and the reference in the text to the cooling of charity is derived from Matthew 24:2. Thus, the introduction suggests that the plague of sorceresses is part of Satan's efforts in the End Days, and this connection is spelled out in later passages.

The crimes of "present-day" sorceresses is said to surpass all those of the past (71C–D). The dating of this present day seems to be indicated in a passage in which the sexual depravity of sorceresses is discussed. In response to the disbelief of certain contemporaries that present-day sorceresses do engage in the acts alleged against them, it is asserted (108A–B) that, whatever may be the case of those who existed before 1400, experience shows that since that date sorceresses have in fact engaged in sexual misconduct with demons. The reason given for uncertainty in the earlier period is that the literary record does not attest similar behavior (though the existence of demons then is undeniable), but it is noted that, whereas the sorceresses at that time apparently had to be forced to engage in such acts, in the present day they do so willingly. Seemingly, Institoris was aware of a novelty in the sorts of activity that he classified as the Heresy of Sorceresses, and dated the start of this development to the beginning of the fifteenth century. Thus, his own century was the start of the final assault of the Antichrist predicted in the Book of Apocalypse, and the rise of the new heresy and the unspeakable horrors supposedly perpetrated by its adherents was the main weapon in the hands of the Antichrist.

This sense of the approaching apocalypse brought in its wake a novel interpretation of the common idea that sorceresses murder children. A medieval notion held that, at the time of Satan's fall from grace, one tenth of the "good" angels fell with him, becoming demons ("bad angels"), and the world will be "consummated" when the number of the elect who rise to heaven equals that of the angels who remained there (see Caesarius

of Heisterbach, *Dialogue of Miracles* 5.8). The *Malleus* directly notes this conception in terms of the horrific notion that midwives intentionally (and even unwillingly) murder newborns at the insistence of demons. The reason for this is that the Devil knows that unbaptized children are not allowed into the kingdom of heaven and thus the consummation of the world and the day of judgment that will see the Devil cast into eternal perdition will be put off (138C). Thus, the idea that the contemporary world is destined to see the terrible tribulations predicted by the Book of Apocalypse explains not only why sorcery is apparently getting worse but also the specific rationale for some of the most heinous crimes attributed to it.

Role of omnipotent God in sorcery

Finally, let us look at the role of God in the practice of sorcery. The *Malleus* deals repeatedly with the question of how to reconcile the existence of a sect dedicated exclusively to the commission of the most extreme evil with the presupposition of an omnipotent and wholly good God. Not surprisingly, the answer is given in terms of the traditional explanation that God's grant of free will to mankind makes it perfectly just (and necessary) for him to tolerate evil deeds (whose perpetrators will of course then be suitably punished after death). The argument is made several times that Satan has no power except to the extent that this is granted to him by God, and that the magical procedures of the sorceresses themselves had no inherent efficacy and "work" simply because of Satan's execution of the deeds that the sorceresses ostensibly bring about through their rites and procedures. This conception of how the magic involved in sorcery operates is necessitated by the premise that God is omnipotent and that nothing can be done without his permission, but this direct involvement of God in the granting or withholding of permission with reference to specific acts of sorcery means that something more than a broad granting of free will is needed to explain how such evil can exist in a world governed by this omnipotent and good God. It is occasionally asserted that God's purposes are inscrutable, which serves to defer judgment on the question of why he allows evil with the assumption that there must be some greater good at issue which is simply unknown to the human observer (126A, D). Much more frequent, however, is the idea that the existence of sorcery is tolerated by God as a form of retribution on the human race as a whole for previous acts of sorcery. Indeed, Satan himself is aware of this reaction on the part

of God and therefore seeks both to instigate the commission of such acts and to bring about a human failure to punish them (on account of the false notion that sorcery does not actually exist), because he knows that this will enrage God, who will then give continued permission for further, more heinous crimes. In effect, the situation is a downward spiral of human crimes, the penalty for which is the commission of even worse crimes. This situation would seem to have no end but the human race being overwhelmed under this mounting wave of crime, and the conception fits in with the idea that the apocalyptic end of the world is near and that the perceived recent upsurge in sorcery plays a central role in the downfall of humanity.

The modern view of the Christian God tends to emphasize his role as a figure of compassion and love. This is certainly not the main characteristic of the God of the *Malleus*, who is portrayed as a stark and inflexible figure, who exacts the severest penalties for acts that offend him. He demands absolute loyalty from those dedicated to his worship (i.e., baptized Christians) and expects to take precedence over anything and anyone else in their affections. Disloyalty to God is equated with treason against a secular prince, and this act deserves to be punished with the same savage penalty on earth that the Roman emperors decreed against traitors in the *Code of Justinian*. This vengeful God not only visits punishment on the descendants of malefactors removed from the crime by three or four generations, but also feels so affronted by the insult made against him through the commission of the crimes associated with satanism that he allows the innocent to be harmed (Pt. I, Q. 15 is devoted exclusively to proving the point). Given this conception of the dire results to be expected from the failure to suppress sorcery, it is not surprising that Institoris felt such outrage on account of his perception that there were both laymen and priests who endeavored to undermine the efforts to exterminate the sorceresses through their denial of the reality of the phenomenon.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN SORCERY

The *Malleus* has been characterized as a thoroughly misogynistic work, and (to borrow a mode of argument from scholasticism) this is true or not depending on what one means by misogyny. In the proper meaning of the term, it signifies a self-conscious literary attack on the female gender as a whole. This genre of literature is exemplified in the Greek poet Semonides' attack on women or the Sixth Satire of the Roman poet

Juvenal. By this standard, the *Malleus* is not misogynistic in that even the main passage discussing what is taken to be the flawed nature of females is prefaced with an overt statement that the negative characterization of women as a group does not apply to all of them (42B), and the work contains references to pious women who resist the allurements of sorcery or fall victim to it.

Nonetheless, even if the *Malleus* is not misogynistic in a narrow sense, the work is clearly permeated with a hostile and negative view of women as a whole. Given the often negative characterization of women in both the Old and the New Testaments, it is not surprising that Christian thought of antiquity and the medieval period adopted a similar attitude. What Sprenger's thoughts along these lines may have been is unknown, but Institoris's statements in other works make it clear that the anti-female premises of the *Malleus* are fully attributable to him. While he no doubt had no qualms about adhering to this point of view, the sections of the *Malleus* that most directly cover the topic are derived from previous authors. The section on why women practice sorcery more frequently than men (Pt. 1, Q. 6) is based on several passages. Exactly the same topic is treated in Nider's *Praeceptorium*, and this material is expanded through the addition of another passage from Nider's *Formicarius* (*Ant Hill*) at the beginning and a heavily reworked section of the *Summa* of Antoninus of Florence that treats the mental and moral inferiority of women.⁹ Thus, in Institoris's own mind there could have been no doubt as to the orthodoxy of the very negative view of women that underlies his conception of sorcery.

It might be objected that men do get included in the Heresy of Sorceresses, particularly in the form of men who use incantations to improve their archery (these are discussed in the last few questions of Pt. 1). In fact, it would appear that these men are mentioned more as a logical reflex of the fact that sorcery is conceived of in terms of heresy rather than because such men form any integral part of the Heresy of Sorceresses as understood in the work. At any rate, these archers are not mentioned at all in the later *Nuremberg Handbook*. As for the *Malleus* itself, what Institoris specifically has in mind is the sort of sorcery that he believed to be practiced among uneducated peasant women, which is overtly distinguished (91C) from the educated magic practiced by men (mainly clerics). Another element in the portrayal of sorcery that distinguishes

⁹ In fairness to Institoris, it should be pointed out that the ridiculous etymology of the word *femina* (Latin for "woman") from the words *fides* and *minus* ("faith" and "less"), for which the *Malleus* is often derided, is borrowed verbatim from Antoninus.

the *Malleus* from the *Nuremberg Handbook* is the strong association of female sorcery with love affairs that have turned out badly for young women who have used their sexual wiles to entice a man into marriage but were ultimately rejected for a more suitable spouse. This focus in the *Malleus* may reflect Institoris's recent experiences in Innsbruck, where amatory magic seems to have played a major role in the supposed sorcery that he investigated.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Now we can turn to the historical realities that lie behind the text, and we will start with the legal framework. This will be discussed first in terms of the ecclesiastical institution for dealing with sorcery, and contemporary judicial methods.

Inquisition

Institoris and Sprenger were both inquisitors, and a large number of the anecdotes about prosecuting sorcery involve the activities of inquisitors. The words "inquisition" and "inquisitor" are derived from Latin terms meaning "investigation" (cf. the alternative English derivation "inquest") and "investigator." The institution of the inquisition arose in the early thirteenth century in connection with efforts to stamp out the so-called "Albigensian heresy" (whose adherents are also known as Cathars) in southern France.¹⁰ There was dissatisfaction with the unwillingness or inability of local bishops to stamp out heretical activities in their dioceses, and the practice arose of appointing mendicant friars (especially Dominicans but also Franciscans) to hunt out heretics. At first such appointments were made on an ad hoc basis, but soon the procedure became institutionalized. Appointments could be made either by provincials (regional administrators of the mendicant orders) or directly by the pope, and in either case the inquisitor would act with delegated papal authority. Both Institoris and Sprenger were inquisitors by papal appointment (as made clear in the bull *summis desiderantes*). The inquisitor was empowered to conduct a full investigation on his own and to seek the assistance of the secular authorities ("secular arm") for this

¹⁰ The regular medieval inquisition is not to be confused with the much more famous Spanish inquisition, which was set up in 1478 by the Spanish crown and operated under the state control, or the Roman inquisition, which was set up by the papacy in the sixteenth century to stamp out any Protestant tendencies in Italy.

purpose. If the suspected heretic was deemed unrepentant or convicted of being a relapsed heretic (that is, someone who returned to the heresy after having previously been found out in it and having abjured or publicly renounced it), the inquisitor could turn over (“relax”) the heretic to the secular arm. The inquisitor would hypocritically state in the sentence that he asked the secular arm not to execute the heretic, but it was understood by everyone that the heretic was to be executed (normally by being burned alive) in accordance with secular laws against heresy.

Though the inquisitors had full authority to deal with an accusation as they saw fit, and could keep someone imprisoned for years if they suspected that a person who refused to confess was guilty, they were also entitled to make use of questioning under torture. This practice was a standard procedure in contemporary legal procedure, so it is worthwhile to consider it in some detail.

Torture in the “inquisitorial” method of investigation

The use of torture arose in conjunction with the revival of Roman law that started in the eleventh century in Italy and gradually spread to the north. In the autocratic administrative structure of the later Roman Empire, the governor conducted criminal investigations and trials himself, and was authorized to use torture under certain circumstances as an investigative tool. This system was laid out in the criminal procedure described in the law code of Justinian that formed part of the Roman legal texts that were taught in the Italian universities, and as the elaborate procedures of Roman law began in continental Europe to drive out earlier medieval jurisprudence, which lacked any comparable theoretical texts, the so-called “inquisitorial” procedure took root. (Here “inquisitorial” means simply that the magistrate in charge conducts the investigation and trial himself, and the term applies to the practices of both secular courts conducted along such lines and those of inquisitors.)

The Roman jurists were fully aware that questioning under torture could well lead to false answers (the innocent might admit to something they had not done as a result of the pain, while guilty people with strong constitutions could endure the pain without confessing), and the medieval jurists came up with complicated procedures to overcome these difficulties. Basically, torture was prohibited unless there was a reasonably strong *prima facie* case against the suspect, and it could be applied only twice. If the suspect survived two sessions without confessing, he or she had to be absolved. In addition, the suspect was supposed to give factual

details that only the criminal could have known. In practice, however, the supposed procedural protections were useless if the magistrate was convinced of the suspect's guilt. The traditional method of examination (known as the "strappado") was to tie the suspect's hands behind his back, then haul him off the ground with a pulley attached to his hands; this had the effect of putting all the weight of the body on the shoulders, which would eventually become disjointed (an effect that could be hastened by either attaching weights to the feet or letting the suspect drop and then precipitously halting the fall before he hit the ground). This simple but brutal method could be effective enough in extracting a confession from anyone, but in the mania to extract confessions during the major periods of witch hunting, the accusation of sorcery was treated as a *crimen exceptum*, that is, a charge exempted from the usual legal precautions, and extreme measures were taken to ensure that the suspects admitted the "truth."

But these pitfalls were not what concerned Institoris. Quite the contrary. He was concerned that the use of torture in criminal investigation would lead to the release of genuine sorceresses. In the first place, it was thought that the sorceresses were able to make themselves immune to pain through the so-called "sorcery of silence" (see Pt. 3, Q. 15), and thus would escape the torture without confessing. The reliance on Eymeric as the main source in Pt. 3 somewhat obscures the point, but the *Nuremberg Handbook* makes it clear that Institoris was very impatient with secular courts that absolved those of whose guilt he was certain because of what he viewed as a mere technicality (the ability to endure two sessions of torture without confessing), particularly as he thought that the very fact of their practicing sorcery allowed them to thwart the procedure. Instead, he advocated the use of conjecture to divine who is guilty, and argued at some length in the *Nuremberg Handbook* that it is better to convict on the basis of conjecture than on the basis of a confession extracted through torture.

