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Witchcraft in Print in Early Modern Germany and England

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Abstract

This thesis is a comparative study of witchcraft in German and English print, c. 1560-1690. There is a wealth of research on witchcraft in each country, much of which has been conducted through regional studies. This approach is logical because of the complexity of the witch-hunts and witch beliefs, but historians are increasingly seeking alternative methodologies to build a bigger picture. This thesis addresses this need. Chapter One introduces the primary sources: these fall under the broad category of 'popular print', including broadside ballads, single-sheet broadsheets, occasional news pamphlets, religious tracts, and sermons. It also examines the notion of 'popular print' and explores the intended purpose of these sources. Chapter Two compares how components of the 'cumulative concept' and 'elaborated concept' of witchcraft were addressed in the two countries. Chapter Three investigates the legal context that underpinned the trials, explores attitudes towards the crime of witchcraft in print, and contextualises these sources within the wider crime reporting genre. Chapter Four analyses the witch identity and its construction in print and evaluates whether witch tropes changed during times of crisis. Chapter Five inspects the ways that location shaped printed witchcraft narratives, including the transmission of information across national borders and spaces associated with the supernatural. Through its thematic approach, this thesis contributes to several fields alongside witchcraft including print culture, gender and identity, and criminality. Overall, the thesis reveals commonalities between German and English witchcraft discourses which have not been recognised previously. It also proposes that differences were due – at least in part – to the organisation and structure of the printing industries and literary conventions in each country. Ultimately, this thesis demonstrates the value of moving beyond local, regional, and even national borders, and argues that a balanced and sustained comparison of two countries yields new and important perspectives for witchcraft studies.

Acknowledgements

It is often said that a PhD is a marathon, not a sprint. That was certainly the case for this research. There were also one or two hurdles along the way, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent restrictions on travel and daily life. It would have been infinitely harder to overcome these hurdles without the guidance and support of the people and organisations listed here. I am sincerely grateful to everyone I have met and worked with during this research journey.

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The restrictions on travel from March 2020 onwards meant that the vast majority of my research was conducted with digital sources. I am indebted to the following digitisation and bibliographic projects: the *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts* (VD16), the *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts* (VD17), the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC), the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), and Early English Books Online (EEBO). My thanks go to the librarians and archivists at the Zentralbibliothek Zürich, the Württembergische Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek, Hannover, the Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg, and the Universitätsbibliothek LMU München for their assistance in identifying or obtaining digital copies of some of the sources. Thanks also to the British Library for providing a space to write and focus during the past year.

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Note on Conventions

All translations provided in this thesis are my own, unless otherwise stated. In the references for primary sources, I have retained the original spelling. Within the text, I have modernised English spelling. In this thesis, early modern Germany refers to the German-speaking lands of the Holy Roman Empire. When referring to locations within Germany, I have used the anglicised form of the German place name (i.e., Munich rather than München) where the anglicised form is more commonly used. Bible quotations are taken from the New International Version, unless otherwise stated.

Abbreviations

Where possible, I have used the catalogue references from the *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts* (VD16) and the *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts* (VD17) for German printed primary sources. If there is no VD16/VD17 number, I have used the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) or created my own abbreviation. I have used the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) for English printed primary sources. If the author is unknown, no author is given.

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
'An Account of what happen'd in the Kingdom of Sweden in the years 1669, 1670. and upwards' in J. Glanvill, *Saducismus Triumphatus: or, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions* (3rd edn., London, 1689), pp. 563-93.	ESTC R3644
'An Act agaynst Conjuracions Inchantments and Witchecraftes (5 Elizabeth c. 16)', in *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed by Command of his Majesty King George the Third, vol. 4, part 1* (London, 1819), pp. 446-7.	Witchcraft Act 1563
'An Acte against Conjuration Witchcrafte and dealinge with evill and wicked Spirits (1. Jacob. I c. 12)', in *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed by Command of his Majesty King George the Third, vol. 4, part 2* (London, 1819), pp. 1028- 9.	Witchcraft Act 1604
'The Bill ayenst conjuracions and wichecraftes and sorcery and enchantments (33 Henry VIII c. 8)', in *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed by Command of his Majesty King George the Third, vol. 3* (London, 1817), p. 837.	Witchcraft Act 1542

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
A Bloudy New-Yeares Gift, or a True Declaration of the Most Cruell and Bloody Murther (London, 1609).	ESTC S750
A Declaration in Answer to Several Lying Pamphlets Concerning the Witch of Wapping Being a More Perfect Relation of the Arraignment, Condemnation, and Suffering of Jone Peterson (London, 1652).	ESTC R171711
A Detection of Damnable Driftes, Practized by Three Witches Arraigned at Chelmifforde in Essex (London, 1579).	ESTC S118977
A Magazine of Scandall. Or, a Heape of Wickednesse of Two Infamous Ministers [...] the Other Named John Lowes of Brandeston, Who Hath Beene Arraigned for Witchcraft (London, 1642).	ESTC R9987
A Most Certain, Strange, and True Discovery of a Witch (London, 1643).	ESTC R4848
A Prodigious & Tragicall History of the Arraignment, Tryall, Confession, and Condemnation of Six Witches at Maidstone, in Kent (London, 1652).	ESTC R202164
A Rehearsall Both Straung and True, of Hainous and Horrible Actes Committed By [...] Fower Notorious Witches (London, 1579).	ESTC S101967
A Sad and Dreadfull Account of a Most Unusual and Barbarous Murther (London, 1690).	ESTC R33578
A Strange and Wonderful Relation of Margaret Gurr of Tunbridge, in Kent (London, 1681-4).	ESTC R184269

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
A Strange Report of Sixe Most Notorious Witches, who [...] were Executed in the Princely Cittie of Manchen in High Germanie the. 29. of July. 1600 (London, 1601).	ESTC S115808
A True and Impartial Relation of the Informations Against Three Witches, viz., Temperance Lloyd, Mary Trembles, and Susanna Edwards (London, 1682).	ESTC R12040
A True and Perfect Relation of the Tryall, Condemning, and Executing of 24 Prisoners (London, 1649).	ESTC R206139
A True Discourse. Declaring the Damnable Life and Death of one Stubbe Peeter, a Most Wicked Sorcerer (London, 1590).	ESTC S101735
A True Relation of the Araignment of Eighteene Witches. That were Tried, Convicted, and Condemned, at a Sessions Holden at St. Edmunds-bury in Suffolke (London, 1645).	ESTC R200262
A True Report of the Horrible Murther, which was Committed in the House of Sir Jerome Bowes (London, 1607).	ESTC S104665
A True Report of the Late Horrible Murther Committed by William Sherwood (London, 1581).	ESTC S103014
A World of Wonders. A Masse of Murthers. A Covie of Cosonages (London, 1595).	ESTC S126714
Alber M., and W. Bidembach, *Eine Summe Etlicher Predigten vom Hagel und Unholden* (s.l., 1562).	VD16 ZV 284

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
ANNO MDLXXXVI. Ist bey Bedbur ein Zauberer geweßen STVMP PETER genant (s.l., 1589).	*Ein Zauberer Stump Peter genant* 1589
Außführlicher Bericht von der Entdeckten Grausamen Zauberey in dem Dorffe Mohra und Umbliegenden Plätzen in Schweden (S.l., 1670).	VD17 23:234689S
Außführlicher Bericht von der Entdeckten Grausamen Zauberey in dem Dorffe Mohra und Umbliegenden Plätzen in Schweden (s.l., 1677).	*Außfürlicher Bericht Schweden* 1677
Bernard, R., *A Guide to Grand-Jury Men* (London, 1627).	ESTC S101683
Bower, E., *Doctor Lamb Revived, or, Witchcraft condemn'd in Anne Bodenham* (London, 1653).	ESTC R207115
Bower, J., *Doctor Lambs Darling: or, Strange and Terrible News from Salisbury* (London, 1653).	ESTC R207118
Brenz, J., *Vom Donner, Hagel, und allem Ungewitter* (s.l., 1565).	VD16 B 7917
Büchner, J., *Warhafftiger und Eigentlicher Bericht Wie sichs mit Osanna, Valentin Alberts zum Albrechtz, im Ampt Suhla Tochter begeben, daß sie aus Gottes Verhängnis von Etlichen Hexen Unerhörter Schrecklicher Weise Germartet Worden* (Schleusingen, 1627).	VD17 16:722288M
Cooper, T., *The Mystery of Witchcraft Discovering, the Truth, Nature, Occasions, Growth and Power thereof* (London, 1617).	ESTC S108665

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
D.S., *A True Reporte or Description of an Horrible, Wofull, and Moste Lamentable Murther* (London, 1573).	ESTC S110536
Damnable Practises Of Three Lincolne-shire Witches, Joane Flower, and her two Daughters, Margret and Phillip Flower (London, 1619).	ESTC S126176
Davenport, J., *The Witches of Huntingdon, Their Examinations and Confessions* (London, 1646).	ESTC R200949
Der Durchlauchtigsten Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn Herrn Augusten Herztogen zu Sachsen [...] Verordenungen vnd Constitutionen des Rechtlichen Process (Dresden, 1572).	VD16 S 895
Der Fürstl. Durchl. Hertzog Maximilians in Bayern unsers Gnädigsten Landtsfürsten und Herrens Landtgebott wider die Aberglauben, Zauberey, Hexerey und Andere Sträffliche Teufelskünste (Munich, 1611).	VD17 12:128322V
Des Allerdurchleuchtigsten Großmechtigsten Unüberwindtlichsten Keyser Karls des Fünfften: unnd des Heyligen Römischen Reichs Peinlich Gerichts Ordnung (Mainz, 1533).	VD16 D 1069
Des Weyland Hochgelehrten Johannis Bodini, Der Rechten Doctoris und Beysitzers im Frantzösischen Parlement Daemonomania [...] Welches der andere Theil Nicolai Remigii Daemonolatria (Frankfurt am Main, 1698).	VD17 3:008271F

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Ditmar, A., *Ein Leichpredigt Vom Friedsamen wolstande der Weltlichen Regimente. Auß dem 85. Psalm. Bey der Begrebnuss deß [...] Rudolphen Hammachers weilandt Burgermeistern der Statt vnd Landtraths deß Stiffts Oßnabrugk* (Lemgo, 1594).	VD16 ZV 18673
Dreyerley Warhaffte Newe Zeittung […] Die Dritte. Auß dem Landt Westuahllen von der Statt Ossenbruckh wie man auff einen Tag 133. Unholden verbrennt hat [...] geschehen den 9. Aprilis diß 96. Jars (Regensburg, 1596).	VD16 ZV 4639
Druten Zeitung Verlauff was sich hin und wider im Frankenland Bamberg und Würzburg mit den Unholden und denen so sich auß Ehr und Geltgetz muhtwillig dem Teuffel ergeben (Schmalkalden, 1627). Accessed at: http://www.hexen-franken.de/hinrichtungsorte/katholische-herrschaften/drutenzeitung/ (accessed 11 May 2021).	*Druten Zeitung* 1627
Dugdale, G., *A True Discourse of the Practices of Elizabeth Caldwell* (London, 1604).	ESTC S110927
Ein Erschröckliche Geschicht so zu Derneburg in der Graffschaft Reinsteyn am Hartz gelegen von Dreyen Zauberin unnd Zwayen Mannen (Nuremberg, 1555).	USTC 750051
Ein Erschröckliche Jedoch Warhafftige und Erbärmliche Newe-Zeitung Von Häxenmeisteren und Zauberern von welchen so vil zarte Jugend durch deß leydigen Teüffels Betrüg seynd verführt worden (s.l., 1666).	VD17 1:693643U

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Ein New Kläglich Lied von dem Grossen Schaden der Unholden so sie in Westphalen zu Aschenbruegk und andern Orten begangen haben (Wesel, 1583).	VD16 ZV 11599
Ein Newes Lied von dem Grausem unnd Sehr Schrecklichen Mord (Strasbourg, 1570).	VD16 N 1251
Ein Warhafftige und Erschreckliche Newe Zeitung von dem Grossen Mörder Melcher Heldoff (Augsburg, 1654).	VD17 12:629682R
Ein Warhafftige und Erschreckliche Newe Zeitung von einen Ungerathen Sohne (s.l., 1603).	VD17 1:670403N
Ein Warhafftige und Gründliche Beschreibung auß dem Bistumb Würtz und Bamberg, deßgleichen von dem ganzen Fränkischen Kraiß, wie man alda so vil Hexen Mann vnd Weibspersohnen verbrennen laßt (s.l., 1627).	VD17 23:293541Q
Ein Warhafftige und Unerhoerte Geschicht von einem Mueller welcher sein Weib und Sechs Kinder jemmerlich ermordet und umbgebracht (s.l., 1597).	VD16 ZV 15395
Ein Warhafftige Zeitung von Etlichen Hexen oder Unholden welche man kürtzlich im Stifft Mäntz zu Ascheburg, Dipperck, Ostum, Rönßhoffen auch andern Orten verbrendt (Frankfurt am Main, 1603).	VD17 1:691858R
Erschreckliche Newe Zeitung welche sich begeben vnd zugetragen in diesem 1650. Jahr in der Osternacht im Schweizer Gebirge bey der Stadt Dillhofen auff einem Dorffe Dimdurff genandt in welchem drey hexen gewohnet (Dillhofen, 1650).	VD17 1:693782T

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Erschreckliche Unerhörte Mordt That so sich der 28. Aprilis dieses 1606 Jahres (Leipzig, 1606).	VD17 3:604082E
Erschreckliche, Warhafftige, Newe Zeitung, so inn der Marggraffschafft Baden geschehen [...] von einer alten Zeuberin (Erfurt, 1581).	*Von einer alten Zeuberin* 1581
Erweyterte Unholden-Zeitung: Kurze Erzelung wie viel der Unholden hin und wider sonderlich inn dem Obern Teutschland gefängklich eingezogen (Ulm, 1590).	VD16 E 3889
Feyerabend, S., *Theatrum Diabolorum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1569).	VD16 F 904
Four Great and Horrible murders, or, Bloody News from Islington (London, 1674).	ESTC R226823
Franklin, J., *A Kentish Man of Maidstone, his owne Arraignment, Confession, Condemnation, and Judgement of Himselfe* (London, 1635).	ESTC S3213
G. B., *A Most Wicked Worke of a Wretched Witch* (London, 1592).	ESTC S119200
Galis, R., *A Brief Treatise Containing the Most Strange and Horrible Cruelty of Elizabeth Stile alias Rockingham and her Confederates* (London, 1579).	ESTC S124945
Gifford, G., *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes* (London, 1593).	ESTC S105690
Gifford, G., *A Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles by Witches and Sorcerers* (London, 1587).	ESTC S103141

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Goodcole, H., *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Elizabeth Sawyer a Witch Late of Edmonton* (London, 1621).	ESTC S117575
Gräter, J., *Hexen oder Unholden Predigten* (Tübingen, 1589).	VD16 G 3237
Great News from the West of England Being a True Account of Two Young Persons lately Bewitch'd in the Town of Beckenton in Somersetshire (London, 1689).	ESTC R26759
Gründliche Unerhörte Zeitung von den Teuffels-Zauberern und bösen Leuten im Braunschweigen Lande [...] verbrandt (Hildesheim, 1628).	VD17 1:692160C
H. F., *A True and Exact Relation of the Severall Informations, Examinations, and Confessions of the Late Witches, Arraigned and Executed in the County of Essex* (London, 1645).	ESTC R200218
Holland, H., *A Treatise against Witchcraft* (Cambridge, 1590).	ESTC S104153
Hopkins, M., *The Discovery of Witches* (London, 1647).	ESTC R201499
Hort an New Schrecklich Abenthewr von den Unholden Ungehewr (s.l., 1600).	USTC 750674
I.D., *The Most Wonderfull and True Storie, of a Certaine Witch named Alse Gooderige of Stapen Hill* (London, 1597).	ESTC S1876
J. H., *A True and Strange Relation of a Boy, who was Entertained by the Devill to be Servant to Him* (London, 1645).	ESTC R200458

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
James VI of Scotland, *Daemonologie, in Forme of a Dialogue, Diuided into Three Bookes* (Edinburgh, 1597).	ESTC S107574
Kuntz, H., *Newe Zeitung von einer Erschrecklichen That, welche zu Dillingen, von einem Jhesuwider, und einer Hexen geschehen ist* (Basel, 1579).	VD16 ZV 21532
Kuntz, H., *Newe Zeitung von einer Erschrecklichen That, welche zu Dillingen, von einem Jhesuwider, und einer Hexen geschehen ist* (Urssel, 1580).	VD16 ZV 28968
Lutz, R., *Warhafftige Zeittung von Gottlosen Hexen auch Ketzerischen und Teuffels Weibern die zu Schettstadt [...] sind verbrennt* (s.l., 1571).	VD16 L 7693
M. F., *Witchcrafts, Strange and Wonderfull: Discovering the Damnable Practices of Seven Witches* (London, 1635).	ESTC S92558
Mackay, C. S., (ed. and trans.), *The Hammer of the Witches: A Complete Translation of the Malleus Maleficarum* (Cambridge, 2009).	*Malleus Maleficarum*
Malleus Maleficarum: De Lamiis Et Strigibus, Et Sagis, Aliisque Magis & Dæmoniacis [...] In Tomos Duos distributi (Frankfurt am Main, 1588).	VD16 M 399
Marckwart, M., *Newe Zeitung. Eine Schreckliche Historia so sich zu Stettin in Pommern mit einer Zeuberinn zugetragen* (Lübeck, 1580).	VD16 M 947
Meder, D., *Acht Hexenpredigten* (Leipzig, 1605).	VD17 12:205316B

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Mistaken Justice: or, Innocence condemn'd, in the Person of Francis Newland, lately Executed at Tyburn (London, 1695).	ESTC R221841
Moore, M., *Wonderfull Newes from the North. Or, A true Relation of the Sad and Grievous torments, Inflicted Upon the Bodies of Three children of Mr. George Muschamp [...] by Witchcraft* (London, 1650).	ESTC R206348
Neuwe Zeitung auß dem Landt Westphalen von der Statt Ossenbruck Allda hat man den 9.Tag Hornungs indem 1591. Jar auff einen Tag 133.Unholden verbrendt (Erfurt, 1591).	VD16 W 338
Newe Zeitung aus Berneburgk Schrecklich vnd Abschewlich zu hoeren vnd zu lesen von dreyen alten Teuffels Bulerin Hexin oder Zauberinnen (s.l., 1580).	VD16 N 624
Newe Zeitung und Ware Geschicht, dises LXXVI. Jars geschehen im Breissgaw, wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken inn die 136. Unholden gefangen und verbrendt hat (s.l., 1576).	VD16 ZV 29945
Newe Zeytunge von einem Manne Hans Vader genant (Nuremberg, 1562).	VD16 N 911
Newes from Scotland. Declaring the Damnable Life of Doctor Fian a Notable Sorcerer, who was Burned at Edenbrough in Ianuarie last. 1591 (London, 1592).	ESTC S105575
Newes out of Germanie. A most Wonderfull and True Discourse of a cruell Murderer (London, 1584).	ESTC S119710

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Newezeitung und Ware Geschicht, dieses 76. Jars geschehen im Breissgaw, wie man da in etlichen Stätten und Flecken in die 55 Unhulden gefangen und verbrennet hat (Hof, 1576).	VD16 ZV 29944
Otto, C., *Eine Christliche Predigt Wider der Zauberey* (Berlin, 1661).	VD17 14:679199Q
Parker, M., *The Tragedy of Doctor Lambe, the great suposed Coniurer, who was wounded to death by Saylers and other Lads* (London, 1628).	ESTC S126177
Perkins, W., *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, 1608).	ESTC S114525
Potts, T., *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster* (London, 1613).	ESTC S114979
Praetorius, J., *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung Oder Ausführlicher Geographischer Bericht von den hohen trefflich alt- und berühmten Blockes-Berge* (Leipzig, 1668).	VD17 3:015601X
Quicke, J., *Hell Open'd, or, The Infernal Sin of Murther* (London, 1676).	ESTC R11200
Relation oder Beschreibung so Anno 1669 den 23. Martii in der Römischen Reichs-Statt Augspurg geschehen von einer Weibs-Person welche ob Grausamer und Erschröcklicher Hexerey (Augsburg, 1669).	*Beschreibung von Hexerey* 1669
Relation of the Most Remarkable Proceedings at the Late assizes at Northampton Conteyning Truely and Fully, the Tryals, Confessions, and Execution of a Most Mischievous Witch, Notorious High-way-man, Barbarous Murderess (London, 1674).	ESTC R222528

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Roberts, A., *A Treatise of Witchcraft* (London, 1616).	ESTC S115983
Salisbury Assizes. [?]ard of Witchcraft (London, 1653).	ESTC R187381
Saur, A., *Ein Kurtze Treuwe Warnung, Anzeige und Underricht: Ob auch zu Dieser Unser Zeit unter uns Christen, Hexen, Zauberer, und Unholden vorhanden* (Frankfurt am Main, 1582).	VD16 S 1915
Schaller, D., *Zäuber-Händel: Acht Predigten, Uber das Acht und Zwantzigste Capittel, des Erste Buchs Samuelis* (Magdeburg, 1611).	VD17 23:258775K
Signes and Wonders from Heaven (London, 1645).	ESTC R232297
Stearne, J., *A Confirmation and Discovery of Witchcraft* (London, 1648).	ESTC R28178
Sterben unnd Thewrung [...] Das andre Lied. Was man in Luttringen für Unholden verbrendt hatt (Eisenberg, 1587).	VD16 W 1261
Strange and Dreadful News from the Town of Deptford, in the county of Kent (London, 1685).	ESTC R219139
Strange and Wonderful News from Yowel in Surry Giving a True and Just Account of one Elizabeth Burgiss, Who Was Most Strangely Bewitched and Tortured (London, 1681).	ESTC R33659
Sundrye Strange and Inhumanie Murthers Lately Committed (London, 1591).	ESTC S2242
The Apprehension and Confession of Three Notorious Witches (London, 1589).	ESTC S119280

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
The Araignement and Burning of Margaret Ferne-seede (London, 1608).	ESTC S113069
The Devils Reign Upon Earth, Being a Relation of Several Sad and Bloudy Murthers lately committed (London, 1655).	ESTC R209090
The Divels Delusions or A Faithfull Relation of John Palmer and Elizabeth Knott Two Notorious Witches (London, 1649).	ESTC R206137
The Examination and Confession of Certaine Wytches at Chensforde in the Countie of Essex (London, 1566).	ESTC S2279
The Examination of John Walsh [...] upon Certayn Interrogatories Touchyng Wytchcrafte and Sorcerye (London, 1566).	ESTC S102100
The Examination, Confession, Triall, and Execution, of Joane Williford, Joan Cariden, and Jane Hott: Who Were Executed at Feversham in Kent, for Being Witches (London, 1645).	ESTC R200303
The Faithful Scout Impartially Communicating the Most Remarkable Passages of the Armies, in England, Scotland, and Ireland [issue 65, 9 April 1652] (London, 1652).	ESTC P1269
The Five Strange Wonders, in the North and West of England as they were Communicated to Divers Honourable Members of Parliament (London, 1659).	ESTC R12040
The Full and True Relation of the Tryal, Condemnation, and Execution of Ann Foster (Who was Arrained for a Witch) on Saturday the 22th of this instant August (London, 1674).	ESTC R40425

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
The Full Tryals, Examination, and Condemnation of Four Notorious Witches at the Assizes held at Worcester (London, 1690).	ESTC R40228
The Horrible Murther of a Young Boy of Three Yeres of Age, whose Sister had her Tongue Cut Out: and How it Pleased God to Reveale the Offendors (London, 1606).	ESTC S113482
The Lawes against Witches, and Conjuration (London, 1645).	ESTC R200343
The Life and Conversation of Temperance Floyd, Mary Lloyd; and Susanna Edwards Three Eminent Witches Lately Condemed at Exeter Assizes (London, 1687).	ESTC R231324
The Life and Death of Lewis Gaufredy (London, 1612).	ESTC S102950
The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther Committed by an Inkeepers Wife […] With the Severall Witchcrafts, and Most Damnable Practises of One Iohane Harrison and Her Daughter (London, 1606).	ESTC S113484
The Most Strange and Admirable Discoverie of the Three Witches of Warboys (London, 1593).	ESTC S95729
The Severall Factes of Witch-Crafte, Approoved and Laid to the Charge of Margaret Harkett (s.l., 1585).	ESTC S92857
The Shee-devil of Petticoat-Lane, or, A True and Perfect Relation of a Sad Accident which befel Mr. Freeland at the Kings-head in Petticoat-Lane near White-Chappel-Bars (London, 1666).	ESTC R25623

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
The Snare of the Devill Discovered: or, A True and Perfect Relation of the Sad and Deplorable Condition of Lydia the wife of John Rogers house carpenter (London, 1658).	ESTC R209814
The Tryall and Examination of Mrs. Joan Peterson, before the Honorable Bench, and the Sessions House in the Old-Bayley (London, 1652).	ESTC R206710
The Witch of Wapping, Or An Exact and Perfect Relation, of the Life and Devilish Practises of Joan Peterson, that dwelt in Spruce Island, near Wapping (London, 1652).	ESTC R206717
The Witches of Northamptonshire (London, 1612).	ESTC S115086
The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower, daughters of Joan Flower neere Beuer Castle (London, 1619).	ESTC S102363
Two Most Unnaturall and Bloodie Murthers (London, 1605).	ESTC S120705
Urgicht und Verzaichnuß, so Walpurga Haußmännin zu Dillingen, in irer peinlichen Marter bekandt, was sie für Ubels und Jamers mit irer Hexerrey, [...] angerichtet und gestift hat (S.l., 1588).	Urgicht und Verzaichnuß 1588
W.W., *A True and Just Recorde, of the Information, Examination and Confession of all the Witches, taken at S. Ofes in the Countie of Essex* (London, 1582).	ESTC S101821
Waldschmidt, B., *Pythonissa Endorea: das ist 28 Hexen- und Gespenst-Predigten* (Frankfurt, 1660).	VD17 12:627125P

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 9. Januarij in der Churfurstlichen Residenz Statt München an einem weitbeschreiten und erschröcklichen Zauberer vollbracht worden (Augsburg, 1666).	*Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils* München 1666
Warhaffte Beschreibung deß Urtheils so Anno 1666. den 15. Aprilis in deß heiligen Römischen Reichs-Statt Augspurg an einer namens Anna Schwayhoferin hat begeben vnd zugetragen (Augsburg, 1666).	*Warhaffte Beschreibung deß Urtheils* Augsburg 1666
Warhaffte Historische Abbild: und kurtze Beschreibung was sich unlangst in des Heyl: ReichsStatt Augspurg mit einer ledigen von einem stummen Teuffel besessen Weibspersohn und ihren zweyen zauberrischen Wartterinnen zugetragen (Augsburg, 1654).	VD17 23:675370B
Warhaffte und Glaubwirdige Zeyttung von hundert und vir vnd dreyssig Uholden, so umb irer Zauberey [...] zu Gefencknus gebracht (Strasbourg, 1583).	VD16 W 560
Warhaffte und Glaubwirdige Zeytung. Wie man in diesem 1582. Jahr wol in die 200. und fuenff und zweyntzig Weiber verbrant hat (Strasbourg, 1582).	VD16 ZV 29564
Warhaffter Summarischer Außführlicher Bericht und Erzehlung, Was die in deß heyligen röm. Reichstatt Augspurg etlich Wochen lang in Verhafft gelegne zwo Hexen [...] wegen ihrer Hexerey [...] hingericht worden (Augsburg, 1654).	VD17 23:253394W

