

THE INFLUENCE OF THE *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM* ON
THE STUDY OF WITCHES IN ENGLAND

by

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The *Malleus Maleficarum* is considered one of the most influential pieces of European witchcraft literature, illustrating a powerful viewpoint of witches that defined much of later demonological thought. While the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s overall influence has been well studied, its influence within England has been a lesser focus. This is interesting given England's significant difference from most of Europe in how the country's ideas of witchcraft developed, with many writers taking strong stances against the persecution of witches. This project probes how the *Malleus Maleficarum* was utilized in the discussions of English witchcraft, mainly characterized along religious lines between Puritan theologians and the Anglican Church. My research shows that there was a divide between mainly Puritan theologians, who argued for the existence of witchcraft and utilized the *Malleus Maleficarum* in that purpose, and Anglican theologians, who argued against the persecution of witches and the utilization of the *Malleus Maleficarum*. This division contradicts previous scholarly understanding of the subject established by Keith Thomas in *Religion and the Decline of Magic* of the divide occurring between Puritan branches and the Anglican branches.

By showing this pattern I will explore the nuances of how English religious intellectuals reacted to the assertions of the *Malleus Maleficarum* and how their beliefs indicate a more complicated debate over witchcraft than was previously assumed.

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Introduction

Witch stories have a great hold over our current folklore and modern ideas of early modern Europe. Stories of the Salem witch trials, most notably *The Crucible*, are strong within our popular consciousness and have dominated our view of the witch trials in both North America and Europe, mainly in their injustice towards women and the extensive utilization of what is weak evidence in a modern court of law. While the roots and validity of that view has been extensively explored in other literature, this paper will focus on the European witch trials during the early modern period. In particular, I will discuss how the connection between the *Malleus Maleficarum* and English demonological thought shows the conflict between Anglican writers, who held that witchcraft was generally an incorrect Catholic tradition, and Puritan writers, who held firmer beliefs in witchcraft, and how this contradicts with the standard historical image of those closer to Catholicism retaining more belief in magic while more Calvinist denominations opposed magical beliefs strongly.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* stands as one of the most notable works of demonology within European thought. Written by Heinrich Kramer, also referred to by his title of Institoris, and published in 1486, the book was as a compendium of Institoris' views on witchcraft, notably containing his beliefs regarding the connection between witchcraft and women, his explanation for demons being able to take corporal form, references to how witches existed and should be punished within the bible, and how to conduct a witchcraft prosecution.^{note} An Institorian view on witchcraft was defined by the treatment of witches being primarily women and the weakness

Note: The book had another listed co-author, Jacob Sprenger, who was occasionally cited by those who would refer to the book, possibly because he was the main author cited in the author's justification.¹ But there is significant dispute over how much Sprenger wrote, with some historians feeling that Institoris was the only contributor to the text. And while the evidence for that is disputed, notably by Christopher S. Mackay whose edition I read, it does seem that Institoris was the main writer for most of the book.²

in character that led to them being persuaded by devils to forsake God, the actions that these witches took with their dark magic being focused on the destruction of the family and marriage, and a focus on how to punish them.³ While there have been many works of literature written on the book, discussing its treatment of women as well as the reasons that it has persisted within the thought of witchcraft to the extent that it did, this paper merely notes that the *Malleus Maleficarum* was a notably influential work, with its authors having received a Papal Bull ordering them to continue investigating witchcraft, implicitly giving the book the approval of the highest authority in the Catholic Church, which massively increased its perceived importance to those that agreed with the book as well as those who disagreed with the book.³ This influence would spread even to countries that had split from the Catholic Church.

English demonology, meanwhile, had branched off into its own set of thought that stood out from its contemporaries. Witch trials were a phenomenon that had engulfed all of Europe in the early modern period, with nearly all countries in the continent having some form of witch trials throughout the 1400's to the 1600's. However, all of them developed into their own distinct practices and England was no exception. Most notably, England spent a large portion of the early modern period undergoing considerable political change, breaking away from the Catholic Church and forming its own church, aptly named the Anglican Church.⁴ Eventually divisions formed within the new Anglican Church, pitting the Puritans against the Anglicans who, in the Puritans' view, held on to too many Catholic traditions and needed to cut them away.⁴ This division also manifested in debates over witchcraft in England, in particular the Catholic Church's suppositions about witches, though not necessarily that they and other forms of evil spirits existed in the world.⁵

Contrary to what one might expect, however, Puritans were more likely to believe Catholic ideas of witchcraft than Anglicans, not less likely. To show this, I will first discuss the origin of the belief in the Calvinist Rejection of witchcraft, mainly looking to Keith Thomas' *Religion and the Decline of Magic* and explaining the evidence for these ideas, especially as it pertains to English witchcraft. Then I will discuss the believers in witchcraft, henceforth referred to as Institorians, and the texts that they write, noting continuous trends among both the authors of the texts and their backgrounds, especially Puritan authors, and explaining what these authors believed and utilized the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the parts of it that they utilized. The second section will then discuss the skeptics of witchcraft, and, along similar lines to the first section, discuss why these authors utilized the *Malleus Maleficarum*, what parts of it they referenced for their argument, and look at the anti-Catholic sentiment behind much of their arguments. Then I will explain the overall pattern of Puritan utilization of the Catholic *Malleus Maleficarum* as opposed to Anglican rejection of it, show how this contradicts the standard understanding of religious interactions with demonology, and how this shows the depth of the interactions between varying forms of Protestant Christianity and magical beliefs. Afterwards, there will be an index and discussion of other works that I also read for this thesis, though they were not ultimately vital to the main argument for a variety of reasons.

I have gathered primary sources for this research using two methods. Firstly, I sourced every document in English from the 1400's to 1600's that I found to have mentioned the *Malleus Maleficarum*. For works that did not mention the book, because of the limited scope of this thesis, standout examples were chosen to limit the size of the section, focusing on works either by the authors found in the first search, works that mentioned those authors, or works that showed similarity to the *Malleus Maleficarum*.

A quick note on terminology before I go any further. I will be utilizing the term Institorians to refer to believers in Heinrich Institoris' idea of witchcraft in England. This will mainly be as a result of my focus on the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a way to show the continuity of Catholic witchcraft beliefs in the authors I will discuss and will be used more broadly than the name might suggest. Not all authors to whom I will refer copy Institoris word for word, or even cite him, but there is strong continuity between their beliefs and those professed in the *Malleus Maleficarum*. As such, I feel this terminology is appropriate and will be using it from this point forward.

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3. Tamar Herzig, “The Bestselling Demonologist” in *The Science of Demons* ed. Jan M. Machielsen (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group), 54–57, 62-63.
4. Vivian Hubert Howard Green. *The European Reformation*. Sutton Pocket Histories. (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton, 1998), 66-67.
5. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 490-491.

Religion and the Decline of Magic

First, I will explain the baseline argument for the protestant rejection of the Institorian understanding witchcraft in England. These ideas, that have significant roots in the overall development of the reformed sects (hereby known as Calvinists generally, though specific sects will be named), included their insistence on limiting the ceremony offered by the Catholic Church being taken to begin the end of believing in magic, though both sects still believed in magic during this period. The main proponent of this argument in the study of witchcraft in Europe is *Religion and the Decline of Magic* by Keith Thomas. A landmark text, the book is an extensive discussion of the relationship between religion and magic as it pertains to England, discussing a large variety of magical practices (such as astrology,¹ religious magic,² and healing³) besides witchcraft. Thomas' book aims to examine the connections between all these forms of magic and the religious turmoil in England and does in considerable depth. The book is required reading for those who want to examine English witchcraft, especially in relation to its connection with religion.

The specific argument of the book that I will discuss is that witchcraft skeptics in England were fueled by anti-Catholic sentiment and that these rejections were ultimately caused by the increasing prominence of Protestantism in England. In Thomas' own words "In elaborating this theme the sceptics were essentially continuing the traditional Protestant onslaught upon the relics of paganism to be found in the teaching and practice of the Roman Church."⁴ Thomas noted that these debates were "deliberately conducted within a framework of Protestant fundamentalism."⁵ This argument frames the witchcraft debate in England as being between the rising protestant beliefs (though they were well established by the time of the skeptics),⁶ which ultimately (though not immediately) led to materialism,⁷ and the remaining

Catholic beliefs in England, which held on to a magical worldview.⁶ This idea fits in well with what is generally accepted about English religion and witchcraft, as England was a country with a Protestant sect as its state religion, though a form of Protestantism that retained the trappings of Roman Catholicism more than other protestant sects.⁸ This would explain the remnants of Catholic thought within English religious matters, as well as the country's simultaneous skepticism of witchcraft towards the middle of the period,⁵ before eventually prosecuting many more supposed witches in trials such as the Matthew Hopkins Trials.⁹ It is an explanation with clear examples like Reginald Scot¹⁰ and Thomas Ady¹¹ as well, both of whom are anti-Catholic in their messaging.