The use of conjecture to determine guilt is also rooted in the procedure outlined by Eymeric. With regular heretics, their crime had to do with the beliefs hidden in their mind, which they would try to conceal with evasions and misrepresentations, and the inquisitor had to outsmart them by formulating questions that would trap them into revealing the truth of the heresy that was concealed in their heads. With sorceresses, the act that caused the harm was physically removed from the effect (and, indeed, according to the theory had no direct physical connection with the harm, which was simply inflicted by a demon to make it seem

as if sorcery were actually effective). Thus, Institoris was applying to a new, but in some ways comparable, situation the method of judgment through conjecture that Eymeric advocated.¹¹

Contemporary magical practices

Now it is time to turn to the question of the realities of practicing witchcraft that Institoris confronted in his inquisitorial activities. First, we have to be specific about the concept that is understood by the terms “witchcraft” and “magic.” For present purposes, we will take it to mean the manipulation of the physical world through the use of special words and procedures. It could easily be argued that the practices of the medieval Church would fall under this definition, but since most contemporaries would have excluded such practices from the category, we will also ignore these here, and consider as “magical” only such practices as would not have been considered legitimate rites of the Church.

In considering pre-modern beliefs about manipulation of the physical world, we have to try and “think away” the category of “science” that comes so naturally to our minds. Today, we think of ourselves as having a clear and substantive understanding of the principles that underlie the behavior of matter around us and of the objects (living and inanimate) that are made of matter. In the medieval period, while there was some understanding of such principles among the educated, even for them much of the operations of the world was mysterious, and this would have been all the more true of the general populace. The belief that the use of mysterious words and procedures could cause real effects in the physical world dates back to well before Classical antiquity, and in the medieval period often involved formulas, items and procedures “borrowed” from Christian rites. At best, such practices were considered superstitious by the ecclesiastical authorities, and to a greater or lesser degree they could be thought to involve demonic invocation (implicit or tacit).

A major distinction of magical practices in the medieval period concerns a division on the basis of the status of the practitioners. There was a sort of “high” magic that involved the educated, which in medieval reality tended to mean renegade priests. This magic was practiced with

¹¹ The necessity of “flushing out” uncooperative heretics also explains the use of lies and deceit to trick them. This distasteful procedure is clearly present in Eymeric and adopted without qualm by Institoris. Clearly, the need to defend the true faith legitimized any means to unmask the enemies of orthodoxy (who were, after all, the tools of Satan).

grimoires or books of learned enchantments. The *Malleus* indicates overtly (91C) that it does not deal with this sort of magic. Instead, it treats the variety of magic practiced by illiterate, mostly female members of the lower orders of society. To some extent this refers to the peasantry, as is indicated by the many incidents involving farm activities in Pt. 2. On the other hand, the amatory sorcery involving impotence and related phenomena that figures prominently in the *Malleus* is often an aspect of urban life.

Now, we have to distinguish between the objective and subjective interpretation of the situation. Many people today (though by no means all) would reject the reality of producing physical effects in the material world through sorcery. But the question of whether people could actually achieve anything through magic is entirely different from the question of whether they *thought* they could. There can be no doubt that there were people at the time of the *Malleus* who engaged in magical practices. For our purposes, the issue is the extent to which the *Malleus* gives an accurate picture of contemporary practices.

On the basis of modern research on sorcery, we can be sure that the association of magical practices with satanism, that is, a heretical cult under the direct supervision of the Devil himself, is false. The study of actual interrogations shows that the dealings with the Devil that suspects were eventually compelled to admit to are actually foisted onto them by the investigators. That is, there is no external evidence to indicate that, even when people were involved in magical practices, they conceived of themselves as acting in accordance with the conception of sorcery laid out in the *Malleus*. Rather, the sorts of views propagated by tracts like the *Malleus* were imposed on the traditional nonsystematic magical beliefs of popular culture. Basically, the peasants may well have thought that, with the right procedures, one could steal the milk from the neighbor's cow or make someone impotent or give him the evil eye. What did not exist, either objectively or subjectively, was a heretical cult of evildoers who inflicted pointless harm at the instigation of Satan.

Now that we have discussed the reality of magical practices, it is time to turn to the dark interpretation placed on such practices by the theory advocated in the *Malleus*.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE *MALLEUS*

The *Malleus* is a work that rouses strong, often emotional reactions, and these may take a multiplicity of forms. Since at least the nineteenth

century, it has been viewed by many as an example of medieval ignorance and superstition, being associated with the later witch hunting of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that seemed to have been instigated by it. For those who view as innocent victims the large numbers of men and (predominantly) women who were burned alive for crimes that are now considered to be completely bereft of substance, the work epitomized everything that was wrong with what was thought to be a medieval mentality. Such an evaluation is at times associated with various extraneous attitudes, both positive and negative, such as a positive assessment of modern neo-paganism and wicca or hostility towards the modern Catholic Church, which is held to be responsible for the witch hunts. Those who are favorably disposed towards the Catholic Church may themselves have rather divergent attitudes.¹² Some choose to dissociate the Church from medieval beliefs that were thought legitimate in the past but are no longer considered respectable, such as anti-semitism, and the witch hunts can fit into this category. But the Church continues to recognize the validity of exorcism, and some Catholics, far from disowning the *Malleus*, view the work as a valid reflection of Satan's interference in human affairs.¹³ Given that all these views relate to people's attitudes about religion, and that such attitudes are matters of faith rather than demonstrable truth, it would be a rather perilous and probably vain matter to try and assess the *Malleus* in such terms. The reader is perfectly entitled to evaluate the work in light of his or her religious beliefs, but the following assessment is based on a materialist understanding of the

¹² While the modern Roman Catholic Church is the linear descendant of the official state religion established in the Roman Empire over the course of the fourth century and has inherited the pretensions to it being the sole recognized religion laid out in Imperial legislation, it should be borne in mind that the Church has undergone a great deal of change over the succeeding millennium and a half. The universal Church as it existed in the medieval period has a large amount of overlap with its modern manifestation, but there is also a fair amount of divergence. In particular, it was only with the Council of Trent, which was held in the mid sixteenth century to counter the challenge posed by the spread of Protestant rejection of the Catholic Church, that the latter's doctrine and ceremonial were given a full systemization, which was then enforced by the administrative apparatus of the states that remained Catholic, and such enforcement of a more or less uniform understanding of Catholicism had been impossible during the medieval period. Thus, it is historically difficult to posit an absolute continuity between medieval doctrine and that of the present-day Church. Of course, those who have a monolithic conception of Catholic doctrine over the centuries may feel differently.

¹³ In an email, I was taken to task by a devout Catholic for seeming to cast doubt, in the introduction to the bilingual edition, on the view presented in the *Malleus* that the world is "a place where demons inhabit [the area above] the earth . . . and plot to ensnare humans . . . guide them in their evil-doing and have sex with them." I was then invited to a "Catholic Charismatic Prayer Breakfast" at which "personal testimony" would be given in proof of the reality of such demonic intervention in the world.

world in which the supernatural in general and the demonic in particular play no role in the affairs on earth.

The major significance of the *Malleus* lies in the role it played in the dissemination and widespread acceptance of the elaborated theory of witchcraft. Certainly, the basic elements of this theory – sorcery, heresy and Satan’s attempt to undermine God’s world order – had existed since antiquity, as had the notion that Satan was involved to greater or lesser degree in both sorcery and heresy. What was new was the notion that sorcery by itself represented a special form of heresy that played an important part in Satan’s plans for the Final Days. This connection was already in existence in the early fifteenth century, but only one printed work (the *Formicarius* or *Ant Hill* of Johannes Nider) had discussed this notion, and then only tangentially and without drawing out the full implications. The *Malleus* takes this notion and fully argues it in terms of the cosmological interpretation of the world (that is, the understanding of the universe in terms of Christian theology) as propounded by Thomas Aquinas. Thus, this notion, which had previously been inchoate, was given full academic justification as understood by the scholastic methodology that held sway in the universities of late-medieval Europe. The twelve reprintings of the *Malleus* that were undertaken in Germany and France in the years 1486–1519 attest to a regular demand for the work, and while, in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was the works of other authors (e.g. Jean Bodin and Martin del Rio) that whipped up the frenzy for witch hunting, those works were effective only because of the shift in paradigm that the *Malleus* had brought about in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

The notion of “shifts in paradigm” comes from Thomas Kuhn’s book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.¹⁴ In that work, Kuhn argues against the modern conception of science as a gradual process consisting of the cumulative building up of factual knowledge that comes incrementally closer and closer to describing the natural world. Instead, scientists work on the basis of “paradigms,” that is, overarching conceptions of the nature of the issue in question. This paradigm is far more than simply a theory regarding a given set of phenomena. It is a fundamental understanding of the nature of the issue and of the very phenomena that are covered by it. In effect, the paradigm gives the general intellectual framework in which the investigation of the natural world is conducted. The paradigm holds sway to such an extent over the intellects of the

¹⁴ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd edn. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

scientific investigators that, when phenomena arise that do not fit in with the dominant paradigm, at first these are often either misconstrued or even not perceived as anomalous at all in that they are interpreted, and indeed conceived of, only in terms of the paradigm. An example of such a paradigm-generated “distortion” comes from the late seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries, when astronomers on numerous occasions observed what we now know of as the planet Uranus. On the basis of the paradigm that held that a set of six planets circled the sun, however, either no motion was observed at all, in which case the object was conceived of as a star, or, if the motion was perceived, abortive attempts were made to explain the object as a comet. Only in 1781 was the old paradigm rejected, when it was finally recognized that there were more planets out there.¹⁵ When new phenomena are recognized as calling the dominant paradigm into question, there can be a more or less prolonged crisis in which attempts are made either to salvage the old one or to come up with a new conception, and if the new conception wins out and a general consensus accepting it is formed, then there is a “shift in paradigm,” and the new paradigm then serves as the basis for further research.

Though Kuhn’s insight on the nature of human conceptualization was put forward specifically in the context of scientific investigation, it seems fruitful to apply the notion to other spheres of activity in which people attempt to make sense of the world around them. After all, the *Malleus* strives to explain sorcery within the context of scholastic understanding of the natural world, and thus is scientific by contemporary standards (at that time, the study of the natural world was at most an element in “natural philosophy”). Indeed, one of the reasons for the great influence of the *Malleus* was the very fact that it does not simply argue for the existence of Satanic sorcery but gives the notion an ontological, phenomenological and teleological basis in the scholastic interpretation of the world. That is, the *Malleus* gives an all-encompassing explanation of what sorcery is, how we can perceive its effects, and what role it plays in the cosmic struggle between omnipotent God and his arch-enemy Satan. Whereas previously sorcery had been viewed as a distasteful and illicit activity, it had not been viewed as having much significance beyond the commission of the act of sorcery itself; now, the *Malleus*

¹⁵ See the discussion in Kuhn, *Structure*, 115–116. It is worth noting that the previously dominant paradigm of six planets (Mercury, Mars, Earth, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn) revolving around the sun was itself a new (Copernican) paradigm that had replaced the medieval/ancient paradigm that saw the five visible planets plus the sun and the moon revolving around the earth.

seemed to prove in a detailed theoretical fashion that maleficent sorcery was a major element in Satan's assault on the very fabric of God's creation. In effect, the full formulation of the diabolic interpretation of sorcery in terms of Thomastic scholastic demonstration created a new paradigm – one that had very menacing implications for those who accepted it.

Kuhn provocatively suggests that:

when paradigms change, the world itself changes with them. Led by a new paradigm, scientists adopt new instruments and look in new places. Even more important, during revolutions [i.e., the breakdown of the old paradigm and its replacement by a new one] scientists see new and different things when looking with familiar instruments in places they have looked before. It is rather as if the professional community had been suddenly transported to another planet where familiar objects are seen in a different light and are joined by unfamiliar ones as well.¹⁶

He quickly grants that no such physical transformation takes place but maintains that “paradigm changes do cause scientists to see the world of their research-engagement differently,” and surely this overall characterization is applicable to the conceptual revolution propagated by the *Malleus*. What had previously been simply random instances of misguided activity now took on a far darker significance, and any such activities could readily be taken as proof of adherence to this literally demonic conspiracy. If one truly believes that sorcery does produce effects in the natural world, that sorceresses engage in their malevolent activities as an integral part of Satan's final attempt to overthrow the divine order, that the thwarting of Satan's evil purposes can only be carried out through the physical destruction of his evil minions, and that the defense of Christendom is inextricably intertwined with the necessity of taking any steps required to track down and eradicate the practitioners of these evil arts, then clearly the most drastic measures would be called for. Given that the early modern method of criminal investigation in continental Europe involved the use of torture to extract information from the accused, it is hardly surprising that, if the officials in charge of investigations were already convinced of the existence of these heinous crimes and predisposed to take the guilt of the accused for granted, the accused were often compelled not only to confess to their supposed misdeeds but to implicate others who would in turn be subject to the same treatment. The only problem of course was that

¹⁶ Kuhn, *Structure*, p. III.

the whole new paradigm was simply a figment of the imagination of fifteenth-century ecclesiastics.