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Warhafftige Newe Zeittung auß dem Land Westvahlen von der Stat Ossenbruck wie man da hat auff einen Tag 133.Unholden verbrendt (s.l., 1588).	VD16 W 337
Warhafftige Newe Zeittung von Etlichen Zauberischen Weibern, so man diß 1617. und 1618. Jahrs, zu Häimburgk in Oesterreich, auff der Ungerischen Grentz verbrennet hat (Vienna, 1618).	*Newe Zeitung von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern* 1618
Warhafftige Newe Zeittungen, Erschröcklich unnd Erbärmlich, so all kurtzlich in disem 1581. Jar geschehen seind [...] und letztlich von Peter Niers, dem grewlichen, erschröcklichen Mörder (Heidelberg, 1582).	VD16 W 447
Warhafftige Newe Zeitung so geschehen den Ersten tag Martij im 70. Jar hat man diese nachfolgende zwen Mörder gericht (Prague, 1570).	VD16 ZV 5770
Warhafftige Newe Zeyttung so den 18. Martii in diesem 75. 75.Jar zu Bramberg im Pintzkaw ein Meilwegs von Mittersel im Bisthumb Saltzburg mit einem Pfarrer vnd seiner Koechin zugetragen hat (Vienna, 1575).	VD16 W 372
Warhafftige und ein Erschröckliche Neuwe Zeitung des Grossen Wasserguss [...] wie man hernach alda etlich Unhulden vebrent hatt (s.l., 1578).	VD16 W 2322
Warhafftige und Erschreckliche Beschreibung, von einem Zauberer (Stupe Peter genandt) (Cologne, 1589).	VD16 W 516

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Warhafftige und Gründtliche GerichtsRegistratur wegen der erschröcklichen jämmerlichen erbärmlichen unnd unerhörten Mordthat (Nuremberg, 1606).	VD17 23:254219F
Warhafftige und Wunderbarlich Newe Zeitung von einem Pauren der sich durch Zauberey des Tags siben stund zu ainen Wolff verwandelt hat (Nuremberg, 1589).	*Newe Zeitung von einem Pauren* Nuremberg 1589
Warhafftige und wunderbarliche Newe Zeitung von einem Bawren der sich durch Zauberey deß Tags siben stunnd zu einem Wolff verwandelt hat (Augsburg, 1589).	*Newe Zeitung von einem Bawren* Augsburg 1589
Warhafftige unnd Erschreckliche Thatten und Handlungen der Lxiii. Hexen unnd Unholden so zu Wisenstaig mit dem Brandt gericht worden seindt (s.l., 1563).	VD16 W 535
Warhafftige Zeitung von Peter Nierschen und seiner Gesellschaft wie sie vierhundert und viertzig Mordt bekannt (Tübingen, 1577).	VD16 W 624
Was man für Hexen oder Unholden verbrendt hat (Hof, 1580).	VD16 W 1260
Wessel, L., *Warhafftige Newe Zeitung und Gruentliche Beschreybung Einer Gerichtshandlung* (Augsburg, 1570).	VD16 ZV 15505
Witchcraft Discovered and Punished. Or, the Tryals and Condemnation of three Notorious Witches, who were Tryed the last Assizes, holden at the Castle of Exeter, in the County of Devon (London, 1682).	ESTC R228715

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Witches Apprehended, Examined and Executed, for Notable Villanies by them Committed both by Land and Water (London, 1613).	ESTC S120192
Zehner, J., *Fünff Predigten von den Hexen* (Leipzig, 1613).	VD17 23:328851P
Zwey Warhafftige und Erschröckliche Geschichten und Wunderzeichen hat uns Gott für Augen gestelt an Unterschiedlichen Orthen […] Das Ander Warhafftige Beschreibung was sich bey der Statt Wilisaw ihn einem Dorff mit einer Zauberin begeben (Hohenhems, 1647).	VD17 12:691618D
Zwo Erschreckliche und Unerhörte Geschicht, welches in diesem XCCI Jar geschehen ist auff dem Brockersberg, dar sich ahn die hundert tausend Unholden oder Hexen versamlet (Cologne, 1596).	*Brockersberg* 1596
Zwo Hexenzeitung Die Erste von dreyen Hexen-Pfaffen unnd einem Organisten zu Ellwang [...] Die Ander: von einer Unholdin oder Hexen wie sie mit jhren Gespilen alles zuverderben unterstanden (Nuremberg, 1615).	*Zwo Hexenzeitung* 1615
Zwo Hexen-Zeitung Die Erste: wie die Bischoff zu Würtzburg das Hexenbrennen im Franckenlande angefangen: Die ander auß dem Hertzogthumb Würtenberg wie die Hertzog zu Würtemberg in unterschiedlichen Stätten das Hexenbrennen auch angefangen (Tübingen, 1616).	VD17 23:626143G
Zwo Newe Zeitung [...] Die ander auß Engelland. Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus welche verurtheilet vnd Gehenckt sind worden zu Chelmsforde in der Graffschafft Essex in Engelland diß 1591. Jahr (s.l., 1591).	*Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus* 1591

SOURCE	ABBREVIATION
Zwo Newe Zeitungen Die Erste, welche gestalt zween falsche Juden durch Zauberey zuwegen gebracht, daß vil tausent Stück Vihe hingefallen und gestorben ist (Vienna, 1599).	VD16 N 1023
Zwo Newezeittung [...] Die Ander: Ein erschröckliche und erbärmliche Geschicht [...] wie daselbst ein Mann sein Schwanger Weib verkaufft (Hof, 1581).	VD16 ZV 29536
Zwo Schröckliche Newe Zeitung, Die Erste ist von dem Grewlichen Elendt, so sich in [...] Aschenburck am Maynstrom gelegen [...] von einer grossen anzahl Hexen unnd Unholten (Giessen, 1612).	*Newe Zeitung von Hexen unnd Unholten* 1612
Zwo Wahrhafftige Newe Zeitung und eigendtliche Beschreibung […] Die Ander newe Zeitung aus dem Landt Wastvalen von der Stadt Osenbruck allda hat man den 9. April in disem 1589 Jahr auff einen Tag Hundert unnd drey und dreissig Zauberin verbrendt (Jena, 1589).	VD16 V 2668
Zwo Warhafftige Newe Zeitungen […] Die Andere Zeitung Eine abschewliche und zuvor nie erhoerte erschreckliche Zaubereyen Moerdt unnd Diebereyen von Vater Mutter zweyen Soehnen und zweyen Toechtermaennern geschehen Welche in [...] Muenchen im Beyerland sind gefaenglich eingezogen worden (Basel, 1600).	VD16 ZV 21490
Zwo Warhafftige und doch Männiglich zuvor bekante Newe Zeitungen: Die Erste von dem grossen Jammer welcher sich begeben in der Marggraffschafft Baden wie allda schon uber die Fünfftzig Hexen [...] sein verbrant worden (Moltzen, 1626).	VD17 23:250479P

Introduction

Men of learning have observed that all witches through Europe are of like carriage and behaviour in their examinations and convictions: they use the same answers, refuges, defences, protestations. In a word, look what be the practices and courses of the witches in England, in any of these particulars, the same be the practices of the witches in Spain, France, Italy, [and] Germany.[1]

In 1608, *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* was printed in Cambridge, England. Edited by Thomas Pickering – who also wrote the preface – it was ostensibly based on the sermons of the preacher and theologian William Perkins, who died six years before its publication.[2] The tract was wide-ranging, exploring the nature of witchcraft, the basis of witches' power, types of witches, and how witches ought to be punished. Perkins and Pickering were not alone in their interest in this topic. Religious, political, economic, and social upheaval in early modern Europe contributed to fears among some that the malevolent force of witchcraft was gaining power. These fears had tragic consequences: the early modern European witch-hunts claimed the lives of approximately 50,000 people.[3] Throughout Europe, writers and printers turned their attention to the trials that resulted in these executions, and to wider debates regarding the existence of witchcraft and how the threat of witchcraft should be addressed. These discussions appeared in a variety of printed media, of which Perkins' *Discourse* is one example. In the passage quoted above, Perkins placed the threat posed by witches in England into a broader European context and asserted that English witches were essentially identical to witches in other European countries. In fact, he considered witches' behaviours and

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[1] ESTC S114525, pp. 191-2.
[2] L. Dixon, 'The Ambivalent Demonologist: William Perkins's Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft', in J. Machielsen (ed.), *The Science of Demons: Early Modern Authors Facing Witchcraft and the Devil* (London, 2020), p. 238.
[3] J. Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt* (London, 2016), p. 27.

motivations to be 'universal'.[4] For Perkins, there was ample scriptural evidence of witchcraft's long history; the 'confessions of witches recorded in the chronicles of countries through all of Europe' convinced him that the witches they encountered were the same as those discussed in the Bible.[5]

Many other writers shared this view. In Germany, Abraham Saur, a jurist in Marburg, Hesse, wrote in his news tract printed in 1582 that some did not believe that witches existed among Christians; he disagreed, commenting that 'in history, sorcerers and witches are found in all times, even among God's people; the Holy Bible also tells of several sorcerers in both the Old and New Testament.'[6] Joachim Zehner, a priest in Schleusingen, Thuringia, agreed in his sermons printed in 1613 that there were multiple precedents proving the ongoing existence of witches and emphasised that witchcraft was a growing widespread concern.[7] He stated that 'not only this place and country, but also neighbouring and other locations are gripped by cursed witchcraft.'[8] In England in 1612, an anonymous pamphlet reporting witchcraft trials in Northamptonshire asserted that witchcraft was 'not young in the days of Moses' and possibly existed prior to the Flood (Genesis 7).[9] The pamphlet also noted recent witchcraft cases including 'reports of the strange mischiefs done by the witches of Norway'.[10] In 1619, another anonymous English pamphlet reporting witchcraft near Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire, cited several examples of recent witchcraft cases, including 'four notorious French witches'.[11] The similarities between the German and English examples are striking, reflecting a shared history of witchcraft. Writers in both countries considered the witchcraft cases that they examined to be part of a wider, transnational issue. Christian Europe, if not the entire world, faced a common enemy in witches.

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[4] ESTC S114525, p. 191.
[5] Ibid., pp. 186-7.
[6] VD16 S 1915, sig. Aiii^{v}.
[7] VD17 23:328851P, pp. 6-9.
[8] Ibid., p. 2.
[9] ESTC S115086, sig. B^{r}.
[10] Ibid., sig. A3^{v}.
[11] ESTC S102363, sig. B4^{v}.

The impression created by these sources is in stark contrast to modern historical interpretations which have, for the most part, emphasised the considerable complexity and diversity of approaches to witchcraft and witch-hunting in early modern Europe. Witch-hunts were not evenly distributed chronologically or geographically. The beginning of the European witch-hunts can be traced to trials in the western Alps during the 1420s and 1430s.[12] Broadly speaking, witch-hunts peaked in early modern Europe between 1560 and 1630, although eastern territories including Hungary and Russia did not experience their peak in witchcraft prosecutions until the eighteenth century.[13] Germany and England vividly illustrate the significant geographic variations. Germany has several titles, including 'the mother of the witches' and 'the heartland of the witch craze'.[14] Its notoriety stems from the fact that approximately 25,000 people were executed for witchcraft in the German-speaking lands of the Holy Roman Empire.[15] This figure equates to half of all witchcraft executions in Europe, a dramatically high proportion considering that Germany accounted for around twenty percent of Europe's population during this period.[16] In contrast, around 1000 people were tried for witchcraft in England, and approximately 500 executed.[17] The only trials that could be considered a major witch-hunt were the East Anglia trials between 1645 and 1647; these trials resulted in the deaths of around 100 individuals, and are infamous for the involvement of witch-finders Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne.[18]

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[12] B. P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (4th edn., London, 2016), p. 185.
[13] Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt*, p. 28; I.Sz. Kristóf, 'Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Hungary', in B.P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 339; V.A. Kivelson, 'Witchcraft Trials in Russia: History and Historiography', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 356.
[14] J. Dillinger, 'Germany-"The Mother of the Witches"', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (New York, NY, 2020), p. 94; H. C. Erik Midelfort, 'Heartland of the Witchcraze: Central and Northern Europe', *History Today*, 31/2 (1981), p. 27.
[15] T. Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials' in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 187.
[16] Dillinger, 'Germany', p. 94.
[17] J. Sharpe, 'Witch Hunts in Britain', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 145.
[18] M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and Evidence in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 198 (2008), pp. 35-6.

Individual territories in Germany executed more witches in a decade than England ever did. Between 1626 and 1634, for example, roughly 2000 people were executed for witchcraft in the Electorate of Cologne, four times the total in England.[19]

It would, of course, be incorrect to treat European witchcraft as a homogenous whole given these drastic variations in scale and intensity. In fact, even national studies risk oversimplification; consequently, a popular approach among historians in both Germany and England is regional and local analysis. While there is good reason for adopting such an approach, historians are increasingly questioning whether it has much more to offer to the field of witchcraft. In Germany, Johannes Dillinger cautions that research has become 'stuck in the mode of regional analysis'.[20] In England, Malcolm Gaskill acknowledges that some recent studies 'have added detail to the spatial and chronological picture without adding much to wider understanding.'[21] One alternative employed successfully in German and English contexts is microstudies focused closely on individual trials.[22] This approach is particularly useful for gaining an insight into the thoughts and experiences of individuals on trial for witchcraft, as demonstrated by Laura Kounine's recent study of emotions and selfhood in witchcraft cases in the Duchy of Württemberg.[23]

Such studies, however, do little to address the growing concern that witchcraft research is too fragmented to build a bigger picture. This critique

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[19] Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials', p. 187.
[20] J. Dillinger, *'Evil People': A Comparative Study of Witch Hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier*, trans. by L. Stokes (Charlottesville, VA, 2009). p. 5.
[21] M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft Trials in England', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 289.
[22] See, for example: M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and Power in Early Modern England: The Case of Margaret Moore', in J. Kermode and G. Walker (eds.), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London,1994), pp. 125-45; L. Kounine, 'The Gendering of Witchcraft: Defence Strategies of Men and Women in German Witchcraft Trials', *German History*, 31/3 (2013), pp. 295-317; A. Rowlands, 'Gender, Ungodly Parents and a Witch Family in Seventeenth-Century Germany', *Past & Present,* 232 (2016), pp. 44-86; M. Gibson, 'French Demonology in an English Village: the St Osyth Experiment of 1582', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer & L. Helene Willumsen (eds.*), Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), pp. 107-26.
[23] L. Kounine, *Imagining the Witch: Emotions, Gender and Selfhood in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 31-6.

was put forward by religious historian Moniker Neugebauer-Wölk, who, in an article titled 'Ways Out of the Jungle', expressed concern that the ever-expanding array of regional studies made the field of witchcraft more incomprehensible rather than aiding understanding.[24] Given the apparent centrality of the witch-hunts as a key to understanding early modern European culture, she viewed the lack of overarching explanatory model as deeply problematic, and accused scholars of failing to engage with or make their work accessible to a non-specialist audience or researchers in other disciplines.[25] Her comments underline the significant problem facing witchcraft historians. Others, including Katrin Moeller and Jacqueline Van Gent, also recognise that it is becoming increasingly difficult to move away from the 'peculiarities of place' and to see the overall picture.[26]

This thesis responds to this interpretive challenge. It explores how a balanced comparison of two countries – Germany and England, in this case – can provide new insights and perspectives for scholars of early modern European witchcraft. Comparative approaches have been used successfully in witchcraft studies, but have not yet been widely adopted. Although comparative approaches do pose significant challenges, witchcraft studies and, indeed, the study of early modern history more broadly, would undoubtedly benefit from engaging more with this methodology. Comparison is also more viable thanks to the extensive and rich regional analysis already conducted in the field of witchcraft; it is not, therefore, intended to undermine regional analysis, but rather works in tandem with and enhances existing scholarship. The thesis also demonstrates that comparison helps to move away from narrow, compartmentalised studies that struggle to relate to one another. The examples above show that early modern writers did not write in a vacuum, isolated from events and ideas circulating in Europe. They recognised the transnational context in which

[24] M. Neugebauer-Wölk, 'Wege aus dem Dschungel. Betrachtungen zur Hexenforschung', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 29/2 (2003), p. 317.
[25] Ibid., p. 319.
[26] K. Moeller, *Dass Wilkür Über Recht Ginge: Hexenverfolgung in Mecklenburg im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld, 2007), p. 14; J. Van Gent, 'Current Trends in Historical Witchcraft Studies', *Journal of Religious History*, 35/4 (2011), pp. 612-13.

their works could be situated. This research encourages historians to do the same.

Research Context

Germany

Germany is understandably a natural focus for those interested in European witchcraft because of the scale of the trials and the abundant archival material resulting from those trials. Indeed, German sources were central to early witchcraft histories by Joseph Hansen, Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan, and Henry Charles Lea, whose works are considered by some to have 'provided the very foundation for today's witchcraft studies.'[27] These studies dominated witchcraft research for much of the twentieth century. But, in the 1960s and 1970s, their arguments were reassessed by Richard Kieckhefer and Norman Cohn, who took issue with Hansen's argument that the witch trials originated from the Inquisition's mission to eradicate heresy.[28] Their research demonstrated that sources used by Hansen, implying that the first trials happened in Toulouse as part of attempts to wipe out Catharism, were forgeries created by nineteenth-century anti-Catholic polemicist Baron de Lamothe-Lagone.[29] This revelation forced scholars to challenge their assumptions about the root of the witchcraft trials, and to seek out new methodologies and explanatory models.

In German witchcraft research, this methodological turn was introduced by Hans Christian Erik Midelfort in his book on the social and

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[27] J. Hansen, *Quellen und Untersuchung zur Geschichte der Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1901); Soldan, W. G., *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse: Band 1* (Stuttgart, 1880); H. C. Lea, *Materials Towards a History of Witchcraft, arranged and edited by Arthur C. Howard with an introduction by George Lincoln Burr, 3 vols.* (New York, NY, 1957); W. Behringer, 'Witchcraft Studies in Austria, Germany and Switzerland' in J. Barry, M. Hester & G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 66.
[28] N. Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Inquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt* (London, 1975), pp. 132-8; R. Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture* (London, 1976), pp. 16-19.
[29] L. Stokes, 'Towards the Witch Craze', in J. Bennett & R. Karras (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2013), p. 578.

intellectual foundations of witch trials in southwest Germany.[30] Midelfort's research was shaped by developments in Anglo-American historical research during the 1970s, which placed a greater emphasis on 'history from below' and took inspiration from anthropology.[31] His study primarily used legal records from Baden-Württemberg to examine large trials (defined as those resulting in twenty or more executions within a year) between 1562 and 1684.[32] Midelfort's approach is widely considered to have sparked a major paradigm shift in German witchcraft research which has endured to the present day.[33]

The most significant contribution was to establish the regional study, based on extensive archival exploration of legal records, as the primary approach for studying witchcraft in Germany. This approach has several advantages. The Holy Roman Empire was vast, decentralized and fragmented, composed of roughly two thousand semi-independent territories of varying sizes; the Reformation created additional conflict, as territories became divided along confessional lines.[34] Indeed, regional case studies, particularly focusing on individual cities, are a common approach in early modern German history more broadly.[35] Regional analysis is also preferred because of the considerable variations in the scale of witchcraft trials throughout Germany. In some territories, chain-reaction hunts claimed the lives of hundreds or even thousands of people in the space of a few years. Examples of these major hunts include those in the Electorate of Trier (1587-93), the Electorate of Mainz (1602-4, 1616-18, 1626-30), the Bishopric of Würzburg (1616-18, 1626-30), the Bishopric of Bamberg (1616-

[30] H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562-1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, CA, 1972).
[31] M. Gaskill, 'The Pursuit of Reality: Recent Research into the History of Witchcraft', *The Historical Journal,* 51/4 (2008), pp. 1070-1.
[32] Midelfort, *Witch Hunting*, p. 9.
[33] J. M. Schmidt, *Glaube und Skepsis: Die Kurpfalz und die abendländische Hexenverfolgung 1446-1685* (Bielfeld, 2000), p. 14; M. Burkart, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Baden* (Durmersheim, 2009), p. 7.
[34] Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials', pp. 180-1.
[35] C. W. Close, 'Regional History and the Comparative Turn in the Study of Early Modern Cities', *German History*, 32/1 (2014), p. 113.

19, 1626-30), and the Electorate of Cologne (1626-34).[36] On the other hand, other territories such as the Duchy of Jülich-Cleve-Berg or the Electoral Palatinate had relatively few or sporadic trials of individuals.[37] The variety of experience in Germany demonstrates, as many historians have argued, that it is futile to seek monocausal explanations for the early modern witch-hunts. Regional analysis, on the other hand, offers the opportunity for scholars to pay close attention to the specific dynamics of the witch-hunts that they examine.

Regional analysis remains the preferred approach for historians of German witchcraft. Studies that claim to discuss 'early modern Germany' are invariably about a single city or territory; in fact, scholarship published originally in English or translated into English focuses almost exclusively on southern Germany. Midelfort's work was followed with Wolfgang Behringer's study of the southeast, translated into English in 1997.[38] Johannes Dillinger focuses on the Electorate of Trier and Swabian Austria, Robert Walinski-Kiehl on Bamberg and Würzburg, Lyndal Roper on Augsburg, Nördlingen, Obermarchtal and Würzburg, Jonathan Durrant on Eichstätt, and both Edward Bever and Laura Kounine consider the Duchy of Württemberg.[39] Research on individual cities is also predominantly concentrated in the southern territories of the Empire: Alison Rowlands explores Rothenburg ob der Tauber and Laura Stokes looks at Lucerne, Basel, and Nuremberg.[40] Even microhistorical contributions emerge from the southwest; Behringer's work examines Oberstdorf and Thomas

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[36] Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials', pp. 186-7.
[37] Schmidt, *Glaube und Skepsis,* pp. 475-7; E. Münster-Schröer, *Hexenverfolgung und Kriminalität: Jülich-Kleve-Berg in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Essen, 2017), p. 15.
[38] W. Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2002).
[39] Dillinger, *'Evil People'*; R. Walinski-Kiehl, '"Godly States", Confessional Conflict and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Germany', *Mentalities*, 5 (1988), pp. 13-24; L. Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London, 2004); J. B. Durrant, *Witchcraft, Gender and Society in Early Modern Germany* (Leiden, 2007); E. Bever, *The Realities of Witchcraft and Popular Magic in Early Modern Europe: Culture, Cognition and Everyday Life* (Basingstoke, 2008); Kounine, *Imagining the Witch.*
[40] A. Rowlands, *Witchcraft Narratives in Germany: Rothenburg, 1561-1652* (Manchester, 2003); L. Stokes, *Demons of Urban Reform: Early European Witch Trials and Criminal Justice, 1430-1530* (Basingstoke, 2011).

Robisheaux's is based around Langenburg.[41] The predominance of southern Germany in Anglophone scholarship is understandable, because over a third of German witchcraft executions happened there.[42] It does, however, create the impression that northern Germany has been neglected in witchcraft research.

Fortunately, Germanophone scholarship has addressed this gap. Research groups including the *Arbeitskreis für Interdisziplinäre Hexenforschung* (Work Group for Interdisciplinary Witchcraft Research) – founded in 1986 in Stuttgart – and the *Arbeitskreis für Norddeutsche Hexen- und Kriminalitätsforschung* (Work Group for North German Witchcraft and Criminality Research) – founded in 2001 in Hamburg – addressed regional gaps and encourage collaborative witchcraft research.[43] Alongside major studies including Gerhard Schormann's study of witchcraft trials in northwest Germany, and Katrin Moeller's study of witchcraft in the Duchy of Mecklenburg, the website linked to the AKIH lists forty-one regional studies of witchcraft.[44] As Midelfort observed in 2008, 'the map of witch-hunting based on the surviving trial records has slowly been filled in, so that there are today relatively few territories and cities that are still blank spots.'[45]

What have historians learned from these studies? Naturally, scholars have devoted significant attention to explaining why the trials happened, and why they were so intense in certain German territories. Several explanations emerged. Some point to confessionalisation and the desire to build a 'godly state' as the impetus for witch-hunts. In the Catholic

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[41] W. Behringer, *Shaman of Oberstdorf: Chonrad Stoeckhlin and the Phantoms of the Night,* trans. H. C. Erik Midelfort (London, 1998); T. Robisheaux, *The Last Witch of Langenburg: Murder in a German Village* (New York, NY, 2009).
[42] Roper, *Witch Craze,* p. 19.
[43] K. Moeller, 'Abeitskreis für Norddeutsche Hexen- und Kriminalitätsforschung', <https://www.geschichte.uni-halle.de/mitarbeiter/moeller/akn/>, accessed 23.11.2018.
[44] G. Schormann, *Hexenprozesse in Nordwestdeutschland (*Hildesheim, 1977); Moeller, *Dass Wilkür Über Recht Ginge*. For a list of articles from a regional perspective, see: 'Regionen und Orte', <https://langzeitarchivierung.bib-bvb.de/wayback/20190716083313/https://www.historicum.net/themen/hexenforschung/lexikon/regionen-und-orte/> accessed 13.6.2022.
[45] H. C. Erik Midelfort, 'Witchcraft' in D. M. Whitford (ed.), *Reformation and Early Modern Europe: A Guide to Research* (Kirksville, MO, 2008), p. 361.

territories of Bamberg, Würzburg, Eichstätt, and Fulda, the most intense period of witch-hunting coincided with the rule of prince bishops or prince provosts who were particularly devoted to establishing religious conformity.[46] This drive for religious conformity was not limited to Catholic territories. Susanne Kleinöder-Strobel notes that the Church and state also collaborated in eradicating anyone who failed to conform to the Christian 'norm' in Protestant areas of Franconia.[47] Yet, in other places, such as the Duchy of Württemberg, historians argue that the clergy promoted restraint in witch trials.[48]

Another explanation focuses on Germany's decentralised political and legal system; in some areas, such as the Rhine-Moselle-Saar region, territorial lords were unable to resist demands for witch-hunting from the local populace.[49] Several historians emphasise the significant role of community tensions, gossip, and slander in witch trials, showing that witchcraft trials could, and indeed often did, originate 'from below'.[50] Territories with strong central government were more able to control witch trials and prevent them from spiralling out of control. The same can be said for imperial free cities, which retained considerable autonomy and viewed gossip and rumours with suspicion.[51]

A further explanation is the Little Ice Age. This argument, put forward primarily by Wolfgang Behringer, is based on the correlation between intense periods of witchcraft and extreme weather conditions. The

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[46] Walinski-Kiehl, '"Godly States"', p. 21. J. Dillinger, 'The Political Aspects of the German Witch Hunts', *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 4/1 (2009), p. 67.
[47] S. Kleinöder-Strobel, 'Verfolgung von Zauberei und Hexerei in den fränkischen Markgraftümern im 16. Jahrhundert', < https://langzeitarchivierung.bib-bvb.de/wayback/20190716091529/https://www.historicum.net/themen/hexenforschung/lexikon/alphabetisch/a-g/art/Fraenkische_Mark/html/artikel/1597/ca/acd1335445/>, accessed 12.10.2018.
[48] Midelfort, *Witch-Hunting in Southwestern Germany*, pp. 36-45; Kounine, *Imagining the Witch*, pp. 127-8.
[49] J. Dillinger, 'The Political Aspects of the German Witch Hunts', *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 4/1 (2009), pp. 68-9.
[50] Schmidt, *Glaube und Skepsis*, p. 14; A. Köhlhofer, *Magie – Gerüchte – Machtkampf: Hexenverfolgung in der kurkölnischen Stadt Neuss* (Neuss, 2017), pp. 3-4; S. Laqua-O'Donnell, *Women and the Counter-Reformation in Early Modern Münster* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 129-32.
[51] Dillinger, 'The Political Aspects', pp. 74-5.

connection between climate change and witch-hunting continues to interest scholars; in February 2018, the subject of the AKIH annual conference was witchcraft and weather. Some regional studies have, however, cast doubt on the connection between witch-hunts and environmental factors. Martin Burkart's study of Baden finds that, despite sharing economic and climatic conditions, Baden-Baden conducted significant trials (c. 300-400), while there were hardly any in Baden-Durlach.[52] Similarly, Jürgen Michael Schmidt comments that the climatic variations which affected surrounding southwest regions also affected the Electoral Palatinate but did not result in an increase in witchcraft trials.[53]

No one explanation is wholly satisfactory but, taken together, they begin to build a picture of the complex circumstances that led to major witch-hunts in Germany. There is also a growing sense in German witchcraft historiography that it is time to ask new questions and explore new directions. Some scholars, including Erika Münster-Schröer, Schmidt, and Rowlands, have focused on territories and cities that did not experience intensive witch-hunting.[54] As Rowlands notes, these studies are perhaps less marketable than those that focus on large-scale trials, but they offer a valuable opportunity to examine the dynamics of individual trials and reveal that scepticism among the authorities played a significant role in limiting trials.[55] Close studies of individual German trials have also been used to gain insights into gender, criminality, and emotions.[56] One shift particularly significant for this thesis is the recognition that the source bases for studies of German witchcraft can be diversified, incorporating sources including sermons and news reports.[57] Despite the impressive and

[52] Burkart, *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Baden*, pp. 236–7.
[53] Schmidt, *Glaube und Skepsis*, p. 477.
[54] Münster-Schröer, *Hexenverfolgung und Kriminalität;* Schmidt, *Glaube und Skepsis;* Rowlands*, Witchcraft Narratives in Germany.*
[55] Rowlands, *Witchcraft Narratives in Germany*, p. 1.
[56] Kounine, *Imagining the Witch*.
[57] R. Voltmer, and L. Helene Willumsen, 'Introduction: Demonology and Witch-trials in Dialogue', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer, and L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), pp. 6-8.

extensive scholarship that already exists on German witchcraft, therefore, the field continues to develop in new and exciting ways.

