

The Cambridge History Of Magic And Witchcraft In The West

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The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West

This book presents twenty chapters by experts in their fields, providing a thorough and interdisciplinary overview of the theory and practice of magic in the West. Its chronological scope extends from the Ancient Near East to twenty-first-century North America; its objects of analysis range from Persian curse tablets to US neo-paganism. For comparative purposes, the volume includes chapters on developments in the Jewish and Muslim worlds, evaluated not simply for what they contributed at various points to European notions of magic, but also as models of alternative development in ancient Mediterranean legacy. Similarly, the volume highlights the transformative and challenging encounters of Europeans with non-Europeans, regarding the practice of magic in both early modern colonization and more recent decolonization.

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This book analyzes the gendered transformation of magical figures occurring in Arthurian romance in England from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries. In the earlier texts, magic is predominantly a masculine pursuit, garnering its user prestige and power, but in the later texts, magic becomes a primarily feminine activity, one that marks its user as wicked and heretical. This project explores both the literary and the social motivations for this transformation, seeking an answer to the question, 'why did the witch become wicked?' Heidi Breuer traverses both the medieval and early modern periods and considers the way in which the representation of literary witches interacted with the culture at large, ultimately arguing that a series of economic crises in the fourteenth century created a labour shortage met by women. As women moved into the previously male-dominated economy, literary backlash came in the form of the witch, and social backlash followed soon after in the form of Renaissance witch-hunting. The witch figure serves a similar function in modern American culture because late-industrial capitalism challenges gender conventions in similar ways as the economic crises of the medieval period.

Crafting the Witch

A collection of essays from leading scholars in the field that collectively study the rise and fall of witchcraft prosecutions in the various kingdoms and territories of Europe and in English, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies in the Americas.

The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America

This expansive, inter-disciplinary guide to Renaissance plays and the world they played to gives readers a colorful overview of England's great dramatic age. Provides an expansive and inter-disciplinary approach to Renaissance plays and the world they played to. Offers a colourful and comprehensive overview of the material conditions of England's most important dramatic period. Gives readers facts and data along with up-to-date interpretation of the plays. Looks at the drama in terms of its cultural agency, its collaborative nature, and its ideological complexity.

A Companion to Renaissance Drama

This book sets the notorious European witch trials in the widest and deepest possible perspective and traces the major historiographical developments of witchcraft

The Witch

Treason and magic were first linked together during the reign of Edward II. Theories of occult conspiracy then regularly led to major political scandals, such as the trial of Eleanor Cobham Duchess of Gloucester in 1441. While accusations of magical treason against high-ranking figures were indeed a staple of late medieval English power politics, they acquired new significance at the Reformation when the 'superstition' embodied by magic came to be associated with proscribed Catholic belief. Francis Young here offers the first concerted historical analysis of allegations of the use of magic either to harm or kill the monarch, or else manipulate the course of political events in England, between the fourteenth century and the dawn of the Enlightenment. His book addresses a subject usually either passed over or elided with witchcraft: a quite different historical phenomenon. He argues that while charges of treasonable magic certainly were used to destroy reputations or to ensure the convictions of undesirables, magic was also perceived as a genuine threat by English governments into the Civil War era and beyond.

Magic as a Political Crime in Medieval and Early Modern England

Focusing on colonial Kenya, this book shows how conflicts between state authorities and Africans over witchcraft-related crimes provided an important space in which the meanings of justice, law and order in the empire were debated. Katherine Luongo discusses the emergence of imperial networks of knowledge about witchcraft. She then demonstrates how colonial concerns about witchcraft produced an elaborate body of jurisprudence about capital crimes. The book analyzes the legal wrangling that produced the Witchcraft Ordinances in the 1910s, the birth of an anthro-administrative complex surrounding witchcraft in the 1920s, the hotly contested Wakamba Witch Trials of the 1930s, the explosive growth of legal opinion on witch-murder in the 1940s, and the unprecedented state-sponsored cleansings of witches and Mau Mau adherents during the 1950s. A work of anthropological history, this book develops an ethnography of Kamba witchcraft or uoi.