However, just because an argument seems to fit in well with prior accepted knowledge does not mean it is true. Thomas admits in the preface of the book that "I am well aware of the compressions and over-simplifications which have resulted in handling so many different topics over so long a period of time"¹² and this is one case where his oversimplification clouds the bigger picture. Thomas himself is aware that some of his observations are oversimplified for the sake of his very broad work being able to cover these topics, with him acknowledging that even Calvinists would implicitly acknowledge the legitimacy of magic by relying on the Catholic clergy for some exorcisms at points,¹³ and his complex writing allows him to still make several strong arguments within the book despite these limitations. When more closely examining the witchcraft writers of this era, both skeptics and Institorians, we find evidence that the divide was not skeptics being Protestant and supporters being Catholic. Rather, we see the conflict emerge between two sects of Protestantism developed in England, the more Calvinist Puritans, who are generally supporters of witchcraft including Catholic texts, and the Anglicans, who are generally more skeptical. This is the opposite of the scenario presented by Thomas, and thus reframes how

we view the conflict in England. Most importantly, many notable English skeptics and supporters reference the *Malleus Maleficarum*, a monumental Catholic work on witchcraft, and by utilizing it and these English sources we can see a pattern emerge in how these two groups approach Catholic ideas of witchcraft.

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6. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 30.
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Institorians

Reviewing the authors who adopted an Institorian understanding of witchcraft shows that the vast majority were aligned with a “Puritan” brand of Protestantism. Institorians in England came from a variety of backgrounds, regarding both their position in society and their belief systems. While there are several treatises written in English that argue for witches coming from Puritans, as the argument of this thesis has put forward, there are still notable treatises written by those other than Puritans, most notably King James’ *Daemonologia*. I have included descriptions of these texts in the index at the end of the thesis, but while there are most certainly examples of non-Puritans writing in belief of witchcraft, they are for the most part less important treatises than the more widely read Puritan supporters. The major exception to this, the aforementioned *Daemonologia*, will not be discussed on account of its author’s heritage in Scottish witchcraft history, which was far more intensive in comparison to England throughout the 16th Century. King James even acted as the head judge and interrogator in the North Berwick witch trials,¹ meaning that his *Daemonologia* carries notable separations with the overall religious conflict between Anglicans and Puritans over the issue. With these issues addressed, this section will review a selection of sources that support witchcraft, especially those that cite the *Malleus Maleficarum*, to show that Puritan authors arguing in favor of witchcraft is a strong trend in English witchcraft discourse, going in order from most important to my argument (as I see it) to least important.

The first source that we will discuss is *Cases of Conscience* by Increase Mather, President of Harvard College at Cambridge, and Teacher of a Church at Boston in New-England.² While it is a source that is not directly from England itself, the colonies in North America still retained a strong connection to England in this era, so we can use this as an example of how English

witchcraft thought was progressing in the 17th Century. The text is written by Increase Mather, a prominent figure within Puritan Massachusetts at the time, as exemplified by his being the President of Harvard.² His other works, such as *A brief discourse concerning the unlawfulness of the common-prayer-worship*, a criticism of the Anglican Church and its liturgy, show his general aversion to ritualized forms of worship outside of prayer, with him rebelling against the act of kissing the Bible as a form of swearing to God, on account of it not being discussed in the Bible.³ It is then curious that he was such an ardent Institorian that not only was he slow to denounce the Salem witch trials fully despite their unpopularity,² but also argued the veracity of the result of George Burroughs' trial. He stated outright that "had I been one of his judges, I could not have acquitted him."⁴ In addition, Mather cited the Catholic *Malleus Maleficarum* for his arguments.⁵

This seems directly contradictory to Thomas' framework of England's rejection of witchcraft being based in a Protestant rejection of Catholicism and its ideas, given that this Puritan author, who balks at forms of worship not mentioned in the text of the Bible,³ is willing to not only argue for an active magic in the world but citing Catholic sources to do so.

Cases of Conscience shows the author's belief that witches exist in the world fully enough to be identified and prosecuted for their crimes. As a result, the pamphlet argues strongly in favor of the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s idea of witches, and utilizes it as a source of criticism for more "pagan" ways of learning about witches, such as burning them with iron, directly citing a page number for this claim.⁵ Both Institoris and Mather feel that this form of identification is ineffective as demons can protect against these forms of identification well enough that they can't be trusted fully.⁶ This belief is remarkably strong, because Mather had earlier written a similar text titled *Illustrious Providences* that discussed witchcraft in similar terms. Notably, he acknowledged many of the witchcraft skeptics in England, including Reginald Scot and Thomas

Ady, as not being heretics or witches themselves, noting “that never any did maintain that familiarity with the evil Spirits, which is commonly believed,”⁷ though his treatise ultimately argued for the existence of witchcraft activity, citing the *Malleus Maleficarum*.⁸ Mather’s works present the conviction with which Puritan thinkers believed in an Institorian view of witchcraft, and thus show an important source within English witchcraft literature that contradicts Thomas’ assertions.

For another Puritan source, we come to William Perkins’ *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft*. An extremely popular work, partially because of his high standing in the world of Protestant theology,⁹ Perkins’ book was a major force in the English witchcraft discussion of the 17th century, with multiple authors citing him to either agree with or rebut his arguments.⁹ He was also a notable Puritan author of other religious works during his time, which helped bring his *Discourse* more prominence. While he was relatively more moderate than some other Puritans, being able and willing to work with the Church of England as a leader of its Puritan movement, he still occasionally faced issues related to his assistance of more radical members of the sect. He still maintained strong Protestant beliefs, notably preaching for predestination, worship of Christ alone, and study of the Bible alone, indicating strong separation from traditional Catholic values.¹⁰ Thomas mentions him in his book as a writer on witchcraft,¹¹ but glosses over some of the doctrinal differences between Perkins and the Anglican Church that undermine Thomas’ later ideas regarding why England rejected witchcraft.¹² For these reasons, Perkins is an important author to discuss in the context of the religious debates over witchcraft in England.

The treatise itself is organized around discussion of witch practices themselves primarily, starting with what witchcraft is and then delving deeper into how it is practiced and

developed, before dedicating the end to how witches should be punished and how to apply that doctrine in 17th century England.¹³ The treatise is not necessarily breaking ground in how it portrays witchcraft as a contract with devils,¹⁴ as the idea of contracts between the devil and that being the result of witches' powers were the standard beliefs of the time. What makes *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* stand out is the amount of detail that Perkins puts into describing these beliefs, being a much more thorough work on the ways that witchcraft has evolved. For example, Perkins makes clear that witches in Moses' time and those in 16th century England are the same to the point of considering them "the same that were in Moses time: and therefore by their owne reason must needes be condemned by this Iudiciall lawe."¹⁵ The similarities to the *Malleus Maleficarum* are very evident, though it is not directly cited, as the *Malleus* and Perkins touch on witchcraft in similar ways, being focused on how witchcraft is practiced,¹⁶ what it is,¹⁷ and how to ultimately bring it to justice,¹⁸ though the *Malleus Maleficarum* focuses on the later part more so than Perkins.¹⁹ Other similarities include their focus on what demons and the devil do,²⁰ how they make contracts with humans,²¹ the way in which that devil's power is limited,²² and finding biblical evidence for witches, with both criticizing Saul for seeking their advice, with both arguing Samuel had been a fake to recommend that option to Saul.²³ While most religious thinkers of the time did invoke the Bible, the two making the exact same argument for that passage is a striking similarity. What makes these connections more interesting, is that Perkins attacks Catholic doctrine in significant ways in this treatise, devoting a subsection to the false nature of Catholic exorcisms,²⁴ despite these being some of the same practices Thomas notes Calvinists often requested Catholics to help in.²⁵ These attacks on Catholicism are somewhat strange when combined with the clear textual relationship between Perkins and the *Malleus Maleficarum*, but Perkins seems to rationalize this

by objecting to the exorcisms of spirits and relics specifically, rather than to any of the examples pushed by the *Malleus*.²⁴ That the *Malleus Maleficarum* shares notable beliefs with one of England's most influential witchcraft texts speaks to the level of influence that it had within English demonological thought.

The next text varies significantly from those we have discussed before, as it is a response to accusations rather than a treatise in and of itself. Titled *A Detection of that Sinful, Shamful, Lying, and Ridiculous Discours, of Samuel Harshnet*, the book was written by John Darrel as a response to those he believed were slandering him over his supposedly fake exorcisms.²⁶ Most notably, Darrel isn't making an argument for witchcraft as a whole like the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the other witchcraft treatises that we've seen. This is a personal response. The work is structured entirely around refuting Harsnett's accusations, with Darrel listing his attacks and then bringing in his own counterarguments.²⁷ Despite this focus, there are clear allusions to Darrel's belief and actions regarding witchcraft, with him actively arguing for the legitimacy the cases that he was handling.²⁸ Additionally, he directly attacked Harsnett himself and accused him of bribing others into confessing to Darrel's supposed crimes.²⁹ What makes this work notable is that it is a direct example of a Puritan-Anglican conflict over the validity of witchcraft and mysticism. Samuel Harsnett would eventually become an archbishop of the Anglican Church,³⁰ while Darrel was an established Puritan who was arguing for the validity of Puritan exorcisms,²⁶ removing the devil and other spirits from peoples bodies.²⁸ This makes the Darrel and Harsnett conflict an encapsulation of the larger debate between Puritans and Anglicans over the validity of witchcraft, contradicting Thomas's argument of an anti-Catholic driven rebellion against witchcraft. This Puritan-Anglican conflict acts as the backbone for major English discourse on witchcraft, and cannot be ignored when looking at the demonological canon in the country.