England

Although the scale of witchcraft prosecutions in England was markedly different to those in Germany, they have, nevertheless, sparked interest among historians. In the early decades of the twentieth century, Wallace Notestein, George L. Kittredge, and Cecil L'Estrange Ewen wrote comprehensive histories of English witchcraft.[58] While Notestein and Kittredge relied heavily on printed sources, Ewen used assize records and 'established for the history of English witchcraft what the archivist Joseph Hansen had in Germany: the need to learn what happened in the courts.'[59] In particular, the court records from the counties of the Home Circuit assizes (Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Sussex, and Surrey) are the subject of several major studies.[60] These counties are prominent in English witchcraft research because the Home Circuit is the only one where records 'survive in anything like an unbroken series before 1650'.[61] Essex's records are especially rich, because the Quarter Sessions material survives from 1556, thirty-three years earlier than the other Home Circuit counties.[62]

The abundance of material from Essex explains its centrality in Alan Macfarlane's seminal study of English witchcraft. He and Keith Thomas are credited with a paradigm shift in English witchcraft; like Midelfort for Germany, they encouraged scholars to consider witchcraft beliefs 'from

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[58] W. Notestein, *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718* (Washington DC, 1911); G. L. Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (Cambridge, MA, 1929); C. L. Ewen, *Witch Hunting and Witch Trials: The Indictments for Witchcraft from the Records of 1373 Assizes Held from the Home Court 1559-1736 AD* (London, 1929); C. L. Ewen, *Witchcraft and Demonianism: A Concise Account derived from sworn Depositions and Confessions obtained in the Courts of England and Wales* (London, 1933).
[59] Gaskill, 'Witchcraft Trials in England', p. 286.
[60] See, for example: Ewen, *Witch Hunting and Witch Trials*; A. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London, 1970); M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent: Stereotypes and the Background to Accusations', in J. Barry, M. Hester, and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 257-87.
[61] J. Sharpe, 'Witchcraft and Women in Seventeenth-Century England: Some Northern Evidence', *Continuity and Change*, 6/2 (1998), p. 184.
[62] Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England,* p. 7.

below' and introduced social anthropological methods into historical witchcraft research.[63] Their studies encouraged scholars to pay close attention to social and cultural foundations of English witchcraft trials, and to examine tensions within communities. Their main contribution was the 'charity-refused' model, which suggested that needy and vulnerable members of society were particularly likely to be accused of witchcraft because of guilt about refusing to give alms and fears of magical repercussions.[64] This argument was influential but has been questioned and revised in subsequent research.[65]

Macfarlane's use of social anthropological methods informed his decision to limit his research to one county; he notes the limited scope of anthropological studies, and argues that regional analysis is necessary to fully explore local records.[66] This justification mirrors the decisions made by scholars of German witchcraft, and demonstrates that the appeal of regional analysis is not limited to German research. Despite Macfarlane's statement that his study was focused on the county of Essex and Thomas's acknowledgement that his research 'blurred some important regional distinctions', Malcolm Gaskill correctly observes that 'the Macfarlane/Thomas framework has too often been […] treated as in some way a definitive statement about witchcraft accusations in England.'[67] In fact, Gaskill's analysis of early modern Kent shows that, even within the Home Circuit, there were significant variations in witch trials and the 'typical' victims.[68] Close analysis of court records in a regional context to

[63] Gaskill, 'Witchcraft Trials in England', p. 287.
[64] K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Belief in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (London, 1971), p. 665; Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 205.
[65] Gaskill, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent', pp. 257-63.
[66] Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England,* pp. 7-9.
[67] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic,* p. x; Gaskill, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent', p. 284.
[68] Gaskill, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent', pp. 285-7.

illuminate nuances and variations has, therefore, become a popular approach in England.[69]

Because trials were more muted in England, scholarship on English witchcraft has been less focused on why the trials happened, although the trials between 1645 and 1647, and the witch-hunters who led them, have understandably provoked considerable interest. Overall, however, research on English witchcraft has devoted more attention to the witchcraft beliefs and the social situation of the victims and their accusers. Like Germany, gender is a key theme explored in English witchcraft research.[70] A concept that has gained particular attention from scholars of English witchcraft is the witch's familiar, and the wider role played by animals in English witchcraft belief.[71] Another question, which continues to feature heavily, is the extent to which the Devil and diabolism played a role in English witchcraft.

Questions about the role of the Devil are closely tied to the wider argument, made in early contributions to English witchcraft historiography, that 'we must make a sharp distinction between English witchcraft and Continental witchcraft.'[72] According to Kittredge

> The trials of the Elizabethan age […] did not involve acceptance, either by the people or the judges, of the complicated and systematized doctrine which formed the basis for the inquisitorial proceedings on the Continent […] there was no Holy Inquisition […]

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[69] See, for example: Sharpe, 'Witchcraft and Women in Seventeenth-Century England', pp. 179-99; M. Stoyle, '"It Is But an Olde Wytche Gonne": Prosecution and Execution for Witchcraft in Exeter, 1558-1610', *History*, 96/322 (2011), pp. 129-51; A. Pickering, *The Witches of Selwood Forest: Witchcraft and Demonism in the West of England, 1625-1700* (Newcastle, 2017); P. McBride, 'Witchcraft in the East Midlands, 1517-1642', *Midland History*, 44/2 (2019), pp. 222-37.

[70] C. Holmes, 'Women: Witnesses and Witches', *Past and Present*, 140 (1993), pp. 45-78; C. Millar, 'Diabolical Men: Reintegrating Male Witches into English Witchcraft', *The Seventeenth Century*, 36/5 (2021), pp. 1-21.

[71] J. Sharpe, 'Familiars' in R. M. Golden (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 347-9; H. Parish, '"Paltrie Vermin, Cats, Mise, Toads, and Weasils": Witches, Familiars, and Human-Animal Interactions in the English Witch Trials', *Religions,* 10/2 (2019), pp. 1-14.

[72] Kitteridge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, p. 24.

> In a word, Elizabethan witchcraft (as brought to trial) was simple and primitive.[73]

The claim that English witchcraft was unique and must be treated separately to so-called 'Continental' witchcraft persisted in later scholarship. Barbara Rosen, a literary scholar who examined witchcraft pamphlets, wrote in 1969 that 'it is necessary to treat witchcraft in England quite separately from witchcraft on the Continent because [...] the English belief and practice followed quite different paths.'[74] In Macfarlane's book, he states that 'English witchcraft appears to be very different from that on the Continent and in Scotland […] an account of English witchcraft which draws information from European records would soon become distorted.'[75] These statements should be viewed in the context of a wider trend in English historiography – identified by Reformation historians including Diarmaid MacCulloch and Peter Marshall – which assumes that 'England is by definition different and special.'[76] MacCulloch observes the 'English habit of talking about the rest of Europe as "the Continent", something which the English have even persuaded Americans to do, in a thoroughly illogical way.'[77] This terminology, as the examples above demonstrate, is firmly embedded in English witchcraft historiography.

The interpretation of English witchcraft as distinctive from 'the Continent' has been substantially revised in recent scholarship. First, as discussed above, witchcraft and witch trials varied significantly throughout Europe. 'Continental witchcraft' is, therefore, a misnomer. Second, historians are increasingly recognising connections between English witchcraft and other European countries. Thomas acknowledges the dissemination of 'the continental conception of witchcraft' in English clergymen's tracts, translations of "continental demonologists", and news

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[73] Ibid., pp. 24-5.
[74] B. Rosen, *Witchcraft* (London, 1969), p. 19.
[75] Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England,* p. 6.
[76] D. MacCulloch, 'Putting the English Reformation on the Map: The Prothero Lecture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 15 (2005), pp. 75-6; P. Marshall, '(Re)defining the English Reformation', *Journal of British Studies*, 48/3 (2009), p. 578.
[77] MacCulloch, 'Putting the English Reformation on the Map', pp. 75-6.

reports of 'European witch trials'.[78] James Sharpe finds some parallels in English witches' claims to have met the Devil to encounters described by 'continental demonologists'.[79] Charlotte-Rose Millar's book builds on Sharpe's arguments; her thesis is that diabolical witchcraft – commonly associated with mainland European witchcraft – was, in fact, a core component of English witchcraft pamphlets too.[80] It is striking that, despite Sharpe's assertion that there was no 'monolithic Continental witchcraft', these historians continue to distinguish between English witchcraft and mainland European witchcraft, even as they seek to demonstrate commonalities.[81] While there have been some comparisons drawn between England and Scotland, there has been little attempt to compare English witchcraft with a mainland European country.[82] This thesis offers a corrective.

Comparative Approaches

In historiographical reviews of German and English witchcraft respectively, Robisheaux and Gaskill both pointed to comparative approaches as key to furthering our understanding of historical witchcraft.[83] Overall, however, comparative studies in early modern witchcraft research remain relatively rare. As with any methodological approach, there are a number of pitfalls associated with comparison, some of which explain why it has not been adopted more broadly. One major consideration is the workload of a comprehensive comparative study. Effective comparative analysis relies on in-depth knowledge of two or more contexts and source bases, which may require considerably more work than a study based in one regional or

[78] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic,* pp. 523-4.
[79] J. Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in England, 1550-1750* (London, 1996), p. 136.
[80] C. Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions in Early Modern England* (London, 2017), p. 12.
[81] Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness*, p. 30.
[82] Sharpe, 'Witch Hunts in Britain', pp. 145-59.
[83] Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials', p. 196; Gaskill, 'The Witchcraft Trials in England', p. 239.

national context.[84] This problem is particularly significant for scholars of German witchcraft because there are already numerous sources and numerous political, judicial, and religious contexts to contend with. To ensure that the volume of sources is not insurmountable, it is essential to define the parameters for comparison first. As Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt note, the 'comparative unit' needs to be appropriate for the guiding research questions, so it is important to clarify the research questions before selecting the elements to be compared.[85]

The balance of comparison is a further issue. There are several different approaches to comparison and one, asymmetrical comparison, is particularly contentious. Asymmetrical comparison is principally concerned with advancing understanding of one case study; other case studies are introduced simply to serve as a contrast to the primary focus.[86] This approach does have some advantages. It introduces some comparative perspective to the study and may be more feasible than an in-depth comparison in light of the problems regarding workload.[87] Yet, such studies often rely on selected secondary literature for the basis of their comparisons and, as a result, may produce 'distorting results'.[88] This critique is certainly applicable to the field of English witchcraft and its tendency to refer to 'European' or 'Continental' witchcraft when situating ideas about witchcraft in a broader context.

A misconception about comparative research is that it is mainly intended to find similarities between its units of comparison and, in doing so, creates 'forced analogies'.[89] Marc Bloch, a key advocate for comparative approaches, argues that, in fact, such research is actually about 'the

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[84] M. Bloch, 'Toward a Comparative History of European Societies' in F. C. Lane and J. C. Riemersma (eds.), *Enterprise and Secular Change: Readings in Economic History* (Homewood, IL, 1953), p. 518; Dillinger, *'Evil People'*, p. 6.
[85] J. Kocka and H. Haupt, *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 15-6.
[86] J. Kocka, 'Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The Case of the German Sonderweg', *History and Theory*, 38/1 (1999), p. 49.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Bloch, 'Towards a Comparative History', p. 507.

observation of differences' and explaining why these differences existed.[90] There is undoubtedly value in comparative work which can recognise both similarities and differences and account for them. In doing so, researchers must allow for the fact that similarities may be due to connections between the two. A common error in comparative research, according to Kocka, is to treat units of comparison as entirely separate when, in reality, they are often linked in some respects.[91] He emphasises that comparative history can benefit from engaging directly with entangled histories and histories of connectivity, although striking the balance between these different approaches can pose challenges.[92]

Despite the challenges and considerations associated with comparative history, previous studies demonstrate that it is possible to apply it to the field of witchcraft. Some have used comparative approaches in their studies of German regions. Moeller, for example, notes that there has been little attempt to compare trials under different jurisdictions within one territory; her research combines comparative and regional approaches, and examines similarities and differences in approaches to witchcraft at multiple levels *within* the Duchy of Mecklenburg.[93] Dillinger is another advocate of the comparative approach, but uses it to analyse two different territories: Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier. These territories were both Catholic territories with similar political structures, and both experienced severe witch-hunts sparked by pressure 'from below'.[94] In other respects, they diverged: Swabian Austria was, for example, a secular territory while Trier was ecclesiastical.[95] Ultimately, Dillinger finds a number of similarities between the witch-hunts in both territories.[96] Another example of comparative research in German witchcraft history is Stokes' study of criminal justice in early witch trials, which examines

[90] Ibid.
[91] J. Kocka, 'Comparative History: Methodology and Ethos', *East Central Europe*, 36 (2009), p. 18.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Moeller, *Dass Wilkür Über Recht Ginge,* pp. 20, 27-8.
[94] Dillinger, *'Evil People'*, p. 9.
[95] Ibid., p. 10.
[96] Ibid., pp. 193-200.

Lucerne, Basel, and Nuremberg.[97] Her study is an asymmetrical comparison, because Lucerne dominates the discussion while Nuremberg is included primarily as a counterpoint. This study demonstrates the issues that can hinder asymmetrical comparisons. Christopher Close notes that Nuremberg is not afforded the same level of in-depth analysis and, consequently, feels like an 'outlier'; he also notes that her key conclusion, that demonisation of crime contributed to the rise of large witch-hunts, is only confirmed by one of the three cities examined.[98]

Other witchcraft historians have undertaken national comparisons. Louise Nyholm Kallestrup compares witchcraft trials in Italy and Denmark. While Italy's witch trials were all carried out by the Inquisition, trials in post-Reformation Denmark were under the jurisdiction of the lay authorities.[99] Kallestrup seeks 'to shed light on how and why prosecutions for witchcraft were so different in Italy and Denmark.'[100] Additionally, she suggests that comparison can 'reveal, along with differences, similarities that were not apparent to contemporaries.'[101] By contrast, Erika Gasser uses comparison to demonstrate the similarities between two distant lands. Her research on gender in witchcraft-possession cases in England and New England primarily seeks to show that 'English people on either side of the Atlantic, despite the differences between their communities and institutions, drew upon shared foundational beliefs about gender, power, and the preternatural.'[102] Given the transatlantic connections that Gasser emphasises, this study shows the close link between comparative histories and histories of connectivity.

These studies demonstrate comparison's potential to contribute new insights to the history of witchcraft. Generally, comparison can help scholars avoid dead ends in their research and avoid overstating the

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[97] Stokes, *Demons of Urban Reform*, pp. 3-8.
[98] Close, 'Regional History and the Comparative Turn', p. 127.
[99] L. N. Kallestrup, *Agents of Witchcraft in Early Modern Italy and Denmark* (London, 2015), pp. 1-2.
[100] Ibid., p. 2.
[101] Ibid., p. 4.
[102] E. Gasser, *Vexed With Devils: Manhood and Witchcraft in Old and New England* (New York, NY, 2017), p. 4.

importance of local factors.[103] These benefits are particularly significant for witchcraft history, offering a different perspective to the dominant regional approach. The decision to employ a comparative approach can, as Kocka states, also be a political one: 'comparison can help to make the task of history writing less national, less provincial, less parochial, more international, more cosmopolitan, more universal, or – at least – more European.'[104] Recent political developments, especially the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union in January 2021 following the EU Referendum in 2016, have fuelled wider discussions about national and international identities. These discourses are not limited to the present but have significant implications for historical perspectives on the UK's European and global ties. The current political climate, therefore, makes comparative history even more valuable. It provides a powerful counterpoint to national narratives and is a testament to the importance of transnational connections.

The case for choosing a comparative approach is persuasive. There is, moreover, good reason to select Germany and England as the units of comparison. As shown above, scholars have approached witchcraft in Germany and England in diverse ways and have asked different questions; this comparison allows for the exploration of themes that are significant in both countries. Additionally, there are other studies that have successfully compared early modern Germany and England in different contexts: Joy Wiltenburg examines female power and deviance in street literature, Robert von Friedenburg explores ideas of self defence and religious strife, and Aidan Anthony O'Lynn investigates belief in ghosts and spectres.[105] These studies have varied aims, but they all recognise shared characteristics between early modern Germany and England that provide a foundation for

[103] Bloch, 'Towards a Comparative History', pp. 504, 519.
[104] Kocka, 'Comparative History', p. 15.
[105] J. Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany* (London, 1992); R. von Friedenburg, *Self-Defence and Religious Strife in Early Modern Europe: England and Germany, 1530-1680* (New York, NY, 2002); A. A. O'Lynn, 'Ghosts of Place and Spirits of War: Spectral Belief in Early Modern England and Protestant Germany' (PhD. diss., University of Bristol, 2018).

the comparison. One similarity is religious upheaval following the Reformation. Another is periods of significant civil and political unrest in the seventeenth century: the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) in central Europe and the British Civil Wars (1642-1651). In addition, both countries had thriving printing industries, and, in consequence, produced a considerable output of printed material ripe for examination and comparison. This final point is particularly important for the present work.

Witchcraft and Print

The relationship between witchcraft studies and print culture is examined in depth in Chapter One but is also worth briefly outlining here. In England, as noted above, printed sources featured heavily in early additions to witchcraft historiography by Kittredge and Notestein. Print, especially news pamphlets, forms a key component of English witchcraft research, thanks largely to contributions from literary scholars such as Rosen, Marion Gibson, Diane Purkiss, and Deborah Willis.[106] Recent studies which place print at the centre of their research include works by Simon Francis Davies, Millar, Sharpe, and Scott Eaton.[107] German witchcraft research was slower to incorporate printed sources, but is beginning to correct this oversight. Behringer, Ursula Maria Krah, Robert Walinski-Kiehl, and Rita Voltmer have all written articles on witchcraft and printed media.[108] The most

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[106] Rosen, *Witchcraft*; M. Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft: Stories of Early English Witches* (London, 1999); D. Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London, 1996); D. Willis, *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England* (London, 1995).

[107] S. F. Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England' (PhD Diss., University of Sussex, 2012); Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions*; D. Willis, 'The Witch-Family in Elizabethan and Jacobean Print Culture', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 13/1 (2013), pp. 4-31; J. Sharpe, 'English Witchcraft Pamphlets and the Popular Demonic', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer & L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), pp. 127-47; S. Eaton, 'Witchcraft and Deformity in Early Modern English Literature', *The Seventeenth Century*, 35/6 (2020), pp. 815-28.

[108] H. Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung. Marginalen zur Flugblatt- und Flugschriftenpublizistik sowie zur Druckgraphik im Kontext der Hexenverfolgung', in S. Lorenz (ed.), *Hexen und Hexenverfolgung im Deutschen Südwesten. Aufsatzband* (Ostfildern, 1994), pp. 85-92; U. Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität in frühneuzeitlichen Kleinschriften (Einblattdrucke und Flugschriften)', in K. Moeller & B. Schmidt (eds.), *Realität und Mythos: Hexenverfolgung und Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Hamburg, 2003), pp. 77-87; R. Walinski-

significant contribution on this topic in the German context, however, comes from Abaigéal Warfield, who completed her PhD on German witchcraft news pamphlets in 2013 and has subsequently published several articles.[109] Scholars have also emphasised the need to incorporate lesser-studied printed sources, such as sermons.[110] Much of this research examines how learned demonological ideas filtered 'down' into more 'popular' forms of print. This analysis is, of course, vital to understanding the dissemination of witchcraft ideas. Concentrating solely on teasing out demonological links could, however, be detrimental because it fails to recognise the wider print context in which these sources were produced. This research, therefore, does not heavily focus on demonological works, although they are discussed briefly in Chapters One and Two.

Scope

This thesis is a comparative study of witchcraft in printed sources in early modern Germany and England. It engages with sources under the broad category 'popular print'. These include broadside ballads (*Lieder*), single-sheet broadsheets (*Flugblätter),* occasional news pamphlets (*Flugschriften*), and printed sermons (*Predigten*). Chapter One explores the rationale for the selection of these sources, and the methodological issues connected to them. All of the sources were written in the vernacular, and chosen because such sources were accessible to a wider readership than those written in Latin. This decision does mean that some major sermon collections are not

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Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-Hunting in Germany c.1560-1630', *Reformation*, 6/1 (2002), pp. 49-74; R. Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy: Demonology and the Media in Dialogue with Trials (14th to 17th Century)', *Religions,* 10 (2019), pp. 648-80.

[109] A. Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany: An Investigation of Non-Periodical Newsheets and Pamphlets, 1533-1669' (PhD. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2013); A. Warfield, 'Witchcraft and the Early Modern Media', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), pp. 208-18; A. Warfield, 'Witchcraft Illustrated: The Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern German News Broadsheets' in A. Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of Print* (Leiden, 2017), pp. 459-87.

[110] I. Sz. Kristóf, '"Charming Sorcerers" or "Soldiers of Satan"? Witchcraft and Magic in the Eyes of Protestant/Calvinist Preachers in Early Modern Hungary', *Religions*, 10/5 (2019), p. 331; Voltmer and Helene Willumsen, 'Introduction: Demonology and witch-trials in dialogue', p. 8.

included. Friedrich Förner, Suffragan Bishop of Bamberg (1609-1630), for example, is a key example of a Catholic preacher who published twenty-five sermons on witchcraft (*Panoplia Armaturae Dei*).[111] But, because these sermons were printed in Latin, they do not feature in the present work.

In fact, the decision to use sources printed in the vernacular means that all of the German preachers examined were Protestant. The thesis is not a comparison of England and Protestant Germany, but it is more heavily skewed to Protestant perspectives. Confessional differences in the German sources pose a challenge. Because the majority of news reports were printed anonymously, it is difficult to ascertain information about the authors' confessional allegiances. Nevertheless, the thesis plays close attention to the print location of the reports and considers how this factor may have influenced the contents of the reports. Discussion of confessional difference features in Chapters Two, Four, and Five, but, for the most part, the research concludes that confessional differences did not play a major role in shaping printed witchcraft discourses.

The main period examined is 1560 to 1690.[112] In both countries, the 1560s marked a turning point. In 1562, severe hailstorms in southwest Germany sparked its first major witch-hunt in Wiesensteig; between 1562 and 1563, sixty-three women were executed for sorcery.[113] In England, the promulgation of the Elizabethan Witchcraft Act in 1563 was followed three years later by the execution of Agnes Waterhouse in Chelmsford, Essex.[114] These events were reported in news pamphlets in their respective countries.[115] The reports seem to represent the start of a relationship between the printing presses and witchcraft discourses, although earlier examples may not have survived. From this point onwards, printed witchcraft discourses in Germany and England followed different chronological paths. In Germany, there were peaks in reporting about

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[111] W. B. Smith, 'Friedrich Förner, the Catholic Reformation, and Witch-Hunting in Bamberg', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36/1 (2005), pp. 115-6.
[112] USTC 750051.
[113] Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany,* pp. 88-9.
[114] Notestein, *A History of Witchcraft in England,* pp. 33-5.
[115] VD16 W 535; ESTC S2279.

witchcraft in the 1580s and 1590s, and in the 1620s.[116] Reports continued sporadically after the 1620s; the last report identified by Warfield was published in 1669.[117] In England, production of witchcraft reports was steady in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but peaked particularly in 1640s and 1650s, and again in the 1680s.[118] The last English witchcraft pamphlet identified by Millar was printed in 1716.[119] Witchcraft also appeared as the subject of printed sermons and religious tracts in both countries after 1560; these largely ceased after 1660. The period 1560 to 1690, therefore, offers a broad chronological scope, encompassing peak periods in witchcraft discourses in both countries and enabling sustained comparison.

A further consideration is terminology. The modern German translation for 'witch' is *Hexe*. *Hexe* does appear in the sources, but other words appear just as frequently: *Zauberer/in* (sorcerer/sorceress) and *Unhold/in* (fiend). While these terms have distinct meanings from 'witch', they were often used interchangeably. This thesis, therefore, groups these words together under the broad category of witches and witchcraft, while acknowledging that they are not synonymous. In fact, English writers also used a range of terms alongside 'witch' including 'conjurer', 'enchanter', and 'sorcerer'. George Gifford, preacher in Maldon, Essex, and one of the first English preachers to write a tract concerning witchcraft, considered the latter three terms to all fall under the category of 'witchcraft'.[120] Overall, this thesis takes a flexible approach to the terminology used to describe witches and witchcraft and incorporates conjurers and sorcerers. Other figures, including soothsayers (*Zeichendeuter/in*) and fortune-tellers (*Wahrsager/in*), are not discussed in detail, because they formed a distinct category. Theoretical and demonological definitions of witchcraft are examined in more detail in Chapter Two.