A History of Witchcraft in England From 1558 to 1718

This richly illustrated history provides a readable and fresh approach to the extensive and complex story of witchcraft and magic. Telling the story from the dawn of writing in the ancient world to the globally successful Harry Potter films, the authors explore a wide range of magical beliefs and practices, the rise of the witch trials, and the depiction of the Devil-worshipping witch. The book also focuses on the more recent history of witchcraft and magic, from the Enlightenment to the present, exploring the rise of modern magic, the anthropology of magic around the globe, and finally the cinematic portrayal of witches and magicians, from *The Wizard of Oz* to *Charmed* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

Witchcraft and Colonial Rule in Kenya, 1900–1955

The definitive history of how witchcraft and black magic have survived, through the modern era and into the present day. *Cursed Britain* unveils the enduring power of witchcraft, curses and black magic in modern times. Few topics are so secretive or controversial. Yet, whether in the 1800s or the early 2000s, when disasters struck or personal misfortunes mounted, many Britons found themselves believing in things they had previously dismissed – dark supernatural forces. Historian Thomas Waters here explores the lives of cursed or bewitched people, along with the witches and witch-busters who helped and harmed them. Waters takes us on a fascinating journey from Scottish islands to the folklore-rich West Country, from the immense territories of the British Empire to metropolitan London. We learn why magic caters to deep-seated human needs but see how it can also be abused, and discover how witchcraft survives by evolving and changing. Along the way, we examine an array of remarkable beliefs and rituals, from traditional folk magic to diverse spiritualities originating in Africa and Asia. This is a tale of cynical quacks and sincere magical healers, depressed people and furious vigilantes, innocent victims and rogues who claimed to possess evil abilities. Their spellbinding stories raise important questions about the state's role in regulating radical spiritualities, the fragility of secularism and the true nature of magic.

The Oxford Illustrated History of Witchcraft and Magic

A new history that overturns the received wisdom that science displaced magic in Enlightenment Britain--named a Best Book of 2020 by the Financial Times. In early modern Britain, belief in prophecies, omens, ghosts, apparitions and fairies was commonplace. Among both educated and ordinary people the absolute existence of a spiritual world was taken for granted. Yet in the eighteenth century such certainties were swept away. Credit for this great change is usually given to science - and in particular to the scientists of the Royal Society. But is this justified? Michael Hunter argues that those pioneering the change in attitude were not scientists but freethinkers. While some scientists defended the reality of supernatural phenomena, these sceptical humanists drew on ancient authors to mount a critique both of orthodox religion and, by extension, of magic and other forms of superstition. Even if the religious heterodoxy of such men tarnished their reputation and postponed the general acceptance of anti-magical views, slowly change did come about. When it did, this owed less to the testing of magic than to the growth of confidence in a stable world in which magic no longer had a place.

Cursed Britain

A comprehensive account of the rich folk culture preserved in the rural secret societies of the British Isles • Describes the secret rites, ceremonies, and initiation rituals of guilds and rural fraternities such as the Shoemakers, Horsemen, Toadmen, Mummers, and Bonesmen • Explains their use of masks, black face, and other disguises to avoid persecution • Draws not only on scholarly research but also the author's personal contacts within these still living traditions. Centuries ago the remote, marshy plains of eastern England--the Fens--were drained to create agricultural land. The Fens remained isolated up until the nineteenth century, and it was this very isolation that helped preserve the ancient traditions of this area, traditions ruthlessly eradicated elsewhere in the British Isles. These magical folk traditions also owe their survival to secret rural societies, from craft guilds and trade unions to Morris dancers and village bands. Exploring the folk customs and magical traditions of guilds and rural fraternities such as the Shoemakers and Horsemen and the secrets guarded by the Free Gardeners, Witches, Toadmen, and Bonesmen, Nigel Pennick shows how the common working people of the Fens belonged to secret societies based on their specific trade. He details the hidden aspects of rural life that most historians ignore--the magical current that flowed through the lives of working people--and describes the secret rites, ceremonies, oaths, and initiation rituals of the guilds and fraternities to which the folk belonged. Drawing not only on scholarly research but also his personal contacts within these still living traditions, Pennick explains their use of masks, black face, and other disguises to avoid persecution and describes

how wise woman healers and witches in rural villages were sought-after for their remedies. He shares the secrets of the toad-bone rite, which gave the Toadman control over animals and members of the opposite sex, and explores the guardian spirits thought to inhabit the Fens, including those of the Wild Hunt. Providing insight into a world that has largely disappeared, one whose magic still echoes in lore and legend, Pennick shows that the rites, customs, and ceremonies of guilds and rural fraternities connect individuals to a wider community and, through collective action, to the power of Nature and the Cosmos.

The Decline of Magic

This title offers a new translation of the medieval treatise on witchcraft, the *Malleus Maleficarum*, by the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Institoris.