The issue of why the witch craze died down in the seventeenth century is not exactly germane to a discussion of the *Malleus* in its own right, but since the *Malleus* is in large part responsible for the new paradigm of sorceresses, a few words may be warranted. One should begin by noting that the view advocated in the *Malleus* never attained universal acceptance, and there were always voices speaking out against it. Nonetheless, a number of prominent individuals in both intellectual and administrative positions came to adopt the new paradigm wholeheartedly, and so long as the paradigm held some sway, it was likely to lead to excesses. In any event, the *Malleus* itself is deeply rooted in the scholastic understanding of the cosmos, and this understanding came to be increasingly untenable with the various scientific discoveries that suggested a mechanistic universe, particularly the complete undermining of the Ptolemaic conception of the heavens that gradually followed upon the publication of Copernicus's *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium* in 1543. Now, it took many decades for the old system to give way, but the old tidy arrangement of an immutable cosmos circling majestically around the earth eventually yielded to the new heliocentric system, and with that the seemingly central role that demons and angels played in the cosmos was likewise called into serious question. There was clearly far more to the shift in intellectual understanding of the world that resulted in the rejection of the paradigm advocated in the *Malleus*, and it would be beyond present purposes to discuss this topic.

In addition to these external factors, the paradigm also collapsed under the weight of its own inherent implausibility. If the new conception was true, then there were satanic sorceresses lurking everywhere, and the early seventeenth century saw certain small jurisdictions in southern Germany carry out large-scale efforts to uproot sorcery in major campaigns that fed upon the accusations of the innocent made under torture by those already accused. One of the most famous books written against these campaigns was the *Cautio Criminalis* (1631) of Friedrich von Spee, a Jesuit priest who had acted as a confessor to those about to be burned alive for sorcery. The work is a general denunciation of the legal abuses that led to convictions, and while Spee does not deny the existence of sorcery, he notes his disbelief that any of those supposed sorceresses for whom he acted as confessor had actually been guilty.

Thus, what undermined the paradigm outlined in the *Malleus* was the combination of a number of factors, such as the contradiction between the scientific underpinnings of the work in medieval scholasticism and

new understandings of the functioning of the universe, the declining desire to see Satan as an active participant in the world around us, and the inherent lack of substance to the great conspiracy that was presupposed by the paradigm. While it is easy to adopt an attitude of smug self-satisfaction when considering the widespread adherence to views that now seem (for most people) to be incompatible with a rational understanding of the world, it is preferable to understand the work in its own context. At the time, the views advocated in it were firmly based in the most authoritative texts. Demons and Satan figure prominently in the Gospels, and other parts of the Bible had been interpreted in light of this. Demons were taken for granted in the orthodox works of the Church Fathers of antiquity and the middle ages. Perhaps most importantly, the role of demons and sorcery in the world was demonstrated in some detail by Thomas Aquinas, perhaps the most respected intellectual figure in scholasticism (and certainly the most respected in the eyes of Dominicans). And as for being caught up in a frenzy of seemingly irrational behavior on the basis of some delusional belief in a demonic conspiracy, one does not have to go back to the anti-semitic madness of Nazi Germany to find a parallel phenomenon in the modern world. Less than thirty years ago in the United States, an unwarranted belief that satanic cults were abusing children, combined with an anxiety that children were being mistreated in daycare centers, led to egregious miscarriages of justice in highly publicized trials involving completely unbelievable accusations and testimony. In fact, one famous victim of such a trial (Gerald Amirault) was released only in 2004 after spending eighteen years in prison following his conviction for accusations that had not the least merit. So perhaps what can be said for the modern world is that it takes only a few years to dispel the sort of frenzy that went on for a century and a half in early modern Europe.

Malleus as evidence for contemporary practices

To shift the question of the significance of the *Malleus*, it is worthwhile to consider how far the work can be viewed as a valid reflection of contemporary sorceresses. It is a basic concept in modern cultural studies to make a distinction, in dealing with the pre-modern Europe, between the “elite” culture of the educated upper classes and the “popular” culture of the general populace. This distinction is not without difficulties – the elite did not live in a vacuum that isolated them from influences deriving from the beliefs of the lower orders, while for their part the non-elite members of society could not be entirely immune from the ideas that

mainly circulated among the elites – but it nonetheless holds generally true. In particular, most knowledge of popular culture derives in one way or another from sources of information that either were produced by members of the elite or at the least are preserved in media that reflected elite rather than popular culture. What then to make of the *Malleus*? Does it in any way give us access to actual practices of sorcery among the general populace? Obviously, it is a work of the intellectual elite, yet it overtly treats a topic that relates to the lower orders. For the most part, the understanding of sorcery presented in the work rests on the theoretical discussions of Thomas Aquinas, and hence sheds little light on contemporary beliefs. Even the arguments against sorcery that are attributed to contemporary opponents of the view advocated in the work actually derive from the negative position that in various disputed questions are attributed by Aquinas to the advocates of the false view before he rebuts it, so that the *Malleus* is to a large extent simply an intellectual exercise based on earlier literary precedents rather than a reflection of the world around it.

On the other hand, the work cites a number of anecdotes from the personal experience of (almost certainly) Institoris. To the extent that these derive from judicial proceedings, there is no reason to doubt their accuracy in that regard. That is, the statements about Institoris's activities in Ravensburg and Innsbruck seem to be reasonable enough accounts of the proceedings (taking into account that he was dealing from memory with events that took place several years before). But that says absolutely nothing about the accuracy of the description of the activities that were investigated and for which people like Anna of Mindelheim and Agnes the bath keeper were burned to ashes. For instance, was the old woman who was convicted of causing a hail storm out of spite because she had not been invited to a wedding party (104B–C) actually guilty of doing so? In a metaphysical sense, of course not. On the other hand, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that she did in fact use magical procedures to do so. But it is very unlikely that the activity even subjectively involved the invocations of a demon in a self-aware act of satanism (much less the actual participation of a demon, though again it cannot be ruled out that the woman imagined such a thing). It is far more likely that she was either falsely accused in the first place (the evidence that led to her arrest is hardly compelling, and the confession is based on the application of judicial torture). The satanic interpretation of her alleged behavior is almost certainly a construct imposed on the situation because of the author's adherence to the paradigm of satanic sorcery. That is, even when there was subjective use of sorcery by peasants, this would have

been simply old-fashioned magical practice that had nothing to do with a diabolic conspiracy. Such a process of reinterpretation on the basis of the paradigm can be seen in the discussion of the seemingly innocuous peasant cures for sorcery discussed towards the end of Pt. 2. These cures are simply part of the to-and-fro of peasant magic for the purpose of some sort of personal gain or vengeance and subjectively do not have anything to do with the evil designs of Satan, but given the hold of the paradigm on Institoris's imagination, it was very difficult for him to conceive of "innocent" magic outside of this conception. Thus, the *Malleus* can safely be used as a guide to the understanding of sorcery held in the mid to late fifteenth century by certain members of the elite. It is very difficult to consider the anecdotal material in the work as shedding unfiltered light on popular beliefs and practices.

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NOTES ON THE TRANSLATION

(a) *Method of making references to the text*

For ease of citation, I have assigned notations to the text that appear in the margin. These notations are based on the modern method of pagination used in Schnyder's facsimile of the first edition, which gives each page its own arabic number.¹⁷ Schnyder then inserts capital letters to designate the halves of the two columns that appear on each page, so that A and B represent the start of the top and bottom halves of the first column and C and D the corresponding halves of the second. The use of these designations not only facilitates consultation of the Latin text (both the bilingual edition from which this translation is derived and the facsimile of the first edition) but also gives a much more specific reference than simply quoting the book and question from which a quotation derives.¹⁸

(b) *Sources not from canon law*

The *Malleus* is filled with a vast number of citations of earlier works, but most of these citations are borrowed from the main sources for the work. If necessary, the full citation of the work (or further citation if

¹⁷ Schnyder uses an arabic number followed by an asterisk for the few pages of the separate publication containing the Bull and Approbation.

¹⁸ Jerouschek's facsimile employs the bibliographically accurate but cumbersome procedure of numbering the folios (separate pieces of paper comprising two modern "pages" each) and indicating the front and back sides with the superscript letters ^r and ^v, for "recto" and "verso" (i.e., "front" and "back" page). The two columns on each page are simply designated as a and b. It is simple enough to convert Schnyder's numbers to Jerouschek's. If the number is even, one simply divides by two and appends the letter ^v (thus, 102 becomes 51^v). If the number is odd, one adds one and then divides by two, appending the letter ^r (thus, 101 becomes 51^r). Thus, Schnyder's 102C and 102D comprise the top and bottom halves of Jerouschek's 51^vb.

the citation in the *Malleus* is inadequate or incomplete) is provided in square brackets (these always indicate an editorial addition that does not appear in the original). If the *Malleus* provides only the book number, this is repeated along with the chapter division in the modern method of citation (i.e., “*Physics*, Book 4 [4.2]” indicates that the reference is to book 4, chapter 2). Note that the Bible is quoted only by chapter number in the *Malleus*, so verse numbers always appear in square brackets. At the end of each question (chapter in Pt. 2), the main primary sources for that section are given in square brackets.

To avoid repetitious footnotes, below is given a list (arranged alphabetically by author’s first name) of the works cited in the *Malleus*, which also provides a brief description of the authors and their works. “Legists” are scholars who study Roman civil law, and “canonists” are scholars of canon law.

Albert (Albertus Magnus or “The Great,” ca. 1200–1285) German Dominican and prominent scholastic. He undertook the monumental task of commenting upon all the works of Aristotle and played a crucial role in winning for the Greek philosopher a prominent place in scholastic philosophy.

Alexander of Hales (ca. 1185–1245) English friar who was both a prelate and theologian. He became a favorite scholastic for Franciscans, and his *Summa theologica* was the text for which he was best known.

Algazel (Abu Hamid Muhammed al-Ghazali, 1058–1111) A Moslem theologian. The references to him in the *Malleus* come from Aquinas.

Ambrose, St. (ca. 340–397) Bishop of Milan, he was a strict defender of orthodoxy.

Anselm (†1109) An Italian monk who was eventually made archbishop of Canterbury. Though his writings were influential, he wrote at the very beginning of the scholastic movement and his works were largely superseded by those of more mature scholastics.

Antoninus (1389–1459) Dominican archbishop of Florence, he wrote the *Summa theologica moralis* towards the end of his life. A popular work on various aspects of moral and ecclesiastical life, it provided the source of the rather negative view of women adopted in the *Malleus* (see above in section on “Sources”).

Archdeacon, the (Guido de Baysio, ca. 1250–1313) Italian canonist. He was best known for the *Rosarium*, a commentary on Gratian’s *Decretum*, but his relevance to the *Malleus* comes from his having written an *apparatus* (collection of glosses) on the *Liber sextus*.

Aristotle (384–322 BC) One of the pre-eminent philosophers of ancient Greece, he advocated the rigorous use of logic. Large numbers of his writings on various topics of philosophy and what we would call science (natural philosophy) survived antiquity, and the rediscovery of these works through Latin translation, first of Arabic translations and then of the Greek originals, had a profound influence on scholasticism (because of his seminal role in the development of scholastic thought he was known simply as “the Philosopher”). Tralaticious references to the *Eudemian Ethics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* are given simply as the *Ethics* without distinction. The pseudo-Aristotelian *Properties of Elements* is attributed to him.

Augustine (354–430) Far and away the most intellectually significant figure among the Latin-speaking Christian thinkers of late antiquity; very large numbers of his writings survive and these formed the basis of western theology until the time of the scholastics. His *City of God* (*De civitate dei*) provided the framework for the medieval understanding of history.

Authentic (*Authenticum*) Medieval term for the *Novels* (*Novellae*), the subsequent Imperial decisions of Justinian that were issued after the promulgation of his *Code*. These decisions were never officially issued as a collection, and two separate private collections survived in the West at the time of the revival of the study of Roman law in the eleventh century. The term *Authenticum* signifies the famous legist Irnerius’s erroneous belief that one collection represented the “authentic” or official version.

Avicenna (980–1037) Moslem interpreter of Aristotle, and in Latin translation his work had an influential impact on scholastic thought, especially that of Aquinas (from whom the references in the *Malleus* derive).

Azo (ca. 1150–1230) Famous early legist.

Bede (672/3–735) A learned English monk who composed a large number of works on a variety of topics. His famous *Histories of the Angles* treated the history of the Germanic population of England.

Bernard (de Botone of Parma, †1266) Canonist whose *apparatus* (collection of glosses) entitled the *Commentary on the Decretals of Gregory VII* became the *Ordinary Gloss* on the *Liber extra*.

Bernard, St. (of Clairvaux, 1090–1153) An early leader of the Cistercian movement, he is cited only in passing in the *Malleus*.

The Birth of the Sciences A work by Robert Kilwardby (ca. 1215–1279), an English scholastic (and high-ranking Dominican

prelate). This work was a theoretical treatment of the nature of speculative philosophy.