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[116] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 6.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions*, p. 199.
[119] Ibid.
[120] ESTC S103141, sig. Bii^{r}.

The thesis is comprised of five thematic chapters. The thematic approach is a deliberate choice to ensure that the analysis does not privilege one country over the other. A thematic approach has additional advantages. Witchcraft is an enticing subject to study because it can be approached with numerous lenses; historians interested in law, crime, gender, the environment, politics, religion, or literature will all find something to pique their interest in the history of witchcraft. By comparing thematically, this research offers an insight into the rich variety of potential approaches to the study of witchcraft. It enables engagement with some of the key issues addressed by scholars of German and English witchcraft respectively – including demonology, crime, and gender – and presents new perspectives on these topics through comparison. Additionally, this approach allows the introduction of new themes, such as space and place, which are not currently prominent in the field, but offer fruitful contributions to historians' understanding of witchcraft.

Structure

Chapter One, *Printing Witchcraft*, introduces the primary sources and considers the methodological challenges associated with studying print culture. It details the forms of print in which witchcraft featured, including demonologies, sermons and tracts, pamphlets, ballads, and drama. It also interrogates the notion of 'popular print' and explores what measures can be used to determine if print is 'popular'. Based on this analysis, it advocates an approach placing printed sources on a spectrum of popularity, based on length, price, terminology, and incorporation of oral and visual cultures. This chapter also explores the motivations of the authors and printers who produced writing on witchcraft. Unpicking the motivations behind these works presents challenges; neither sermons nor news reports should be taken at face value. In most cases, authors' and printers' motivations were multifaceted. One recurring theme, however, is their emphasis on moral instruction. This common thread is the justification for grouping these sources together.

Chapter Two, *Defining Witchcraft*, examines demonological thought concerning witchcraft. It explores core components of witchcraft theory and is divided into four sections. The first analyses the role of the Devil and the diabolic pact; the second explores witches' interactions with demons (familiars in England and *Buhlteufel* in Germany); the third considers the notion of the witches' sabbath and witchcraft as a collective act; the fourth inspects the concept of witches' flight. The chapter finds shared attitudes towards these components of witchcraft theory in the sermons and tracts of German and English preachers. In particular, this chapter emphasises the connections between the concepts of familiars and *Buhlteufel* and argues that they served analogous functions in many respects. It also shows that there was a greater distinction between the ideas in German and English news reports; the witches' sabbath is a point of particular discrepancy between the two countries. Nevertheless, the chapter finds that, in both countries, witchcraft was defined in printed sources as a diabolic act and the Devil was perceived to wield significant real power through witches.

Chapter Three, *Criminalising Witchcraft,* investigates attitudes to the crime of witchcraft. It explains the legal and judicial background to the trials in Germany and England, and then explores the ways that writers and printers responded to the legal context. Ambiguity in the legal codes in both countries were exploited by writers who sought to interpret and shape the law for their own purposes. German and English preachers both considered witchcraft as heresy primarily; while they expressed caution about the overzealous use of torture, preachers in both countries also advocated harsher measures for a broader range of magical activities than those that were officially designated criminal. Pamphleteers were more concerned with the harm caused by witches. This chapter interrogates the idea that news pamphlets were witch-hunting propaganda and directly fanned the flames of the so-called 'witch craze'. It finds that most *Hexenzeitungen* were broadly supportive of the witch trials, but that there was a greater variety of opinion on the topic in the English news reports. The last section of this chapter contextualises reports about witchcraft

alongside other crime reports to determine how far witchcraft was treated as an exceptional crime. It argues that many of the differences between German and English witchcraft pamphlets reflect wider differences in crime reporting, and emphasises that recognising this broader context avoids misinterpreting the sources.

Chapter Four, *Identifying Witchcraft,* addresses the following question: who, or what, is a witch?[121] Identity is a major component of witchcraft historiography, and this chapter addresses the different facets that comprise the witch identity. Sex and gender are important, of course, but this chapter identifies other significant characteristics, including age, familial relationships, and wealth. Additionally, it explores tropes like the witch-priest and the witch-midwife and determines whether these tropes featured heavily in German and English print. The chapter emphasises that writers did not merely seek to reflect the real identities of those accused of witchcraft; instead, English and German writers actively moulded and shaped the witch identity to fit their priorities. This chapter also scrutinizes the idea that the witch stereotype broke down in times of crisis. It contends that, on the contrary, the witch identity was always flexible, and that its malleability was intrinsic to the witch's ability to inspire fear. The shared aim of German and English writers to instruct their readers morally led them to emphasise wickedness as the quintessential trait of the witch. As the chapter demonstrates, however, this wickedness was represented in different ways in England and Germany.

Finally, Chapter Five, *Locating Witchcraft*, explores the role of location in printed witchcraft narratives. Even today, some locations are intimately associated with witchcraft. This chapter considers three facets of location and space. The first section investigates how print location shaped witchcraft narratives. It underlines the differences in the structures of the

[121] An earlier version of this chapter was published in the Midlands Historical Review: N. Grace, '"Vermin and Devil-Worshippers": Exploring Witch Identities in Popular Print in Early Modern Germany and England', *Midlands Historical Review*, 5 (2021): http://www.midlandshistoricalreview.com/vermin-and-devil-worshippers-exploring-witch-identities-in-popular-print-in-early-modern-germany-and-england/

English and German printing industries, and questions whether these differences influenced the content of witchcraft reports. The second section examines reports that were created at a literal and figurative distance from the events they described: transnational news. It shows that reports were adapted to be more suitable for a domestic audience. Yet, it also suggests that, when a case was of political or national significance, new demonological ideas could reach international audiences through news. The last section inspects supernatural spaces within printed narratives. In Germany and England, the Devil occupied liminal and marginal spaces, but also threatened to invade domestic spaces. Other spaces, such as church buildings, occupied ambiguous positions. This analysis of supernatural spaces has wider implications for historians' understandings of early modern people's relationships with their surroundings and environment.

Aims and Arguments

The primary aim of this thesis is to identify and analyse the commonalities and differences in printed discourses about German and English witchcraft. It asserts that there were shared characteristics in English and German printed witchcraft narratives which have not been fully appreciated previously. In part, these similarities – especially those found in sermons and tracts – indicate a shared theological understanding of witchcraft. Since the thesis is more heavily focused on Protestant sources, this overlap is logical. The research also draws attention to the transmission of ideas between countries, particularly from Germany to England but also, in a case explored in Chapter Five, from England to Germany. In doing so, this thesis engages with entangled histories alongside the comparative methodology.

Nevertheless, this thesis also emphasises that printed witchcraft discourses in the two countries were not identical. Partially, the differences reflect a divergence in demonological thought and wider variations in the trials themselves. A further explanation, however, is the influence of the printing industries and literary conventions in the two countries. The second aim of this thesis is to compare the print cultures of Germany and

England. Printed sources are central to understanding historical witchcraft, but these insights are most persuasive when witchcraft sources are contextualised alongside other printed media. The thesis argues that national comparisons are useful for deepening understanding of print and communication in early modern Europe.

Alongside developing historians' knowledge of witchcraft in England and Germany, the thesis addresses gaps in the witchcraft scholarship of each country respectively. With regards to English witchcraft, this research moves decisively away from comparisons with 'Continental' or 'mainland European' witchcraft and proves that more incisive and nuanced analysis can be achieved with a focused comparison to one mainland European country. For scholarship on Germany, this study contributes to the existing drive to incorporate the media and print and strengthens this endeavour by introducing the methods and scholarship from England, where printed sources are a more established component of witchcraft studies. Fundamentally, this thesis demonstrates that comparative analysis enhances and enriches our understanding of witchcraft in Germany and England, and reveals new avenues for further exploration in the field of early modern European witchcraft.

Chapter One: Printing Witchcraft

The transformative impact of print in Europe in the mid-fifteenth century is widely acknowledged. Gutenberg's press sparked significant religious, political, social, and cultural change. The Protestant Reformation was the first major movement to use the potential of print; in Germany, an estimated 10,000 pamphlets were produced between 1500 and 1530, increasingly printed in the vernacular, and primarily concerned with the Reformation.[1] Indeed, Richard Cole claims that the Reformation would have been 'almost unthinkable without the printed pages of Luther's sermons, essays, addresses, and biblical translations.'[2] Some scholars also connect the printing press with the Enlightenment, progress, and modernisation.[3] Elizabeth Eisenstein, however, notes that this characterisation of print as a modernising force sits uneasily alongside its contributions to other social changes including the so-called 'witch craze'.[4] For Eisenstein, 'the witch craze [...] was a by-product of Gutenberg's invention.'[5]

Writing in 1980, Eisenstein suggested that witchcraft historians including Hugh Trevor-Roper and Keith Thomas had failed to appreciate the connection between print technology and witch-hunting.[6] To some extent, questions remain about the exact link between the two. In 2009, Wolfgang Behringer observed that the media's role in witch-hunting remained 'insufficiently explored'.[7] Witchcraft scholarship, particularly in

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[1] M. U. Edwards Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (London, 1994), pp. 17-21.
[2] R. G. Cole, 'Reformation Printers: Unsung Heroes', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 15/3 (1984), p. 327.
[3] H. J. Helmers, N. Lamal, and J. Cumby, 'Introduction: The Printing Press as an Agent of Power', in H. J. Helmers, N. Lamal, and J. Cumby (eds), *Print and Power in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2021), pp. 1-3.
[4] E. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations, vols 1. & 2* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 440.
[5] Ibid., p. 439.
[6] Ibid., pp. 438-40.
[7] W. Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', in M. E. Plummer & R. B. Barnes (eds.), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H. C. Erik Midelfor*t (Farnham, 2009), p. 218.

England but also increasingly in Germany, is, however, working to address this issue; print and the media are now firmly on the agenda in witchcraft studies.[8] Most research, however, remains focused on national or regional contexts, and focuses primarily on one form of print. This chapter takes a different approach. It brings together scholarship from German and English perspectives on print culture and on witchcraft in printed sources. Section one explores the different forms of print in which witchcraft appeared, including demonologies, sermons and tracts, pamphlets and ballads, and dramas. It notes that the distinctions between these genres were sometimes blurred, and identifies sermons, tracts, pamphlets, and ballads as the main body of sources for this thesis. One reason for the selection of these sources is the idea that they fall under the label 'popular print'. Section two of this chapter interrogates this notion and considers how far these sources can be considered popular. It argues that these different printed sources can be placed on a spectrum of popularity, based on their length, price, vocabulary, and incorporation of oral and visual culture. This thesis excludes those sources on the furthest end of this spectrum, which were solely aimed at learned audiences, but includes those that may directly or indirectly have reached wider audiences through preaching or oral delivery. Section three examines the motivations of writers and printers who wrote about witchcraft. Although there were multiple motivations at play, this chapter emphasises that preachers and pamphleteers in both countries used witchcraft as a case study to instruct their audiences morally. Ultimately, this chapter concludes that – although they present methodological challenges – these printed sources offer a valuable basis for a comparative study of ideas about witchcraft in Germany and England.

1.1. Forms of Print

The form of print most associated with early modern witchcraft is the demonological treatise. At a basic level, demonology is defined as 'the

[8] For discussion of the existing scholarship, see Introduction, pp. 21-2.

science of demons and their actions.'[9] While Gerhild Scholz Williams considers 'demonologies' to be literary genre, establishing the boundaries of this genre is challenging.[10] For Scholz Williams, demonologies are:

> compendious tracts that examine all aspects of the interactions alleged to take place between Satan and his demons (or fallen angels) and human beings, in particular women accused of being witches. Employed as aids in the identification and prosecution of witches, demonologies examine the history and theology as well as the legal and medical implications and consequences of such interactions.[11]

Rita Voltmer, meanwhile, considers demonologies to encompass 'all kinds of texts (including images), whose authors of various religious confessions thought about and debated the extent of the power of Satan, demons, and witches, about their corporeality or their illusory nature.'[12] These categorisations, then, are broad and wide-ranging. Several demonological texts, however, generally take centre stage in research on the topic. These include Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487), Johann Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1567), Jean Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers* (1580), Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), Nicholas Rémy's *Daemonolatreiae Libri Tres* (1595), James VI of Scotland's *Daemonologie* (1597), Martin Delrio's *Disquistiones Magicae* (1600), Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficium* (1608), and Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de L'inconstance des Mauvais Anges et Démons* (1612). Sections of these texts were also included in edited compilations alongside other contemporary reports of witchcraft.[13] Scholz Williams claims that twentieth-century historians and literary scholars neglected demonologies

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[9] W. Behringer, 'Demonology: 1500-1660', in R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity: vol. 6, Reform and Expansion 1500-1660* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 406.
[10] G. Scholz Williams, 'Demonologies', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 69.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Voltmer and Helene Willumsen, 'Introduction: Demonology and Witch-trials in Dialogue', p. 3.
[13] See, for example: VD16 F 904; VD16 M 399; VD17 3:008271F.

in their research.[14] This oversight has undoubtedly been addressed in the last thirty years. Stuart Clark's foundational work on demonological thought, first printed in 1997, remains influential.[15] Alongside this work, several overviews of the genre now exist.[16] In 2020, two edited volumes were published offering case studies of several different demonologists and their work from across Europe.[17] Scholars have also turned their attention to exploring the dissemination of ideas from major demonological treatises in other printed media.[18] In light of the significant work already undertaken in this area, therefore, this thesis does not examine demonological treatises in detail, focusing instead on lesser-known printed sources.

Witchcraft also featured in printed sermons and tracts by theologians. Many consider these sources to fall under the bracket of 'demonologies' and, in several respects, they do. Certainly, they addressed similar themes, including the nature of witchcraft, the prosecution of the crime, and the identification of witches. Yet, these works differ from other demonological treatises. They were part of a distinct genre of printed texts which functioned as instructional tools intended to aid the understanding both of other preachers and of their audience. Historians highlight preaching as a key form of transmission of ideas about witchcraft to wider audiences.[19] Sermons have sometimes been directly linked to witch-hunts. In Germany, Johannes Dillinger draws a connection between preaching in

[14] Scholz Williams, 'Demonologies', p. 70.
[15] S. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1999).
[16] Scholz Williams, 'Demonologies', pp. pp. 69-83; Behringer, 'Demonology', pp. 406-24.
[17] J. Goodare, R. Voltmer, and L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020); J. Machielsen (ed.), *The Science of Demons: Early Modern Authors Facing Witchcraft and the Devil* (London, 2020).
[18] See, for example: Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany'; Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy', pp. 648-80; M. Gibson, 'French Demonology in an English Village: the St Osyth Experiment of 1582', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer & L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and witch-hunting in early modern Europe* (London, 2020), pp. 107-26; Sharpe, 'English Witchcraft Pamphlets and the Popular Demonic', pp. 127-47.
[19] B. P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (4th edn., London, 2016), p. 124; J. Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt* (London, 2016), p. 128.

the Electorate of Trier and subsequent hunts.[20] Likewise, in England, Malcolm Gaskill notes that Samuel Fairclough, a minister in Suffolk, gave several assize sermons on the subject of witchcraft during the East Anglia hunts of 1645-7.[21] Of course, many of these sermons were never printed, but printed sermons do provide some insight into the ideas circulating. There are several extant German sermons on the subject of witchcraft printed during the sixteenth century.[22] By the seventeenth century, sermon collections – featuring multiple sermons concerning different aspects of witchcraft – were more common.[23] The situation in England was slightly different. Although references to witchcraft appear in passing in many printed sermons, individual printed sermons and collections were not devoted to the topic in the same way as in Germany. Still, there were several tracts written on the topic by preachers, and these were most likely representative of the ideas that they shared with their parishioners.[24] The title page of the tract written by Cambridge minister William Perkins, for example, stated that the content was originally 'framed and delivered by M. William Perkins, in his ordinary course of preaching'.[25] This work is the clearest example of a tract that was directly influenced by preaching. Others also most likely originated as sermons: as Augustin Mendez argues, 'the inner structure and style of [these tracts] suggests that they were originally sermons, later extended and adapted to the written format which helped to immortalize and spread their content beyond the physical and geographical limits of the parish'.[26] This thesis, therefore, groups the

[20] J. Dillinger, '*Evil People': A Comparative Study of Witch Hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier,* trans. by L. Stokes (Charlottesville, VA, 2009), p. 103.
[21] M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and Evidence in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 198 (2008), p. 55.
[22] VD16 B 7917; VD16 ZV 284; VD16 G 3237.
[23] VD17 12:205316B; VD17 23:258775K; VD17 23:328851P; VD17 12:627125P; VD17 14:679199Q.
[24] ESTC S103141; ESTC S104153; ESTC S105690; ESTC S114525; ESTC S115983; ESTC S108665; ESTC S101683.
[25] ESTC S114525, p. 1.
[26] A. Mendez, 'To Accommodate the Earthly Kingdom to Divine Will: Official and Nonconformist Definitions of Witchcraft in England (ca. 1542-1630)', *Preternature*, 6/2 (2017), p. 299.

sermons and sermon collections from Germany with the tracts written by preachers in England.

As well as sermons and tracts, witchcraft entered the public consciousness through printed news. The invention of the printing press, reductions in the cost of paper, and the development of postal networks across Europe all aided the growth of the news industry, which flourished in both Germany and England from the mid-sixteenth century onwards.[27] News about witchcraft appeared in several different printed forms in both countries. Some accounts appeared in pamphlets. The form and length of pamphlets could vary significantly, as explained by Jason Peacey:

> Technically, a pamphlet was conceived within the book trade as anything in size smaller than a folio (i.e. quarto, octavo, duodecimo), and in bulk consisting of fewer than twelve sheets. In terms of quartos, therefore, pamphlets contained anything between eight and ninety-six pages, the latter being the maximum size which could be roughly stitched rather than thoroughly sewn.[28]

Several of the English witchcraft news pamphlets were on the longer end of this scale, offering detailed accounts of individual trials.[29] Charlotte-Rose Millar identifies a total of sixty-six extant witchcraft pamphlets printed between 1566 and 1735; Abaigéal Warfield finds seventy German witchcraft reports *(Hexenzeitungen)* between 1563 and 1669.[30] Harald Sipek suggested there were 120 surviving *Hexenzeitungen*, a figure that has been cited by other scholars, but because he offers no bibliographic evidence to support the claim, it is difficult to substantiate.[31] Of the seventy German pamphlets identified by Warfield, a significant proportion are in ballad form (*Lieder*). The ballad was a common form of news in Europe;

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[27] A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (London, 2014), p. 2; H. Droste, 'How Public was the News in Early Modern Times?', in H. Droste & K. Salmi-Niklander (eds.), *Handwritten Newspapers: An Alternative Medium during the Early Modern and Modern Periods* (Helsinki, 2019), p. 29.
[28] J. Peacey, 'Pamphlets', in J. Raymond (ed.), *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, Vol 1: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), p. 454.
[29] See, for example: ESTC S101821; ESTC S114979; ESTC R200262.
[30] Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions,* p. 1; Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 10.
[31] Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung', p. 86.

reports were written in verse, usually rhyming, and with a title provided for the reader to sing the news aloud. This form appears to have been more common in Germany than in England, although this difference may be due to poor survival rates in England. Records from the Stationers' Register indicate that there were five English witchcraft ballads.[32] None of these ballads have survived.[33] There are, however, four surviving ballads which do not feature in the Stationers' Register.[34] These ballads are not included in Millar's study but are included in this present research. The pamphlets and broadsheets identified by Warfield and Millar, with the English ballads, form the core sources of this thesis alongside the sermons and tracts.

People also encountered witches in drama and literature. Some scholars choose to incorporate these dramatic representations of witches alongside other printed sources.[35] It is certainly true that, in many respects, the boundaries between reality and fiction became blurred as stories intermingled and passed between these different genres. Faust is the classic example of this phenomenon. The story of Dr Faustus, who apparently signed away his soul to the Devil, was first printed in German in 1587; a year later in England, Christopher Marlowe turned the tale into a play, *Doctor Faustus*.[36] Scholars have noted the enduring influence of Faust on later news reports in both Germany and England, and his notoriety also continued in literature well beyond the early modern

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[32] H. E. Rollins (ed.) *An Analytical Index to the Ballad Entries (1557-1709) in the Register of the Company of Stationers of London* (Hatboro, PA, 1927). The five entries are:
-*Skratchinge of ye wytche, ye* (1579) [entry no. 2382, p. 205].
-*A warning to wytches* (1585) [entry no. 2890, p. 249].
-*Life and death of Three wyches Arrayned and executed at Chelmisford. 5. Julij 1589* (1589) [entry no. 1500, p. 131].
-*Lamentable songe of Three Wytches., of Warbos. and executed at Huntingdon* (1593) [entry no. 1419, p. 124].
-*Prophane pastime or the witches Mad humours* (1634) [entry no. 2209, p. 191].
[33] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 70.
[34] ESTC S126176; ESTC S126177; ESTC R187381; ESTC R228715.
[35] See, for example: Willis, 'The Witch-Family in Elizabethan and Jacobean Print Culture', pp. 4-31; Eaton, 'Witchcraft and Deformity in Early Modern English Literature', pp. 815-28.
[36] L. Roper, 'Witchcraft and the Western Imagination', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 16 (2006), pp. 128-32.

period.[37] Other dramas also took their inspiration from real trials, including *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) and *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634). A comparison between the literary representations of witchcraft in Germany and England is undoubtedly an interesting avenue of research but beyond the scope of this present study. Instead, this thesis concerns itself primarily with sources that claimed to offer 'factual' accounts of the witch-hunts although, as this chapter demonstrates, this claim should be treated with caution.

1.2. Popularity

Exploring the popularity of a genre can offer significant insights into early modern mentalities. Differences in popularity of print about witchcraft might, for example, reveal the scale of concern about witchcraft in both countries. Attempts to assess popularity are, however, beset with methodological problems. Counting the number of extant pamphlets reveals very little; any number could sound impressive if it is not contextualised. Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser provide a methodology for exploring print popularity in the early modern English book trade: they suggest that market share and reprint rates are two key indexes for measuring popularity.[38] This approach is sound but presents challenges when assessing the sources used in this thesis. Poor survival rates are one issue. Andrew Pettegree hypothesises that just one percent of book production survives, making it difficult to establish the total size of the market for any printed material.[39] The problem is particularly acute for pamphlets and broadside ballads, which had very poor survival rates because they were likely to be reused or destroyed; while books survive in hundreds of copies, finding more than one copy of a broadsheet is extremely

[37] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', pp. 64-83; T. Maus de Rolley, 'The English afterlife of a French magician: The Life and Death of Lewis Gaufredy (1612)', in J. Glomski and I. Moreau (eds.), *Seventeenth-Century Fiction: Text and Transmission* (Oxford, 2016), p. 40.
[38] A. B. Farmer and Z. Lesser, 'What is Print Popularity? A Map of the Elizabethan Book Trade', in A Kesson and E. Smith (eds.), *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England* (London, 2016), pp. 24-27.
[39] A. Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (London, 2010), p. 334.

rare.[40] Cataloguing problems mean that even assessing the extant material as a whole is difficult. In the case of the German material, the major bibliographical project *Das Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts* (VD16) deliberately excluded broadsheets, and questions have also been raised about the completeness of what the bibliography intended to include.[41] In England, the situation is slightly better, as the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) includes broadsheets; the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) is also incorporating broadsheets and includes over 42,000 examples.[42] In all cases, however, tracking down broadsheets and pamphlets in archives and libraries is problematic, because they are often included with other material under a collective title and with varying descriptive labels.[43] The second measure suggested by Farmer and Lesser, reprint rates, is also unhelpful in the case of news broadsheets and pamphlets. Such sources have what Farmer and Lesser term a high first edition weighting (FEW); because they reported on topical events, printers would very rarely reprint news pamphlets.[44] Information about print runs is also very rarely available, although in England the London Stationers' Company print runs were limited to 1500 copies until 1635, and 2000 copies thereafter.[45]

Witchcraft pamphlets illustrate the problems with exploring print popularity, particularly with a comparative approach. At first glance, the numbers of extant witchcraft pamphlets provided by Warfield and Millar seem surprising. Given the intensity of witch-hunts in Germany, and the relative mildness in England, it would be logical to expect far more reports

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[40] A. Pettegree, 'Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of Print. Typology and Typography', in A. Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of Print* (Leiden, 2017), p. 4.
[41] J. Beyer, 'How Complete are the German National Bibliographies for the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (VD16 and VD17)?' in M. Walsby and G. Kemp (eds.), *The Book Triumphant: Print in Transition in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 58, 76.
[42] Pettegree, 'Broadsheets', p. 7.
[43] Pettegree, 'Broadsheets', pp. 5-6.
[44] Farmer and Lesser, 'What is Print Popularity?', pp. 40-41.
[45] A. Hill, 'The Lamentable Tale of Lost Ballads in England, 1557-1640', in A. Pettegree (ed.), *Broadsheets: Single-Sheet Publishing in the First Age of* Print (Leiden, 2017), p. 449.

about witch trials in Germany. Instead, the numbers are nearly equal, with just four more examples in Germany than in England. It is, however, difficult to draw firm conclusions based on this data. Joy Wiltenburg suggests that survival rates for ephemeral literature are far lower in Germany than in England.[46] Identifying surviving pamphlets in Germany is, in some ways, more complex than in England. While London dominated the printing industry in England, printing in Germany was spread across multiple locations including Augsburg, Nuremberg, Erfurt, Leipzig, and Cologne.[47] This regional variety makes it harder to build a complete bibliography for German sources. Emil Weller's bibliography surveyed *Neue Zeitungen* printed between 1505 and 1599, which he identified in libraries in Freiburg im Breisgau, Ulm, Augsburg, Munich, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Maihingen and Berlin.[48] His bibliography contains 877 pamphlets; just seventeen of these can be categorised as witchcraft pamphlets. Given that Warfield has identified forty-five witchcraft pamphlets during the same period, Weller's bibliography is clearly incomplete. Categorisation is an additional issue because Weller only included documents with *Zeitung* in the title, while witchcraft pamphlets are sometimes instead titled as a story (*Geschichte*) or a description (*Beschreibung*).[49] Problems with the subjectivity of categorisation further compound the challenges posed when attempting to quantitatively analyse witchcraft pamphlets, as each researcher has their own set of criteria for including a pamphlet in their discussion. These issues are the same in England, but there, at least, there are some ways to trace lost printed sources. As Alexandra Hill highlights, the print registers of the London Stationers' Company – which was granted a royal charter in 1557 – show works that were printed but are no longer extant, enabling scholars to build

[46] J. Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany* (London, 1992), p. 44.
[47] Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women,* p. 37.
[48] E. Weller, *Die Ersten Deutschen Zeitungen herausgegeben mit einer Bibliographie (1505-1599)* (Stuttgart, 1872), p. 1.
[49] H. Ettinghausen, *How the Press Began: The Pre-Periodical Printed News in Early Modern Europe* (A Coruña, 2015), p. 29. For witchcraft pamphlets with different titles see, for example: VD16 W 516; *Brockersberg* 1596.

a fairly complete picture of the print trade in London.[50] Davies used these registers to identify one pamphlet no longer extant relating to witchcraft in England, and a further two relating to witchcraft trials in Germany and Bohemia; he also notes, however, that some of the extant witchcraft pamphlets do not feature in the registers.[51] In England too, then, the total number of witchcraft pamphlets that once existed remains a mystery.