Witchcraft and Secret Societies of Rural England

How was magic practiced in medieval times? How did it relate to the diverse beliefs and practices that characterized this fascinating period? This much revised and expanded new edition of *Magic in the Middle Ages* surveys the growth and development of magic in medieval Europe. It takes into account the extensive new developments in the history of medieval magic in recent years, featuring new material on angel magic, the archaeology of magic, and the magical efficacy of words and imagination. Richard Kieckhefer shows how magic represents a crossroads in medieval life and culture, examining its relationship and relevance to religion, science, philosophy, art, literature, and politics. In surveying the different types of magic that were used, the kinds of people who practiced magic, and the reasoning behind their beliefs, Kieckhefer shows how magic served as a point of contact between the popular and elite classes, how the reality of magical beliefs is reflected in the fiction of medieval literature, and how the persecution of magic and witchcraft led to changes in the law.

The Malleus Maleficarum

Histories you can trust. This history provides a readable and fresh approach to the extensive and complex story of witchcraft and magic. Telling the story from the dawn of writing in the ancient world to the globally successful Harry Potter films, the authors explore a wide range of magical beliefs and practices, the rise of the witch trials, and the depiction of the Devil-worshipping witch. The book also focuses on the more recent history of witchcraft and magic, from the Enlightenment to the present, exploring the rise of modern magic, the anthropology of magic around the globe, and finally the cinematic portrayal of witches and magicians, from *The Wizard of Oz* to *Charmed* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

Magic in the Middle Ages

A comprehensive look at the history and practices of rural English witchcraft • Explores witch's familiars and fetches, animal magic, and the forms of witchcraft practiced by rural tradespeople, such as blacksmiths, herbalists, and artisans • Offers practical insight into spells, charms, folk incantations, herbal medicine practices, amulets, sigils, and tools of the craft • Details the evolution of public perception of witchcraft throughout England's history, including the laws against witchcraft in place until the 1950s and witchcraft's contentious relationship with the Christian church In this practical guide, Nigel Pennick takes the reader on a journey through the practice of operative witchcraft in the British Isles from the Middle Ages and the Elizabethan era to the decriminalization of witchcraft in the 1950s and its practice today. Highlighting uniquely English traditions, Pennick explores fetches and witch's familiars, animal magic, and the forms of witchcraft practiced by rural tradespeople, such as blacksmiths, herbalists, and artisans, to enhance their professional work and compel others to do their bidding, both man and beast. He provides actual spells, charms, and folk incantations, along with details about the magical use of a variety of herbs, including nightshades, the creation of amulets and sigils, protection against the Evil Eye, and the use of aromatic oils. Pennick explains the best times of day for different types of magic, how to identify places of power, and the use of the paraphernalia of operative witchcraft, such as the broom, the witches' dial, and pins, nails and thorns. He explores the belief in three different types of witches: white witches, who offer help and healing for a fee; black witches, who harm others; and gray witches, who practice both white and black magic. Examining witchcraft's contentious relationship with the Christian church, he investigates the persecution of witches throughout the UK and the British West Indies up until the mid-20th century. He offers a look into the changing public perceptions of witchcraft and the treatment of its followers as well as revealing how English churchmen

would offer magical solutions to the perceived threat of black witchcraft. Painting an in-depth picture of English witchcraft, including how it relates to and differs from modern Wicca, Pennick reveals the foundation from which modern witchcraft arose. He shows how this context is necessary to effectively use these ancient skills and techniques and how the evolution of witchcraft will continue harmonizing the old ways with the new.

The Oxford History of Witchcraft and Magic

The end of the eighteenth century saw the end of the witch trials everywhere. This volume charts the processes and reasons for the decriminalisation of witchcraft but also challenges the widespread assumption that Europe has been 'disenchanted'. For the first time surveys are given of the social role of witchcraft in European communities down to the end of the nineteenth century and of the continued importance of witchcraft and magic as topics of debate among intellectuals and other writers>

Operative Witchcraft

In a culture where the supernatural possessed an immediacy now strange to us, magic was of great importance both in the literary mythic tradition and in ritual practice. In this book, Daniel Ogden presents 300 texts in new translations, along with brief but explicit commentaries. Authors include the well known (Sophocles, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, Virgil, Pliny) and the less familiar, and extend across the whole of Graeco-Roman antiquity.