Moving to another English author, we come to Richard Gilpin, author of *Demonologia Sacra*. *Demonologia Sacra* is a treatise of considerable length that discusses the history of demons, as the author writes it, from Satan's fall to the history of witchcraft and how it has been defined.³¹ The work focuses on Satan and his works, focusing most of its discussions in terms of the figure of Satan and his history, and how his actions are still at play in the world today.³² The treatise places considerable focus on the religious purity aspects of defending yourself from Satan, to a greater degree than other treatises, focusing on self-reflection in order to be able to avoid his schemes to corrupt and weaken your moral foundations.³¹ The author quotes the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source for the idea that consecrated places can be sprinkled with holy water to help purify them and rid them of any devilish influence, displaying his broader knowledge of witchcraft.³³

Richard Gilpin is a unique figure within the sources that we've discussed, in that he is a general non-conformist rather than a hardline Puritan like Mather, or even Perkins.³⁴ While this means that Gilpin wasn't at home with the doctrines preached by the Anglican Church, it didn't necessarily make him a Puritan in belief, though he did preach on Devils in a similar manner.³⁴ He held multiple religious gatherings outside of the Anglican Church, and was punished repeatedly for such activities.³⁴ That he continued to organize such activities indicates conflict with the Anglican Church. Given Gilpin's strong criticism of both popes and Catholic believers within *Demonologia Sacra*,³⁵ he clearly had stronger Protestant leanings than the Anglican establishment, as he would be unlikely to dislike them for not being close enough to Catholicism and still express such sentiments. Despite this, he was still willing to utilize the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source,³³ which provides another example of the anti-Catholic divide described by Thomas not preventing someone from utilizing Catholic beliefs in the case of witchcraft.

For the last of the Institorians, Joseph Glanvill provides another witchcraft treatise. His treatise, *Saducismus Triumphatus*, discusses the overall picture of witches and spirits, aiming to definitively prove their existence.³⁶ Proving that witches were an active threat that should be prosecuted was a much taller task with the treatise being published in 1681, when the Witch Hunts were dying down across Europe.³⁷ Glanvill chose to write this text in order to combat what he saw as a rise in Atheism through anti-witchcraft texts.³⁸ He was raised Puritan, and eventually developed into a Latitudinarian thinker. Latitudinarianism refers to an opposition to any specific or restrictive doctrines within Christian faith despite officially being part of the Church of England. This put Glanvill in conflict with both the Church of England with some of its more ritualistic practices as well as Puritanism with its strict codes on behavior.³⁹ While it may seem strange to bring a thinker who has such a strong break from the Puritan community in this section, Glanvill is an interesting figure to discuss regarding my point. Firstly, he provides an example of an English Institorian who was not Puritan and thus shows the widespread influence of Catholic witchcraft beliefs on English Protestant thinkers. Secondly, while Glanvill most certainly doesn't align with Puritans, he also was not fully in line with the beliefs of the Anglican establishment, meaning that his inclusion can still be used as a contrast to their own beliefs. Glanvill's treatise provides a detailed view of the proof of both spirits and witches in his mind,³⁶ as well as other letters written to and by him on the subject.⁴⁰ The book, similarly to Perkins' work, utilizes evidence from the Bible to help prove the validity of its view on witchcraft,⁴¹ but also makes clear use of specific examples from testimony that he had recently heard of: stories of endless drum beats that couldn't be found,⁴² witches cursing children into sickness,⁴³ and women signing contracts with devils,⁴⁴ among other examples.

The most interesting parts of the book are when Glanvill argues against both Reginald Scot and John Webster, two of the main skeptics of witchcraft. For Scot, Glanvill accuses him of not having strong reasons to argue against witchcraft, simply pulling up old stories and laughing at them without giving a convincing argument against witchcraft as a whole. Additionally, he directly argues against Scot's accusations that witchcraft cannot be found in the Bible, bringing examples in the Old Testament of mentions of witchcraft.⁴⁵ For Webster, Glanvill directly brings up his arguments later in the text regarding how Saul would be unable to see an apparition, claiming that there are numerous examples of apparitions only appearing to one person and that this does not disprove witchcraft.⁴⁶ Glanvill's arguments for the treatise show how proponents of witchcraft came from multiple denominations aside from Puritanism, and that these denominations had some conflict with the Anglican opposition to witchcraft. This once again throws a wrench into Thomas' theory on the rejection of witchcraft by England, as those who would typically be most opposed to the rituals and magic associated with Catholicism are those who act as the most prominent defenders of witchcraft.

By looking at the supporting documents we can see clear trends of many Puritan, as well as other denominations, thinkers that broke away from the main Anglican Church being the main supporters for witchcraft. When analyzing this when compared to Thomas' ideas, we can see a clear divide between the anti-Catholic countrywide resistance to witchcraft, and those that supported the idea of witches. Many Puritans, those that believed the Church of England to be too Catholic,⁴⁷ were ardent supporters of witchcraft, which makes the idea of ascribing that idea to England's rejection of witchcraft in totality misleading. Many of the skeptics were pushed forward by anti-Catholic beliefs, as will be discussed, but the presence of prominent Puritan supporters of witchcraft shows that considering anti-Catholic beliefs the sole reason for

England's relative rejection of witchcraft is inaccurate. Looking into the skeptics will bring much more ardent anti-Catholicism, but this will be from primarily Anglican authors.

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Skeptics

Skeptics of the Institorian understanding of witchcraft, in contrast to the Institorians, were mainly Anglican authors. They argued fervently from the Anglican perspective and showed strong anti-Catholic traits throughout their arguments. As mentioned before, the anti-Catholic traits in these sources would seem to support Thomas' arguments, especially given how much emphasis it places on the Protestant parts of this skepticism. However, that same emphasis on a Protestant onslaught is contradictory when considering the presence of Puritan Institorians. If the belief were to go exactly as Thomas argued then you would expect there to be a considerable number of Puritan skeptics, as opposed to Puritans' strong association with belief in witchcraft. Looking at authors that are skeptical of Institorian witchcraft beliefs, especially those that cite the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the anti-Catholicism present in these rejections of witchcraft came most prominently and prolifically from Anglican writers. I define as having strong ties to the Anglican or Elizabethan establishment and royalty and apparently following the Anglican book of common prayer. These sources are remarkable in the consistency of their arguments, though not without exceptions. While there are Institorian sources from Anglican authors, namely Henry Holland,¹ they are considerably outnumbered in both importance and amount by their contemporaries who believed in witchcraft. The balance is certainly skewed towards Anglican authors for skeptics, which contradicts the argument put forward by Thomas. With much of the arguments for witchcraft coming from Puritan or otherwise Calvinist sources and the arguments against coming from Anglican sources, the picture painted is one in which the more Catholic leaning Anglicans are the stronger opponents of Catholic witchcraft, with the more Calvinist Protestants like Puritans still retaining the belief in witchcraft well into the end of the 17th

Century. Like the Institorian discussion, I will be listing the authors in order of importance to my point from most to least important.

The first work is *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, written by Samuel Harsnett. Harsnett is a figure who was mentioned earlier in the discussion of supporters, mainly in relation to his conflict with John Darrel, and is the most publicly important person in this section for the purposes of my argument. Harsnett was an Anglican priest who eventually rose to become Archbishop of York, making him one of the highest-ranking Anglicans to discuss witchcraft, though he became Archbishop decades after this book.² The fact that a skeptic who, as we will discuss, was so prominently anti-Catholic and against the Institorian idea of witchcraft rose to such a high position is invaluable to show the Anglican rebellion against Institorian ideas. This work is specifically addressed to the Catholics of England, and aims to discuss and show off how the Catholics have been misled by the Pope and his followers away from the true word of God,³ accusing the Pope and the Papacy of being directly working with Satan and actively being his heralds in spite of claiming to drive him away.⁴ This focus is discussed throughout the whole work, which focuses on how the Papacy conducts their business and sways their followers to their side through claimed acts of God that are in fact satanic illusions.³ As a work that had received a Papal bull of approval, naturally the *Malleus Maleficarum* comes under fire in this work. Sprenger in particular is named multiple times as someone of note that participates in the Pope's deceptions, showing that Harsnett directly links the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the Catholic Church. At one point Harsnett directly accuses Sprenger of utilizing his practices to get fame and money.⁵ This work is not unique in its negative view of the papacy, as writers like Thomas Ady held similar views, but its singular focus on attacking Catholicism as a whole distinguishes it from other sources discussed here. Catholicism is the only subject of this work,

and this stands in contrast to works of more Protestant authors like William Perkins and Increase Mather, who do not mention Catholicism with nearly as much focus, despite their clear objections to some of its practices.⁶ This gives a powerful example of the anti-Catholic sentiment held by the Anglican establishment in regards to witchcraft, and how it contrasts the puritan view on the subject.