Despite the problems with establishing the extent of witchcraft pamphlet publishing and understanding survival rates, scholars have interpreted fluctuations in the numbers of witchcraft pamphlets over time as representing the shifting levels of concern about witchcraft. Gibson, for example, suggests that a lack of witchcraft pamphlets between 1621 and 1640 is evidence of a decline in interest in witchcraft.[52] Behringer similarly notes the lack of media attention given to German trials in the 1660s, and questions whether this is representative of shifting attitudes to witchcraft in the wider public.[53] Warfield draws links between peaks in witchcraft news pamphlets and intense periods of witch-hunting to suggest that the pamphlets reflect growing concern about witchcraft.[54] While these links are logical, the problems with survival rate limit the reliability of such conclusions. As Henry Ettinghausen notes, survival rates for earlier materials from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries appear to be much poorer than later material; the UTSC shows a clear increase in volume of German pamphlets in the second half of the sixteenth century.[55] An absence of records may simply indicate lack of survival rather than absence of interest.

Changes in the news pamphlets industry may also explain surges or declines in witchcraft reporting. Weller's bibliography mirrors the increase in pamphlets in the second half of the sixteenth century shown in the USTC. As Figure 1 shows, the number of pamphlets printed each year

[50] Hill, 'The Lamentable Tale of Lost Ballads', p. 446.
[51] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 30, n. 10.
[52] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft,* p. 186.
[53] Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 228.
[54] Warfield, 'Witchcraft and the Early Modern Media', p. 210.
[55] Ettinghausen, *How the Press Began,* p. 26.

generally increased from the 1560s onwards: the 1560s was also when production of witchcraft pamphlets increased in both Germany and England. While some genres of news pamphlet remain consistent throughout the period surveyed by Weller (warfare and conflict with the Turks, for example, feature heavily throughout), Figures 2, 3, and 4 show that reports of other areas such as crime (mainly murder, but also theft and arson), miracles and portents (which includes reports of monstrous births), and disaster (storms, flooding, famine) were non-existent prior to 1520 and increased after 1560.

FIGURE 1 *Neue Zeitungen* printed 1505-1599 (data from Weller, *Die ersten deutschen Zeitungen*)

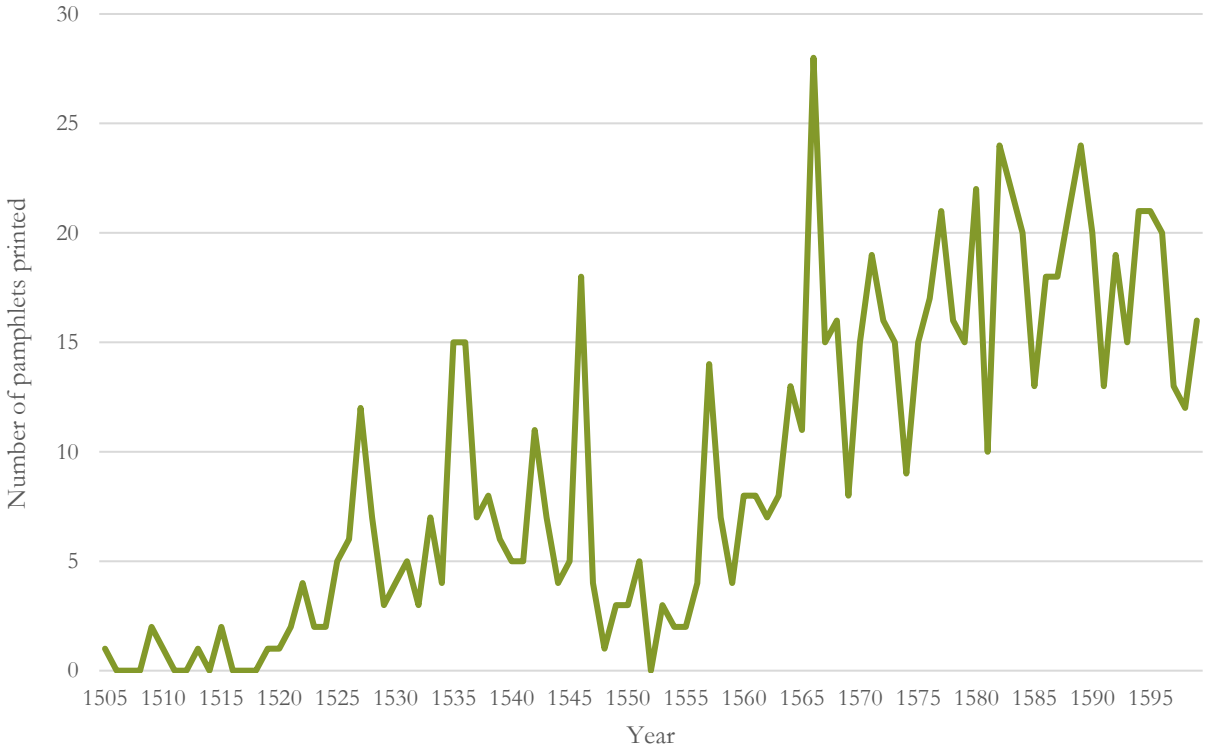


FIGURE 2 Crime pamphlets printed 1505-1599 (data from Weller, *Die ersten deutschen Zeitungen*)

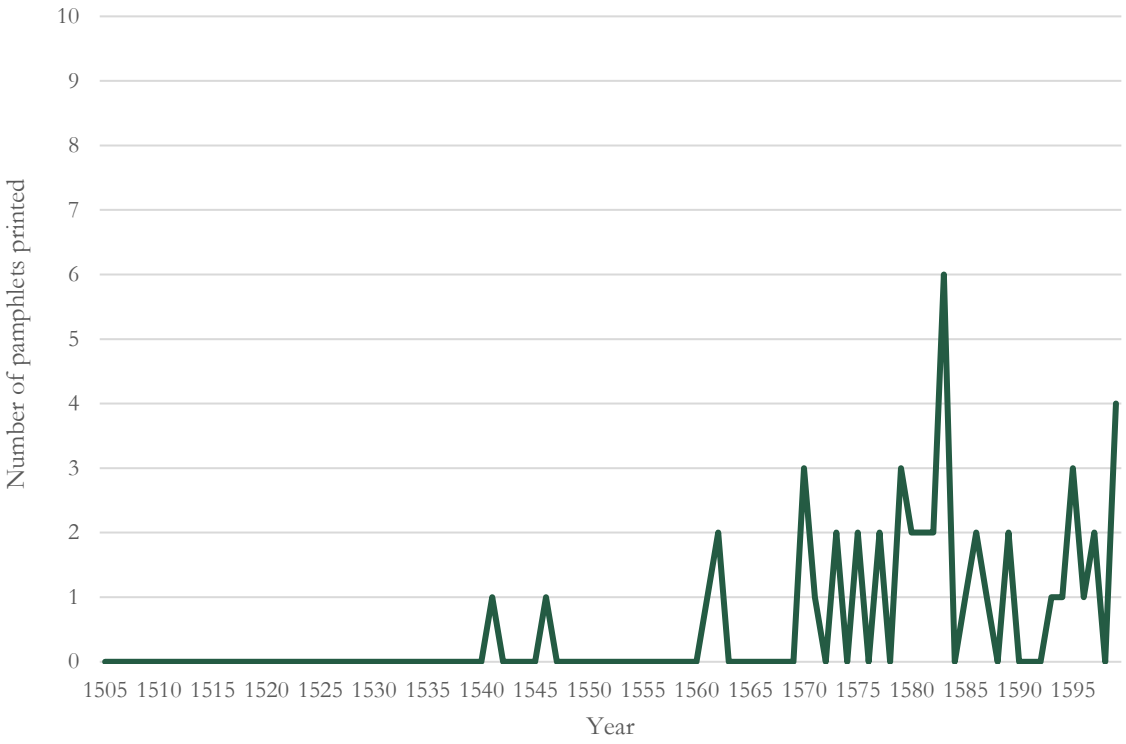


FIGURE 3 Miracle and portent pamphlets printed 1505-1599 (data from Weller, *Die ersten deutschen Zeitungen*)

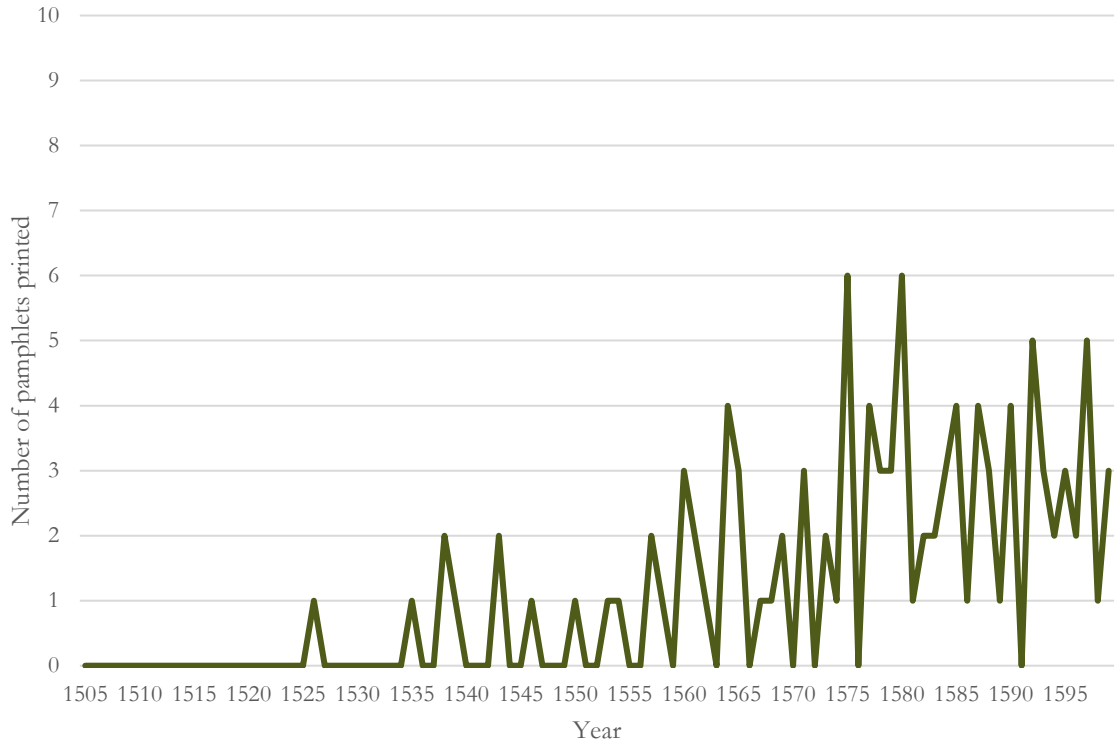
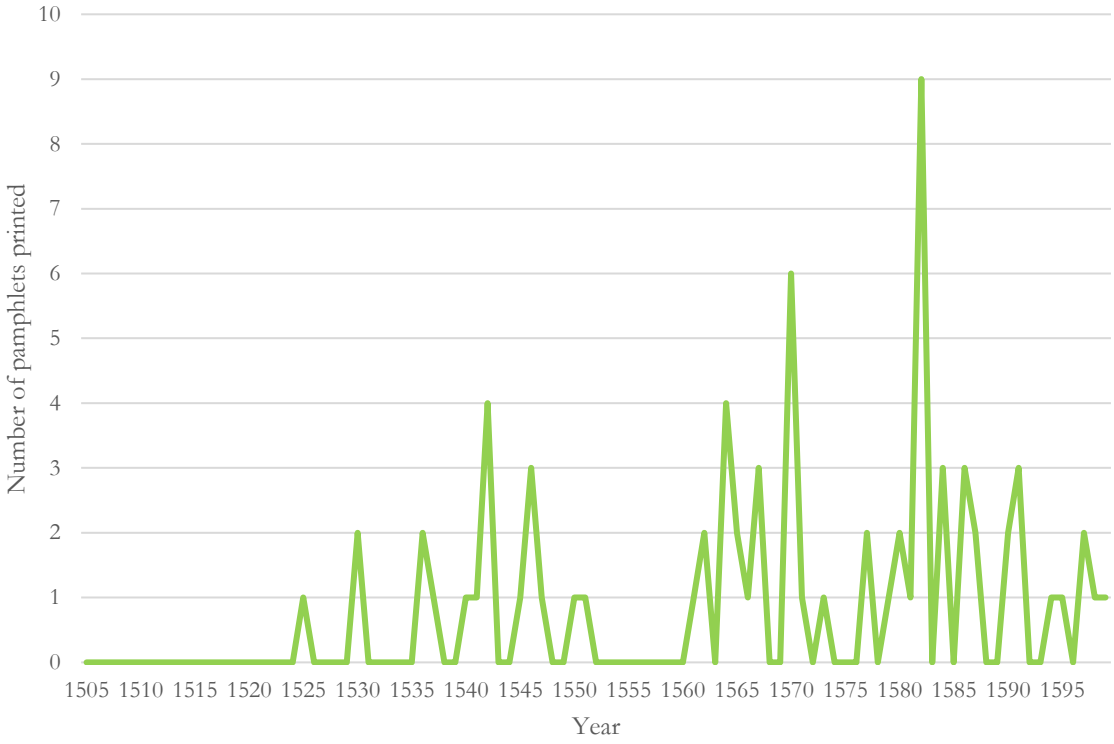


FIGURE 4 Disaster pamphlets printed 1505-1599 (data from Weller, *Die ersten deutschen Zeitungen*)



The second half of the sixteenth century does not necessarily signal a growth in interest in witchcraft, but rather a diversification of the genres considered worth reporting as the news pamphlet industry grew. In England, Davies highlights an increase in reporting on crimes such as murder and theft after 1560, with spikes in production during the last decades of the sixteenth century and in the 1640s and 1650s, once again coinciding with period where multiple witchcraft reports were produced.[56] Lena Liapi finds a similar rise in the printing of 'rogue' pamphlets – focusing on the lives and deeds of notorious criminals – in England after 1590.[57] The decline in English witchcraft pamphlets during the 1620s is likewise mirrored with other pamphlets; rather than indicating a shift in interest, Davies suggests that it is likely to be linked to the rise of *corantos*

[56] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 54.
[57] L. Liapi, *Roguery in Print: Crime and Culture in Early Modern London* (Woodbridge, 2019), p. 19.

(periodical news reports) in the 1620s and government restrictions on printing in the 1630s.[58] The lack of reporting on German witchcraft trials in the 1660s noted by Behringer may similarly be due to shifts in reporting of news from occasional news pamphlets to periodicals.[59] Placing the witchcraft reports in the broader context of early modern print culture is, therefore, crucial to avoid misrepresenting the evidence.

Similar considerations influence attempts to understand the popularity of sermons and religious tracts on the topic of witchcraft. As a whole, printed sermons occupied a significant proportion of the market in both countries. In Germany, Friedrich Löblein emphasises the commercial market for sermons and highlights that many sermons were quickly produced as pamphlets and sold in markets and at fairs.[60] Funeral sermons were, according to Pettegree, particularly abundant: there are around 200,000 extant examples from the seventeenth century.[61] In England, Mary Morrissey suggests that sermon books and similar religious writing accounted for about half of the total press output prior to 1660.[62] Scattered examples of sermons and tracts concerning witchcraft, then, do not appear to reflect a substantial subsection of the genre.

The other indicator that Farmer and Lesser suggested for measuring popularity is reprint rates. Davies examines reprints of several English tracts used in this thesis. In two cases, he finds that tracts were reprinted due to the success of the initial print run: these are Perkins' *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (printed in 1608 and reprinted in 1610) and Richard Bernard's *Guide to Grand Jurymen* (printed in 1627 and reprinted in 1629).[63] George Gifford's *Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraft* (first printed in 1593) was also reprinted in 1603; rather than a reflection

[58] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 52.
[59] Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 228.
[60] F. Löblein, *Prediger der Barmherzigkeit im 16. Jahrhundert: Bd. 1, Predigt und Diakonie in südwestdeutschen Reichtsstädten* (Heidelberg, 2013), pp. 31-2.
[61] Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, p. 223.
[62] M. Morrissey, 'Sermons, Primers, and Prayerbooks' in J. Raymond (ed.), *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, Vol 1: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), p. 491.
[63] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', pp. 99-101.

of the success of the first edition, however, Davies notes that the timing of this reprint indicates it was influenced by the accession of James I (VI of Scotland) whose interest in witchcraft was clear from his own demonological treatise.[64] Other tracts, such as those by Henry Holland and Thomas Cooper were, in Davies' view, 'a dismal failure' commercially and were not reprinted.[65] In terms of reprints, then, the success of the English tracts was patchy.

A similar picture emerges in Germany. The sermon collections of Daniel Schaller (1611), Joachim Zehner (1613), and Bernhard Waldschmidt (1660) were all limited to one print edition. David Meder's *Eight Witch Sermons* (*Acht Hexenpredigten)*, on the other hand, was printed in 1605 and reprinted in 1615. As with Gifford's *Discourse,* there is good reason to think that the timing of this reprint was linked to wider events. While witch prosecutions in the Electorate of Saxony – where Meder lived and where his sermons were printed – were generally mild, one of the peak periods was in 1615; these trials were primarily held in Dresden, Wittenberg, and Leipzig (where both editions were printed).[66] The sermon by theologian and Reformer Johannes Brenz does seem to have been successful in generating interest. Brenz originally preached the sermon in 1539; it was printed in Latin and German in 1557; and it was reprinted both individually and as part of compilations with other similar sermons.[67] Reprint rates in both England and Germany, then, indicate that there was some success for some sermons and tracts, but several seem to have failed to make a lasting impact. Once again, however, this index should be considered in terms of the broader sermon genre. Morrissey suggests that, in general, very few sermons had 'sustained popularity', with 'only the exceptional ones being reprinted many times over a period

[64] Ibid., p. 98.
[65] Ibid., p. 104.
[66] R. Füssel and K. Moeller, 'Germany, Northeastern', in R. M. Golden (ed.), *Encylopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2006), p. 421.
[67] M. Brecht, 'Johannes Brenz und das Hexenwesen', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Römische Abteilung*, 86/1 (2000), p. 387.

of years.'[68] The low reprint rates are, therefore, typical of the genre, and do not necessarily indicate that they were unpopular because of their subject matter.

Popularity cannot – and, indeed, should not – be judged solely through economic success. As Tessa Watt notes, 'there is no straight equation between "popularity" in numerical terms and print for the "popular" classes.'[69] Both Millar and Warfield claim that witchcraft pamphlets are valuable sources because they 'allow us to understand how the crime of witchcraft was popularly imagined'. [70] The implication is that such sources offer an insight into the culture of the masses. Yet, notions of 'popular culture' and 'popular print' are hotly contested among historians. Bob Scribner argues that such sources provide 'only indirect access to the "popular" and may tell us more about the producers than about the consumers of these cultural products'.[71] This sentiment is echoed by Joad Raymond, who highlights that print was produced by 'particular interest-groups'.[72] He does, however, suggest that 'popular' is still an appropriate term for describing print, but with the caveat that 'it does not describe a print culture produced by the people: it describes a use and a mode of reading, a transaction between a writer and a reader'.[73] Identifying these readers is, of course, challenging. While it is not always possible to be specific about readership, one approach to the question of 'popularity' and 'popular print' is to consider the accessibility of these sources for a wide readership.

Literacy rates are a key component of this puzzle, but determining the extent of literacy in early modern Europe is notoriously difficult. Robert Houston outlines indirect measures (the number of schools, book

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[68] Morrissey, 'Sermons, Primers, and Prayerbooks', p. 504.
[69] T. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 259.
[70] Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions*, p. 13; Warfield, 'Witchcraft and the Early Modern Media', p. 213.
[71] R. W. Scribner, *Religion and Culture in Germany 1400-1800* (Leiden, 2001), p. 31.
[72] J. Raymond, 'Introduction: The Origins of Popular Print Culture', in J. Raymond (ed.), *The Oxford History of Popular Print: Volume One, Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), p. 4.
[73] Ibid., p. 6.

production and ownership, and comments from contemporary observers) and direct measures (signatures on legal documents, and diaries and journals) which historians have used to assess literacy levels.[74] All of these measures have their flaws, but in combination can begin to build a picture of potential literacy rates. David Cressy, for example, used signatures on legal documents in England to calculate that, by 1600, roughly thirty percent of men and ten percent of women were literate, although it is likely that the percentage of people who could read was higher because people appear to have learned to read before they learned to write.[75] As Joy Wiltenburg observes, factors such as warfare or economic disruption could also hinder educational efforts and cause developments in literacy rates to falter; she suggests that Germany initially had higher literacy rates than England owing to educational zeal linked to the Reformation but learning stagnated during the seventeenth century because of the Thirty Years' War.[76]

In both countries, literacy rates were further divided along multiple lines in the population: there were, for example, higher literacy rates among men than women. One significant divide was between urban and rural spaces. In German cities such as Augsburg and Nuremberg, Warfield suggests that roughly thirty percent may have been able to read: in rural areas, Bob Scribner suggests that less than ten percent may have been literate.[77] In England, literacy rates grew rapidly in London (around ninety percent by the mid-eighteenth century) but were slower to develop in the north and in rural areas.[78] Social status also played a role. According to Houston, literacy in the sixteenth century was primarily linked to the

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[74] R. A. Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education, 1500-1800* (2nd edn., London, 2002), pp. 125-39.
[75] Kesson and Smith, 'Introduction: Towards a Definition of Print Popularity', pp. 11 – 12.
[76] Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women,* p. 37.
[77] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 6; R. W. Scribner, 'Oral culture and the transmission of Reformation ideas' in H. Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *The Transmission of Ideas in the Lutheran Reformation* (Dublin, 1989), p. 83.
[78] R. A. Houston, 'Literacy', *European History Online*, 2011 < http://www.ieg-ego.eu/houstonr-2011-en> accessed: 25.4.2022; I. Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), p. 26.

'landlord, mercantile, and professional classes', but gradually reached the middling ranks by the mid-seventeenth century.[79] Ultimately, while literacy rates did show an overall increase during the early modern period in both Germany and England, developments were patchy, uneven, and often slow. Many would have been unable to read these sources directly.

There were also various levels of reading ability. In Germany, the humanist Sebastian Brant (1458-1521) suggested that there were three groups of readers: those who could read German and Latin, those who could read German, and those who could read woodcut images.[80] As Ian Green observes, the use of quotations in multiple languages (such as Latin, Greek, or Hebrew) without translations is a clear indication that the works were targeted at elite learned readers.[81] All of the sources chosen for this thesis were primarily written in the vernacular. Some of the German sermon collections and reports, however, also included citations or asides in other languages.[82] This technique did not commonly appear in English tracts or reports which, although they did cite works from other countries, tended to simply offer an English translation for the reader. This difference suggests that the English sources were intended for a slightly wider audience than their German counterparts.

Another consideration linked to accessibility is financial cost. Some scholars refer to 'popular print' and 'cheap print' interchangeably, indicating that there was a direct correlation between popularity and affordability.[83] According to Wiltenburg, German news pamphlets cost between three and six pfennigs, although broadsides were more expensive because of the woodcuts; the wage of a master builder was around twenty-four pfennigs per day, so these pamphlets were affordable but still a

[79] Houston, 'Literacy'.
[80] A. Rankin, 'Germany', in J. Raymond (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Popular Print Culture: Volume One, Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 207-8.
[81] Green, *Print and Protestantism*, p. 41.
[82] See, for example: VD17 23:328851P, p. 12; VD17 12:627125P, p. 132.
[83] Watt, *Cheap Print,* p. 260.

significant purchase.[84] In England, broadsheets sold for around one penny, while pamphlets cost between three and four pennies, meaning they may have been 'a luxury […] for better-off workers who thought such entertainment worth the price of a few drinks'.[85] Overall, Wiltenburg argues that 'the popular literature of early modern Germany was more expensive than that of England'.[86] This general statement, however, masks significant variations within popular literature.

Several circumstances shaped the cost of individual printed works. Paper was, naturally, a major component, accounting for approximately seventy-five percent of the expense of book production in the sixteenth century; consequently, 'the cost of the book was, in general, directly proportionate to the number of sheets used'.[87] This measure alone indicates that the tracts and sermons used in this thesis would have been luxuries and prohibitively expensive for the majority of the population. Waldschmidt's collection of twenty-eight sermons, including sixteen witch-sermons is nearly 700 pages long.[88] While this is an extreme case, various German sermon collections and English witchcraft tracts are over 200 pages long.[89] News reports also varied significantly in length. Several English reports were over 100 pages long.[90] Longer reports were less common in Germany but did exist.[91] At the other end of the spectrum, some German and English reports were single-sheet broadsides, while many others were between eight and sixteen pages long. Although length was significant, other components also influenced the cost of printed works. Paper quality, for example, varied between different media. The best quality paper was reserved for important works and presentation copies, while other works for immediate consumption often used poorer quality

[84] J. Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture in Early Modern Germany* (Charlottesville, VA, 2012), p. 9; Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women,* pp. 35 – 36.
[85] Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women*, p. 30.
[86] Ibid., p. 36.
[87] Watt, *Cheap Print*, p. 262.
[88] VD17 12:627125P.
[89] VD17 12:205316B; VD17 23:258775K; ESTC S114525; ESTC S101683.
[90] ESTC S101821; ESTC S114979.
[91] VD16 L 7693; VD16 S 1915.

materials (a factor that has contributed to the poor survival rate of these sources).[92] Another component which influenced price was illustrations. Watt notes that 'illustrated books could cost 100% more than other books, although not when printed with old re-used woodblocks'.[93] Wiltenburg found that, generally, German printers tended to use original woodcuts in their broadsheets, while English printers were more likely to re-use them.[94] In the case of witchcraft sources, however, the woodcuts in both Germany and England often have direct relevance to the events described within the reports and seem, therefore, to have been commissioned for the reports specifically. The inclusion of such illustrations may have increased the prices in these cases.

Yet, in other respects the use of images in reports aided their accessibility. As outlined above, one of the groups of readers identified by Brant in Germany was those who could read woodcuts. The importance of images in early modern print is emphasised by Charles Zika, who suggests that visual objects 'exercised significant social and cultural power' and need to be viewed as more than simple illustrations of the text they accompanied.[95] In Germany, several broadsheets used alphabetical keys to connect directly the text and images; this key also provided an outline of the flow of the narrative depicted in the images, enabling those with limited reading capacity to follow the events.[96] Warfield notes that such woodcuts were used to convey key demonological ideas such as the witches' pact and the witches' sabbath (explored in Chapter Two).[97] Millar observes the same phenomenon in England, emphasising the recurrence of witches' familiars in illustrations of reports.[98] These illustrations were, moreover, not limited to those who purchased the reports; broadsheets were often

[92] Green, *Print and Protestantism*, p. 40.
[93] Watt, *Cheap Print*, p. 262.
[94] Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women,* p. 35.
[95] C. Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London, 2007), p. 3.
[96] *Warhaffte Beschreibung deß Urtheils Augsburg* 1666; *Beschreibung von Hexerey* 1669.
[97] Warfield, 'Witchcraft Illustrated', pp. 472-83.
[98] Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions*, pp. 60-3.

displayed in drinking houses or used as decorations.[99] Their reach, therefore, extended beyond the literate public who could afford to purchase them.