Boethius (480–524/5) Important Christian author. While imprisoned, he composed the *Consolation of Philosophy* (*De consolazione philosophiae*), and even though this work is inspired by purely pagan philosophical thought and bears no trace of Christian influence, it was popular in the middle ages. His translation of and commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge* was one of the foundations of Christian logic until the scholastic age. The *Malleus* also has a reference to his treatise *Music* (*De institutione musica*).

Bonaventure, St. (1217–1274) An Italian Franciscan, he was a scholastic theologian.

Book of Examples of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary (*Liber exemplorum Beatissime Virginis Marie*) Presumably an alternative title for some collection of edifying anecdotes; its identity is unknown.

Book of the Saintly Fathers See “Lives of the Fathers.”

Book on Causes (*Liber de causis*) An Arabic compilation of the Greek *Stoicheiosis theologica* of the Neo-Platonic philosopher Proclus, this work was taken to be Aristotelian. It was commented on by Aquinas (from whom the reference comes).

Caesarius (of Heisterbach, ca. 1170 – ca. 1240) Cistercian monk of the monastery of Heisterbach in Germany. He was a prolific author, and his *Dialogus miraculorum* (“Dialogue on Miracles”) was an extremely popular work in late medieval Germany.

Cassian (ca. 360 – ca. 435) Important figure in the spread of the monastic movement in the West during late antiquity. He wrote the *Collationes* (“Conferences”), a collection of conversations that he and a companion had with famous ascetics in Egypt. This work is quoted extensively in the *Malleus* through citations of it in Nider.

Catholicon A popular medieval dictionary of Latin.

Cato A collection of one- and two-line moral aphorisms was made at an indeterminate date under the Roman Empire on the basis of sententious statements in the mimes of Publilius Syrus. One version came with a preface purporting to be addressed by Marcus Cato to his son, and the work was very popular in the middle ages under the title *Catonis Distich* (“Cato’s couplet”). The putative author was presumably meant to be Cato the Elder (M. Porcius Cato, 234–149 BC), who had a reputation for strict morality and was a prolific author (rather than his great-grandson Cato Uticensis).

- Chancellor, the (1166/85 – 1236) Philip the Chancellor was an academic known for his position as chancellor of the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. While his definition of the cardinal virtues in *Summa de bono* was influential, he is little studied apart from that work, and the identity of the *Flowers of Moral Rules* (*Flores regularum moralium*) is unclear.
- Chrysostom, St. (ca. 347–407) His actual name was John, but he posthumously came to be called Chrysostom (“Golden-mouthed”) on the basis of his oratorical skills. He was not a great thinker but his excellence as a preacher resulted in the preservation of a large number of his works, especially homilies and commentaries on various books of the Bible. The *Unfinished Work on Matthew* is the composition of a Late Antique Arian that was spuriously ascribed to Chrysostom.
- Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero, 106–43 BC) The most famous orator of ancient Rome. In addition to many speeches, a number of philosophical works survive. To him was falsely ascribed the *Rhetoric*, an anonymous treatise on rhetorical practice from the early first century BC that is known today as the *Ad Herennium*.
- Code of Justinian* Official collection of decisions of Roman emperors that was compiled by order of the late Roman Emperor Justinian (527–565).
- Dionysius the Areopagite Acts 17:34 states that someone of this name was converted to Christianity by Paul’s speech about the “unknown god,” and several works written in Greek purport to be by this man. Internal evidence shows that the author who adopted this persona lived around 500 and was probably a Syrian monk.
- Directorium [Inquisitorium]* Handbook on inquisitorial procedure written by Nicholas Eymeric (ca. 1320–1399) that was the main source for Pt. 3 of the *Malleus* (see above in section on “Sources”).
- Ecclesiastical Dogmas* (*Liber de ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*) A work falsely ascribed to Augustine; the reference comes from Aquinas.
- Geoffrey (Gotfridus or Goffredus de Trano, †1245) An early canonist. His *Summa on the Titles of Decretals* (*Summa super rubricis decretalium*) was a major source for the *Ordinary Gloss*, but knowledge of him in the *Malleus* is tralaticious.
- Gregory, St. (“The Great”) (ca. 540–604) The first monk elected pope (590), which lent prestige to his writings.
- Guido of the Order of Carmelites (Guido Terrena, †1342) French scholastic and prelate, he wrote a number of works on theology.

Haguccio (†1210) Italian canonist who wrote a *Summa super corpore decretorum* ("Summa on the body of decretals"), which is considered one of the most important treatises on canon law but has never been published.

Heraclides The story of this reference is somewhat complicated. There is a work about early Egyptian monasticism known as the *Lausiac History* (because it was dedicated to Lausus, the chamberlain of the late Roman Emperor Theodosius II) that was written by someone named Palladius, who may or may not be the same as a fifth-century bishop of Helenopolis of the same name. This work circulated in the middle ages in a short Latin version known as the *Paradise of Heraclides* (*Paradisus Heraclidis*) and, on the basis of its content, was also called *Vitas Patrum* ("Lives of the Fathers"). In any case, the references in the *Malleus* come from Nider.

Hostiensis (Henry of Susa or Henricus de Segusio, 1190/1200 – 1271) Influential canonist (the name by which he is generally known refers to his position as the cardinal-bishop of Ostia), whose *Copious Summa* (*Summa copiosa*, also known as the *Aurea summa* or "Golden Summa") was a greatly respected legal treatise.

Isidore, St. (ca. 560–636) Isidore, the bishop of Seville in Spain, was a prolific writer and his *Etymologies* (*Etymologiae*) was popular in the later middle ages as an encyclopedia.

Itinerary of Clement (*Itinerarium Clementis*) This work (also known as the *Recognitions of Clement*) was written early in the history of Christianity (third century?) and purports to be the personal story of St. Clement, who was supposedly bishop of Rome ca. 100. The work was originally written in Greek but survives only in a Latin translation from late antiquity.

Jerome, St. (ca. 340–420) A dyspeptic Christian ascetic, who was also a prolific author. He is best known for drawing up in its final form the Vulgate Latin text of the Bible. He wrote large numbers of commentaries on various books of the Bible. He also wrote several vitriolic treatises against those whose orthodoxy he disputed, and the *Malleus* quotes from the work *Against Jovinianus*, a heated defense of the superiority of celibacy over married life. Towards the end of Book One, Jerome has an extended passage in which he disparages wives as a group, and this became a favorite anti-female text in the middle ages and served as a source for Walter Map in his spurious *To Rufinus* of Valerius (see below under Valerius).

- John Monachi (Johannes Monachus or Monachi, or Jean LeMoine, ca. 1250–1313) Wrote a number of influential works on canon law.
- John (Johannes) Nider (ca. 1380–1438) High-ranking Dominican, whose *Formicarium* or *Ant Hill* and *Praeceptorium* are important sources for the *Malleus* (see above in section on “Sources”).
- John of Andrea (Johannes Andreae or Giovanni d’Andrea, ca. 1270–1348) Important canonist whose *apparatus* (collection of glosses) on the *Liber sextus* and the *Clementines* was soon adopted as the *Ordinary Gloss*. He also wrote the *Book on Jerome* (*Hierominianus*), a treatise on the cult of St. Jerome.
- John of Damascus (St. John Damascene, ca. 675 – ca. 750) The last of the Greek Fathers, he was a vigorous opponent of iconoclasm. His *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* (*Expositio fidei orthodoxae*), which was the third part of his *Fount of Knowledge* (*Pege gnoseos*), was a collection of pronouncements by earlier Greek patristic authors on a variety of topics. The work is similar in conception to Peter Lombard’s *Pronouncements* and is referred to by this title in the *Malleus*.
- Lactantius (Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, fl. 300–320) Christian apologist whose *Divine Institutes* (*Divinae institutiones*) was the first attempt at systematic theology composed in Latin.
- “Lives of the Fathers” (*Vitas Patrum*) This compilation of stories from various sources about the early Egyptian hermits was falsely ascribed to Jerome.
- Lucan (Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, 39–65) Ancient Roman poet whose *Civil War* treated the war that broke out in 49 BC between Julius Caesar and the defenders of the Roman Republic.
- Master, The See Peter Lombard and *Scholastic History*.
- Moses (Maimonides, 1135–1204) Famous Jewish philosopher from Spain. The reference to him is borrowed from Aquinas.
- Nicholas of Lyra (1270–1340) French Franciscan well known for his commentary (*Postilla literalis*) on the Bible. He is cited merely because of Paul of Burgos’s correction of him.
- Ordinary Gloss* (*glossa ordinaria*) Strictly speaking, a “gloss” is a note explaining a single word, but it came to be used collectively to describe a collection of such glosses on a single work. Thus, the “ordinary gloss” signifies the “standard commentary.” The *Ordinary Gloss* on the Bible consisted of excerpts from the recognized exegetes of the past. Later, an *Ordinary Gloss* was established for the canon law (a different commentator providing the commentary for each of the successive codes).

Origen (185–253/4) An extremely prolific and original author on various Christian topics (comparatively few of his works survive). He was highly respected in his lifetime, but in late antiquity certain groups in the Greek East were condemned for adherence to beliefs attributed to him and “Origenism” fell into disrepute.

Pandect This was a medieval term for the *Digest*, which constituted one of the three sections of the final codification of Roman law promulgated under the late Roman Emperor Justinian (527–565). The work consists of extracts from the jurists of Roman civil law arranged under various rubrics in fifty books.

Paul of Burgos (ca. 1365–1435) Spanish biblical scholar whose *Additions* (*Additiones*) or marginal notes on the *Postilla* of Nicholas of Lyra was published several times in the 1480s.

Peter Damian, St. (1007–1072) Italian prior who was deeply involved in papal politics.

Peter de Palude (also Peter Paludanus, ca. 1280–1342) Prolific Dominican author whose works include a *Commentary on Pronouncements*.

Peter Lombard (ca. 1100–1160) Little is known of the man who produced one of the most influential books in the history of scholastic theology. His *Pronouncements* (generally known as *Sentences*) is a collection of excerpts from recognized Church authorities that are arranged under logical rubrics in four books. The work thus showed little originality but was a very convenient summary of views on a given topic. This collection was the standard introduction to theology throughout the scholastic period, and later theologians frequently wrote commentaries on the work.

Peter of Bonaventure See Bonaventure.

Peter of Tarentaise (1245–1277) French Dominican who became Pope Innocent V. He wrote a *Commentary on Pronouncements*.

Philosopher, The See Aristotle.

Pronouncements See Peter Lombard.

Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus, fl. 127–147) Ancient astronomer whose *Almagest* (known by its Arabic name) is a clear exposition of the heliocentric astronomical theory, and as the standard textbook on the subject in the medieval period it provided the basis for scholastic thought on the subject.

Raymund (of Penyafort, or Raymundus, 1180/85–1275) An influential Spanish canonist, he received from Pope Gregory IX the task of drawing up the collection of decretals known as the *Liber extra*.

Remigius (†908) The commentary on the letters of Paul written by Haimo of Auxerre was attributed to Remigius of Auxerre, a Benedictine monk who wrote a number of works of biblical exegesis.

Saintly Doctor, The See Thomas Aquinas.

Scholastic History This work of the twelfth-century ecclesiastic Peter Comestor (“The Master”) was a sort of historical exegesis of the non-didactic books of the Bible that enjoyed great popularity in the late middle ages. Hence, the abbreviated form of reference to both the title and author (though the straightforward “Master” would more naturally be taken as referring to Peter Lombard).

Scotus (John Duns Scotus, ca. 1266–1308) Of Scottish origin (hence the name Scotus, which means “the Scotsman”), he was a Franciscan friar who became one of the most influential scholastic theologians, but, since he was a Franciscan, it was somewhat unusual for Dominicans to follow his views.

Seneca (Lucius Annaeus Seneca, 4 BC / AD 1 – AD 65) Roman Stoic philosopher and author, he composed several tragedies, which were known in the middle ages. The one (tralatitious) quotation in the *Malleus* comes from his play *Medea*, but another quotation attributed to his tragedies actually comes from Publilius Syrus.

Severus (Sulpicius Severus, ca. 360 – ca. 420) Born to a high position in Gaul, he attached himself to St. Martin of Tours and wrote a number of works about his esteemed mentor.

Six Principles This work is an anonymous elaboration on the six of Aristotle’s ten “categories” which he described less fully than the other four (the regular Latin translation of “category” was *praedicamentum*, but here it was rendered as *principia*, which is translated here as “principles”). This work came to be ascribed to Aristotle, but it was often considered by later scholastics to be the work of Gilbert of Porrée (a twelfth-century scholastic of dubious orthodoxy). Many people continued to consider the work anonymous, however, and this seems to be the case in the *Malleus*.

Strabus (Walafridus Strabus, †849) Monk of the famous monastery of Fulda, he was traditionally considered the author of the biblical *Ordinary Gloss*, though this attribution is no longer accepted.

Terence (Publius Terentius Afer, ca. 190 BC – 159 BC) Roman playwright.