Witchcraft and Magic in Europe, Volume 5

Witchcraft, astrology, divination and every kind of popular magic flourished in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from the belief that a blessed amulet could prevent the assaults of the Devil to the use of the same charms to recover stolen goods. At the same time the Protestant Reformation attempted to take the magic out of religion, and scientists were developing new explanations of the universe. Keith Thomas's classic analysis of beliefs held on every level of English society begins with the collapse of the medieval Church and ends with the changing intellectual atmosphere around 1700, when science and rationalism began to challenge the older systems of belief.

Magic, Witchcraft, and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds

Taking the reader into the heart of one of the fastest-growing religious movements in North America, Sabina Magliocco reveals how the disciplines of anthropology and folklore were fundamental to the early development of Neo-Paganism and the revival of witchcraft. Magliocco examines the roots that this religious movement has in a Western spiritual tradition of mysticism disavowed by the Enlightenment. She explores, too, how modern Pagans and Witches are imaginatively reclaiming discarded practices and beliefs to create religions more in keeping with their personal experience of the world as sacred and filled with meaning. Neo-Pagan religions focus on experience, rather than belief, and many contemporary practitioners have had mystical experiences. They seek a context that normalizes them and creates in them new spiritual dimensions that involve change in ordinary consciousness. Magliocco analyzes magical practices and rituals of Neo-Paganism as art forms that reanimate the cosmos and stimulate the imagination of its practitioners. She discusses rituals that are put together using materials from a variety of cultural and historical sources, and examines the cultural politics surrounding the movement—how the Neo-Pagan movement creates identity by contrasting itself against the dominant culture and how it can be understood in the context of early twenty-first-century identity politics. *Witching Culture* is the first ethnography of this religious movement to focus specifically on the role of anthropology and folklore in its formation, on experiences that are central to its practice, and on what it reveals about identity and belief in twenty-first-century North America.

Religion and the Decline of Magic

The six-volume set *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, of which this volume is the fifth, provides a scholarly survey of the supernatural beliefs of Europeans from ancient times to the present. Contributors combine political, legal, and social historical approaches with a critical synthesis of cultural anthropology, historical psychology, and gender studies. With the end of witch trials in the 18th century, the writers chart the process of and reasons for the decriminalization of witchcraft, but also challenge the widespread assumption that Europe became "disenchanted." Presented here are surveys of the social role of witchcraft, as well as a full treatment Victorian supernaturalism and the continued importance of

witchcraft and magic as topics of debate among intellectuals and other writers. Three authors contribute three extensive articles: "The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions" by Brian P. Levack (U. of Texas); "Witchcraft After the Witch-Trials" by Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra (U. of Amsterdam); and "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought" by Roy Porter (Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine). Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

Witching Culture

The definitive history of how witchcraft and black magic have survived, through the modern era and into the present day *Cursed Britain* unveils the enduring power of witchcraft, curses and black magic in modern times. Few topics are so secretive or controversial. Yet, whether in the 1800s or the early 2000s, when disasters struck or personal misfortunes mounted, many Britons found themselves believing in things they had previously dismissed - dark supernatural forces. Historian Thomas Waters here explores the lives of cursed or bewitched people, along with the witches and witch-busters who helped and harmed them. Waters takes us on a fascinating journey from Scottish islands to the folklore-rich West Country, from the immense territories of the British Empire to metropolitan London. We learn why magic caters to deep-seated human needs but see how it can also be abused, and discover how witchcraft survives by evolving and changing. Along the way, we examine an array of remarkable beliefs and rituals, from traditional folk magic to diverse spiritualities originating in Africa and Asia. This is a tale of cynical quacks and sincere magical healers, depressed people and furious vigilantes, innocent victims and rogues who claimed to possess evil abilities. Their spellbinding stories raise important questions about the state's role in regulating radical spiritualities, the fragility of secularism and the true nature of magic.

Witchcraft and Magic in Europe

Defining 'magic' is a maddening task. Over the last century numerous philosophers, anthropologists, historians, and theologians have attempted to pin down its essential meaning, sometimes analysing it in such complex and abstruse depth that it all but loses its sense altogether. For this reason, many people often shy away from providing a detailed definition, assuming it is generally understood as the human control of supernatural forces. 'Magic' continues to pervade the popular imagination and idiom. People feel comfortable with its contemporary multiple meanings, unaware of the controversy, conflict, and debate its definition has caused over two and a half millennia. In common usage today 'magic' is uttered in reference to the supernatural, superstition, illusion, trickery, religious miracles, fantasies, and as a simple superlative. The literary confection known as 'magical realism' has considerable appeal and many modern scientists have ironically incorporated the word into their vocabulary, with their 'magic acid', 'magic bullets' and 'magic angles'. Since the so-called European Enlightenment magic has often been seen as a marker of primitivism, of a benighted earlier stage of human development. Yet across the modern globalized world hundreds of millions continue to resort to magic - and also to fear it. Magic provides explanations and remedies for those living in extreme poverty and without access to alternatives. In the industrial West, with its state welfare systems, religious fundamentalists decry the continued moral threat posed by magic. Under the guise of neo-Paganism, its practice has become a religion in itself. Magic continues to be a truly global issue. This Very Short Introduction does not attempt to provide a concluding definition of magic: it is beyond simple definition. Instead it explores the many ways in which magic, as an idea and a practice, has been understood and employed over the millennia. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Cursed Britain