Images are one way that messages could be conveyed to semi-literate or illiterate audiences. The other was through oral performance. As section one of this chapter noted, some news reports were written in ballad form, with a simple rhyming pattern and a song provided in the title to enable the report to be sung aloud. That writers intended these ballads to be primarily heard rather than read is clear from the text. One example printed in Frankfurt am Main in 1603, for example, opened with the statement 'pay attention to what I sing'.[100] Julie Crawford emphasises the close connection between oral culture and printed news, stating that 'news itself was fundamentally oral and popular'.[101] She highlights the significant overlap between the two forms of communication: 'print and oral culture fed back into each other in endlessly citational and proliferating ways; both were forms of storytelling.'[102]

Crawford's statement illustrates the close relationship between oral and print cultures which several scholars consider to be key to the reach of these sources to a wider audience. The interplay and exchange between the different modes of communication does, nevertheless, pose problems for historians attempting to understand reception, recover the performance of these sources, or to determine how the content may have shifted between the different media. As Scribner argues, the printed texts are not 'unmediated access to popular thoughts' but are 'more than two or three removes' from the oral culture to which they are linked.[103] This issue is especially pertinent to sermons and sermon collections. Several historians comment on the issues associated with studying printed sermons: many

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[99] Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women*, p. 31; Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 226.
[100] VD17 1:691858R, sig. A^{v}.
[101] J. Crawford, 'Oral Culture and Popular Print', in J. Raymond (ed.), *The Oxford History of Popular Print: Volume One, Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), p. 116.
[102] Ibid., p. 122.
[103] Scribner, *Religion and Culture in Germany*, p. 31.

components of the performance of a sermon, such as levels of attendance, audience engagement, and the manner and style of delivery, are ultimately unrecoverable.[104] The extant written record presents further challenges. Sermons were usually written down *after* the sermon was preached, either by a trained audience member or the preacher themselves.[105] Determining how closely this text resembles the spoken word is, therefore, impossible. In several of the sermon collections and tracts used in this thesis, it is safe to assume that they are not direct transcriptions of the spoken word, for reasons already addressed such as their length and their use of multiple languages. Yet, some of these sources did originate from orally delivered sermons, including the work of Perkins in England and Zehner in Germany.[106] Additionally, John Frymire emphasises that sermon collections were commonly used as models and the basis for other preachers' own sermons.[107] While these sources may have primarily been directed at other learned preachers, therefore, their content may also have indirectly reached wider audiences through further preaching. While it must be acknowledged that such sources do not offer a direct insight into preaching and oral culture, they are similarly not entirely removed from wider audiences.

In fact, it is unlikely that any of these sources appealed to one 'homogenous audience'.[108] According to Wiltenburg, it would be inaccurate to assume that sources such as short pamphlets and ballads only appealed to people of 'humble status', despite the scorn shown for cheap print in contemporary literature.[109] Warfield has convincingly demonstrated the

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[104] J. Craig, 'Sermon Reception', in P. McCullough, H. Adlington & E. Rhatigan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon* (Oxford, 2011), p. 179; P. T. Ferry, 'Martin Luther on Preaching: Promises and Problems of the Sermon as a Source of Reformation History and as an Instrument of the Reformation', *Concordia Theology Quarterly*, 54/4 (1990), p. 266; A. Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 11.
[105] Löblein, *Prediger der Barmherzigkeit,* p. 68.
[106] ESTC S114525; VD17 23:328851P.
[107] J. M. Frymire, *The Primary of the Postils: Catholics, Protestants, and the Dissemination of Ideas in Early Modern Germany* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 1-3.
[108] Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women,* p. 38.
[109] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture,* p. 11.

inclusion of ideas drawn from demonological treatises in the German witchcraft pamphlets; these sources, therefore, offer us an insight into the connections between learned and popular ideas of witchcraft.[110] Behringer agrees, suggesting the pamphlets not only appealed to a popular audience, but also aided the development of demonology in both Germany and England.[111] The survival of many occasional news pamphlets describing miraculous or supernatural events, including witchcraft pamphlets, is due to the collection of Swiss theologian Johann Jakob Wick, highlighting the appeal of these sources for some learned elite.[112]

Rather than strict categorisations of popular versus elite print, then, it is better to think of printed sources on a spectrum of popularity. At one end are single-sheet ballads incorporating textual, visual, and oral culture; these sources may potentially have reached the widest audience but had a poor survival rate. At the other end of the spectrum are demonological treatises, primarily written by and for the learned elite and not intended for broader consumption. The sources used in this thesis mostly fall between these two extremes. It would be incorrect, for example, to state that all German and English witchcraft pamphlets were popular to the same extent. There are distinct variations within the pamphlet genre in terms of length, language, and use of images. Nevertheless, they all have a greater potential to offer insights into wider understandings of witchcraft than demonologies. Similarly, sermons and tracts might have been primarily consumed by learned audiences, but they were informed by and in turn informed oral dissemination of witchcraft ideas to their communities.

1.3. Purpose

Raymond suggests that, fundamentally, the value of popular printed sources is not 'intrinsic, but lies in the uses to which they are put.'[113] This

[110] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 8.
[111] Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 226.
[112] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 7.
[113] Raymond, 'Introduction: The Origins of Popular Culture', p. 13.

final section, therefore, explores the intended purposes of these sermons, tracts, and news reports. When considering authorial intent, a logical place to start is dedications and prefaces. Here, writers often recorded the background to their work and their motivations. These sections are, however, not a consistent feature of the sources. During the sixteenth century, dedications became more common in printed texts but remained rare in ballads or pamphlets. The sermon collections and tracts used in this thesis all include some form of dedication or foreword. Several longer news reports in England also included a similar preface or dedication; this practice was more common in England than Germany, where there are only a few extant examples of witchcraft reports featuring prefaces. Nevertheless, where dedications and prefaces were included, it is worth exploring the authors' explanations for their work.

One recurrent feature in the forewords of both German and English printed works is the claim that their interest was sparked by their own involvement in witchcraft prosecutions or knowledge of trials in the locality. Reinhard Lutz, a Lutheran preacher in Schlettstadt (now Sélestat in modern-day France), discussed a series of trials in 1566 which had sparked controversy; these trials form the basis of Lutz's news report and tract (1571).[114] Meder wrote in the dedication of his sermon collection that he heard information about trials in Baden-Württemberg while he was general inspector of the schools in Hohenlohe and a minister in Öhringen. He too noted that the trials were controversial, and that this controversy prompted him to preach publicly on the subject in Nebra, Saxony.[115] Alexander Roberts, a preacher in King's Lynn, Norfolk, outlined his own personal involvement in the trial of Mary Smith, a woman convicted of witchcraft in 1616.[116] Henry Goodcole, a pastor in London, was a 'continual visitor' of Elizabeth Sawyer, the 'Witch of Edmonton', whose case he wrote about in 1621. In his preface, he implied that he would rather not have

[114] VD16 L 7693, sig. Aii^{v}.
[115] VD17 12:205316B, sigs.)?(iii^{r-v}.
[116] ESTC S115983, sigs. A2^{r}-B^{r}.

published the tract but did so 'to defend the truth of this cause'.[117] John Stearne asserted in his news report and tract that his writing included:

> some few things which otherwise I have learned and observed since the 25. of March 1645 as being in part an agent in finding out or discovering some [witches] since that time, being about two hundred in number, in Essex, Suffolk, Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, and the Ise of Ely in the County of Cambridge.[118]

On the face of it, then, many of these authors suggest that they wrote their works because of a desire to share their personal experience and insight into witchcraft trials.

There were, of course, other motives too. Examining the dedicatees offers clues about the wider goals of the writers. In both Germany and England, authors dedicated their work to significant individuals with political influence. Henry Holland, for example, dedicated his tract to the Earl of Essex, Robert Devereaux.[119] Meder dedicated his sermons to Bernhard von Pölnitz, chancellor of the Electorate of Saxony.[120] Others chose groups rather than individuals. Cooper dedicated his tract to the mayor and justices of the peace in Chester, a city to which he had a personal connection stemming from his employment there in 1600.[121] Roberts likewise dedicated his work to the mayor, council, and burgesses of King's Lynn, Norfolk.[122] Some divided their attention between clergymen and secular authorities. Schaller dedicated his sermons to the church officials, the mayor, and the councillors of Havelberg, a town in the district of Stendal, Saxony-Anhalt, where he was a pastor.[123] Bernard dedicated his tract jointly to the judges in the Western Circuit and the Archdeacon and Bishop of Wells.[124] These two examples especially illustrate the close

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[117] ESTC S117575, sigs. A3^{r-v}.
[118] ESTC R28178, sig. A2^{v}.
[119] ESTC S104153, sig. A2^{r}.
[120] VD17 12:205316B, sigs.)?(^{r}.
[121] ESTC S108665, sig. A2^{r}.
[122] ESTC S115983, sig. A2^{r}.
[123] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Aii^{r}.
[124] ESTC S101683, sigs. A3^{r}, A5^{r}.

connection between secular and religious authorities in the eyes of these authors. The decision that these authors made to dedicate their works to officials, whether at a local, regional, or national level indicates that they hoped not merely to inform but also to influence.

Indeed, several historians emphasise that the authors of these tracts and sermons were primarily religious reformers.[125] Many were actively involved in the reform of their localities. Brenz, for example, was the 'father of Württemberg theology'.[126] Several German preachers, including Matthäus Alber, Meder, and Zehner, held the role of superintendent in their region, a role that included oversight of church ordinances and visitations.[127] In England, Gifford – 'one of the most prolific and influential of godly writers' – published multiple tracts and sermons, including *A Brief Discourse on Certaine Points of Religion* (1581), *A Dialogue Betweene a Papist and a Protestant* (1582), *and Sermons upon the Whole Booke of the Revelation* (1596).[128] Perkins was 'one of the most significant theological and pastoral minds of the English Calvinist tradition' and wrote numerous books, mostly in the 1590s.[129] Mendez associates the English witchcraft tracts closely with Puritanism and suggests that there is a strong connection between writing about witchcraft and a shift among Puritans 'away from ecclesiastical policy toward discipline and morality'.[130] In both countries, the sermons and tracts were part of wider attempts to 'standardise ordinary people's cultural habits' and to build godly communities.[131]

In connection with the aim to build a 'godly state', preachers in both countries expressed in their prefaces and forewords that they had printed

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[125] Clark, *Thinking with Demons,* p. 440; A. Mendez, 'To Accommodate the Earthly Kingdom to Divine Will', p. 279.
[126] Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, pp. 445-6.
[127] Ibid, p. 439.
[128] B. Usher, 'Gifford, George, (1547/8 – 1600)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).
[129] L. Dixon, 'The Ambivalent Demonologist: William Perkins's Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft', in J. Machielsen (ed.), *The Science of Demons: Early Modern Authors Facing Witchcraft and the Devil* (London, 2020), p. 238.
[130] Mendez, 'To Accommodate the Earthly Kingdom to Divine Will', p. 293.
[131] Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, p. 440.

their tracts and sermons because of their pastoral obligations to educate the wider populace. In Gifford's *Dialogue*, he reflected on the composition of his tract, and noted that he chose the dialogue format 'to make the fittest for the capacity of the simpler sort'.[132] Holland likewise chose to write his tract as a dialogue and stated that 'the ministers of Christ must both in doctrine and in conversation oppose themselves' to Satan and his servants.[133] The dialogue – inspired by classical authors such as Cicero and Plato – was a popular humanist genre, and was also utilised in several demonologies including Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's *Strix* (1523) and James VI's *Daemonologie*.[134] Its potential for educating readers about complex issues such as witchcraft was, therefore, widely recognised. Cooper, too, considered the tract part of his 'pastoral charge [...] for the informing and reforming of that ignorant people, who never before enjoyed any constant ministry'.[135] In Germany, Meder claimed that he was eventually persuaded to commit his 'insignificant work' to honour God, thwart the Devil, and to inform 'all pious Christians [...] what they should believe about witchcraft and what they should not, and what actions they should take'.[136] Schaller highlighted that preachers had an important responsibility to instruct their parishioners about the threat posed by witchcraft and the Devil.[137] He also noted that he initially only intended his sermons for his own parishioners' benefit but was persuaded to print them to reinforce the message and educate a wider audience.[138] Waldschmidt similarly noted that he originally wrote his sermons as weekly sermons for his parishioners to elucidate the different perspectives on witchcraft and to teach them God's word; he acknowledged that, in the form he had printed them, they could not be read aloud directly, but that

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[132] ESTC S105690, sig. A3^{r}.
[133] ESTC S104153, sig. B1^{r}.
[134] L. Normand and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland: James VI's Demonology and the North Berwick witches* (Exeter, 2000), p. 333; W. Stephens, 'Learned Credulity in Gianfrancesco Pico's Strix', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 42/3 (2019), pp. 18-19.
[135] ESTC S108665, sigs. A2^{v}-A3^{r}.
[136] VD17 12:205316B, sig.)?(iiii^{v}.
[137] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Aiii^{r}.
[138] Ibid., sig. [Aiiii^{r}].

he had chosen to include notes and commentary to reveal his thinking process to readers.[139] These works, therefore, all had didactic aims at their core.

Many news pamphlets did not include prefaces. And, even where they were included, they may not have been written by the same author as the main report. With regards to prefaces in English witchcraft reports, Gibson suggests that they should be considered 'seper*able* from their pamphlets, but not always seper*ate*,' arguing that the two were linked but also had their own form and content.[140] The separation of the preface and main text is demonstrated in Perkins's tract. Perkins died in 1602, six years before his tract was first published; the preface was written by its editor, Thomas Pickering. In fact, there is some debate about how far Perkins can be considered the author of the text itself.[141] This case also demonstrates a problem for analysing most news pamphlets in both England and Germany: authorship. Most pamphlets were written anonymously, so the motivations of individual authors' – and how their own personal background may have influenced their ideas – remains unknown. In these cases, looking within the text and considering the reports in their entirety is the only way to explore why they were written.

At a basic level, it may appear that pamphleteers simply sought to inform audiences about current events including witchcraft trials. The composition of the reports in both countries certainly lends weight to this theory. German and English witchcraft pamphlets emphasised that their reports were 'truthful' (*wahrhaftig*) and 'believable' (*glaubwürdig*) on their title pages.[142] Additionally, many English pamphlets – particularly those printed in the 1580s and in the 1640s – used trial documentation to construct their narratives and often included direct transcriptions.[143] A

[139] VD17 12:627125P, sigs. [d4^{v}]-e^{r}.
[140] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, p. 158.
[141] Dixon, 'The Ambivalent Demonologist', p. 239.
[142] See, for example: ESTC S101967; ESTC S101821; ESTC R4848; VD16 ZV 29564; VD17 1:693643U.
[143] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, pp. 3-9; Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 30.

similar approach existed in four *Hexenzeitungen* noted by Ursula Maria-Krah and Warfield. Produced by Augsburg printer Elias Welhöfer between 1654 and 1669, the reports copied material from the *Strafbuch des Rats* 'almost verbatim'.[144] By using direct transcription, English and German pamphleteers created the impression that they provided an unmediated and objective insight into real trials. This impression is, of course, misleading. Trial records themselves do not offer an unmediated view of what happened in the court room; editorial decisions by the scribe, and the possibility that translation was needed, mean we cannot be certain that any legal record provides a direct insight into what defendants or accusers said or thought.[145] The pamphlet is further removed from the trial itself and will have been shaped by the pamphleteers' editorial decisions: which sections of the trial to transcribe, for example, and which to leave out. Aside from these problems which have long plagued witchcraft historians, it is also impossible in many cases (particularly in the German cases) to verify the source of the pamphlet. Wellhöfer's pamphlets are highlighted by Krah and Warfield because they are exceptional.

Despite claims to be truthful reports of current events, some pamphlets appear to have been entirely fabricated. The Osnabrück *Hexenzeitungen* offer an intriguing example of this practice. The first known example was printed in 1588 in an unknown location; it opens with a call to Christian people to hear the tale of 'strange things.'[146] The pamphlet describes the gathering of 18,000 witches from Westphalia and Saxony at Blocksberg and explains how they plotted to destroy crops with the aid of the Devil. Two of these witches were discovered drunk and asleep in a cellar by a servant. They were taken to the mayor, who ordered that they be questioned; under torture, they confessed that there were ninety-two witches in Osnabrück and seventy-three in the rural hinterland. These

[144] Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität', pp. 78-9; Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 29
[145] L. Kounine, *Imagining the Witch: Emotions, Gender, and Selfhood in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, 2018), p. 7; Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, pp. 14-19.
[146] VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p.1].

witches were rounded up and confessed to numerous crimes including stirring up storms and making many people lame. As a result, 133 witches were burned. The pamphlet concludes with an exhortation to God, calling on him to protect his people from Devilish harm.[147] This story was printed at least three more times: in Jena, 1589; in Erfurt in 1591; and in Regensburg in 1596.[148] They are not verbatim copies. In each there are spelling variations and slight alterations. The 1591 version omits several verses. The 1596 version includes verses from the 1588 version which do not appear in the 1591 version, so likely used the original story as its basis. But there is no doubt that they are the same story. Strangely, this story was presented as a contemporary event every time. In fact, the later versions give more specific details than the first one, all claiming that the burning took place on the 9th of April in the respective years of publication. They all claim to be truthful accounts.

Yet, while 276 people were executed for witchcraft in Osnabrück during the early modern period, there is no documentary evidence to suggest that the trials described in these pamphlets happened.[149] There was a period of witch-hunting between 1583 and 1592, and a particularly intense period between March and August 1583, during which 121 women were executed.[150] These executions may well have formed the basis for the reports. This theory is supported by the prominent role played by the mayor in the reports. The funeral sermon of Mayor Hammacher – incumbent during the period in question – specifically praised his decisive action during the witch trials in 1583.[151] There may, therefore, be some basis in reality, but all of the reports were distorted significantly.

The misinformation from these pamphlets has had a lasting legacy in scholarship on witchcraft. Hans Christian Erik Midelfort wrote in 1981

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[147] Ibid., [unpaginated: p. 6].
[148] VD16 V 2668; VD16 W 338; VD16 ZV 4639.
[149] R. Schulte, *Man as Witch: Male Witches in Central Europe,* trans. L. Froome-Döring (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 60.
[150] N. Rügge, *Die Hexenverfolgung in der Stadt Osnabrück: Überblick – Deutungen – Quellen* (Osnabrück, 2015), p. 21.
[151] VD16 ZV 18673, sigs. Diii^{v}- Div^{r}.

that 'in the lands of the convent of Quedlinburg, some 133 witches were burned in just one day in 1589'.[152] More recently, Brian Levack repeated this claim and cited Midelfort.[153] The details of this statement are strikingly similar to the claims made in the Osnabrück *Hexenzeitungen,* with the exception of the significant location shift from Osnabrück to Quedlinburg. On closer inspection, the confusion stems from an essay written in the eighteenth-century by Gottfried Christian Voigt (town clerk of Quedlinburg) who used the records there to erroneously calculated that, in Germany as a whole, 133 witches were burned each year.[154] This figure was adopted by several historians in the nineteenth century and, over time, morphed into the idea that 133 witches were burned in one day in Quedlinburg, with scholars citing a story that was essentially the same as the Osnabrück pamphlets.[155] Similar details included the date (1589) and the fact that they were discovered after gathering on Blocksberg and drinking in cellars. Some German scholars at the time recognised the mistake and suggested that the trials referred to happened in Osnabrück, not Quedlinburg.[156] The error has, nevertheless, persisted.

While the Osnabrück *Hexenzeitungen* are particularly striking examples and demonstrate the importance of interrogating these sources closely, there are other cases where pamphleteers significantly adapted or fabricated reports. Warfield has demonstrated that one pamphlet printed in 1594, which claimed to describe the prosecution of Johanna Harweilerin in 1593, was in fact drawn from Bodin's *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, which had been translated into German in 1581.[157] Another pamphlet printed in 1581 which claimed to describe the execution of a sorceress for

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[152] H. C. Erik Midelfort, 'Heartland of the Witchcraze: Central and Northern Europe', *History Today,* 31/2 (1981), p. 28.
[153] Levack, *The Witch-Hunt,* p. 24.
[154] W. Behringer, 'Neun Millionen Hexen: Entstehung, Tradition und Kritik eines populäres Mythos', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 49 (1998), pp. 666-69.
[155] See, for example: W.G. Soldan, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse: Band 2* (2nd edn., Stuttgart, 1880), p. 84; C. Lempen, *Geschichte der Hexen und Hexenprozesse* (St Gallen, 1880), p. 61.
[156] J. Moser, 'Kleiner Beitrag zur Geschichte der Quedlinburger Hexenprozesse', *Zeitschrift des Harz-Vereins für Geschichte und Altertumskunde,* 27 (1984), pp. 620-2.
[157] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 274.

performing weather magic was lifted from the *Malleus Maleficarum*.[158] While outright fabrication of trials does not appear to have happened in England, there were cases which were recycled and repackaged as though they were recent events. One report printed in 1635 was essentially a reprint of an account from 1619 concerning the discovery of witches near Belvoir Castle, Lincolnshire, but with an additional discussion attached concerning the appropriate methods for trying witches.[159] Another pamphlet, which has no print date on its title page but is listed as around 1690 on the ESTC, supposedly reported the trial of four witches in Worcester at the assizes in March during the year of publication.[160] The inclusion of Matthew Hopkins, notorious witch-finder who died in 1647, is a clear signal that this report is not entirely accurate.[161] The report actually describes the trials of four women who were tried in Chelmsford, Essex, in 1645, and appears to have lifted much of the text from a report published during that year.[162] Clearly, as both Gibson and Krah emphasise, witchcraft pamphlets need to be considered as literary sources rather than 'a database of "facts"'; these pamphlets should be 'recognised as texts, representing, and not merely transmitting, information about witchcraft'.[163]

The repeated claims to report 'truth' in witchcraft pamphlets is a reflection of the early modern news genre as a whole. Reliability of news was a major concern. According to Pettegree, news in medieval Europe was considered far more believable if delivered verbally by a trusted messenger than in an anonymous written report.[164] This belief created problems as news reporting developed in the age of print, and 'attempts to convince readers of the truthfulness of accounts were instrumental in shaping the forms that news took, the developments of these forms, and the rhetoric its

[158] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 265.
[159] ESTC S92558.
[160] ESTC R40228.
[161] Ibid., p. 3.
[162] ESTC R200218.
[163] Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität', p. 82; Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft,* p. 7.
[164] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 2.

writer adopted.'[165] Claims of truthfulness, far from signalling that these documents were factual reports, indicate that the authors were employing rhetorical techniques to convince the reader. Sara Barker notes that pamphleteers deliberately included specific details including people's names, places, dates, and, in the case of translated news, information about the translator, to create a sense of familiarity and to make the pamphlet appear authoritative.[166] This technique may explain why the later Osnabrück pamphlets add a specific date of the trial into the title. The reprinting of popular tales and the use of demonological literature shows that, regardless of what pamphleteers claimed in their titles, the aim of these witchcraft pamphlets was not primarily to provide an accurate report of current events.

Almost as frequently as news reports claimed to be truthful, witchcraft pamphlets' titles in both England and Germany were filled with emotive language such as 'terrifying' (*erschrecklich*), 'strange' (*wunderlich*), and 'cruel' (*unmenschlich*).[167] Often these terms were juxtaposed with truth: this construction is found in both Germany – *Warhafftige und erschreckliche Beschreibung, von einem Zauberer (truthful and shocking account concerning a sorcerer)* (1589) – and in England – *A Most Certain, Strange and True Discovery of a Witch* (1643). The connection between truth and shock in these sources leads Warfield to describe them as 'a forerunner for our own modern-day fascination with "true crime" series and documentaries'.[168] In the increasingly competitive market of cheap print, printers and writers needed to grab the attention of readers quickly. With examples such as *A Magazine of Scandal* (1642), it is easy to understand the appeal of these pamphlets for early modern readers.[169] The idea that tales were simultaneously shocking, scandalous,

[165] S. F. Davies and P. Fletcher, 'Introduction', in S. F. Davies and P. Fletcher (eds.), *News in Early Modern Europe: Currents and Connections* (Leiden, 2016), p. 6.
[166] S. K. Barker, 'International News Pamphlets', in A Kesson and E. Smith (eds.), *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England* (London, 2016), pp. 149-52.
[167]VD16 ZV 21490; VD17 1:693782T*;* ESTC S124945; ESTC S117575.
[168] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 265.
[169] ESTC R9987.

and true was intended to excite, intrigue, and entice audiences in much the same way that clickbait articles and tabloid headlines do today. Rather than offering dispassionate reporting of information, these pamphlets were 'primarily concerned to titillate'.[170]

The sensationalism in pamphlet titles was matched with descriptions of dreadful deeds within the pamphlets, such as infanticide, cannibalism, poisoning, and suicide. Such violent and dreadful acts are typical of witchcraft and crime pamphlets, and reflect the preoccupation with gruesome crime, disaster, and evil in the early modern period. While the Reformations might have encouraged focus on godly, pious living and good Christian values, Joel Elliot Slotkin points out that many of the most enduring elements of early modern English literature – such as *Richard III*, the *Fairie Queen*, and *Paradise Lost* – are 'the passages that describe infernal landscapes, wicked villains, and demonic or monstrous beings'.[171] Then, just as today, there was a grim fascination with misfortune and disaster, and news pamphlets catered for this interest by allowing a 'wider public to experience vicariously the horror or thrill of these villainous acts.'[172] As Barker notes, news pamphlets were not purchased to show sophistication, but for their contents, and audience reception undoubtedly shaped pamphlet production as printers sought to satisfy consumer expectations.[173] The construction of occasional news pamphlets, traditionally written after the event they described and with a clear narrative structure, was more appealing for many than the serial newspapers which developed during the seventeenth century. While serial newspapers offered little explanation or context for their reports, requiring a subscription to understand the significance of the news stories reported, occasional pamphlets could be one-off purchases if the story contained within was particularly intriguing.[174] Commercial considerations played a

[170] Ettinghausen, *How the Press Began,* p. 145.
[171] J. E. Slotkin, *Sinister Aesthetics: The Appeal of Evil in Early Modern English Literature* (Cham, 2017), p. 7.
[172] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 89.
[173] Barker, 'International News Pamphlets', pp. 148 – 151.
[174] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 9.

significant role in selecting and shaping the narratives that appeared in news pamphlets, privileging the most sensational and entertaining to guarantee an audience.