Continuing with works of Samuel Harsnett, we come to his accusations against John Darrel, an Institorian who was conducting Puritan exorcisms in the countryside, titled *A discovery of the fraudulent practises of Iohn Darrel*. Harsnett's earlier treatise indicates his distaste for witchcraft incidentally, given his attacks on the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s authors, but this distaste is on full display in this treatise. He accuses Darrel of utilizing witchcraft as an excuse to give his patients instead of truly solving their problems.⁷ He continuously attacks Darrel's supposed dispossession of various people,⁸ as well as Darrel's various claims regarding his abilities,⁹ continuously throughout the treatise, painting a picture of Darrel as someone who scams others and pretends to exorcise them.¹⁰ Harsnett also continues his anti-Catholic attacks against Darrel, referring to him as "popish" on occasion,¹¹ an interesting comment on a puritan exorcist, as well as those whose witchcraft experiences he finds guidance in.¹² These comments show that Harsnett connects exorcism and the treatment of demonic ills by such methods with Catholicism explicitly, most prevalently in his accusation that they use the baptism to fake driving devils away.¹³ Such a direct attack on a fundamental Catholic practice shows Harsnett's dedication to attacking Catholicism and his strong association of Catholicism with witchcraft. This work also bears interesting similarities to how Harsnett attacks the *Malleus Maleficarum*, as his accusations of Darrel scamming people reflect what he wrote later about Sprenger utilizing his practices to get fame and money off of those he supposedly helped deal with witches.⁵ This

work is an extremely important one for its clear example of the conflict between Anglicans and Puritans regarding witchcraft. Contrary to what one would expect, the Anglicans are referring to the Puritans as being popish and too Catholic,¹¹ which is especially interesting in the context of Thomas' arguments regarding the Protestant nature of England's skepticism over witchcraft. The standard roles of the religious beliefs are reversed, which contradicts Thomas' conclusion entirely. With the more Protestant sects of England displaying much more acceptance of witchcraft than their Anglican counterparts, to the point of being considered popish, English witchcraft literature is clearly more complicated than a simple idea of anti-Catholic skepticism entirely.

Next in the skeptical texts is Reginald Scot's *Scot's Discovery of Vvitchcraft*, which is arguably the most famous skeptical witchcraft work in England. This source is not only one of the largest works discussed here, but is written by the most consistent critic of the Institorian view of witchcraft. Scot himself doesn't appear to have been a major figure outside of this work, being mainly relegated to helping build dams in Kent while financially surviving from his cousin. His connections with the aristocracy, mainly his cousin Sir Thomas Scott, and some of the clergy indicate that he was connected to Anglicanism, despite not holding entirely orthodox views.¹⁴ The work acts as Scot's ultimate refutation of the Institorian worldview of witchcraft, with Scot discussing every idea regarding witches he can, be it witches' connection to spirits and why they cannot work as described,¹⁵ why people may confess to witchcraft when they have not committed the crime,¹⁶ and a variety of other factors related to Institorian witchcraft. Notably, Scot has the same anti-Catholic sentiments that we have seen from Harsnett, remarking early on that the pope's religion is absurd and finding that "in the erection and maintenance of idolatry and superstition, specially in Images, pardons, and reliques of saints, will yet persevere to think,

that the rest of his doctrine and trumpery is holy and good.” while making accusations of them being notable culprits in accusing women of witchcraft.¹⁷ Naturally, with such a strong anti-witch prosecution message in this work, the *Malleus Maleficarum* is openly rejected by Scot. Scot mentions the book by name repeatedly, while citing it in many other instances.¹⁸ Firstly he mentions an instance of the *Malleus* believing that Circe transformed Nebuchadnezzar into an ox, which he counters by claiming that the animalistic descriptions referred to his behavior rather than any physical transformation, and that this is backed up by other experts.¹⁹ Another time, Scot calls Jacob Sprenger and Heinrich Institoris liars, attacking their claims regarding witchcraft in the *Malleus Maleficarum* as being written to maintain their credit and citing their supposed protection by God from the curses of witches as an example of those lies.²⁰ He also calls their book popery, but while doing so describes their book as being a source of a variety of stories and accusations that he himself has utilized.²⁰ Scot’s consistent condemnations of the *Malleus Maleficarum* in combination with his general anti-Catholic attitude solidifies the Anglican rejection of witchcraft being based on a rejection of Catholicism, adding more evidence to the argument that the anti-Catholic sentiment came specifically from Anglicans rather than the broader Protestant rejection of Catholic ideas that Thomas paints.

Looking to another source that is skeptical of witchcraft, *A Candle in the Dark...* is the work of Thomas Ady, an English physician. We know very little about Ady, as he was a physician who only published this treatise on witchcraft, along with an updated version of the same work later.²¹ His admiration of Scot, along with his attacks against America and the Scottish King James early on,²² may indicate that he was Anglican. However, he also clearly admired William Perkins, though he refused to believe that Perkins’ witchcraft treatise was truly published by him.²³ Ultimately, there is little hard proof of his beliefs as a person. However, his

beliefs regarding witchcraft lined up strongly with his more evidently Anglican contemporaries. We see this in his writing, as *A Candle in the Dark*... argues that witchcraft is consistently wrongly prosecuted and such prosecutions break God's law.²⁴ Notably, Ady goes out of his way to note that witches are real, and that he is not denying their existence in and of itself when writing the treatise.²⁵ He is arguing that witchcraft trials and how people imagine witches is not accurately finding them,²⁶ and thus there should be far more restraint and caution when it comes to witchcraft prosecution,²⁵ rather than the far more radical idea that the concept of witches has no proof in and of itself. The *Malleus Maleficarum* is mentioned within *Candle*, with Ady mentioning the authors, Jacob Sprenger, and Heinrich Institoris, by name when critiquing the work.²⁷ Ady accuses the *Malleus* of being dyed with "horrible lyes and impossibilities", and additionally accuses the authors of being pawns for the Pope, whom Ady calls the Grand Witch, and enforcing his will to torment innocent Christians on the basis of groundless tradition.²⁷ Ady connects the Pope to the authors by the *Malleus Maleficarum*, claiming that the "horrible lies and impossibilities" mentioned within the book are a way for they and the Pope to hide their cruelty from the rest of the world.²⁷ *Candle* still stands as a testament to how skeptics of the witchcraft trials in England framed their arguments. They distrust sources like the *Malleus* because of it being a papal source, which was accurate given that Institoris received a papal bull of approval.²⁸ They also argue that those accusing others of being witches don't present strong enough evidence to convict people of being witches.²⁹ *Candle* continues the pattern of Scot and Harsnett by being a strongly anti-Catholic work, though unlike them it is harder to pin down Ady's beliefs. Still, Ady follows their lead in arguments and thus still conveys the consistent anti-Catholic Anglican angle.

The next source of the skeptics is John Webster, who wrote *The displaying of supposed witchcraft* in 1677. Webster is an interesting religious figure, nominally having no true sect, and mainly advocating against traditional learning and the devil having a physical presence.³⁰ He seemingly held anti-religious establishment views during the time of the English Commonwealth but had mostly switched to supporting the following royalist regime by the time he wrote this treatise, becoming far more in line with the Anglican establishment.³⁰ His actions after the Restoration included voting for royalist candidates in Parliament, attacking the Quakers that he had once supported, speaking positively of the Royal Society, and being promoted to Magistrate as a result of his conformity to the restored Anglican Church.³⁰ Because of this, I will be discussing him as Anglican in this context, as this book was written during this period.³⁰ This source, as its name indicates, rejects the ideas of those that argued for the prosecution of witches, and in a similar way to Scot. Webster spends the essay arguing against the prosecution of witchcraft,³¹ as Scot did, while also taking the time to attack the works of those who were critiquing Scot directly. Indeed he mentions both the *Daemenologie* attributed to King James by name,³² as well as the attacks made against Scot by Joseph Glanvill³³. Webster's critiques are another example of a skeptic using similar refutations of witchcraft to Scot, who was focused on refuting arguments for and examples of witchcraft similar to and occasionally sourced from the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Examples of this include him claiming that Scot doesn't argue that witches do not exist,³³ calling Glanvill's stories about witchcraft silly and that he has very little ground to accuse Scot of simply attacking silly stories, writing "and if *Scot* were little better than absurd, then he the better agrees with Mr. Glanvil,"³⁴ and arguing against the idea of witches copulating with the devil³⁵, an idea with roots as far back as the *Malleus Maleficarum*.³⁶

Webster, despite his unique religious history, continues the trends previously expressed by the other skeptics, though that is not to say that there was no variance in skeptical beliefs.

The last skeptical source that will be discussed, *The Infallible True and Assured Vvitch* by John Cotta stands as an interesting break from the typical skeptic. Cotta was a physician by trade, much like Ady, though he was a clearly sympathetic Puritan, another difference from the mainly Anglican skeptics that were previously discussed,³⁷ and that difference is noted in how they discuss witchcraft. The treatise argues that, while witchcraft in and of itself exists, it cannot be easily identified.³⁸ It describes witchcraft in great detail, describing practices,³⁹ methods of identification for both witches and evil spirits,⁴⁰ how they hide their identities,⁴¹ and things in the world that only learned men are aware of (according to the treatise),⁴² ultimately coming to the conclusion that there are few ways to accurately persecute witches that only experts, such as Cotta, would be able to utilize.⁴³ Cotta clearly argued for the prosecution of witches, as opposed to other skeptics, mainly using the treatise as a testing ground for the limits of modern thinking.³⁷ Cotta cites the *Malleus Maleficarum* twice within the treatise, firstly to corroborate the idea that German witches were able to utilize their powers to cure diseases,⁴⁴ and secondly to corroborate the idea that they have been known to kill children.⁴⁵ This shows the differences between Cotta's brand of skepticism and those of the other skeptics, as they reject the ideas of the *Malleus Maleficarum* outright, especially Ady,²⁷ Scot,¹⁹ and Harsnett,⁵ while Cotta is perfectly willing to utilize it as a source for witchcraft practices, despite his skepticism over the reliability of non-experts looking for witches. This utilization of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, perhaps as a result of his Puritan beliefs, makes Cotta almost Institorian in his beliefs on witchcraft, with his main difference being the greater restraint he has on non-expert prosecutions. Cotta acts as an example against the general skeptical consensus and how the skeptics could review similar arguments

against witchcraft in very different ways, and further serves to strengthen the idea of the divide over witchcraft between Puritans and Anglicans, given his much different approach to skepticism than his Anglican counterparts.