This volume, edited by Tzvi Zbusch and Karel van der Toorn, contains the papers delivered at the first international conference on Mesopotamian magic held under the auspices of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies (NIAS) in June 1995. It is the first collective volume dedicated to the study of this topic. It aims at serving as a bench-mark and provides analytic and innovative but also sythetic and programmatic essays. Magical texts, forms, and traditions from the Mesopotamian cultural worlds of the third millennium BCE through the first millennium CE, in the Sumerian, Akkadian and Aramaic languages as well as in art, are examined.

Magic: A Very Short Introduction

Magic has been an important term in Western history and continues to be an essential topic in the modern academic study of religion, anthropology, sociology, and cultural history. *Defining Magic* is the first volume to assemble key texts that aim at determining the nature of magic, establish its boundaries and key features, and explain its working. The reader brings together seminal writings from antiquity to today. The texts have been selected on the strength of their success in defining magic as a category, their impact on future scholarship, and their originality. The writings are divided into chronological sections and each essay is separately introduced for student readers. Together, these texts - from Philosophy, Theology, Religious Studies, and Anthropology - reveal the breadth of critical approaches and responses to defining what is magic. CONTRIBUTORS: Aquinas, Augustine, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Dennis Diderot, Emile Durkheim, Edward Evans-Pritchard, James Frazer, Susan Greenwood, Robin Horton, Edmund Leach, Gerardus van der Leeuw, Christopher Lehrich, Bronislaw Malinowski, Marcel Mauss, Agrippa von Nettesheim, Plato, Pliny, Plotin, Isidore of Sevilla, Jesper Sorensen, Kimberley Stratton, Randall Styers, Edward Tylor

Mesopotamian Magic

A Medieval Book of Magical Stones is the first translation of the longest and most comprehensive medieval English treatise on the occult powers of stones and gems, the Peterborough Lapidary. Lapidaries (encyclopaedias of the 'virtues' of stones and minerals) were an essential resource for practitioners of natural and ritual magic as well as medicine. This late fifteenth-century manuscript from the library of Peterborough Cathedral describes 145 stones, portraying them as living beings whose properties range from giving the bearer the power to command spirits and foretell the future to healing numerous illnesses and communicating with spirits and the dead, along with instructions on how to release latent occult power from within stones. Many of the proposed uses of stones resemble the concerns of medieval necromancers, such as invisibility, love magic, power over animals and the creation of magical mirrors. pp. xliii+106; 2 column text; introduction; bibliography; analytical index; 8 b/w illustrations

Defining Magic

The story of the beliefs and practices called 'magic' starts in ancient Iran, Greece, and Rome, before entering its crucial Christian phase in the Middle Ages. Centering on the Renaissance and Marsilio Ficino, this richly illustrated and groundbreaking book treats magic as a classical tradition with foundations that were distinctly philosophical.

A Medieval Book of Magical Stones: The Peterborough Lapidary

The eighth and final volume of *The Cambridge History of Africa* covers the period 1940-75. It begins with a discussion of the role of the Second World War in the political decolonisation of Africa. Its terminal date of 1975 coincides with the retreat of Portugal, the last European colonial power in Africa, from its possessions and their accession to independence. The fifteen chapters which make up this volume examine on both a continental and regional scale the extent to which formal transfer of political power by the European colonial rulers also involved economic, social and cultural decolonisation. A major theme of the volume is the way the African successors to the colonial rulers dealt with their inheritance and how far they benefited particular economic groups and disadvantaged others. The contributors to this volume represent different disciplinary traditions and do not share a single theoretical perspective on the recent history of the continent, a subject that is still the occasion for passionate debate.