Nineteenth-century assumptions that sensationalism was a 'marker of lower-class appeal' led some to disregard these pamphlets.[175] Acknowledging the sensationalism of these sources, however, does not undermine their historical value. As noted above, sources that appealed to a wide audience are beneficial for studies of 'popular culture'. Additionally, both Pettegree and Wiltenburg have argued that, although these pamphlets may have reached a wider audience through their images and lyrical construction, the people able and likely to purchase these documents – and the audience, therefore, that printers were seeking to entice – was, in fact, 'the literate upper levels of early modern society.'[176] Sensationalist pamphlets describing terrifying murders and shocking acts of magical sabotage played into the anxieties of the burgher households who feared that their relative stability could be turned upside down by a rogue servant or apprentice.[177] Gibson also criticises the assumption that entertaining pamphlets are of less value than serious ones. Rather, these sources simply offer a different representation of witchcraft to the version that is most familiar in demonological and theological tracts. She points out that serious events are often treated with satirical humour today; why, then, should it be assumed that people in early modern Europe were only influenced by 'intensely serious' discussions of witchcraft?[178]

In addition, while it may be tempting to see the sensationalism in these documents as 'commercialism pure and simple', it would be unwise to think that that commercial gain was the only (or even primary) concern driving the production of pamphlets.[179] According to Pettegree, 'for most of this period there was not much money to be made from publishing news,

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[175] J. Wiltenburg, 'True Crime: The Origins of Modern Sensationalism', *American Historical Review*, 109/5 (2004), p. 1382.
[176] Wiltenburg, 'True Crime', p. 1382; Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 93.
[177] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 94.
[178] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, pp. 145-6.
[179] Wiltenburg, 'True Crime', p. 1383.

and most of it went to those at the top of the trade.'[180] The anonymity of most news pamphlets makes it impractical in most cases to explore how many news pamphlets a single writer produced, but it is unlikely that anyone could support themselves financially through news pamphlets alone. Indeed, Wiltenburg stresses that while it may have been possible for printers to gain from printing crime pamphlets, 'it almost certainly brought little reward to the authors.'[181] The entertaining elements of the pamphlets may have helped to increase the likelihood of the pamphlets being purchased, but, given the poor prospects for financial gain for pamphlet writers, it is unlikely that authors were driven primarily by a desire to entertain and make profit. It is, therefore, worth considering what other factors may have motivated pamphlet writers.

Some scholars, including Sipek and Walinski-Kiehl, argue that witchcraft news pamphlets were primarily witch-hunting propaganda, intended to fan the flames of the so-called 'witch craze' and spread them to neighbouring territories.[182] Both of these historians focus on Germany, where there was a correlation between a peak in witch-hunting in the southern territories of the Empire and printing of news reports on the topic. As Behringer observes, however, it is unclear whether this pattern is simply because more reports were printed when there were more trials, or evidence that such reports actively contributed to witch-hunting.[183] Certainly, the persuasive power of pamphleteering is widely recognised. As noted in the introduction, reformers made extensive use of print and pamphleteering in their efforts. The legacy of these early Reformation pamphlets is evident in witchcraft news pamphlets, many of which adopted the same passionate tone of their predecessors. Krah observes that German witchcraft pamphlets often concluded with invocations and appeals to God, placing the events of the pamphlet within a wider religious framework.[184]

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[180] Pettegree, *The Invention of News,* p. 11.
[181] Wiltenburg, 'True Crime', p. 1383.
[182] Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung', p. 87; Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda, and Witch-Hunting', p. 54.
[183] Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 218.
[184] Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität', p. 77.

This technique was used in the Osnabrück reports, which ended by calling for God's protection from the 'devilish multitudes.'[185] Similar sentiments were expressed in English reports. An account printed in 1645 concerning several strange occurrences including the discovery of multiple witches in Norfolk and Suffolk proclaimed as follows in the conclusion: 'God in his mercy give us all a sight of our sins, and grant us grace to acknowledge them, and amend our lives.'[186] News pamphlets also borrowed motifs from broader religious art and literature. Pettegree notes, for example, that woodcut illustrations of crime pamphlets, illustrating several scenes of the text from the crime to the execution, were reminiscent of Passion narratives in late medieval paintings.[187] This method was more common in German witchcraft reports, where it was used in several broadsheets (see images below).

FIGURE 5 Woodcut from a pamphlet printed in 1555 about trials in Derenburg, Germany (USTC 750051)



[185] VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p. 6].
[186] ESTC R232297, p. 5.
[187] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 90.

FIGURE 6 Woodcut from broadsheet about Peter Stumpf, werewolf-sorcerer, executed near Cologne. Printed in 1589 (*Newe Zeitung von einen pauren* Nuremberg, 1589).



Yet, while witchcraft reports may have adopted many of the same persuasive techniques as Reformation pamphlets and art, the question remains as to whether their sole aim was to encourage witch-hunting. Gibson in particular cautions against the suggestion that witchcraft news pamphlets offered a united ideological position on witchcraft. In several pamphlets, multiple authorial voices were present within one report. A key example is the report concerning the so-called 'witches of Warboys', printed in 1593.[188] While it was once assumed that Gilbert Pickering (uncle of the girls afflicted by witchcraft) was the sole author, both Gibson and Erika Gasser suggest that internal evidence indicates there were at least four authorial voices involved in shaping the narrative.[189] Overall, Gibson argues that concerns presented in pamphlets 'are wide and various enough within individual works to suggest multiple intentions beyond crude

[188] ESTC S95729.
[189] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, p. 125; E. Gasser, *Vexed with Devils: Manhood and Witchcraft in Old and New England* (New York, NY, 2017), p. 38.

propaganda.'[190] How far German and English witchcraft reports actively encouraged witch-hunting is, nevertheless, an important question that warrants further consideration. Their attitude to witch-hunts and the legal procedures are explored in more detail in Chapter Three.

In fact, the use of motifs from religious art and pamphlets speaks to the wider aim of many of these pamphlets: moral instruction. The sensationalism in these pamphlets is, according to Wiltenberg, not purely for entertainment; it also emphasises the severity of God's wrath.[191] In both German and English reports, witchcraft is placed within the context of the broader cosmic struggle between good and evil. This wider struggle was emphasised in one of the earliest German witchcraft reports. Printed in 1555 and featuring a striking woodcut illustration (see above) the Derenburg report was split into three main paragraphs. The first paragraph was dedicated to describing the growing threat of 'the old snake, the Devil'.[192] It referenced Genesis 3:15 ('I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head and you will strike his heel') and claimed that the Devil always seeks to create disbelief and disobedience. There is the sense of growing danger; the threat from the Devil has increased 'in recent times' because the Devil is aware that 'the Day of Judgement draws nearer'.[193] This paragraph concludes 'amen', emulating the conclusion of a sermon. The second paragraph briefly describes the events of the witch trials, before returning in the final paragraph to doomsday statements about the Devil and the need to defend against him:

> Such a dreadful example should rally us to repentance and piety, so that we may defend ourselves against the enemy with God's words and prayer. And this history of certain Epicureans and sorcerers is a reminder that the Devil still lives and that the fire of Hell has not yet been extinguished. The almighty God wills you to repent […] and

[190] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, p. 138.
[191] Wiltenburg, 'True Crime', p. 1385.
[192] USTC 750051.
[193] Ibid.

> wants to rule all with his Holy Spirit. May we live with godliness, discipline, and honesty to the glory of your Holy Name.[194]

Other pamphlets conveyed similar messages. One report concerning trials in Bamberg and Würzburg (1627) asserted it was a 'warning' which must be heard by all Christians, despite the horror of the tale, and exhorted God to 'guard and protect' his people against the 'tricks and wiles of the Devil and his followers'.[195] An English report about witches in Windsor (1579) offered an 'admonition for the unwary and the careless', warning them of the 'the ambushments, which Satan the secret work master of wicked drifts, has placed in most parts of this realm'.[196] Similarly, a report concerning witches in Lincolnshire (1619) encouraged its readers to 'make use of so wonderful a story' and offered ten conclusions that it hoped to impart.

Witchcraft reports in both countries belonged to the longstanding literary tradition of 'exempli', in which stories are presented that are intended to impress a broader message on the reader.[197] The didactic goals of such reports were unmistakable in the Derenburg broadsheet, which emphasised that readers must 'paint, preach, sing and talk [about the Devil] to educate to people whenever possible'.[198] The reference to preaching here is particularly significant, and, indeed, several scholars have noted the similarities between news pamphlets and sermons in their structure, content, and perhaps even authorship.[199] While most pamphlets were anonymous, where authorship *is* known, many were clergymen; in the witchcraft pamphlets, Reinhard Lutz and Henry Goodcole provide two examples.[200] As discussed above, pamphlets were not profitable enough to provide the sole income for a pamphlet writer. It is logical, therefore, that pamphlet writers may have been employed in other professions like the

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[194] Ibid.
[195] VD17 23:293541Q, sig. Aii^{v}.
[196] ESTC S118977, sigs. Aii^{r}-Aiii^{v}.
[197] Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität', p. 82.
[198] USTC 750051.
[199] Slotkin, *Sinister Aesthetics*, p. 132; Ettinghausen, *How the Press Began*, p. 146; Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 45.
[200] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 92.

church. As well as his witchcraft pamphlet, Goodcole authored several other pamphlets detailing gruesome crimes and dreadful punishments including *The Adultresses Funerall Day* (1635) and *Natures Cruell Step-Dames* (1637). He also published several sermons such as *The Good Treasurer* (1623). Likewise, Lutz wrote several sermons and catechisms in both Latin and German in addition to his witchcraft report printed in 1571. Alongside supplementing income, news pamphlets appealed to preachers because, as Pettegree suggests, they provided a 'living sermon'.[201] The exempli tradition found in pamphlets was frequently employed in sermons, so pamphlets gave preachers the opportunity to illustrate their lessons with some 'real world' examples. As Slotkin convincingly argues, 'despite the wide diversity of ballads, pamphlets, and sermons, and their supposed division into the opposing categories of secular and religious, we can productively view them as a coherent group of texts depicting divine punishment in similar ways and for similar purposes.'[202]

1.4. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the value and potential of studying witchcraft in printed sources, while acknowledging the multiple methodological challenges that such sources present. Section one outlined the various forms of print in which witchcraft appeared. The main forms discussed were demonological treatises, religious tracts and sermons, news pamphlets and ballads, and dramatic and literary portrayals. There was, arguably, overlap between these genres; demonologies and sermons shared characteristics, while stories that first appeared as news pamphlets could be the foundation for dramas and novels. Categorisation is also complicated by comparison between the two countries. German preachers, for example, tended to label their writing as sermons on witchcraft which their English counterparts did not do. Comparison of the dedications and prefaces in both countries, however, demonstrates that both often

[201] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 92.
[202] Slotkin, *Sinister Aesthetics*, p. 131.

originated as sermons that were delivered orally and had shared didactic aims. It must also be acknowledged that, while there are sources referred to as 'witchcraft news pamphlets' in both Germany and England, there are stylistic differences between the two countries. Given the wide range of printed sources that featured witchcraft, it is not possible to include all of them. This thesis does not, therefore, engage directly with demonologies or with literary portrayals of witches. Demonologies have already received significant attention in their own right, and recent works by Warfield and Millar have also explored the direct links between demonologies and news pamphlets. Similarly, contemporary literary portrayals of witchcraft belong to their own field of research, and it is not within the scope of the present work to include them.

The remaining sources have been chosen because they can be said to fall under the broad category of 'popular print'. This chapter has explored this notion in detail. Economic popularity is one component and, as this chapter demonstrated, is often difficult to judge on the basis of extant evidence. The other facet of popularity is a source's reach and potential to reflect mass culture. Like economic popularity, this concept also presents several hurdles. This chapter identifies several features of these sources which may have contributed to their level of popularity, including length, use of complex terminology, and incorporation of visual and oral culture. Some of these components, particularly in the case of oral performance, are unrecoverable. This problem exists for both sermons and ballads. It is also difficult to trace transformations between the oral performance and the written record. Because the various features identified as shaping popularity vary from source to source, it is not possible to categorise each source as 'popular' or 'elite' neatly. Instead, this chapter argues that printed sources should be placed on a spectrum of popularity. Some of the sources used in this thesis, including the longer sermon collections, news reports, and tracts, may have primarily appealed to a more learned audience than the broadside ballads with woodcut illustrations. Even those sources that appeared to be for such audiences,

however, had some basis in popular culture, and were often – according to their authors – derived from oral performances originally and shaped by interactions with their parishioners. All of these sources had the potential to reach a wider audience than specialised texts like demonologies, and it is for this reason that these sources are included.

Moreover, as this chapter has illuminated, there were wider shared characteristics between sermons, tracts, and news reports that necessitate studying them together. There are also several similarities between the German and English examples, demonstrating that they are a good foundation for this comparative study. Both German and English news reports, for example, incorporated a similar rhetoric of truth and shock, intended to entice their reader and to convey authority on their reports. Similarly, as the Osnabrück and Worcester examples demonstrate, writers and printers in both countries were willing to invent, adapt, or repurpose reports and were, therefore, clearly not wholly concerned with accuracy. Ultimately, of course, multiple motivations were at play in all of the works examined in this chapter, and it would be reductive to suggest that they were intended to serve only one purpose. Persuasion does, however, appear to have been a major motivation for both preachers and pamphleteers. The extent to which these sources can be considered witch-hunting propaganda is a thorny question, discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. A recurring theme in the German and English pamphlets and sermons is the desire to use witchcraft as an exemplum in moral instruction for their readers. This aim unites these sources and provides a basis for exploring the ideas about witchcraft that they presented further.

Chapter Two: Defining Witchcraft

What is witchcraft? What do witches do? Where does their power come from? Such questions plagued contemporaries during the early modern European witch-hunts. Definitive answers, however, proved elusive. As David Meder wrote in his sermons, 'the judgements and opinions of learned and unlearned people concerning these points are divided in almost every respect.'[1] He and other writers in Germany and England offered detailed reflections on the 'correct' opinions regarding witchcraft. Sermons, tracts, news pamphlets, and ballads all assisted in the dissemination of ideas about witchcraft, helping to spread news of trials far and wide and offering readers a way to interpret these events. Authors in both countries claimed that their writing was intended to provide clarity for those who did not understand witchcraft or even denied its reality.[2] Defining witchcraft was both a priority and a challenge for early modern writers.

The same can be said for modern historians of witchcraft. In some senses, witchcraft is universal. Belief in witchcraft exists in multiple periods, geographical contexts, and cultural settings. The prevalence of belief in witchcraft across the globe is key to its appeal in interdisciplinary research. Yet, as the editor of an interdisciplinary collection on witchcraft Johannes Dillinger noted, the witches in these various contexts are not identical.[3] The diversity of interpretations of witchcraft poses particular problems for comparative research. For example, what signifiers can be used to ensure that comparisons are meaningful and do not draw anachronistic connections between phenomena which are, in reality, entirely separate? Broadly, Wolfgang Behringer defines witchcraft as 'a generic term for all kinds of evil magic and sorcery, as perceived by contemporaries'.[4] While this definition is a useful starting point, more detail is required to draw effective comparisons.

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[1] VD17 12:205316B, f. 65^{v}.
[2] See, for example: VD16 L 7693, sig. Biii^{r}; VD16 S 1915, sig. [Aiii^{r}]; ESTC S115086, sigs. A3^{v}-A4^{r}; ESTC R28178, sig. A2^{v}; ESTC R40228, p. 2.
[3] J. Dillinger, 'Editor's Preface', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. x.
[4] W. Behringer, *Witches and Witch-Hunts: A Global History* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 4.

In the early modern context, two concepts have emerged which seek to provide a basic understanding of witchcraft during the European witch-hunts. The first is the cumulative concept, originally developed in the work of German historian Joseph Hansen, and more recently used by Brian Levack.[5] The cumulative concept has five components: one, the Devil, who gives witches the power to perform magic; two, the pact made between witches and the Devil; three, the existence of assemblies known as witches' sabbaths where witches gathered to worship the Devil collectively; four, the ability of witches to fly to the sabbath; and fifth, the ability of witches to transform into animals, also known as metamorphosis.[6] A slight variation on this concept is proposed by Behringer who, in his study of witchcraft in Bavaria, suggested the 'elaborated concept' of witchcraft, collated from various European demonologists including Heinrich Kramer, Jean Bodin, Peter Binsfeld, and Martin Delrio.[7] The elaborated concept also highlights five ideas: one, the Devil's pact and apostasy; two, a sexual relationship with the Devil; three, witches' flight; four, the witches' sabbath; and five, maleficent magic.[8]

These concepts have several limitations. Levack acknowledges that not all of these components were found in every trial.[9] Richard Kieckhefer highlights the 'persistent regionalism' in witchcraft beliefs, meaning that diabolic witchcraft was fully accepted in some places and not in others.[10] This regional difference has been particularly emphasised in England. English witchcraft has traditionally been viewed as exceptional and distinguished from 'Continental' or 'European' witchcraft.[11] This chapter challenges this characterisation. As both

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[5] J. Hansen, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozeß im Mittelalter und die Entstehung der grossen Hexenverfolgung* (Munich, 1900), pp. 448-52; B. P. Levack, 'Introduction', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 3.
[6] B. P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (4th edn., London, 2016), pp. 47-63.
[7] W. Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 13.
[8] Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 14.
[9] Levack, *The Witch-Hunt*, p. 47.
[10] R. Kieckhefer, 'The First Wave of Trials for Diabolical Witchcraft', in B. P. Levack (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 170-5.
[11] A. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London, 1970), p. 6; R. Rowland, '"Fantasticall and Devilish Persons": European Witch-beliefs

the cumulative and elaborated concepts have their roots in German witchcraft research, it may be expected that they would be widely applicable there. Yet, multiple local and regional studies show that witchcraft beliefs were far from uniform across the German lands of the Holy Roman Empire. These concepts are also primarily based on learned demonological writings, and so present a 'top-down' approach to understanding witchcraft.

Although these limitations should be acknowledged, the two concepts still offer a useful point of departure to explore what witchcraft constituted in German and English popular print. This chapter is divided into four sections broadly related to the ideas laid out in the cumulative and elaborated concepts. The first section considers the role of the Devil and the diabolic pact. The second explores the witches' interactions with demonic creatures: familiars in England, and *Buhlteufel* in Germany. The third examines the witches' sabbath. The final section discusses the reality of witches' flight. All four sections address complex issues that could easily be chapters in their own right. Indeed, many of the themes discussed here have been explored in Abaigéal Warfield's PhD thesis on German witchcraft news pamphlets, and Charlotte-Rose Millar's book on the English equivalents.[12] This chapter, therefore, focuses on areas where comparison is most illuminating, and demonstrates that comparison can contribute useful insights into the ways that witchcraft was understood and defined in both countries.

2.1. The Devil and the Pact

The Devil was the ultimate foe in early modern Germany and England. Although he had long been an important cultural figure, the Reformation heightened anxieties about the Devil across all confessional groups. Protestant authorities simultaneously warned of his growing power in the world and rejected the efficacy of traditional forms of protection against demonic influence like

in Comparative Perspective', in B. Ankarloo & G. Henningsen (eds.), *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1990), p. 173.

[12] A. Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany: An Investigation of Non-Periodical Newsheets and Pamphlets, 1533-1669' (PhD. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2013); C. Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions in Early Modern England* (London, 2017).

sacramentals (ritual blessings of objects used in liturgy, believed to exorcise harmful spirits from said object).[13] Additionally, Protestant emphasis on individual sin and conscience reframed the battle against diabolic temptation as a deeply personal struggle.[14] Religious conflict, identification of the Devil with religious opponents, and the need to create a 'godly realm' free of so-called 'superstition' equally led to increased concerns about diabolic power in Catholic territories.[15] The recurrent citation of 1 Peter 5:8 ('Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour') in German and English sources is a vivid illustration of pervasive paranoia and fear about the threat posed by the Devil.[16]

Growing concerns about diabolic power had significant implications for witchcraft beliefs and prosecutions. The connection between diabolism and magic developed in early Christian thought – most notably in St Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* (396) – but it was only in the fifteenth century that concerns about witches as participants in a diabolic cult became widespread.[17] A core component of this diabolic witchcraft was the pact witches made with the Devil, promising to worship him, to assist him in performing wicked deeds, and to renounce God.[18] Numerous regional studies in Germany demonstrate that, by the end of the sixteenth century, belief in the diabolic pact was found across the Empire, although in some territories such as Brandenburg, the pact rarely featured heavily in trials.[19] Even with these regional variations, however, the

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[13] R. W. Scribner, 'The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the "Disenchantment of the World"', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 23/3 (1993), pp. 479, 487.
[14] D. Oldridge, *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 2016), p. 79; Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions,* p. 34.
[15] Oldridge, *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 77; G. K. Waite, 'Sixteenth-Century Religious Reform and the Witch-Hunts', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 490; I. Hille, *Der Teufelspakt in frühneuzeitlichen Verhörprotokollen: Standardisierung und Regionalisierung im Frühneuhochdeutschen* (Berlin, 2009), p. 49.
[16] See, for example: VD16 S 1915, sig. A^{r}; ESTC S1876, p. 32; VD17 23:258775K, sig. [Ciiii^{v}]; ESTC R209814, sig. A3^{r}.
[17] M. D. Bailey, 'Diabolic Magic', in D. J. Collins (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 361, 371.
[18] J. Machielsen, 'Introduction: The Science of Demons', in J. Machielsen (ed.), *The Science of Demons: Early Modern Authors Facing Witchcraft and the Devil* (London, 2020), p. 4.
[19] For southern Germany, see: Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria,* p. 117; A. Rowlands, *Witchcraft Narratives in Germany: Rothenburg ob der Tauber 1561-1652*

acceptance of the pact in many parts of Germany starkly contrasts with the traditional perception of the pact in English witchcraft. Alan Macfarlane and Keith Thomas argue that there is little evidence of a direct connection between the witch and Satan in English trial records.[20] According to Thomas, there is no mention of an oral compact with the Devil prior to 1612, and no written pact until the trials led by witch-hunters Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne in the 1640s.[21] These arguments have been repeated in subsequent scholarship; often the supposed lack of diabolism in English witchcraft serves as a key distinction from other European countries.[22] Yet, James Sharpe and Charlotte-Rose Millar question this characterisation. In particular, they highlight witchcraft news pamphlets as evidence of a closer connection between the witch and the Devil in English witchcraft than has previously been recognised, suggesting that distinctions between English and 'European' witchcraft are overstated.[23] Their claims warrant further examination of portrayals of the diabolic pact in print and an exploration of how far ideas about the Devil and the pact in England and Germany were truly distinct.

Some printed discussions of witchcraft made no reference to the Devil. One English pamphlet printed in 1585, for example, reported the various misdeeds of Margaret Harkett in Stanmore, Middlesex.[24] Despite the fact that Margaret cursed several individuals, there is no suggestion in this pamphlet that

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(Manchester, 2003), p. 50; L. Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London, 2004), p. 84; J. Dillinger, *'Evil People': A Comparative Study of Witch Hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier*, trans. by L. Stokes (Charlottesville, VA, 2009), p. 44. For northern Germany, see: R. Schulte, *Man as Witch: Male Witches in Central Europe,* trans. L. Froome-Döring (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 182; R. Füssell and K. Moeller, 'Germany, Northeastern', in R. M. Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 417-21.

[20] Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England,* p. 189; K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Belief in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (London, 1971), pp. 525-9.

[21] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 528.

[22] B. P. Levack, 'Introduction: Witchcraft in the British Isles and New England', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology vol. 3: Witchcraft in the British Isles and New England* (London, 2001), p. vii; Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 11.

[23] J. Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in England 1550 – 1750* (London, 1996), pp. 94-100; Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions*, p. 14; J. Sharpe, 'English witchcraft pamphlets and the popular demonic', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer & L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), pp. 127-47.

[24] ESTC S92857, sigs. A3^{r}-[A6^{v}].

she was assisted by or worked for the Devil. In 1587, a German pamphlet recounted the execution of twenty witches in Lüttringen, North Rhine-Westphalia.[25] This news ballad likewise made no reference to the Devil's involvements in the witches' activities. Other cases with no mention of the Devil can be found in both countries.[26] The length of these pamphlets might offer an explanation. As these pamphlets are all comparatively short, pamphleteers chose to focus on the sensational crimes and their devastating impact on victims, rather than discussing the minutiae of demonological theory. In her study of German crime pamphlets, Joy Wiltenburg hypothesises that 'the involvement of the Devil sometimes seemed so obvious that authors did not bother to mention it'.[27] This explanation could apply to these English and German witchcraft pamphlets. Certainly, while they did not mention the Devil directly, they still framed the witches' actions as sinful: Harkett is described as 'ungodly', while the Lüttringen witches are characterised as 'vermin' whose actions are opposed to God.[28] These cases may assume the Devil's involvement, but they make no explicit associations with him, leaving the reader to make their own judgement as to the source of the witches' power.

In both countries, however, other writers devoted significant attention to explaining the source of witchcraft and emphasising the pact made between the Devil and the witch. Unsurprisingly, many of these extended discussions are found in sermon literature and religious tracts. In several respects, clergymen in England and Germany broadly agreed about the pact and its centrality to witchcraft. As Perkins stated, 'the ground of all practices of witchcraft is a league or covenant made between the Witch and the Devil.'[29] Joachim Zehner, a priest in Schleusingen, Thuringia, likewise argued that '[the witch's] power originates solely from the pact that they have made with the Devil.'[30] Both Zehner and Perkins also emphasised the heretical nature of this pact, labelling it as an

[25] VD16 W 1261, sigs. [A3^{r}]-[A4^{v}].
[26] See, for example: ESTC S126714, sigs. E2^{v}-F^{r}; VD16 N 1023, sigs. Aii^{r}-Aiii^{r}; VD16 ZV 21490, sigs. Aii^{v}-Aiiii^{v}.
[27] J. Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture in Early Modern Germany* (Charlottesville, VA, 2012), p. 96.
[28] ESTC S92857, sig. A3^{v}; VD16 W 1261, sig. A4^{v}.
[29] ESTC S114525, p. 41.
[30] VD17 23:328851P, p. 27.

inversion of the agreement made between God and man through baptism.[31] Witchcraft was primarily characterised as apostasy in these sources, with renunciation of God commonly listed as the first and most important term of the pact.[32]

Throughout German sermon literature, the idea of a close connection between the Devil and the witch remained largely unchanged. The pact was presented as an indisputable fact throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[33] Some English evidence, however, indicates that the pact was initially more contested there. Henry Holland wrote his 1590 tract as a dialogue between a sceptical character, Mysodaemon, and a learned character, Theophilius. Mysodaemon argued that there was no scriptural evidence for most witchcraft theory, including the pact.[34] While Holland offered evidence through Theophilius of the reality of the pact, the inclusion of this discussion suggests that Holland recognised it was a point of controversy. There may, therefore, have been more scepticism toward the pact in England than in Germany in the sixteenth century. It should be noted, of course, that the consistent portrayal of the pact as fact in the German sermons does not necessarily mean that it was, in reality, widely accepted as fact. In isolation, these sources do not reveal much about the reception of the ideas they presented. Nevertheless, the German preachers did appear more assured about the reality of the pact than some English contemporaries.