Looking at this evidence shows a different picture of English witchcraft than Thomas describes, and suggests that there was much more complexity to why England ended up with the amount of skeptics of Institorian witchcraft that it had for reasons other than a simple Protestant rejection of Catholicism. While there is variety in the background of these skeptics, they all mostly fall into line with each other in terms of core beliefs, with several of them referencing each other in their treatises. The only exception to this, the Puritan John Cotta, further emphasizes the divide on the Institorian view of witchcraft between the Puritans and the Anglicans.

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Conclusion:

English witchcraft has been viewed through the lens of Thomas' argument in *Religion and the Decline of Magic* since the 1970's. And that is not without reason, as the book was a landmark in understanding how magic interacted with religion and why these beliefs became less common by the 17th century after their rise in popularity during the 15th century. However, that does not mean that the book must remain unchallenged, as history is always trying to find new ways to understand events. Looking at the religious beliefs of many of the English authors discussing witchcraft during the early modern period, we see a clear indication that more work must be done on this subject, as Thomas' argument does not hold merit when observing the tendency for more Protestant and Calvinist denomination to retain strong beliefs in witchcraft that oppose Anglicans whose religious practices were the closer to Catholicism. When keeping these observations in mind it becomes much more apparent that England didn't simply reject Catholicism because of becoming a more Protestant country. A religious battle took place between mostly Puritan-adjacent supporters of belief in Institorian witchcraft and mostly Anglican skeptics of Institorian witchcraft that eventually resulted in the skeptics' seeming victory by the 18th Century. But simply restricting it to a battle between Protestants and Catholics, as Thomas does, causes us to miss the full picture.

There is one major argument against my thesis that I feel I must address, especially in relation to the examples of supporters, which is that there is little proof they were arguing in favor of Catholic ideas of witchcraft. After all, in contrast to many of the skeptics, they mention the Pope far less, with some exceptions like Richard Gilpin, and don't put as much focus on the Catholic aspects of witchcraft. To that I point to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, and its prominence in the majority of these sources. The *Maleficarum* is deeply related to Catholicism, with it being

opened with a Papal Bull commanding the authors to continue their work in prosecuting witches.¹ This is also recognized clearly by many of the English writers of the time, with both Ady and Harsnett explicitly referring to the writers as being Catholic,² and the book being primarily written by the Dominican friar Heinrich Kramer. Catholicism is extremely prominent with regards to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, and despite that even authors that openly criticize the Catholic Church in their works like Gilpin utilize it as a source when talking about practices.³ Quoting the *Maleficarum*, or being otherwise related, can be taken as an indication of Catholic influence and given its origins, it's hard to interpret it as a sign of anything else. It is simply a bedrock of Catholic ideas of witchcraft, especially as they were perceived in England at the time.

With the main counterargument discussed, the question becomes what this discovery indicates about English witchcraft and what further research needs to be done. As I earlier indicated, the main idea posited by this essay is that the argument Thomas makes in *Religion and the Decline of Magic* doesn't hold weight when looking at the overall picture of witchcraft in England, especially major figures. With that established, the next area of research should be to look into why the Puritans were so much more likely to believe an Institorian view of witchcraft than the Anglicans were. It is possible that the Anglicans were more prominently anti-Catholic in this area as a way to distinguish themselves from the Catholic Church, as the Anglican Church retained more similarities to Catholicism compared to other Protestant branches, and that Puritans, who had much more significant doctrinal disagreements,⁴ didn't feel the need, but this is mere speculation. Further research will provide a much clearer picture of how England's conflict over Institorian ideas of witchcraft came into existence, and why Puritans believed those ideas much more frequently.

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Index

This index, which compiles analyses of all the works that I read when writing this thesis, is arranged in alphabetical order based on the author. Those without known authors are at the end, organized by their titles' alphabetical order.

A Candle in the Dark... is the work of Thomas Ady, an English physician. We know very little about Ady, as he was a physicist who only published this treatise on witchcraft, along with an updated version later¹. His admiration of Scot, along with his attacks against America and the Scottish King James early on may indicate that he was Anglican², but there is little hard proof of his beliefs as a person. However, his beliefs regarding witchcraft lined up strongly with his clearly Anglican contemporaries. His treatise clearly communicates this, arguing that witchcraft is consistently wrongly prosecuted and those prosecutions defies God's law.³ Notably, Ady goes out of his way to note that witches are real, and that he is not denying their existence in and of itself when writing the treatise.⁴ He is arguing that witchcraft trials and how people imagine witches is inaccurate when trying to find them,⁵ and thus there should be far more restraint and caution when it comes to witchcraft prosecution,⁶ rather than the far more radical idea that the concept of witches has no proof in and of itself. The *Malleus Maleficarum* is mentioned within this work, with Ady mentioning the authors, Jacob Sprenger, and Heinrich Institoris, by name when critiquing the work.⁷ Ady accuses *Maleficarum* of being dyed with "horrible lyes and impossible accounts", and additionally accuses the authors of being pawns for the Pope, whom Ady calls the Grand Witch, and enforcing his will to torment innocent Christians on the basis of groundless tradition.⁷ This work still stands as a testament to how skeptics of the witchcraft trials in England framed their arguments, mainly in terms of casting distrust of sources like the *Malleus* as being a papal source, which was accurate given that Institoris received a papal bull of

approval,⁵ as well as arguing that those accusing other of being witches don't present strong enough evidence to convict people of being witches.⁹ This treatise is a strongly anti-Catholic work, but we have little information on Ady's religious beliefs, especially when compared to how obvious his skeptical contemporaries are with theirs.

The next work, written by Thomas Bromhall, is *An History of Apparitions, Oracles, Prophecies, and Predictions*. The first notable thing about this source is its origin relative to other works discussed here, as it is originally a French work that was translated into English. While this does make its place within the canon of English demonology more questionable than other works featured, it still can be taken as an indication of what sources were being read by those that studied witchcraft in England. The treatise itself is focused on the history of various people who divert from the Christian faith in various ways, be they non-believers or those who commit major crimes, and how they are interconnected with devils, sparing some time to discuss how devils and angels are able to incarnate themselves on the Earth.¹⁰ It also refutes arguments against these happening,¹¹ going as far back as the Sadducees.¹² The *Malleus Maleficarum* is listed early on as a source for the treatise¹³ but is not directly referenced in the text. However, there is a reference to a source titled the *Malleus Veneficarum*,¹⁴ which curiously does not appear in the source list at the beginning of the treatise.¹³ If we assume that the two sources are one and the same, then the *Malleus* is cited as a source for witches by the author, both generally¹⁴ and for the specific claim of witches taking away penises from men,¹⁵ which the author attributes to the power of a devil. This utilization of the *Malleus Maleficarum* is important because it provides an example of foreign treatises being published and read within England, and that the *Malleus Maleficarum* was a source in some of those foreign treatises. Having it be used in such a manner

shows both a travel path that the *Malleus Maleficarum* could have taken to be read in England, and how it influences even outside sources in English witchcraft.

Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is the next treatise. This work acts as an attempt to describe how melancholy develops within humans,¹⁶ already making it rather distinct from other works that have been discussed. One of the points of discussion in the book is witchcraft, with the author speculating whether some of the diseases that the book reports could potentially be caused and then cured by witchcraft.¹⁷ And as a source for multiple discussions of witchcraft in the work is the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the author utilizing it as a source of how witchcraft and diseases are connected on numerous occasions throughout the book.¹⁸ Despite the book being disconnected from demonological thought, the utilization of the *Malleus Maleficarum* within this book pertains to its influence.¹⁸ Most notably, the *Malleus* being utilized in works that are notably different from the usual trappings of demonology once again shows its wide reach as a work. This is interesting to note, because the *Malleus* being considered such a baseline work is important to the idea that it was something those studying demonology in any fashion had to read, and thus meant that its influence over English demonology as a whole would be considerable, even if it was discussing works that were simply translated into English.

The next source that will be discussed, *The Infallible True and Assured Vvitch* by John Cotta stands as an interesting break from the typical skeptic. Cotta was a physician by trade, much like Ady, though he was a clearly sympathetic Puritan, a major difference from the mainly Anglican skeptics that were previously discussed,¹⁹ and that difference is noted in how they discuss witchcraft. The treatise argues that, while witchcraft in and of itself exists, it cannot be easily identified.²⁰ It explains witchcraft in great detail, describing practices,²¹ methods of identification for both witches and evil spirits²², how they hide their identities,²³ and things in the

world that only learned men are aware of (according to the treatise),²⁴ ultimately coming to the conclusion that there are few ways to accurately persecute witches that only experts, such as Cotta, would be able to utilize.²⁵ Cotta believed in the existence of witches, mainly using the treatise as a testing ground for the limits of modern thinking.¹⁹ The *Malleus Maleficarum* is cited as a source twice within the treatise, firstly to corroborate the idea that German Witches were able to utilize their powers to cure diseases,²⁶ and secondly to corroborate the idea that they have been known to kill children.²⁷ This shows the differences between Cotta's brand of skepticism and those of the other skeptics, as they reject the ideas of the *Malleus Maleficarum* outright, especially Ady,⁷ Scot,²⁸ and Harsnett,²⁹ while Cotta utilizes it as a source for witchcraft practices, despite his skepticism over the reliability of non-experts looking for witches. Cotta is an example against the general skeptical consensus and shows how the skeptics could review similar arguments against witchcraft in very different ways. He further serves to strengthen the idea of the divide over witchcraft between Puritans and Anglicans, given his much different approach to skepticism than his Anglican counterparts.