Thomas Aquinas, St. (1224/6–1274) Italian scholastic (“Aquinas” means “of Aquino,” his birthplace). A Dominican, he produced a very large number of works on theology, which eventually came to

be accepted as the standard exposition of Catholic doctrine (and were particularly esteemed in Dominican circles). He is frequently mentioned in the *Malleus* simply as the “Saintly Doctor” (*doctor sanctus*), which refers to his canonization. Though a number of his works are cited, the most frequent references are to his *Commentary on Pronouncements*, and to the *Summa theologia*. The peculiar method of citing the latter needs comment. The work is divided into three parts (the last completed, on the basis of his outline, by students, from material in the *Commentary on Pronouncements*), and the second part is itself divided into two parts. Due to its great prestige, the *Summa theologia* was quoted only by reference to the part without explicit mention of the title. References to *Part One* and *Part Three* are simple enough, but the second part was cited as *First* or *Second of the Second* without explicit mention of the word “part.”

Thomas of Brabant (Thomas de Cantinpré, 1201–1271) Dominican scholastic. Among the works attributed to him is the *Universale bonum de apibus* (“Universal Good regarding Bees”), an allegorical treatment of moral precepts and the appropriate behavior of superiors and subordinates that deals with its subject through the image of bees.

Valerius The tract *Ad Rufinum* (“To Rufinus”) is a work of humor that has been removed from its context and taken seriously. It was written by Walter Map (ca. 1140–1208/10), an English ecclesiastic with a rather secular sense of humor, and appeared in his *De nugis curialium* (“Jokes for Courtiers,” 3.3–5). It was supposedly an earlier effort to show the evils of marriage to a friend called Johannes Rufus, with Map using the pseudonyms Valerius for himself and Rufinus for his addressee. The work was then detached and circulated separately, and in this guise enjoyed much popularity among those who favored celibacy. Its spurious argumentation is based on both Classical authors and Jerome’s polemic against marriage entitled *Against Jovinianus*, but it contains much fictional elaboration.

Vincent (of Beauvais, ca. 1190 – ca. 1264) A Dominican friar who produced a massive encyclopedia of human knowledge. The whole work is known as the *Greater Mirror* (*Speculum majus*), and it is divided into four subsections, the first of which, the *Mirror of Nature* (*Speculum naturale*), covers the natural world, while the third, the *Mirror of History* (*Speculum historiale*), treats human history down to 1250.

- William (of Auvergne, 1180/90–1249) A prolific writer on theological matters in the scholastic manner, and his *The Universe* (*De universo*) discusses philosophical questions about the created universe.
- William Durand (Guilhelmus Durantis, 1231–1296) Important canonist whose *Speculum iudiciale* (“Judicial mirror”) was a comprehensive treatment of legal procedure that remained a standard reference for centuries.
- William of Montlezun (Guilhelmus de Monte Lauduno, †1343) Minor canonist.

(c) *Citations of canon law*

The very large number of references to canon law contained in the *Malleus* has resulted in a special treatment of them. The method of citing the texts used in the *Malleus* reflects medieval practice, which is somewhat different from modern usage. Since the *Decretum* of Gratian was the first authoritative book of canon law, it was generally cited without mention of the title at all. The sections of the first part are cited as “dist(inction),” while the “causes” of the second part are cited merely by number; then the relevant question is listed. For the later collections of decretals, these are cited by name (though the *Liber extra* (*Decretum*) is referred to simply as the *Extra*), along with the relevant book and title. In modern texts, the canons are numbered sequentially, but the medieval practice was to quote the first word(s) of the text to indicate which specific canon was meant. In the translation, the titles are translated, since they could be understood even in the abbreviated way in which they were cited. On the other hand, the first word or words quoted from the canon itself were meaningless when quoted out of context, and so have been left untranslated. Instead of endlessly repeating the references for the commonly cited canons, I provide a list of the Latin words used to cite the canons with the corresponding numerical citations used in modern editions of the medieval canon law.

A recta: *Decretum* 2.24.1.9

Ab eo: *Liber Sextus* 2.15.6

Accipimus: *Liber Extra* 5.34.16

Accusatus: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.8

Ad abolendam: *Liber Extra* 5.7.9

Ad conditorem: *Extravagants of John XXII* 14.3

Ad ejus: *Decretum* 1.5.4

Afferte: *Liber Extra* 2.23.2

- Alieni: *Decretum* 2.3.4.1
 Anteriorum:¹⁹ *Decretum* 2.2.6.28
 Audi: *Decretum* 2.11.3.21
 Cessante: *Liber Extra* 2.28.60
 Constitueretur: see *ut constitueretur*
 Consuetudinis:²⁰ *Decretum* 1.11.4
 Consuluisti: *Decretum* 2.2.5.20
 Cum contumacia: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.7
 Cum dilectus: *Liber Extra* 5.34.11
 Cum infirmitas: *Liber Extra* 5.38.13
 Cum litteris: *Liber Extra* 2.20.33
 Daemonium sustinenti: *Decretum* 2.26.7.18
 De his vero: *Decretum* 2.33.2.12
 Decrevimus: *Decretum* 2.3.9.10
 Dixit: *Decretum* 2.32.1.2²¹
 Dixit apostolus: *Decretum* 2.24.3.29
 Episcopi: *Decretum* 2.26.5.12
 Erubescant: *Decretum* 1.32.11
 Ex tenore: see *Ex tuarum*
 Ex tuarum: *Liber Extra* 5.21.2
 Excommunicamus: *Liber Extra* 5.7.13 and 15
 Excommunicamus itaque: *Liber Extra* 5.7.13
 Filii: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.3
 Gravem: *Liber Extra* 5.37.13
 Haec est fides: *Decretum* 2.24.14.1
 Haec tria: actually, the commentary to *Decretum* 2.3.7.1
 (*Infamis*), which begins with “tria sunt”
 Heresis: *Decretum* 2.24.3.27
 Igitur: *Decretum* 2.26.3.1
 Illud: *Decretum* 2.26.2.6
 In fidei favorem: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.5
 Indutiae: *Decretum* 2.3.3.3
 Inquisitionis: see *Inquisitores*
 Inquisitores: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.16
 Inter sollicitudines: *Liber Extra* 5.34.10
 Legi non debet: erroneous citation; perhaps *Decretum* 2.16.1.36 “Legi
 epistolam?”

¹⁹ In the modern edition, § *Biduum* appears separately as Ch. 29.

²⁰ *Consuetudinem* in the official version.

²¹ *Ait* in the modern text.

Licet Heli: *Liber Extra* 5.3.31
 Litteras: *Liber Extra* 2.23.14
 Menna: *Decretum* 2.2.5.7
 Monomachiam: *Decretum* 2.2.5.22
 Multorum querela: *Clementines* 5.3.1
 Nec miris: see Nec mirum
 Nec mirum: *Decretum* 2.26.5.14
 Nec qui fidem:²² *Liber Extra* 4.1.30
 Non licet: *Decretum* 2.26.5.3
 Non observabitis:²³ *Decretum* 2.26.7.16
 Non oportet: *Decretum* 2.26.5.4
 Non potest: *Decretum* 2.2.7.24
 Nos in quemquem: *Decretum* 2.2.1.1
 Noverit: *Liber Extra* 5.39.49
 Per tuas: *Liber Extra* 2.20.48
 Pervenit: *Liber Extra* 2.21.5
 Presbyter: *Decretum* 2.2.4.5²⁴
 Primo: *Decretum* 2.2.1.13
 Priusquam: *Decretum* 1.28.4
 Pro dilectione: *Decretum* 3.2.95
 Proposuisti: *Decretum* 1.82.2
 Qualiter et quando: *Extra* 5.1.17 and 24
 Quanto: *Extra* 2.23.8
 Quantumlibet: *Decretum* 1.47.9
 Qui contra pacem: *Decretum* 2.24.1.32
 Qui illorum:²⁵ *Decretum* 2.24.3.32
 Qui in ecclesia: *Decretum* 2.24.3.31
 Qui viderit: *Decretum* 2.32.5.13
 Quicumque: *Decretum* 2.23.7.1
 Quicumque (haereticos): *Liber Sextus* 5.2.2
 Quid ergo: *Decretum* 2.23.5. 6
 Quisquis nec:²⁶ *Decretum* 2.2.8.3
 Quisquis per pecuniam: *Decretum* 2.1.1.5
 Quo jure: *Decretum* 2.8.1
 Quoniam: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.2

²² *Is qui fidem* in the official version.

²³ *Non observetis* in the official version.

²⁴ Strictly speaking this is in Q. 5, but this question is placed directly after Q. 3 because of the similarity in content.

²⁵ *Qui aliorum* in the official version.

²⁶ This should be *quisquis ille*. Perhaps there has been some confusion in citation, as the relevant section follows a sentence beginning with *nec*.

Quorundam: *Decretum* 1.34.1
 Quotiens: *Decretum* 2.24.1.12
 Sacius: *Decretum* 2.32.4.8
 Saepe contingit: *Clementines* 5.11.2
 Sciendum: *Decretum* 26.4.2
 Si a sacerdotibus:²⁷ *Decretum* 2.15.6.1
 Si aliquis: *Liber Extra* 5.12.5
 Si autem: *Decretum* 2.11.3.11
 Si de rebus: *Decretum* 2.23.7.2
 Si peccatum: *Decretum* 2.33.3 ("Penance")
 Si per sortiarias (et maleficas artes): *Decretum* 2.33.1.4
 Si quando: *Decretum* 2.2.6.40
 Statuta: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.20
 Statutum: *Liber Sextus* 5.2. 9
 Statutum Felicis: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.15
 Super eo: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.4
 Super quibusdam: *Liber Extra* 5.40.26
 Testes: *Decretum* 2.4.2/3.1
 Tua: *Liber Extra* 3.2.8
 Ut commisi: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.12
 Ut constitueretur: *Decretum* 1.50.25
 Ut inquisitionis: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.18
 Ut officium: *Liber Sextus* 6.2.11
 Vergentis: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.10
 Verum: *Liber Sextus* 5.2.11.1

(d) *Outlining of the disputed questions*

To aid the reader in following the argument in disputed questions (discussed above), the standard abbreviations (based on the Latin terminology) that are used in modern editions of Thomas Aquinas to mark the separate sections are added in square brackets at the start of the relevant section of the translation:

[TT] = *Titulus* or "heading."

[AGI etc.] = "argument" 1 etc.; designates the arguments adduced in favor of the false initial answer to the question.

[SCI etc.] = *Sed contra* or "to the contrary."

[CO] = *Corpus* or "body."

[RAI etc.] = *Ratio* or "reason" 1 etc.; designates the rebuttals of the corresponding argument at the beginning.

²⁷ Should be *si sacerdotibus*.

(e) Remarks on certain words in the translation

While I have on the whole tried to translate the *Malleus* with the normal diction of modern English (e.g. “incidental” for *accidentalis*, since “accidental” gives a rather different sense in regular usage), at times I have used words that give the flavor of the medieval thought of the work but may be subject to confusion if the sense is not explained. Sometimes this is accomplished with a footnote in the text, but there are certain such terms that crop up so frequently that it is more efficient to give a single discussion of them at the outset.

Breach of the Faith The Latin *perfidia* literally signifies the act of breaking one’s pledge or faith, and in the ecclesiastical context it refers to someone who has abandoned or corrupted the Christian faith. Since the English derivative “perfidy” normally lacks this religious connotation, I have rendered it with a more literal phrase.

Doctor In normal English, this signifies someone with recognized medical competence, but the Latin word from which it comes simply signifies “teacher.” In an ecclesiastic context, the word describes any recognized orthodox authority (known collectively as the “doctors of the church”). To avoid confusion, *medicus* (the Latin term for a medical authority) is translated as “physician.”

Experimentum This was a medieval term for a procedure that experience has proven to be effective. The term often referred to a magical “spell” but was also used in other spheres of life like medicine (the distinction between what we would call “magic” and “science” being far from clear). I have chosen to retain the Latinate form in order to avoid any possible confusion through use of the modern derivative “experiment,” which has become specialized to indicate a self-conscious (scientific) attempt to determine the efficacy of a procedure.

Nigromancer, nigromancy This is the medieval form for the Greek term *necromancy*, which literally signifies “corpse divination,” a compound noun whose first element derives from the noun *necros* (“corpse”). Once knowledge of Greek was lost in Western Europe in the early medieval period, this element was confused with the Latin *niger* (“black”). Since the color black was associated with evil because of the blackness of night-time darkness, the use of the color to describe what was taken to be the evil practices of magic and witchcraft would have been perfectly natural, and the skills by which magic was practiced came to be known as the “black arts.”

Given these associations with the black arts inherent in the form “nigromancy,” I have decided to retain the medieval version rather than adapt it to the modern “necromancy,” which has different connotations.

Pronouncement This is the more idiomatic translation used for the Latin *sententia*. This term is usually translated with its English derivative “sentence,” which is normally restricted to the meaning “grammatically complete utterance” or “penal judgment in court.” The Latin word more broadly signifies a pronouncement uttered by a person possessing some sort of prestige or authority (hence, the legal meaning), and in the religious context designates a statement of recognized validity issued with reference to some aspect of doctrine or dogma, in contradistinction to an “opinion” (*opinio*), which signifies a similar statement that is rejected by the speaker as a recognized pronouncement.