Magic in Western Culture

How was magic practised in medieval times? How did it relate to the diverse beliefs and practices that characterised this fascinating period? In *Magic in the Middle Ages* Richard Kieckhefer surveys the growth and development of magic in medieval times. He examines its relation to religion, science, philosophy, art, literature and politics before introducing us to the different types of magic that were used, the kinds of people who practised magic, and the reasoning behind their beliefs. In addition, he shows how magic served as a point of contact between the popular and elite classes, how the reality of magical beliefs is reflected in the fiction of medieval literature, and how the persecution of magic and witchcraft led to changes in the law. This 2000 book places magic at the crossroads of medieval culture, shedding light on many other aspects of life in the middle ages.

The Cambridge History of Africa

This book draws on feminist commentary from the disciplines of anthropology, history, law, politics and sociology in order to deal with the phenomenon of modern-day witchcraft. It focuses on the re-emergence of witchcraft beliefs in contemporary society, suggesting that witchcraft accusations and persecution are being used as a marginalisation mechanism of women. The re-emergence of witchcraft beliefs in contemporary society and the prevalence of the violence associated with such beliefs has received little attention within academic literature, yet witchcraft-related violence against women is, progressively, becoming one of the most pervasive forms of violence facing women today. This book addresses this gap in the literature, discussing the return of witchcraft beliefs to contemporary society, whilst assessing the effectiveness of international human rights law in protecting women from witchcraft accusations and persecution.

Magic in the Middle Ages

Rae Beth, author of the bestselling *Hedge Witch*, here blends the ancient traditions of hedge witchcraft with our modern concerns for the natural world. Working in liminal places and with wild spirits, she shows how we can both help to heal the human relationship with the natural world and cast spells of increase for threatened species. *The Green Hedge Witch* is based in the knowledge that we are part of nature, not apart from Her, and that this gives us our power and potential as well as our responsibilities. And therefore, by the use of rites, spirit journeys, and elven help, we can work heartfelt healing magic. This is a book for the budding spellcaster as well as the experienced hedge witch.

Witchcraft Accusations and Persecutions as a Mechanism for the Marginalisation of Women

Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is a work by John Gregorson Campbell. It depicts the ghosts and the supernatural denizens of Scotland from the point of view of a folklorist.

The Green Hedge Witch

Witchcraft and magic are topics of enduring interest for many reasons. The main one lies in their extraordinary interdisciplinarity: anthropologists, folklorists, historians, and more have contributed to build a body of work of extreme variety and consistence. Of course, this also means that the subjects themselves are not easy to assess. In a very general way, we can define witchcraft as a supernatural means to cause harm, death, or misfortune, while magic also belongs to the field of supernatural, or at least esoteric knowledge, but can be used to less dangerous effects (e.g., divination and astrology). In Western civilization, however, the witch hunt has set a very peculiar perspective in which diabolical witchcraft, the invention of the Sabbat, the persecution of many thousands of (mostly) female and (sometimes) male presumed witches gave way to a phenomenon that is fundamentally different from traditional witchcraft. This Special Issue of *Religions* dedicated to Witchcraft, Demonology, and Magic features nine articles that deal with four different regions of Europe (England, Germany, Hungary, and Italy) between Late Medieval and Modern times in different contexts and social milieus. Far from pretending to offer a complete picture, they focus on some topics that are central to the research in those fields and fit well in the current “cumulative concept of Western witchcraft” that rules out all mono-causality theories, investigating a plurality of causes.

Witchcraft & Second Sight in the Highlands & Islands of Scotland

Between the age of St. Augustine and the sixteenth century reformations magic continued to be both a matter of popular practice and of learned inquiry. This volume deals with its use in such contexts as healing and divination and as an aspect of the knowledge of nature's occult virtues and secrets.>

Witchcraft, Demonology and Magic

The confessions of Isobel Gowdie are widely recognised as the most extraordinary on record in Britain. Using historical, psychological, comparative religious and anthropological perspectives, this book sets out to separate the voice of Isobel Gowdie from that of her interrogators.

Witchcraft and Magic in Europe, Volume 3

This volume presents a complete history of witches in the West, from their earliest origins, through their persecutions as heretics in the 16th century, to the pagan witches of the 20th century.

The Visions of Isobel Gowdie

This book combines two classic topics in social anthropology in a new synthesis: the study of witchcraft and sorcery and the study of rumors and gossip. First, it shows how rumor and gossip are invariably important as catalysts for accusations of witchcraft and sorcery. Second, it demonstrates the role of rumor and gossip in the genesis of social and political violence, as in the case of both peasant rebellions and witch-hunts. Examples supporting the argument are drawn from Africa, Europe, India, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia.

Witchcraft

Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumors and Gossip