The next text, titled *A Detection of that Sinful, Shamful, Lying, and Ridiculous Discourse, of Samuel Harshnet*, is written by John Darrel as a response to those he felt were slandering him over his supposedly fake exorcisms.³⁰ Most notably, Darrel isn't making an argument for the existence of witchcraft like the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the other witchcraft treatises that we've seen, given that this is a personal response. The work is entirely focused on refuting Harsnett's accusations, with Darrel taking his attacks and then bringing in his own counterarguments.³¹ Despite this focus, there is a clear allusion to Darrel's belief and actions regarding witchcraft, with him actively arguing for the existence of witches in the cases that he was handling.³² Additionally, he directly attacked Harsnett himself and accused him of bribing others into

confessing to Darrel's supposed crimes.³³ What makes this work notable is that it is a direct example of a Puritan-Anglican conflict over the validity of witchcraft and mysticism. Samuel Harsnett would eventually become an archbishop of the Anglican Church,³⁴ while Darrel was an established Puritan who was arguing for the validity of Puritan exorcisms.³⁰ This makes the Darrel and Harsnett conflict an encapsulation of the larger debate between Puritans and Anglicans over the validity of witchcraft. This Puritan-Anglican conflict acts as the backbone for major English discourse on witchcraft and cannot be ignored when looking at the demonological canon in the country.

The first record of a witch trial I'll discuss is John Davenport's *The Witches of Huntington*. As a trial record, it is composed of two primary types of sections, examinations,³⁵ sessions where a believed witch is questioned, and informations,³⁶ information collected from eyewitness regarding a witch and submitted to the court. Interestingly, the first 3 sections of the record are in fact examinations, which describe the interrogations and confessions of Elizabeth Weed, John Winnick, and Francis Moore.³⁷ How they were decided to be witches is not determined within the documents themselves, as much like before the examinations are very closed off to anything besides what was said by those examined, and they don't have any informations to given us a closer view. This unusual structure aside, the contents are mostly similar to the previous record and thus show a noticeable connection to the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Mainly, we see the continued reliance on the testimony of neighbors as important evidence for the trials,³⁸ with there being descriptions of ideas that were presented consistently within the *Malleus Maleficarum* such as the killing or harming in other ways of livestock,³⁹ and the temptation or action of witches by spirits through cats as an animal image,⁴⁰ which Institoris notes as being the usual image that the devil utilizes when it comes to animals,⁴¹ as well as the

murder of children through sickness.³⁹ All of these are forms of witchcraft that are commonly found and emphasized in the *Malleus Maleficarum*,⁴² but one more notable trait that they share is their focus on women as witches. There are some male witches that were persecuted through these trials, namely John Winnick⁴³ and John Clarke Junior,⁴⁴ but the majority of people examined for witchcraft were women. As mentioned before, one of Institoris' main innovations in witchcraft was his women-centric view of the crime,⁴⁵ and that being applied still in England is strong proof of the impact that he has had on the witch beliefs of the country.

Moving to another English author, we come to Richard Gilpin, author of *Demonologia Sacra*. *Demonologia Sacra* which is a treatise of considerable length that discusses the history of demons, as the author writes it, from Satan's fall to the history of witchcraft and how it has been defined.⁴⁶ The work focuses on Satan and his works, centering most of its discussions in terms of how it relates to the figure and his history, and how his actions are still at play in the world today.⁴⁷ The treatise places considerable focus on the religious purity aspects of defending yourself from Satan, to a greater degree than other treatises, focusing on self-reflection in order to be able to avoid his schemes to corrupt and weaken your moral foundations.⁴⁶ The author utilizes the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source for the idea that consecrated places can be sprinkled with holy water to help purify them and rid them of any devilish influence, displaying his broader knowledge of witchcraft.⁴⁸

Richard Gilpin is a relatively unique figure within the sources that we've discussed, in that he is a general non-conformist rather than a hardline Puritan like Mather, or even Perkins' beliefs.⁴⁹ While this means that Gilpin wasn't at home with the doctrines preached by the Anglican Church, it didn't necessarily make him a Puritan in belief, though he did preach on Devils in a similar manner.⁴⁹ He held multiple religious gatherings outside of the Anglican

Church, and was punished repeatedly for such activities.⁴⁹ That he continued to organize such activities, indicates a strong break with the Anglican Church, one that, given his strong criticism of both popes and Catholic believers within *Demonologia Sacra*,⁵⁰ indicates stronger Protestant leanings than the Anglican establishment. Despite this, he was still willing to utilize the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source,⁴⁸ which provides another example of the anti-Catholic divide described by Thomas not taking place with regards to Institorian beliefs.

Another work is Joseph Glanvill's treatise, *Saducismus Triumphatus*, which discusses the overall picture of witches and spirits, aiming to definitively prove their existence,⁵¹ a much taller task with the treatise being published in 1681, when the Witch Hunts were dying down across Europe.⁵² Glanvill was raised Puritan, and eventually developed into a Latitudinarian thinker. Latitudinarianism refers to an opposition to any specific or restrictive doctrines within Christian faith despite officially being part of the Church of England, putting him in conflict with the Church of England and some of its more ritualistic practices, though it also put him at odds with the dogmatic Puritans.⁵⁴ Glanvill's treatise provides a detailed view of the proof of both spirits and witches in his mind,⁵² as well as other letters written to and by him on the subject.⁵⁵ The book, similarly to Perkins' work, utilizes evidence from the Bible to help prove the validity of its view on witchcraft,⁵⁵ but also makes clear use of specific examples from testimony that he had recently heard of, such as stories of endless drum beats that couldn't be found,⁵⁶ witches cursing children into sickness,⁵⁷ and women signing contracts with devils among other examples.⁵⁸ Other parts of note are when Glanvill argues against both Reginald Scot and John Webster, two of the main skeptics of witchcraft. For Scot, Glanvill accuses him of not having strong reasons to argue against witchcraft, simply pulling up old stories and laughing at them without giving a convincing argument against the existence of witchcraft. Additionally, he directly argues against

Scot's accusations that witchcraft cannot be found in the Bible, bringing examples in the Old Testament of mentions of witchcraft.⁵⁹ For Webster, Glanvill directly brings up his arguments later in the text regarding how Saul would be unable to see an apparition, claiming that there are numerous examples of apparitions only appearing to one person and that this does not disprove witchcraft.⁶⁰ Glanvill's arguments for the treatise show how proponents of witchcraft came from multiple denominations aside from Puritanism, and that these denominations had some conflict with the Anglican opposition to witchcraft.

Moving on, the next work is *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, written by Samuel Harsnett. Harsnett is a figure who was mentioned earlier in the discussion of supporters, mainly in relation to his conflict with John Darrel. Harsnett was an Anglican priest who eventually rose to become Archbishop of York, making him one of the highest ranking Anglicans to discuss witchcraft, though he became Archbishop decades after this book.⁶¹ This work is specifically addressed to the Catholics of England, and aims to discuss and show off how the Catholics have been misled by the Pope and his followers away from the true word of God,⁶² accusing the Pope and the Papacy of being directly working with Satan and actively being his heralds in spite of claiming to drive him away.⁶³ This focus is discussed throughout the whole work, which focuses on how the Papacy conducts their business and sways their followers to their side through claimed acts of god that are in fact satanic illusions.⁶⁴ As a work that had received a Papal bull of approval, naturally the *Malleus Maleficarum* comes under fire in this work. Sprenger in particular is named multiple times as someone of note that participates in the Pope's deceptions, at one point being accused of utilizing his practices to get fame and money.⁶⁴ This work is not unique in its negative view of the papacy, as writers like Thomas Ady held similar views, but its singular focus on attack Catholicism makes it a unique stand out from other

sources discussed here. Catholicism is the only subject of this work, and this stands in contrast to works of more Protestant authors like William Perkins and Increase Mather, who do not mention Catholicism with nearly as much focus, despite their clear objections to some of their practices.⁶⁵ This gives a powerful example of the anti-Catholic sentiment held by the Anglican establishment in regards to witchcraft, and how it contrasts the Puritan view on the subject.

Continuing with works of Samuel Harsnett, we come to his accusations against John Darrel, who was conducting puritan exorcisms in the countryside, titled *A discovery of the fraudulent practises of Iohn Darrel*. Harsnett's treatise indicates his distaste for witchcraft incidentally, given his attacks on the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s authors, but this distaste is on full display in this treatise, with him accusing Darrel of utilizing witchcraft as an excuse to give his patients instead of truly solving their problems.⁶⁶ He continuously attacks Darrel's supposed dispossession of various people,⁶⁷ as well as his various claims regarding said abilities,⁶⁸ continuously throughout the treatise, painting a picture of Darrel as someone who scams others and pretends to exorcise them.⁶⁹ Harsnett also continues his anti-Catholic attacks against Darrel, referring to him as "popish" on occasion,⁷⁰ an interesting comment on a Puritan exorcist, as well as those whose witchcraft experiences he finds guidance in.⁷¹ This work also bears interesting similarities to how Harsnett attacks the *Malleus Maleficarum*, as his accusations of Darrel scamming people reflect what he wrote later about Sprenger utilizing his practices to get fame and money off of those he supposedly helped deal with witches.⁶⁴ This work is an extremely important one for its clear example of the conflict between Anglicans and Puritans regarding witchcraft. Contrary to what one would expect, the Anglicans are referring to the Puritans as being popish and too Catholic,⁷⁰ which is especially interesting in the context of Thomas' arguments regarding the Protestant nature of England's skepticism over witchcraft. The standard

roles of the religious beliefs are reversed, which contradicts Thomas' conclusion entirely. With the more Protestant sects of England displaying much more acceptance of witchcraft than their Anglican counterparts, to the point of being considered popish, English witchcraft literature is clearly more complicated than a simple idea of anti-Catholic skepticism entirely.