Sorcerer, sorceress, sorcery These words are used to translate the Latin *maleficus*, *malefica* and *maleficium*, the uniform terms used in the *Malleus* to describe malevolent magic and its practitioners. To some extent, “witch” and “witchcraft” would be the natural translations, but two considerations necessitated the choice of “sorcery” and related terms. First, there is no natural male equivalent in English to “witch,” and some sort of directly related male term is needed both because of the not infrequent discussion in the work of male practitioners and because the work often slips into the masculine gender when speaking in generalities.²⁸ In addition, “witchcraft” similarly seems to be a female-oriented word, and so a gender-neutral term for practicing malevolent magic was called for. The terms related to “sorcerer” seemed best suited for the requirements. A further problem arises in reference to the term *maleficium*, which can signify not simply the practice of magic in the abstract but a specific instance of the practice. Furthermore, in this concrete usage, the term can designate both the physical item that causes the magical result and the physical manifestations in the victim. Since no single English word can convey these meanings, I have translated them respectively as “instrument of sorcery” and “spell of sorcery.”

²⁸ “Male witch” is too cumbersome and would be misleading in generalizing contexts. “Wizard” and “warlock” suffer from the same disadvantage, and in any case these words connote the practitioners of learned magic, who are most certainly not the people intended when the term *maleficus* is used.

Virtue In addition to the meaning of “moral excellence,” which is the normal meaning of the English derivate, the Latin *virtus* also has the sense of an inherent (and often secret) “power” or “capacity” to do something. The word always has this sense here, so that the “virtue of demons” has nothing to do with their morality.

Work, to work The Latin noun *opus* and the derivate verb *operari* are basic elements in the medieval conception of religious action. These words refer to the “works” that bring merit or demerit in a person’s life, and while at times English idiom would seem to suggest other translations like “deed” or “to do,” I have regularly stuck to “work” in order to make the religious implications clear.

(f) *Difficulties with grammatical gender*

In Latin, the masculine and feminine genders are clearly distinguished, and the difference between the two forms is often marked by changing a single letter (e.g. *malefici* “sorcerers” vs. *malefice* “sorceresses” in medieval orthography). In the manuscript for the *Nuremberg Handbook*, which preserves the clean copy submitted by Institoris to the city council and gives direct evidence for his usage, Institoris frequently writes one gender (masculine or feminine) and then repeats the ending for the other gender in superscript letters (e.g. *malefici^e* for “sorcerers/sorceresses”). The first edition of the *Malleus* has no direct correspondence to this usage, but one frequently finds masculine forms appearing where one would expect feminine ones. Sometimes, the masculine forms seem to be generalizing (the masculine gender can be used in Latin when no one in particular is meant), and sometimes anomalous forms can be ascribed to incomplete adaptation of a source (especially Eymeric). But in some instances, the context clearly demands the feminine instead of the masculine form in the text, and perhaps the incorrect gender can be ascribed to the impossibility of rendering in printed format the sorts of superscript letters used in the *Nuremberg Handbook* (though clumsy composition can never be excluded as the cause). In any case, the misuse of gender is quite noticeable in the Latin, and no effort is made in the translation to correct these apparent errors, so that the translation reproduces the jarring sound of the original.

harassment, but the fact that the evil spirit withdrew when David played the lyre was caused by the power of the Cross. This is stated explicitly enough in the gloss, where it says, “David was learned in musical chants. The reasoned and modulated harmony of various sounds signifies the Unity of the Church that resounds in various ways everyday. In his lyre David chained up the malevolent spirit because there was such force not in the lyre but in the Sign of the Cross that was made in the wood and the tightening of the chords, that is, | the veins, which then put the 39D demons to flight.”²⁹⁴

[NOTE ON SOURCES

Major identified sources for Q. 5:

Aq., *On Evil* 2.12; 3.3, 5; 16.2

Summa 1.110.4; 1.114.4; 1.115.4, 5; 1.116.1, 2, 4; 1.117.3

Summa Contra Gentiles 3.103; 3.105; 3.106

Nider, *Praec.* 1.11.35]

THERE FOLLOWS A DISCUSSION OF SORCERESSES
SUBORDINATING THEMSELVES TO DEMONS (IT IS
QUESTION SIX ACCORDING TO THE ENUMERATION)

AS A THIRD AND related difficulty concerning the sorceresses who subordinate themselves to demons, several difficulties can be raised about the method of undertaking such filthy acts.²⁹⁵ First, in terms of the demon and the body assumed by him, which element the body is formed from. Second, in terms of the act, whether it is always performed with an introduction into the sorceress of seed taken from another man. Third, in terms of the time and place, whether he carries out the act at one time rather than another. Fourth, whether he acts visibly with reference to the by-standers. In terms of the women, whether only those who are begotten as a result of such filthy acts are habitually visited by demons; |second, whether those who are offered by midwives to demons 40A at the time of birth are so visited; and third, whether the sexual pleasure is lessened in the case of such women. Since a response to all these questions is not necessary at the present time because our interest is only in the

²⁹⁴ This quotation is an adaptation of Rabanus Maurus's gloss on the biblical passage.

²⁹⁵ The introductory passage in front of Q. 3 (21A) indicates that the third “difficulty” concerning the increase of the Heresy of Sorceresses through demons will treat “sorceresses who subordinate themselves to demons.” Unlike the other questions of Pt. 1, this “difficulty” does not take the form of a disputed question, and instead is a simple discussion in three parts.

generality, and since those questions will be explained individually in Part Two of the work through their deeds, as will be explained in Chapter Four,²⁹⁶ where there will be mention of the individual methods, let us turn to the second basic topic,²⁹⁷ and first to the question of why this form of breach of the Faith is found more often in the delicate sex than in males. The first question will be a general one concerning the general circumstances of the condition of women,²⁹⁸ the second will be a specific one concerning which specific sort of women are found to be superstitious and sorceresses,²⁹⁹ and the third will be a particular one concerning midwives, who surpass all others in evil.³⁰⁰

40B AS FOR THE FIRST, namely why a larger number of sorcerers is found among the delicate female sex than among men, it would certainly not be helpful to cite arguments to the contrary,³⁰¹ | since experience itself makes such things believable more than do the testimony of words and of trustworthy witnesses. Without looking down upon the sex in which God has always performed brave deeds in order to confound, let us say that while different reasons are given by different people for these facts, these reasons always agree in principle. Hence, this topic is quite worthy of being preached for the admonition of women – as experience has often shown, they are eager to listen – so long as it is propounded with circumspection.

Some Doctors give the following explanation. They say that there are three elements in the world that do not know how to maintain a middle course in terms of goodness or evil, and instead attain a certain pinnacle in goodness or evil when they pass over the boundaries of their condition, these three things being a tongue, a churchman and a woman. They do this in goodness when they are ruled by a good spirit, and as a result of this they become excellent. They also do this in evil when they are ruled by an evil spirit, and as a result of this they are rendered very bad.

²⁹⁶ Actually, Pt. II, Q. I, Ch. 4 (105D–114A). The list of deferred topics is repeated virtually verbatim in 105D. It seems that at some point in the composition the material was shifted from Pt. I to Pt. II.

²⁹⁷ As stated in 21A, Pt. I discusses the three elements in sorcery (the demon, the sorcerer, and God's permission), and now the second topic is to be treated. This same topic (women subordinating themselves to demons) is also described there as a "difficulty" relating to the topic of demons.

²⁹⁸ Q. 6 (40A–45A).

²⁹⁹ Qs. 7–11 (see n. 333).

³⁰⁰ Q. 11 (63C–64C).

³⁰¹ Presumably, this means that the usual method of scholastic argumentation is being eschewed.

This is clear with regards to the tongue, since with its help very many | kingdoms have been conquered for the Christian Faith, and for 40C
 this reason the Holy Spirit also appeared to the Apostles of Christ in fiery tongues [Acts 2:3].³⁰² In other wise preachers³⁰³ there is manifested every day the tongue of the dogs who lick the wounds and sores of feeble Lazarus [Luke 16:21] and who tear the souls “from the enemy with the tongue of your dogs,” as the passage [Ps. 67:24] says. For this reason, the Leader and Father³⁰⁴ of the Order of Preachers is represented in the form of a barking dog who holds a burning torch in his mouth, so that down to the present day he has had the task of warding off the wolves of heresy from Christ’s flocks of sheep with his barking.³⁰⁵ It is also clear from daily experience that the slaughter of countless people is sometimes prevented by the tongue of a single foresightful man. Because of these things Solomon not unjustly sang many songs in praise of it: “On the lips of the wise man is wisdom found” (Prov. 10[:13]), and again, “The tongue of the just man is choice silver, the heart of the impious is as nothing” [verse 20] and again, “While the lips of the just man teach very many, those who are unlearned will die amid poverty of heart” [verse 21]. For this reason, it is added that “It is the role of a human to prepare 40D
 his spirit | and of the Lord to govern the tongue” (Prov. 16[:1]).

On the topic of the evil tongue, you will find Ecclesiasticus 28[:16–17]: “The third tongue stirred up many and scattered them from nation to nation, destroyed walled cities and ransacked the homes of the mighty.” (By “third tongue” is meant the tongue of those who speak in an incautious or foul manner in between two opposing parties.)

Regarding the second category (churchmen), understand the clerics and the religious³⁰⁶ among each sex. On the phrase, “He threw the sellers and buyers from the temple,” Chrysostom said, “Every evil arises from the priesthoods, just as every good does.” Jerome said in the *Letter to Nepotianus* [5], “Flee like the plague a merchant cleric, who has turned from a poor man into a rich one and from a low-born man into a prestigious one.” St. Bernard, speaking of clerics, says (Homily 23 on

³⁰² This and the following paragraph are copied over from the source (Nider) and are irrelevant to the issue at hand. Perhaps the references to the Dominican Order and to the failings of ecclesiastics were pleasing to the author.

³⁰³ I.e., members of the Dominican Order (properly known as the Order of Preachers).

³⁰⁴ I.e., St. Dominic.

³⁰⁵ This ugly image is symbolic of the Dominican Order’s mission to hunt out and exterminate heretics. The symbolism gave rise to the false derivation of the term “Dominican” (lit. “belonging to Dominic”) from the Latin for “dogs of the Lord” (*domini canes*).

³⁰⁶ I.e., those who have adopted vows as monks (nuns) or friars.

“The Song of Songs” [23:16]), “If an avowed heretic were rising up, he would be sent off and would wither away. If a violent enemy did so, perhaps the good men would withdraw from him. But in the present time, how will they cast away, where will they withdraw?”³⁰⁷ All men are
 41A friends, and yet all are enemies, | all are intimate associates and none peaceable, all are neighbors and all seek the things that are theirs.”³⁰⁸ In another passage he says, “Our prelates have become Pilates, and our pastors have become fleecers,” and he says of the prelates among the religious who impose heavy burdens on those below them, “They would not touch the smallest ones with their own finger.”³⁰⁹ Gregory says in his *Pastoral Book*, “No one causes more harm in the Church than one who acts perversely but possesses a recognized reputation for saintliness. For no one presumes to rebuke him when he does wrong, and his guilt turns into a forceful example when a sinner is honored out of respect for his status.” About the religious St. Augustine says, “Before the Lord our God, Who has been the witness of my soul since I began to serve God, I straightforwardly admit to Your Charity that it is with difficulty that I have found any people either worse or better than those who have either gone astray or gone forward in monasteries” (*Letter to Vincentius the Donatist* [Let. 2.78.9]).

The evil of women is discussed in Ecclesiasticus 25[:22–23]: “There is
 41B no head worse than the head of a snake, and there is no anger surpassing the anger of a woman. | It will be more pleasing to stay with a lion and a serpent than to live with an evil woman.” Among many things that follow and precede, he concludes about the evil woman in the same passage, “Every evil is small compared to the evil of a woman” [verse 26]. Hence, Chrysostom says in reference to the passage, “It is beneficial not to marry” [Matt. 19:10]: “What else is a woman but the enemy of friendship, an inescapable punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable disaster, a danger in the home, a delightful detriment, an evil of nature, painted with nice color? Therefore, if it is a sin to send her away, then since it is appropriate to keep her, now there is truly an obligatory sort of torture in that we are either to commit acts of adultery in sending her away or have daily quarrels” [*Unfinished Work on Matthew* 38]. Finally, Cicero says, “While men are driven to every act of wrongdoing [*maleficium*=sorcery] by individual,” that is, multiple,

³⁰⁷ So the reading of the first edition; Nider has “whom will they cast aside or from whom will they hide themselves?”

³⁰⁸ A reference to Phil. 2:21.

³⁰⁹ Ultimate source unknown.

“desires, women are led to every sort of wrongdoing [“acts of sorcery”] by a single desire. For the basis of all the vices of women is greed” (*Rhetoric*, Bk. 2 [Pseudo-Cicero, *Ad Herennium* 4:23]). Seneca [actually, Publilius Syrus A5, D8] in his tragedies says, “A woman either loves or hates. No third thing has been given. For a woman to cry is a lie. | Two kinds of tears 41C are kept in the eyes of women, one of true grief and one of treachery. When a woman thinks alone, she thinks evil thoughts.”

There is such praise of good women that it is read that they have even made men blessed and saved nations, lands and cities. This is clear in regards to Judith, Delbora and Esther.³¹⁰ Hence, the Apostle says in Corinthians 7[:13], “If a woman has a husband and he agrees to live with her, let her not send away her husband. For an unbelieving man is made holy through a faithful woman.” For this reason it is said in Ecclesiasticus 26[:1], “The husband of a good woman is blessed. For the number of his years is double.” Almost the whole chapter recounts many very praiseworthy things about the excellence of good women, as does the last chapter of Proverbs about a “stout woman” [31:10]. All these notions about women were also made clear under the New Testament, as in the case of virgins and other holy women who led disbelieving nations and kingdoms from the worship of idolatry to the Christian religion. If someone wishes to do so, let him examine Vincent in the *Mirror of History*, Bk. 26 [actually 25], Ch. 9 about the conversion of the kingdom of Hungary through the most Christian Gisela³¹¹ and that of the kingdom of the Franks through Chlothild³¹² the virgin betrothed to Clovis, | and he will find many miraculous events. Hence, whatever 41D diatribes against the lusting of the flesh are read can be interpreted in such a way that “woman” is always interpreted as the lusting of the flesh according to the passage, “I found woman more bitter than death”

³¹⁰ These three biblical figures were frequently cited in the Middle Ages as examples of heroines. Delbora (a variant of Deborah) cajoled Barak into attacking the Canaanites (Judges 4). Judith saved a Jewish town that was being besieged by ingratiating herself with the enemy commander and murdering him while he was in a drunken stupor (Judith 8–16). Esther, concubine of the Persian king, used her influence with him to secure the execution of a minister of his who was the enemy of the Jews in general and of her uncle in particular (Esther 7). The last two examples suggest that Delbora/Deborah is being confused with the woman Jael, who hammered a tent pin into the head of Sisera, the enemy general who was taking a nap in her tent during his flight after Barak's victory.

³¹¹ Sister of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry II, she married King Stephen of Hungary in AD 995/96. He was the first Christian king of Hungary, and they both helped convert the kingdom to Christianity and were made saints for their efforts.

³¹² In AD 493, Chlothild, daughter of the King of the Burgundians, married the pagan Clovis, who had recently united the Franks. Though she attempted to convert her husband to Christianity, according to Gregory of Tours he actually converted as a result of a vow made during his defeat of the Alamanni.

[Ecclesiastes 7:27], and “A good woman is subordinated desire of the flesh.”

There are others who give different reasons for why women are found to be superstitious in larger numbers than men, and they say that there are three reasons. The first is that they are prone to believing and because the demon basically seeks to corrupt the Faith, he assails them in particular. Hence Ecclesiasticus 19[:4]: “He who quickly believes is fickle in heart and will be made small.” The second reason is that on account of the tendency of their temperament towards flux they are by nature more easily impressed upon to receive revelations through the impression of the disembodied spirits, and when they use this temperament well, they are very good, but when they use it badly, they are worse. The third reason is that they have loose tongues and can hardly conceal from their female companions the things that they know through evil art, and since they lack physical strength, they readily seek to avenge themselves
 42A secretly through acts of sorcery. | Hence, “It will be more pleasing to stay with a lion and a snake than to live with an evil woman. All evil is small compared to the evil of a woman.” (Ecclesiasticus 25[:23, 26], quoted above). The following reason can likewise be added. Since they are prone to flux, they can more quickly offer children to the demons, as in fact they do.

There is also a third group, who give different reasons. Preachers should propound and mention these reasons cautiously. In Scripture, they say bad things about women for the most part in the Old Testament – because of the first sinner (Eva) and her imitators – but later in the New Testament, because the name changed (Eva becoming Ave)³¹³ and because, as Jerome says, “All the evil that the curse of Eva brought in was removed by the blessing³¹⁴ of Mary,” there are very many statements about women that should always be praised and preached. In modern times, however, this kind of breach of the Faith is found more often in women than in men, as experience itself indicates, and by tracing
 42B the reason more carefully beyond the foregoing we can say that | since they are defective in all the powers of both soul and body, it is not surprising that they cause more acts of sorcery to happen against those for whom they feel jealousy. For in terms of the intellect or the understanding³¹⁵

³¹³ This is a rather forced play on words. *Ave* (“hail”) is the first word in the Latin version of the “angelic salutation” to Mary (“Hail, Mary”) in Luke 1:38. Thus, the transposition of the letters in the name Eva (the Latin for Eve) signifies the redemption of the introduction of original sin in the human race by Eve through the birth of Jesus by Mary.

³¹⁴ There is a play on words in the Latin, the words for “curse” (*maledictio*) and “blessing” (*benefdictio*) being similar formations (lit. “speaking well” and “speaking ill”).

³¹⁵ This is an etymological play in Latin in that “intellect” (*intellectus*) is clearly the abstract noun of the verb to “understand” (here in the form *intelligendum*).

of spiritual matters they seem to belong to a different variety than men. Authority and reason, along with various examples from Scripture, indicate this. Terence [*Hecyra* 312] says, “Women are generally like children, possessing trivial views.” Lactantius says that a woman has never known philosophy except Themiste³¹⁶ (*Institutes* 3[.25]). Proverbs 11[:22] says as if describing woman, “A beautiful and foolish woman is a gold ring in a pig’s nose.” There is a natural explanation, namely that she is more carnal than a man, as is clear in connection with many filthy carnal acts. These defects can also be noticed in the original shaping of woman, since she was formed from a curved rib, that is, from the rib of the chest that is twisted and contrary, so to speak, to man. From this defect there also arises the fact that since she is an imperfect animal,³¹⁷ she is always deceiving,³¹⁸ and for this reason she is always deceptive. Cato says, “She sets a trap with tears” [*Distich* 3.20], | and it is said, “While a woman 42C cries, she is striving to deceive her man.”³¹⁹ This is clear in the case of the wife of Samson, who, after importuning him greatly to reveal to her the riddle that he had given to his companions, revealed to them what he had said and thus committed deception.³²⁰ It is also clear in connection with the first woman that they have less faith by nature, since in response to the serpent’s question as to why they did not eat of every tree in paradise, she said, “From every . . . lest we may die” [Gen. 3:2–3]. In this she shows that she is doubtful and does not have faith in the words of God. All this is also demonstrated by the etymology of the noun. For the word “*femina*” [the Latin word for woman] is spoken as “fe” and “minus,” because she has and keeps less [Latin “*minus*”] faith [Latin “*fidem*”].³²¹ This is the result of nature in terms of faithfulness, though as a result of both Grace and nature at the same time, faith never failed in the case of the Most Holy Virgin, when it had failed in the case

³¹⁶ This is a garbling of the name of the Greek goddess Themis, who personifies order.

³¹⁷ The biological notion was that the female was a “defective” or lacking form of the male. The statement here seems a reflection of Aq., *Sent.* 1.102.3.Ra9, which is an explanation of why holocaust offerings in the Old Testament consisted exclusively of male animals.

³¹⁸ The source (Antoninus) is garbled here; the text should say that “she always thinks that she is being deceived.”

³¹⁹ Actually, only the first quote is attributed to Cato in the source (Antoninus), and the second is a modification of a common medieval adage.

³²⁰ For the story of Samson’s riddle and the deception of his wife Timnah, see Judges 14:11–18.

³²¹ This absurd etymology is probably the best-known example of the anti-female reasoning of the *Malleus*. In fairness, it should be noted that this passage is borrowed verbatim from the source (Antoninus of Florence’s *Summa*). The etymology makes sense only in the Romance languages, where the Latin *fides* is often reduced to *fē* (cf. Spanish *fē* and French *foi*). Though the standard modern Italian *fede* retains the two syllables and “d” of the Latin form, archaic Italian used the form *fē*, which must lie behind Antoninus’ reasoning.

of all the men at the time of the Passion of Christ.³²² Therefore, as a result of her nature, since she more quickly forms doubts in the Faith, the evil woman also denies the Faith more quickly, this being the basis for acts of sorcery.

- 42D As for another power of the soul (the will), | when she hates someone whom she previously loved, as a result of nature she swells with anger and with her inability to tolerate this, and she is entirely intolerant of this in the same way that the swelling of the sea bubbles and rushes. Various authorities allude to this explanation. Ecclesiasticus 25[:19]: “There is no anger compared to the anger of woman.” Seneca in the eighth tragedy [*Medea* 579–582]: “No terrifying force of flame or of billowing wind or of hurled spear is so great as that with which a wife bereft of nuptial torches blazes and hates.” This is clear in the case of the woman who falsely accused Joseph and had him imprisoned because he was unwilling to agree to the crime of adultery with her (Gen. 30 [actually, 39]). In fact, the principal cause contributing to the increase of sorceresses is the grievous war between married and unmarried men and women. Indeed, this is the case even among holy women, so what about the others? For in Genesis you see how great was the intolerance and envy of Sarah against Hagar after she conceived (Gen. 21[:9–21])! How great was that of Rachel against Leah because of the sons that Rachel did not have (Gen. 30)! Or that of Hannah against Peninnah, who was fertile while she herself was sterile
- 43A (1 Sam. 1)! Or that of Miriam against | Moses (Numbers 12), as a result of which she grumbled at and disparaged Moses, because of which she was also struck with leprosy! Or that of Martha against Magdalene when she was sitting and Martha serving (Luke 10[38–42])! Hence, Ecclesiasticus 37[:12]: “Deal with a woman about the things that she envies”, as if it said, “one should not deal with her because there is always rivalry, that is, envy in a bad woman.” When they behave this way among themselves, how much more so against men! Therefore, as Valerius [*To Rufinus* 14] relates, on the day when king Phoroneus of the Greeks died, he said to his brother Leontius, “I would lack nothing in complete happiness if I had always lacked a wife.”³²³ To this Leontius asked, “How does a wife obstruct happiness?” and Phoroneus replied, “This all husbands know.” The philosopher Socrates, when asked whether it was necessary

³²² Whereas the Apostles abandoned Jesus at the time of his arrest, his mother was present at the crucifixion according to John 19:25–27.

³²³ While Phoroneus is mentioned by Augustine as an early Greek lawgiver, the character of Leontius was made up by Walter Map in his satirical attack on marriage (see “Valerius” in section b of the “Notes on the translation”).

to take a wife, answered, “If you do not take one, desolation will take possession as the executor.³²⁴ In this case, there is the death of the lineage and your heir is from another’s family. But if you take one, in that case there is endless desolation: complaints about quarrels, upbraiding about the dowry, the burdensome hauteur of the relations by marriage, the prattling tongue of the mother-in-law, someone succeeding to another’s marriage, the uncertain outcome of children.” These things | he said as 43B one with experience. For, as Jerome says in *Against Jovinianus* [1.48], this Socrates had two wives, and though he endured them with great patience, he was not able to escape their insults, shouts and rebukes. Hence, one day they were making complaints against him, and after he left the house to avoid their annoying words and sit in front of the house, the women threw dirty water on him. Unfazed by this since he was a philosopher, he said, “I knew that the rain follows after the thunder.” One can read about a certain man whose wife had drowned in a river. When he was looking for her corpse to remove it from the water, he walked upstream, and when he was asked why he was looking for her upstream though heavy objects flow downstream and not up, he answered, “In life that woman was always contrary to my words and deeds or commands, and so I am looking for her in a contrary manner in case even in death she retains a contrary will that surpasses what is normal.” Indeed, just as 43C the result of the first defect, that of intelligence, is that they commit | the renunciation of the Faith more easily than do men, so too the result of the second, namely irregular desires and passions, is that they seek, think up and inflict various acts of vengeance, whether through acts of sorcery or by any other means. Hence, it is no wonder that such a large number of sorcerers exists in this category.