The next document to be looked at from these books is *A treatise against witchcraft* by Henry Holland. This is a much more traditional treatise to examine, though one that is often neglected in the landscape of English witchcraft literature according to James Sharpe.⁷² Much like the earlier parts of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, Holland employs a unique structure that amongst the works studied in this thesis, framing the discussion in a dialogue form.⁷³ Unlike them, however, he frames the answers to his questions not as a direct answer, but as a dialogue between Mysodaemon (hater of demons) and Theophilus (lover of god). This leads to Holland organizing a debate about the topics related to witchcraft that he discusses between the two, which vary from how witches confer with Satan both historically and in his time to who is in the most danger from witchcraft.⁷⁴ After finishing these questions, Holland adopts a more traditionally structured argument for the remainder of the treatise. This is likely the result of Holland making proposals in this part of the treatise rather than answering questions on beliefs, with Holland arguing speaking the word of God to those who are witches, amongst other countermeasures.⁷⁵ Holland fully emphasizes this as what Satan fears most and thus the primary way to combat him, though he does still advocate for the execution of known witches.⁷⁶ While this is significantly different than the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s suggestions,⁷⁷ which are far more intimately involved with the justice system than Holland is, most likely because of Holland's lack of judicial experience⁷⁸ (notable relative to the experienced prosecutor Institoris), he still utilizes many similar examples to those that were used by Institoris in his examples of witchcraft

and sorcery, such as the harming of cattle⁷⁶, swearing by his name, bringing more people to serve Satan⁷⁹, as well as pointing to historical examples of witches⁸⁰. Notably, Holland's view of witches is very woman-centric⁸¹, a view that was codified with Institoris⁴², with there being little mention of male witches in the treatise. These examples show the connection between the two texts despite their notable differences in style, with the *Malleus* showing considerable influence even on relatively unpopular texts.

The *Daemonologie* attributed to King James I of England, stands as one of the most important witchcraft treatises in English history. James' unique relationship with witchcraft bears mention before we discuss this particular work and how it relates to English witchcraft literature as a whole. James was originally the King of Scotland before England, and thus brought some of Scotland's attitude towards witches, which leaned far more into prosecution than England's did. His demonological process there can be most clearly seen in the North Berwick Witch Hunt, with the cases happening soon after his marriage to his wife and being directly presided over by him.⁸² His views on witchcraft are shown in this work to contradict Scot's as a result. James opens the work criticizing Scot's attacks on witchcraft, openly considering him to be one of the main opponents of witchcraft and compares him to the Sadducees in denying spirits.⁸³ James then proceeds to take a similar approach to the *Malleus Maleficarum* in proving the existence of witches, namely in that he usually structures his book as a dialogue⁸⁴ (similar to the first section of the *Malleus Maleficarum*)⁸⁵ and that when he focuses on witches, occurring in the second book of the treatise, he typically relies on evidence from examples. We can see other similarities between the two, with both sharing the scripture example of Saul's experience with Samuel to prove the existence of witches in the Bible.⁸⁶ It can be somewhat seen as an evolution from the *Maleficarum*'s approach, given that Scot had earlier criticized the *Malleficarum* by saying it

contradicted scripture.⁸⁷ Having the proof of witches in scripture would make the argument for them much more compelling to readers, in addition to the publicity of a book published by the King of England at the time. This book having both stylistic similarities and an indirect link to the *Malleus Maleficarum* stands as a strong example of its influence.

The next source is *Cases of Conscience* by Increase Mather, President of Harvard College at Cambridge, and Teacher of a Church at Boston in New-England.⁸⁸ While it is a source that is not directly from England itself, the colonies in North America still retained a strong connection to England in this era, so we can use this as an example of how English witchcraft thought was progressing in the 17th Century. The text is written by Increase Mather, the President of Harvard at the time and a prominent figure within the Puritan community.⁸⁸ His other works, such as *A brief discourse concerning the unlawfulness of the common-prayer-worship*, portray his opposition to the Anglican book of common prayer, with him rebelling against the act of kissing the Bible as a form of swearing to God, on account of it not being discussed in the text.⁸⁹ It is thus curious that he was such an ardent Institorian that he not only was slow to denounce the Salem witch trials fully despite their unpopularity,⁸⁸ but also argued for the accuracy of the result of George Burroughs' trial, claiming that "had I been one of his judges, I could not have acquitted him."⁹⁰ as well as cited the Catholic *Malleus Maleficarum*.⁹¹ This seems directly contradictory to Thomas' framework of England's rejection of witchcraft being based in a protestant rejection of Catholicism and its ideas, given that this Puritan author, who balks at forms of worship not found in the Bible,⁸⁹ is willing to both argue for an active magic in the world while citing the *Malleus Maleficarum*, an overtly Catholic source, to do so.

Cases of Conscience shows the author's belief that witches exist in the world well enough to be tried. As a result, the pamphlet argues strongly in favor of the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s idea

of witches, and utilizes it as a source of criticism for more “pagan” ways of learning about witches, such as burning them with iron, directly citing a page number for this claim,⁹² with both Institoris and Mather feeling that this form of identification is ineffective as demons can protect against these forms of identification well enough that they can’t be trusted fully.⁹³ This belief is remarkably strong, because Mather had earlier written a similar text titled *Illustrious Providences* that discussed witchcraft in similar terms, notably acknowledging many of the witchcraft skeptics in England, including Reginald Scot and Thomas Ady, as not being heretics or witches themselves, noting “that never any did maintain that familiarity with the evil Spirits, which is commonly believed,”⁹⁴ though his treatise ultimately argued for the existence of witchcraft activity, citing the *Malleus Maleficarum*.⁹⁵ Mather’s works present the conviction with which Puritan thinkers supported witchcraft, and thus show an important source within English witchcraft literature that contradicts Thomas’ assertions.

The next work is *The History of Magick*, written by Gabriel Naudé. It is another French work that was translated into English, and which concerns itself with trying to disprove many historical figures accused at the time of being magicians of some form over time. It doesn’t deny the existence of witches and magic, it merely argues that some people were misjudged who actually was a magician,⁹⁵ and seeks to repair the reputations of those it feels were unjustly attacked. This work also shows itself to argue against the *Malleus Maleficarum*’s reliability as a source. While it does not accuse it to the extent that Thomas Ady does, as it does not imply the existence of a Papal conspiracy meant to harm and prosecute Christians, the book still accuses Springer and Institoris of several of their stories not truly being credible.⁹⁶ This work presents a similar point of view about witchcraft to Thomas Ady’s work, despite both being written in different countries and this work holding a more historical bent than Ady’s work. If there is

anything it can say about the *Malleus*' influence, it is that its skeptics existed even in nominally Catholic countries by the 1650's, and that such works were being published concurrently with English skeptics, showing how prominent the skeptics were at that time.

The next source to discuss is *A Pleasant Treatise of Witches their Imps* by a Pen Neer the Covent of Eluthery. This work utilizes the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source on witchcraft remarkably early on in the work, utilizing it as a source on witch practices and how they were carried out.⁹⁷ The treatise overall point is as a description of how witches exist in the world, and historical examples of them at that point.⁹⁸ It covers nearly everything related to witches, from their own practices⁹⁹ to their relations with various spirits¹⁰⁰ and how to tell the difference between good and bad spirits,¹⁰¹ as well as what happens to witches as they die,¹⁰² In this way, it functions as a similar source to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, a compendium that describes witches and their abilities and connections. While this means that the document in and of itself doesn't really make a political statement regarding witches, outside of them existing and needing to be persecuted, it does show that there was a considerable amount of respect for the *Malleus Maleficarum* amongst those who were studying demonology. Additionally, given the treatise is a similar work to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, albeit shorter, we can see that works like the *Malleus Maleficarum* still held value in the domain of witchcraft, allowing those studying the subject to get an idea of how witches and demons behaved.

The next treatise, William Perkins' *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft*, is organized around discussion of witch practices themselves, starting with what witchcraft is and then delving deeper into how it is practiced and developed, before dedicating the end to how witches should be punished and how to apply that doctrine in England.¹⁰³ The treatise is not necessarily breaking ground in how it portrays witchcraft as a contract with devils¹⁰⁴, as the idea

of contracts between the devil and that being the result of witches' powers were the standard beliefs of the time. What makes *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* stand out is the amount of detail that Perkins puts into describing these beliefs, being a much more thorough work on the ways that witchcraft has evolved, with Perkins considering witches in Moses' time and those in 16th century England the same, claiming that "the same that were in Moses time: and therefore by their owne reason must needes be condemned by this Iudiciall lawe,"¹⁰⁵ and that therefore they should be treated similarly. The similarities to the *Malleus Maleficarum* are very evident, though it is not cited, as the *Malleus* and Perkins touch on witchcraft similarly, being focused on how witchcraft is practiced,¹⁰⁶ what it is,¹⁰⁷ and how to ultimately prosecute it,¹⁰⁸ though the *Malleus Maleficarum* focuses on the later part more so than Perkins.¹⁰⁹ Other similarities include their focus on what demons and the devil do,¹¹⁰ how they make contracts with humans,¹¹¹ the way in which that devil's power is limited,¹¹² and finding biblical evidence for witches, with both criticizing Saul for seeking their advice, with both arguing Samuel had been a fake to recommend that option to Saul.¹¹³ What makes these connections more interesting, is that Perkins attacks Catholic doctrine in significant ways in this treatise, devoting a subsection to the false nature of Catholic exorcisms,¹¹⁴ despite these being some of the practices Thomas notes Calvinists often requested Catholics to help in.¹¹⁵ The *Malleus Maleficarum* sharing notable beliefs with one of England's most influential witchcraft texts speaks to the level of influence that it had within English demonological society.

Moving on, *Scot's Discovery of Vvitchcraft*, which is arguably the most famous skeptical witchcraft work in England, is next. Written by one of the most notable witchcraft skeptics of the time, Reginald Scot, this source is not only one of the largest works I've discussed, but aims to show fully how false Scot perceives many witchcraft accusations to be. Scot himself doesn't

appear to have been a major figure outside of this work, being mainly relegated to helping build dams in Kent while financially surviving from his cousin. His connections with the aristocracy, mainly his cousin, and some of the clergy indicate that he was connected to the Anglican aristocracy, despite not holding entirely orthodox views.¹¹⁶ The work clearly sets out to do just that, discussing nearly every part of witchcraft that Scot can conceive of on the subject, be it their connection to spirits and why they cannot work as described,¹¹⁷ why people may confess to witchcraft when they have not committed the crime,¹¹⁸ and a variety of other factors related to witchcraft. Notably, Scot carries the same anti-Catholic undertone that we have seen throughout the skeptics, remarking early on that the pope's religion is absurd and finding that "in the erection and maintenance of idolatry and superstition, specially in Images, pardons, and reliques of saints, will yet persevere to think, that the rest of his doctrine and trumpery is holy and good"¹¹⁹ while making accusations of them being notable culprits in accusing women of witchcraft.¹¹⁹ Naturally, with such a strong anti-witch prosecution message in this work, the *Malleus Maleficarum* is not highly held by Scot. Scot mentions the book by name repeatedly, while citing it in many other instances,¹²⁰ firstly he mentions an instance of the work believing that Circe transformed Nebuchadnezzar into an ox, which he counters by claiming that the animalistic descriptions referred to his behavior rather than any physical transformation, and that this is backed up by other experts.¹²¹ Another time it is mentioned, Scot calls Jacob Springer and Heinrich Institoris liars, while also calling their book popery. But while doing so, he also describes their book as being a source of a variety of stories and accusations that he has utilized.¹²² Scot's consistent condemnations of the *Malleus Maleficarum* in combination with his general anti-Catholic attitude solidifies the Anglican rejection of witchcraft being based on a rejection of Catholicism, adding more evidence to the argument that the anti-Catholic sentiment

came specifically from Anglican's rather than the broader Protestant rejection of Catholic ideas that Thomas paints.

Next, let's look at the play *The Lancashire-Witches and Tegue O Dively the Irish-Priest a Comedy Acted at the Duke's Theater*. Written by Thomas Shadwell, the play is not a proper demonological text, but instead a work of fiction with a story regarding witches. While this doesn't allow us to get a clear idea of what the most prominent figures in witchcraft persecution and demonology were thinking at the time, it does serve as a window into the popular thought in England regarding witches. This allows for a connection to be made between English popular culture at the time and the *Malleus Maleficarum*, with Shadwell referencing the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source for witches being able to turn into cats, with the characters in the play commenting on how "sweetly" the book writes about witches¹²³. It is a simple citation, but that the *Malleus Maleficarum* is directly informing the ideas regarding witches' abilities and is considered to be an authoritative source for those abilities existing is a crucial precedent to establish when proving its influence on English witchcraft literature and thought, and something that should be kept in mind when looking at how Demonological authors in England refer to the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a source.

The next source, a skeptic, is John Webster, who wrote in 1677 *The displaying of supposed witchcraft*. Webster is a very interesting religious figure, having no true sect, and mainly advocating against traditional learning and the devil having a physical presence.¹²⁴ He seemingly held anti-religious establishment views during the time of the English Commonwealth but had mostly switched to supporting the following royalist regime by the time he wrote this treatise, becoming far more in line with the Anglican establishment.¹²⁴ This source, as its name indicates, rejects the ideas of those that argued for the prosecution of witches, and in a similar

way to Scot. Webster spends the essay arguing against the prosecution of witchcraft,¹²⁵ as Scot did, while also taking the time to attack the works of those who were critiquing Scot directly. Indeed he mentions both the *Daemenologie* attributed to King James by name¹²⁶ as well as the attacks made against Scot by Joseph Glanvill.¹²⁷ Webster's critiques are another example of a skeptic using similar refutations of witchcraft to Scot, who was focused on refuting arguments for and examples of witchcraft similar to and occasionally sourced from the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Examples of this include him arguing that Scot doesn't argue that witches do not exist¹²⁶, calling Glanvill's stories about witchcraft silly and that he has very little ground to accuse Scot of simply attacking silly stories, writing "and if *Scot* were little better than absurd, then he the better agrees with Mr. Glanvil,"¹²⁸ and arguing against the idea of witches copulating with the devil,¹²⁹ an idea with roots as far back as the *Malleus Maleficarum*.¹³⁰ Webster, despite his unique religious history, continues the trends previously expressed by the other skeptics.

Next we will look at the *Relation of the Severall Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the Late Witches, Arraigned and Executed in the County of Essex*, which were seemingly published by H.F, seemingly the name of a printing shop, on the order of authorities.¹³¹ After the preface, which warns people to beware of witchcraft and mentions its influence and danger,¹³² the documents start with various witnesses describing their bouts of sickness and other problems that they attribute to witchcraft.¹³³ Afterwards, the document then moves further into the trial with the descriptions of the examination of the accused witches,¹³⁴ interspersing the various testimonies.¹³⁵ Though the examinations are short and do not contain much details of the what happened in the examination, only what those who were examined ended up confessing during the examinations.¹³⁴ This does limit the knowledge we have of how much duress they were under, so while we understand what was presumably utilized in courts,

we unfortunately do not have a clear picture of the examinations themselves from these recordings. However, we can see similar reasoning to the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s examples being used in the testimony for the witches who were examined. A major running theme throughout the various pieces of information given is that it is a neighbor who has suffered some form of problems after a dangerous encounter with one of the accused, notably in the testimonies of John Rivet¹³⁶ and Robert Taylor.¹³⁷ Such encounters are mentioned numerous times in the *Malleus Maleficarum*, with Part II containing numerous descriptions of similar information being shared.¹³⁸ Another notable occurrence throughout the testimonies are the accusations of the woman accused witchcraft supposedly having sex with devils, most notably in John Sterne's testimony,¹³⁹ which was backed up by John Bankes,¹⁴⁰ and Matthew Honkins' testimony against Elizabeth Clarke.¹⁴¹ How demons are capable of doing such things is a notable topic in the *Malleus Maleficarum*, with Institoris dedicating an entire chapter to it in the second part.¹⁴² While there is no direct citation of the *Malleus Maleficarum* in these documents, these similarities are examples of the influence of it in the trials against witches, with many of its ideas holding weight in the 17th century.

I now come to the treatise titled *The wonderful discoverie of the vvitchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower*, written anonymously. This treatise, as it states in its title, discusses the witchcraft that was perpetuated by the Flowers along with other witches. Notably the treatise claims right at its beginning that it is not making any contentious arguments regarding the distinction or definition of witchcraft, though it does argue that it exists, instead leaving that discussion up to the scriptures.¹⁴³ It instead focuses on the situations relating to the trials that it discusses, following them in chronological order and explaining the various circumstances that made their way into their trials and accusations.¹⁴⁴ This treatise mentions both John Cotta, and

King James' *Daemonologia*.¹⁴⁵ and while the author clearly maintains that witchcraft exists and pays respect to the two authors, there is a clear difference in how they handle this work compared to those texts. Mainly, as mentioned before, the author writes this text as a narrative through the various witch trials that are discussed in this text, and this is the primary focus of the text rather than an argument about witches. This is a notable contrast to both Cotta and James, as both were less focused on the story of the examples themselves and were more focused on the point that these examples proved.¹⁴⁶ This also applies to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, as that book is not focused on the story of the witches themselves but on how these examples explaining how they behave.¹⁴² However, these somewhat separate approaches do not contradict each other entirely, as *The wonderful discoverie of the vwitchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower* still utilizes these stories as an example of witchcraft and proof of its existence implicitly.¹⁴⁷ The book also focus on how the witches committed their crimes, utilizing various forms of eyewitness evidence and the experiences of the neighbors of the witches as part of their narrative of the Flowers' deaths,¹⁴⁴ which was a major focus of the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s second part's examples.¹⁴⁸ While there is some clear division between how this text and the *Malleus* are written, there is still a clear influence in the focus of the text from the *Malleus* in spite of those differences.

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