In addition, how great is their defect in the power of memory, since as a result of nature there is in them the vice that they are unwilling to be ruled and instead follow their own urges without any piety! She strives after this, arranging to this end all the things she has remembered. Hence, Theophrastus says [cited in *To Rufinus* 1.48], “If you entrust the entire house to her, you must act like a slave. If you retain for your own judgment a great matter or even some trivial one, she will think that you do not trust her and will stir up disputes. Unless you consult her quickly, she gets poisons ready and consults soothsayers and predictors of the future.” Behold acts of sorcery! As to what the dominion of women is like, hear Cicero in *Paradox of the Stoics* [5.36]: “Is that man free to whom

³²⁴ I.e., the end of the family will dissipate its property.

a woman gives commands, imposes terms, makes rules, orders or forbids what she wants, or can he or dare he say no to her when she makes some
 43D command? I think that he should be called not simply a slave | but the most wicked of slaves, even if he is born of the most impressive family.” Hence, Seneca, too, says in the person of the raging Medea,³²⁵ “Why are you stopping now?³²⁶ Follow the fortunate impulse! How small is that portion of the revenge in which you rejoice! . . .” [*Medea* 892–896]. Here he makes many statements, showing that a woman is unwilling to be ruled but proceeds by her own impulse, even to her own harm, just as one can read about many women who, on account of either love or pain, killed themselves because they could not wreak vengeance. For instance, in *Commentary On Daniel* [on 11:6] Jerome tells the story of Laodice. Being the wife of Antiochus, King of Syria, and feeling jealous that he would have more love for Beronice, whom he also held as wife, Laodice first had Beronice and her child by this Antiochus killed and then killed herself with poison. Hence, because her wish is not to be ruled but to proceed by her own impulse, Chrysostom³²⁷ not unjustly says, “Oh, an
 44A evil worse than any evil is a woman, whether she is poor or rich! For if she is the wife of a rich man, she does not cease day or night | agitating her husband in clever conversation, enticing wickedly and demanding violently. If, on the other hand, she has a poor husband, she does not stop rousing him too to anger and squabbles. If she is a widow, she looks down upon everyone without distinction and is inflamed by a spirit of arrogance to every form of boldness.”

Let us look, and we find that virtually all the kingdoms of the world have been overturned because of women. For the first prosperous kingdom (Troy) was destroyed because of the seizure of a single women, Helen, and many thousands of Greeks were killed. The kingdom of the Jews suffered many evils and deaths because of a very bad queen, Jezebel, and her daughter Athalia, queen in the kingdom of Judah, who had had the sons of her son killed in order that at his death she could reign herself, but both women were killed. The kingdom of the Romans endured many evils because of Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, a very bad woman. And so on about others. Hence, it is no wonder if the world now suffers on account of the evil of women.

³²⁵ The figure from Greek tragedy who, as an act of vengeance against her ex-husband, killed her own children and his future bride. Seneca wrote a tragedy about this.

³²⁶ “Now” is a misreading. Antoninus (the source) correctly has “Why, spirit, are you stopping?”

³²⁷ Ultimate source unknown.

Next, an examination of the carnal desires of the body. As a result of them countless injuries happen to human life, | so that we can justly say 44B
with Cato Uticensis³²⁸ that if the world could exist without women, we would interact with the gods. For if the evil of women did not in fact exist – not to mention their acts of sorcery – the world would remain unburdened of countless dangers. In the letter *To Rufinus*, Valerius says, “You do not know that woman is a chimera but you ought to know that that triple-shaped monstrosity is made lovely with the outstanding face of a lion, befouled with the stomach of a smelly she-goat and armed with the tail of a poisonous snake.” He means that her countenance is beautiful, her touch malodorous, and her interaction with others destructive.

Let us also hear another characteristic, that of her voice. For she is lying in speech just as she is in nature. She is stinging and yet pleasing, and as a result of this the voice of women is compared to the song of the Sirens, who attract those who sail past with sweet melody and eventually kill them. Women do kill in that they empty wallets, drain strength, and forcibly cause the loss of God. Again Valerius says the following in the letter *To Rufinus*, “The delight gives pleasure and the transgression pricks the senses. The flower of Venus is a rose because under | its dark-red color lurk many thorns.” So Proverbs 5[:3–4]: “Her 44C
throat is more shiny than oil,” that is, her most recent speech is bitter like wormwood.

Let us hear another characteristic. Her walk, bearing and demeanor – this is the vanity of vanities. There is no man in the world who strives to please Beneficent God as much as even a woman who is moderate in her vanities strives to please men. About this there is an example in the life of Pelagia.³²⁹ Being given over to the secular world, she was running around in Antioch with excessive adornment, and a Saintly Father by the name of Nomius began to weep at the sight of her. He said to his associates that in all the time of her life she had never applied such diligence in pleasing God and so on, and in the end she was converted by his prayers. This is the woman mentioned in Ecclesiastes 7[:27] and about whom the Church now laments because of the huge number of sorceresses: “I have found woman more bitter than death. She is a hunters’ snare, her heart is bait, and her hands are chains. He who pleases God will

³²⁸ Ultimate source unknown.

³²⁹ In the *Life of Pelagia*, a work popular in the Middle Ages, the conversion is narrated of the prostitute Pelagia to the life of asceticism through the intervention of Bishop Nonnus (here inaccurately rendered as Nomius).

shun her. He who is a sinner will be captured by her.” She is more bitter
 44D than death, that is, than the Devil: “His name | was Death” (Apocalypse
 6[:8]). For though it was the Devil who misled Eve into committing
 sin, it was Eve who led Adam astray, and since the sin of Eve would
 not have brought the death of the soul and body upon us if the guilt
 in Adam to which she and not the Devil misled him had not ensued,
 she is “more bitter than death.” Again, she is “more bitter than death”
 because death is natural and kills only the body, but the sin introduced
 by woman kills the soul as well as the body by depriving it of Grace
 as a penalty for sin. Again, she is “more bitter than death” because the
 death of the body is an open, fearsome enemy, but woman is a hidden,
 cajoling one, and for this reason she is more bitter and dangerous. She
 is called a snare of hunters, that is, of demons, because men are cap-
 tured not merely through carnal desires at the sight and sound of them –
 since their face is a burning wind and their voice a serpent’s hiss accord-
 ing to Bernard [*Poem of Exhortation to Rainald, The Manner of Living*
Well] – but also through their affecting countless men and domestic
 45A animals with sorcery. Her heart is called “bait,” that is, the imperceptible
 ill-will that holds sway in women’s hearts. Their hands are chains | for
 restraining. For when they set their hand to affecting a creature with sor-
 cery, then with the co-operation of the Devil they bring about what they
 undertake.

Conclusion. Everything is governed by carnal lusting, which is insatiable in them (next to the last chapter of Proverbs [30:15]: “There are three insatiable things . . . and a fourth that never says, ‘It is enough,’” namely the opening of the womb) and for this reason they even cavort with demons to satisfy their lust. More evidence could be cited here, but 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. Blessed be the Highest One, Who has, down to the present day, preserved the male kind from such disgraceful behavior,³³⁰ and clearly made man privileged since He wished to be born and suffer on our behalf in the guise of a man.

³³⁰ This expression of thanks to the Almighty is borrowed from William of Auvergne (*The Universe* 2.3.25), whose point is rather different. He argued that since demons abhor homosexuality, they restrict their sexual attentions to human females, and for this he was duly grateful to God.

*What sort of women are more often found to be superstitious
and sorceresses*

AS FOR THE SECOND topic,³³¹ namely what sort of|women are found 45B
to be more given to superstition and tainted with acts of sorcery than
are the rest, it should be said, as has become clear from the preceding
question, that because three general vices (lack of faith, ambition, and
debauchery) are seen to hold sway among bad women in particular, those
women who are devoted to these vices more than the rest engage in acts
of sorcery more than do the rest. Again, since among these three vices
the last is the predominant one, therefore, since this vice is insatiable
and so on, even among ambitious women the ones that are more tainted
are those who are more inflamed with the purpose of satisfying their
base lustings, like adulteresses, female fornicators and the concubines
of powerful men. This takes place on the basis of seven different sorts
of sorcery, by means of the tainting of the sexual act and fetuses in the
womb with various acts of sorcery, as is mentioned in the bull.^{332/333} First,
by diverting the minds of men to irregular love and so on.³³⁴ Second,
by impeding the procreative force.³³⁵ Third, by taking away the limbs
appropriate for this act.³³⁶ Fourth, by changing men into the shape of
beasts through the art of conjuring.³³⁷ Fifth, by destroying the procreative
force with reference to females. |Sixth, by causing a miscarriage. Seventh, 45C

³³¹ That is, the second topic arising from the broader question of why women are more prone to sorcery than men, as outlined in 40A.

³³² I.e., *Summis desiderantes*, which mentions only the killing of fetuses and the impeding of sex, and not the seven sorts of sorcery.

³³³ The topic of which sort of women are more prone to sorcery is seemingly dropped after only two sentences, and from now until Q. 11 the topic turns to the seven methods of thwarting reproduction. The phrase *et hoc* (“and this . . .”) that introduces the present sentence normally gives an elaboration of some major thought that proceeds, but it is not self-evident which thought is being elaborated. Just after Q. 6 in the Table of Contents it is explicitly stated (3B) that “what sort of women are involved more than others is explained in the following five questions,” and this must refer to Qs. 7–11, which speak of the method of impeding procreation. Furthermore, in 52B the “truth that adulteresses, female fornicators and so on are more frequently sorceresses” is demonstrated by the ability to interfere with procreation, this topic being called “second,” just as it is here. This “truth” is likewise alluded to at the start of Q. 9 (56A), Q. 10 (59B) and Q. 11 (63C), which all continue the seven-fold enumeration indicated here. It would appear, then, that the topic of which sort of women engage in sorcery is discussed (confusingly and illogically) from the point of view of what sort of sorcery they perform. Perhaps this peculiar procedure is a sign that the content of Qs. 7–11 has been adapted from some earlier work and put to use in a new context for which it is ill-suited.

³³⁴ 45C–52B plus Q. 7 (46A–52B).

³³⁵ Q. 8 (52C–55D).

³³⁶ Q. 9 (56A–59B).

³³⁷ Q. 10 (59B–63A).

by offering babies to demons.³³⁸ This is apart from the other animals and fruits of the earth, on which they inflict various injuries; these will be treated in following sections but for the present let us give explanations for the injuries to humans. First, a conclusion about those whom they affect with sorcery in the direction of irregular love or hatred, and later the same topic should be discussed under the rubric of a difficulty for further understanding.

This conclusion is as follows. St. Thomas, when treating the impediment caused by sorcery (*Commentary on Pronouncements*, Bk. 4, Dist. 34 [*Sent.* 4.34.1.3]), gives explanations to show why more power over the sexual acts of man is granted to the Devil by God than over other acts, and therefore it is necessary to say by similar reasoning that those women who are more given over to these acts suffer more harassment. For he says that because the first corruption of sin by which man was made a slave of the Devil reached us through the act that generates, the power of sorcery is granted to the Devil by God in connection with
 45D this act more than with others, | just as the virtue of acts of sorcery is demonstrated more in the case of serpents, as is stated, than of other animals, since the Devil made temptation by means of the serpent as if with his own tool. Hence, as he later adds, though marriage is an act of God, having been instituted by Him, still it is sometimes destroyed through the acts of the Devil, not, to be sure, through violence, since in that case the Devil would be counted stronger than God, but by causing an impediment, whether temporary or permanent, to the conjugal act as a result of God's permission. On the basis of these arguments, let us say what experience teaches, namely that for the sake of carrying out such filthy acts in regards both to themselves and to the powerful men of the secular world of whatever rank and status, they carry out countless acts of sorcery, turning these men's minds to the love of mistresses or to infatuation, so that no shaming or persuasion can prevail upon them to give them up. From these facts the destruction of the Faith or an intolerable risk of this threatens everyday, since the women
 46A know how to change these men's minds in such a way that | the men allow no harm to be done to the sorceresses either by themselves or others, and thus the sorceresses multiply daily. Would that experience had not taught us this at all! To the contrary, however, such hatreds are stirred up through acts of sorcery among those joined by the Sacrament of Marriage and likewise such coolings of the power of procreation

³³⁸ Topics Five to Seven here are all treated in Q. 11 (63D–64B).

that they cannot return or claim the matrimonial debt for the sake of progeny.

Love and hatred exist in the soul, which even a demon cannot enter, and in order that these assertions should not seem almost unbelievable to anyone, they should be discussed under the rubric of a question, since even opposites are more obvious when placed side by side.³³⁹

[NOTE ON SOURCES

Major identified sources for Q. 6:

Antoninus, *Summa* 3.1.25

Nider, *Ant Hill* 5.5, 8

Praec. 1.11.21]

THE QUESTION CONCERNING WHETHER SORCERESSES
CAN TURN THE MINDS OF MEN TO LOVE OR HATRED
(BEING THE SEVENTH IN ORDER)

[TT] THE QUESTION³⁴⁰ IS RAISED as to whether demons can turn and incite the minds of men to irregular love or hate through these witches.

[AG 1] It is argued that according to the foregoing they cannot. There are three elements in man: will, intellect and | body. Just as God can 46B direct the first by Himself (“The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord” [Proverbs 21:1]), He can also enlighten the second through an angel and guide the body through the influences of the heavenly bodies.

[AG 2] Also, demons cannot exist within bodies when changing them, and much less then can they exist within the soul when introducing hatred or love into its powers. The consequence clearly is that as a result of their nature they have greater control over physical than spiritual matters, and indeed it was made clear in many passages above that they cannot cause a change, because they cannot bring about an essential or incidental shape except with the help of some other agent, just like any other craftsman. To the same effect there is also 26, Q. 5, “*Episcopi*” at the end: “Whoever believes that any creature can be changed for better or worse except by the Creator of all things Himself is worse than an infidel and pagan.”

³³⁹ The last clause sounds like an aphorism of scholastic logic, but if so, its relevance is not self-evident.

³⁴⁰ This is the first of the issues raised in 45B but is not overtly marked as such here.