By the seventeenth century, however, English clergymen also confidently asserted the reality of the pact. Perkins claimed that there was abundant evidence for the pact, both historical, biblical evidence and in the confessions of witches.[35] He and other English writers also provided detailed descriptions of the terms of the pact, including the notion drawn from demonologists such as Jean Bodin that witches sealed the pact with their own blood.[36] In a marginal

[31] ESTC S114525, p. 46; VD17 23:328851P, p. 9.
[32] See, for example: VD17 12:205316B, f. 42^{v}; ESTC S108665, p. 66; ESTC S101683, pp. 108-9; VD17 12:627125P, p. 29.
[33] VD16 B 7917, sig. A3^{v}; VD16 G 3237, sig. B^{v}; VD17 12:627125P, pp. 27-38; VD17 14:679199Q, pp. 16-20.
[34] ESTC S104153, sigs. E3^{v}-E4^{r}.
[35] ESTC S114525, pp. 42-4.
[36] ESTC S114525, pp. 48-9; ESTC S108665, pp. 65-94; ESTC S101683, pp. 110-12.

note, Alexander Roberts cited the first book of Johann Georg Gödelmann's *De Magis, Veneficis Et Lamiis* (published in Frankfurt am Main, 1591) as his source for the list of formal terms in the diabolic pact.[37] Gödelmann was a jurist in Saxony, demonstrating that there were direct connections between German and English thought on this topic. German preachers included similar explorations of the practicalities of making the pact in their works. Meder discussed a list of steps that needed to be taken to make the pact, while Daniel Schaller and Bernhard Waldschmidt emphasised that witches signed the pact with their blood.[38] While English tracts initially demonstrated more caution about the pact than their German equivalents, by the seventeenth century a similar understanding of the pact was circulating in both countries, even if it did not yet appear frequently in English trial records.

News reports in both countries also explored the relationship between the witch and Devil. In fact, certain sections of the pamphlets were particularly likely to discuss the topic. Several scholars draw attention to the preface in English witchcraft pamphlets.[39] The preface in English pamphlets took numerous forms, including short sermons, poetry, and, in some cases, overviews of demonological debate. As noted in Chapter One, Marion Gibson observes that the prefaces in Elizabethan witchcraft pamphlets sometimes appeared disconnected from the main text.[40] In some Elizabethan pamphlets, the differences between the preface and pamphlet text were evident in the role they attributed to the Devil. One pamphlet printed in 1579, for example, warned readers about 'Satan the secret work master of wicked drifts' and encouraged them to be alert to any signs of 'Devilish deeds'.[41] In the main text, however, the accounts of the four witches made no mention of the Devil. This pamphlet, therefore, presented two different approaches: the first considered witchcraft to

[37] ESTC S115983, pp. 81-2.
[38] VD17 12:205316B, ff. 42^{v}-43^{r}; VD17 23:258775K, sig. Kiii^{r}; VD17 12:627125P, p. 86.
[39] C. Holmes, 'Popular Culture? Witches, Magistrates, and Divines in Early Modern England', in S. L. Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (New York, NY, 1984), p. 100; M. Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft: Stories of Early English Witches* (London, 1999), p. 155; Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions*, p. 41.
[40] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, pp. 158-9.
[41] ESTC S118977, sigs. Aii^{r}-Aiii^{v}.

be rooted in diabolism, while the second focused on the impact of the witches' crimes.

German witchcraft pamphlets did not often include a preface, but some isolated examples from the 1570s and 1580s did. These cases share similar features to contemporary English pamphlets. One example is the pamphlet written by Reinhard Lutz, a preacher in Sélestat. Lutz's interpretation of witchcraft was based on the pact that they made with the Devil, and in his description of the pact he focused on their apostasy, arguing that they rejected Christ and the Christian faith, and devoted themselves to the Devil.[42] As Warfield observes, however, the witches in Lutz's news report did not mention a pact or alliance with the Devil, although he did feature in their confessions.[43] This report represents another example of differing learned and popular ideas about the nature of the witches' relationship with the Devil presented side-by-side. Another report written by Martin Marckwart, a preacher in Stettin, Pomerania (now Szczecin, Poland), included a preface which likewise placed greater emphasis on apostasy and the notion that witches had given themselves to the Devil 'body and soul' than did other contemporary reports.[44] These German and English examples of prefaces suggest not only that these pamphlets presented an interplay of learned and popular ideas, but also that the notion of a diabolic pact was not fully integrated into popular understanding in either country by the late sixteenth century.

During the seventeenth century, discussions of the Devil and the diabolic pact in news reports shifted. Several historians pinpoint the 1640s as an atypical moment in English witchcraft, with the diabolic pact taking a more central role in the East Anglian trials of 1645-7; they suggest that this change was due to Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne's use of 'continental' demonology.[45] It is true that their printed works did attribute importance to the pact. Stearne in particular was unequivocal about the centrality of the pact, stating that 'to

[42] VD16 L 7693, sigs. B^{r}-[Biiii^{r}].
[43] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 56.
[44] VD16 M 947, sigs. A^{v}-Aiii^{v}.
[45] C. L'Estrange Ewen, *Witchcraft and Demonianism: A Concise Account derived from sworn Depositions and Confessions obtained in the Courts of England and Wales* (London, 1933), p. 52; Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 139.

convict or prove one guilty of witchcraft, is to prove a league made with the Devil: in this only act, stands the very reality of a witch.'[46] Yet Sharpe rightly questions whether the ideas presented during these trials were truly uncharacteristic. He argues that there is little evidence that Hopkins used European demonologies in his work, noting that James VI and I's *Daemonologie* is the only source Hopkins cites; Stearne did draw on evidence from Bodin and Del Rio but '"continental" notions do not feature heavily'.[47] As shown above, other English writers were discussing the pact prior to these trials. There is, therefore, no reason to assume that these trials introduced ideas about the pact that were entirely alien in English demonological thought.

Similarly, while earlier English pamphlets may not have explicitly discussed the pact to the same extent, they increasingly made a connection between the witch and the Devil. Earlier divisions between the preface and main text became blurred, and discussions of the Devil appeared in both. A report printed in 1619 concerning witches around Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire, offers an example. The preface was written by someone familiar with witchcraft theory; it referenced James's *Daemonologie*, as well as tracts by Gifford and Roberts, and other English news reports.[48] It explained that witches 'give away their souls' to the Devil who then assists them in their witchcraft.[49] This description is mirrored in the main text, where Joan, Margaret, and Phillip Flower are persuaded by the Devil to enter into a pact with him, sealed with blood, and become 'Devils incarnate.'[50] This case was also reported in a ballad. The ballad likewise reported that the witches gave themselves to the Devil and sealed the agreement with blood.[51] The inclusion of these ideas in a short ballad, arguably the most popular form of print, supports Clive Holmes's assertion that during the course of the seventeenth century, the idea of the diabolic pact was gradually

[46] ESTC R28178, p. 40.
[47] J. Sharpe, 'The Devil in East Anglia: the Matthew Hopkins Trials Reconsidered', in J. Barry, M. Hester, and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 251.
[48] ESTC S102363, sigs. [B4^{r-v}].
[49] Ibid., sig. B3^{r}.
[50] Ibid., sig. D^{r}.
[51] ESTC S126176.

integrated from learned texts into more popular media.[52] The connection with the Devil did not disappear after the 1640s, but remained a common notion in pamphlets during the last decades of the seventeenth century. A pamphlet reporting the trial of three witches in 1682, for example, described how the witches 'made an interchange, accepting a Hell for a Heaven, rather willing to please the Devil than the great Creator'.[53] As far as English witchcraft pamphlets are concerned, Millar is correct to claim that references to devils are 'almost omnipresent.'[54]

In this respect, German witchcraft pamphlets were very similar to their English counterparts. According to Wiltenburg, the Devil was a 'cultural anti-icon' in German crime literature, and this unsurprisingly fed into his role in witchcraft pamphlets.[55] In one of the earliest German witchcraft pamphlets, printed in 1563, the idea that witches rejected God and gave themselves to the Devil was already established.[56] While many earlier pamphlets did not give the same attention to the witches' crime of apostasy as those with prefaces discussed above, the Devil is, nevertheless, a participant in the witches' crimes.[57] Pamphlets printed during peaks in witch-hunting in the 1610s and 1620s likewise frequently and explicitly linked the witch and the Devil. A pamphlet printed in 1615 featuring two witch reports, for instance, reported how three witch priests 'devoted themselves to the Devil body and soul in perpetuity, and performed the Devil's work'; among their wicked deeds, these priests baptised babies in the name of the Devil.[58] The pact continued to feature in later pamphlets, including a broadsheet printed in Augsburg in 1669, where the witch confessed that she had been linked with the Devil for thirteen or fourteen years, and had made a 'secret pact' with him to renounce God and do the Devil's bidding instead.[59] In both England and Germany, the involvement of the Devil in

[52] Holmes, 'Popular Culture?', p. 101.
[53] ESTC R12040, sig. A2^{r}.
[54] Millar, *Witchcraft, The Devil, and Emotions*, p. 14.
[55] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture,* pp. 96-8.
[56] VD16 W 535, sig. Aii^{r}.
[57] See, for example: VD16 N 624; VD16 ZV 29564; VD16 W 337.
[58] *Zwo Hexenzeitung* 1615, [unpaginated: pp. 2-3].
[59] *Beschreibung von Hexerey* 1669.

witchcraft became a recurrent and regular feature of the news reports during the seventeenth century.

Yet, while pamphlets in both Germany and England frequently drew a link between the Devil and the witch, their discussions of the practicalities and terms of the pact were often less detailed than the ideas in sermon literature. In Germany, Warfield notes that some learned ideas, such as drawing a circle on the ground to perform the pact, did not appear in the pamphlets until 1654.[60] There were also relatively few examples of witches actually signing a written pact. On occasions where the witches did sign a pact, their sudden ability to write at a time when the majority of the population was illiterate was explained by the Devil guiding their hand.[61] In England, Thomas's observation that written pacts were not a feature of the trials until the 1640s is also true for the pamphlets. After this point, however, written pacts were a frequent feature, and while, in some cases, the Devil guided the witch's hand, in other examples they signed the pact freely.[62] The pact was often signed in blood; the use of blood to confirm the oral pact was relatively common from the earliest English witch pamphlets onwards.[63] Additionally, the use of circle magic to conjure the Devil was found much earlier in England, appearing in a 1589 pamphlet reporting the trial of four witches in Chelmsford, Essex.[64]

The English pamphlets, then, seemed to contain more detail regarding the act of making the pact than did those in Germany. The additional detail provided in the English pamphlets may be due to the form of the pamphlets in the two countries. As noted above, it was far more common for English pamphlets to include a preface which framed the narrative; English pamphlets were also often much longer than the German pamphlets. Additionally, although early German pamphlets focus on individual cases, they shifted in the 1580s to describe witch-hunts more widely, often including accounts of several different

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[60] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft,' p. 83; VD17 23:253394W, sig. [Aiii^{v}].
[61] *Urgicht und Verzaichnuß* 1588, sig. A2^{v}; *Newe Zeitung von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern* 1618, [unpaginated: p. 3]; *Beschreibung von Hexerey* 1669.
[62] ESTC R200303, sig. A2^{r}; ESTC R200949, pp. 1-2; ESTC R207118, p. 5; ESTC R231324, p. 3.
[63] ESTC S2279, sig. B^{r}; ESTC S101967, sig. Av^{v}; ESTC S119280, sig. B^{v}.
[64] ESTC S119280, sig. [Aiiii^{r}].

cases across Germany featuring hundreds of witches.[65] English pamphlets, on the other hand, primarily discussed small groups of individual witches throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This focus, coupled with the longer length of the English pamphlets, made it feasible for the authors of these works to explore the witch's interactions with the Devil in detail. Indeed, it is in the earlier sixteenth century German examples and those produced in the later seventeenth century (when pamphlets had reverted to reporting individual cases) that the discussions of written pacts and ceremonial magic are most evident.

Considering the role of the Devil and the pact in German and English print as a whole, several key points emerge. Although there were certainly some examples in both countries where the Devil did not feature, these were atypical. In sermons, tracts, and news reports in both countries, witchcraft was commonly associated with the Devil and diabolism. There was more scepticism about the pact in English religious tracts than in the German sermon literature in the sixteenth century, but by the seventeenth century the ideas expressed in both were remarkably similar. These parallels indicate that, at this level, Protestant writers drew on a shared demonological understanding separate from national or local considerations. There is more variation in the extent to which the pact was emphasised in the news reports. The length of the reports was a major factor in shaping how far diabolism featured and was explored. Reports concerned with individuals or small groups of witches – more common in England than in Germany – tended also to include more detail about the nature of the witches' power and how the pact was made. Some pamphlets were also clearly multivocal, with prefaces that framed the narrative with reference to wider demonological ideas and confessions from witches that did not make the same connections. In these examples, the distinctions between learned and popular ideas concerning the Devil are most evident. By the seventeenth century, however, it was increasingly standard for pamphleteers to draw a connection between the Devil

[65] W. Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', in M. E. Plummer & R. B. Barnes (eds.), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H. C. Erik Midelfort* (Farnham, 2009), p. 226.

and witch, demonstrating that this component of the cumulative concept did gain wide acceptance in both German and English popular print.

2.2. Familiars and Buhlteufel

Alongside the diabolic pact, historians have noted that there were other ways the diabolic connection was represented in England and Germany. In England, several scholars argue that the witch's familiar is key to understanding diabolism in witchcraft, with the familiar acting as a proxy for the Devil.[66] The familiar is a fairly ubiquitous feature of English witchcraft pamphlets, appearing in over eighty percent between 1566 and 1735.[67] It is commonly described as 'very particular' or 'almost unique' to England.[68] Lyndal Roper argues that 'German confessions never mention familiar spirits, and are drawn from a repertoire of magical and demonological beliefs quite different from the English'.[69] She and other historians of Germany point to a different manner through which the witch's connection the Devil was expressed: sex with devils (*Teufelsbuhlschaft*).[70] German printed sources often mentioned an attendant demon with which witches had sex, referred to as a *Buhle* or *Buhlteufel* (paramour or incubus). Just as the familiar is generally considered to be alien to the German context, so too is the notion that witches had sex with devils in England. This section examines these two phenomena, starting with the witch's familiar, and considers whether there is any resemblance between the familiars and *Buhlteufel*.

Although the familiar is commonly found in English witchcraft pamphlets, an exact definition of it and its relationship to the witch remains elusive. A broad outline of the key characteristics can be summarised as follows. The familiar is a creature, usually – although not always – in animal form. Other common terms

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[66] J. Sharpe, 'Familiars' in R. M. Golden (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 347-9; Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions,* p. 35.
[67] Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions,* p. 50.
[68] Sharpe, 'Familiars', p. 347; C. Holmes, 'Women: Witnesses and Witches', *Past and Present*, 140 (1993), p. 67; Millar, *Witchcraft, The Devil, and Emotions*, p. 35.
[69] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 92.
[70] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 84; Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria*, p. 14; Hille, *Der Teufelspakt in frühneuzeitlichen Verhörprotokollen,* p. 44.

to describe the familiar in the pamphlets include 'imp' and 'spirit'.[71] Its primary role in the narrative is to perform the witch's wicked desires. In some pamphlets, the witch has several familiars which each perform a different role; one attacks livestock, while the other attacks humans.[72] The relationship between the witch and familiar was highly complex. On the one hand, the familiar seemingly obeyed the commands of the witch, suggesting it occupied a subservient role. In earlier pamphlets, the witch often cared for the familiar, keeping it in small boxes or pots and nourishing it with milk, bread, and blood.[73] On the other hand, writers increasingly argued that the familiar only pretended to need nourishing to fool the witch.[74] The familiar also sometimes acted in opposition to the witch's commands.[75] Whether the familiar was a real animal possessed, the Devil himself, or a lesser demon is also unclear. Indeed, Millar argues that 'these are questions that seem to bother modern historians far more than they ever did contemporaries.'[76]

Some, including Emma Wilby, Darren Oldridge, and Holmes, argue that the familiar is a peculiarly English phenomenon because it was based in popular folkloric belief. Wilby suggests that the similarities between familiars and fairies in early modern England and Scotland originated in popular folklore and that the two concepts were often merged in popular and elite thinking.[77] Oldridge states that there is very little evidence to suggest that the familiar came from 'continental' demonology, and both he and Holmes note the scepticism about familiars expressed by some English authors, including George Gifford.[78] Others are not so convinced. Millar claims that Wilby overstates the similarities between the fairy and familiar in English sources, noting that plays, ballads, and pamphlets frequently treated the two as separate phenomena.[79] Ronald Hutton

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[71] See, for example: ESTC S115086, sigs. B2^{r}, B3^{r}.
[72] For familiars with individual roles, see: ESTC S113484, sig. C3^{r}; ESTC R28178, p. 42.
[73] See, for example: ESTC S118977, sigs. Aiiii^{v} and [Avi^{v}].
[74] ESTC S105690, sigs. B4^{v}-D^{r}; ESTC R201499, p. 4.
[75] See, for example: ESTC S119280, sig. Bii^{r}.
[76] Millar, *Witchcraft, The Devil, and Emotions*, p. 68.
[77] E. Wilby, 'The Witch's Familiar and the Fairy in Early Modern England and Scotland', *Folklore*, 111/2 (2000), pp. 298-9.
[78] D. Oldridge, *The Devil: in Tudor and Stuart England* (New York, NY, 2010), p. 167; Holmes, 'Women: Witnesses and Witches', p. 67.
[79] Millar, *Witchcraft, The Devil, and Emotions*, p. 52.

observes that there are no medieval examples of familiars in the trial records and considers it to be 'an innovation of the Tudor period' which entered popular thought through its inclusion in witchcraft pamphlets.[80] He, Millar, and Sharpe instead claim that the concept drew on the accepted notion in Christian thought that the Devil could appear in the guise of an animal, and that the familiar was linked to demonological thought.[81] These debates about the origins of the familiar are significant; if the witch's familiar is indeed rooted in demonological thinking, it is possible that similar ideas existed in other European countries.

One indication that the familiar was a learned or demonological concept is that some English printed sources cited several biblical passages when discussing familiars. Familiar spirits are noted numerous times in Roberts's tract alongside biblical passages including 2 Chronicles 33:6.[82] Stearne used both Isaiah 19 and 1 Samuel 28 as biblical precedents for the familiars found in witches' confessions.[83] Likewise, a pamphlet about two witches in St Albans printed in 1649 highlighted biblical references to familiar spirits as evidence of their long history.[84] These examples suggest that belief in the familiar was fundamentally based in scripture, and if this is the case, one could reasonably expect that the familiar should also be present in German demonological writing. German pamphleteers and preachers, however, did not refer to this phenomenon.

Examination of the biblical passages used by the English writers indicates that, in fact, the familiar spirit was not initially or primarily taken from scripture. Looking at translations of the Bible in Germany and England, it becomes clear that the interpretation of some passages was different and, moreover, that their meaning shifted in England over time. Here, for example, is Isaiah 19:3, printed in the *Vulgate*, the *Luther Bible* (first printed in 1534), the

[80] R. Hutton, *The Witch: A History of Fear, From Ancient Times to the Present* (London, 2017), pp. 272-4.
[81] Hutton, *The Witch*, p. 278; Millar, *The Witch, The Devil, and Emotions*, p. 55; Sharpe, 'Familiars', p. 349.
[82] ESTC S115983, pp. 6, 11, 75.
[83] ESTC R28178, p. 40.
[84] ESTC R206137, p. 3.

Geneva Bible (first printed in 1560), and the *King James Version* (first printed in 1611):

Vulgate	Et dirumpetur spiritus AEgypti in visceribus ejus, et consilium ejus praecipitabo; et interrogabunt simulacra sua, et divinos suos, et ***pythones***, et ariolos.
Luther Bible	Und der Mut soll den Ägyptern in ihrem Herzen vergehen, und ich will ihre Anschläge zunichte machen. Da werden sie dann fragen ihre Götzen und Pfaffen und ***Wahrsager*** und Zeichendeuter.
Geneva Bible	And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst of her, and I will destroy their counsel, and they shall seek at the idols, and at the sorcerers, and at ***them that have spirits of divination*****,** and at the soothsayers.
King James Version	And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof, and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and ***to them that have familiar spirits****,* and to the wizards.

While the King James Version specifically references familiar spirits, the Geneva Bible refers instead to spirits of divination. This association with divination is much closer to the German translation, where the word used is *Wahrsager*, which translates as fortune teller or diviner. This translation is also closer to the sense of the Vulgate, where *python,* or, at other times, *pythonissa* is used. This word derives from Pythia, or the Oracle of Delphi, a high priestess in Greek mythology with the power of prophecy.[85] It is, therefore, primarily associated with divination and prophecy. Significant differences in translation

[85] D. Harper, 'Etymology of Pythoness', *Online Etymology Dictionary*, accessed at: <https://www.etymonline.com/word/pythoness> accessed 12.7.2022.

can also be found elsewhere. In total, there are thirteen references to familiar spirits in the King James Version, compared to five in the Geneva Bible.[86] The other references in the Geneva Bible instead use the term 'spirits of divination', and the most common translation in the Luther Bible is *Wahrsager/in*. In 1 Samuel 28:7, the Luther Bible refers to a *Wahrsagergeist*, which can be translated as spirit of divination. In the Vulgate, this passage references '*mulierem habentem pythonem'*, suggesting that the Witch of Endor was a woman who 'had a spirit of divination'. It could be assumed that the 'familiar spirit' in the King James Version is analogous to 'spirits of divination', but it is clear from the references used by English pamphleteers that they did not interpret it in this way. As discussed earlier, the functions of the witch's familiar extended beyond divination. This shift in translation suggests, therefore, that the familiar spirit became closely connected to witchcraft and sorcery in the King James Version. This conclusion is supported by Garthine Walker's observation that the Jacobean Witchcraft Act (1604) specifically criminalised consulting familiar spirits, a notion that was not included in the Elizabethan Witchcraft Act (1563).[87] The examples of English writers referring to biblical passages discussing familiar spirits are all found after the King James Version was published. Taken together, this evidence suggests that the familiar may have originally been a popular idea which was incorporated into and appropriated by demonological and scriptural understandings of English witchcraft during the seventeenth century.

While the scriptural foundation for the familiar spirit may have been absent in Germany, it is still worth exploring whether its characteristics and the role it played in the narratives were mirrored in the German sources. The form of the familiar, in the shape of small and domestic animals like dogs, cats, rats,

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[86] The thirteen passages in the KJV are: Leviticus 19:31, Leviticus 20:6, Leviticus 20:27, Deuteronomy 18:11, 1 Samuel 28:3, 1 Samuel 28:7, 2 Kings 21:6, 2 Kings 23:24, 1 Chronicles 10:13, 2 Chronicles 33:6, Isaiah 8:19, Isaiah 19:3, and Isaiah 29:4. The five passages in the GNV are: 1 Samuel 28:7, 2 Kings 21:6, 2 Kings 23:24, 1 Chronicles 10:13, and 2 Chronicles 33:6.

[87] G. Walker, 'The Strangeness of the Familiar: Witchcraft and the Law in Early Modern England', in A. McShane and G. Walker (ed.), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp (*Basingstoke, 2010), p. 113.

mice, and polecats, is one of its defining features. The prominent role played by animals in witchcraft belief is described by Helen Parish as 'peculiarly English'.[88] She claims that major European demonologies only briefly discussed the possibility of demonic animals and agrees with others who claim the animal familiar was primarily drawn from folkloric popular belief.[89] This interpretation is, however, questionable. In 2019, the *Arbeitskreis für Interdisziplinäre Hexenforschung* held a conference on the theme of animals and witchcraft. Papers included discussions of witchcraft and animals in Scotland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, and England, highlighting that England was far from the only country where there was a complex interplay between witches and the animal world.[90] Hutton notes that animals such as cats, goats, and dogs featured in some of the earliest accounts of diabolic witchcraft in the fifteenth century; additionally, the idea that witches rode to gatherings on demons in the form of animals can be found in the demonological works of Nicholas Remy and Pierre de Lancre.[91] He argues, therefore, that 'attendant demons' in animal form were 'built into the new stereotype of satanic witchcraft from the very beginning', but that this role was largely restricted to the witches' sabbath.[92]

German printed sources support Hutton's argument that attendant demons in animal form existed outside the English context. Moreover, they indicate that their role was not solely limited to the sabbath. Marckwart's news pamphlet explained how a witch who had long been in the service of the Devil met with him frequently; the Devil did not appear in the form of a man, however, but 'sat in her house daily in the form of a large black raven'.[93] The witch confessed to several crimes, which she claimed she performed with the assistance of the raven.[94] This example is remarkably similar to the English familiar, with

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[88] H. Parish, '"Paltrie Vermin, Cats, Mise, Toads, and Weasils": Witches, Familiars, and Human-Animal Interactions in the English Witch Trials', *Religions,* 10/2 (2019), p. 4.
[89] Parish, '"Paltrie Vermin"', pp. 4-5.
[90] 'Tiere und Hexen: Animal Turn in Hexenforschung?', Arbeitskreis für Interdisziplinäre Hexenforschung, 25-28 September 2019: https://www.uni-saarland.de/fileadmin/upload/lehrstuhl/behringer/PDF/Tagungen/Programm_Tiere_und_Hexen.pdf (Accessed 3 May 2021).
[91] Hutton, *The Witch*, pp. 270-1.
[92] Ibid., p. 271.
[93] VD16 M 947, sig. [Aiiii^{v}].
[94] Ibid., sig. B^{v}.

the Devil in animal form attending the witch and assisting with her evil deeds. Hans Kuntz's pamphlet describing a witch and Jesuit in Dillingen, printed in 1579 and 1580, contains a dramatic narrative where the witch is accompanied to her execution by 'two large black ravens' who lifted her out of the flames and carried her away.[95] While the animal in these examples differs from the domestic animals found in English pamphlets, they are, nevertheless, evidence of the belief that the Devil could and did appear in animal form to assist witches. A further example from 1654 shows that the types of animals in the English sources did also appear in the German context. Barbara Frölin, one of the accused witches, claimed she was initially approached by the Devil in the form of a 'black man', but during the course of their relationship, he appeared to her in many forms, including a 'black dog' and 'a fiery frog'.[96] In these forms, he instructed her on harming people and encouraged her to convince others to become witches, once again performing similar actions to the familiars in English sources. Although animal demons appear more frequently in England, comparable ideas did circulate in Germany.

The notion that the Devil could appear in animal form and work with witches was also found in the German sermon literature. Schaller described what the Devil could and could not do in the second of his eight sermons on witchcraft. He argued that the Devil could possess animals and speak through them.[97] This concept is very similar to the one proposed in England by Hopkins. According to Hopkins, the Devil could appear 'in any shape whatsoever [...] and many times does assume shapes of many creatures'.[98] To achieve this feat – given that the ability to create new creatures is limited to God alone – Hopkins claimed that '[the Devil] does really enter into the body, real, corporeal, substantial creature, and forces that Creature (he working in it) to his desired end.'[99] This explanation chimes closely with Schaller's account of animals with unnatural abilities. A later sermon, written in 1661 by Christian Otto, a deacon in Trebbin,

[95] VD16 ZV 21532, sig. [Aiiii^{v}].
[96] VD17 23:253394W, sigs. Aii^{v}-Aiii^{r}.
[97] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Eiii^{r}.
[98] ESTC R201499, p. 4.
[99] Ibid.

Brandenburg, also addressed the idea the Devil could appear in animal form. After the pact between the witch and Devil was agreed, claimed Otto, the Devil would visit the witch's dwelling at any time of day; he might appear in the form of a man, but could also appear in the form of numerous animals.[100] The idea that the Devil in animal form would frequently visit the witch in their home is reminiscent of the domestic setting of many English witch familiar encounters. Overall, there is clear evidence that attendant demons in animal form were a feature of German witchcraft in print.

Both German and English print also include examples of interactions with demons in human form. A typical German example is a report about witches in Bernburg, printed in 1580, which reported that three witches met the Devil in human form; all three described meeting a man in handsome clothing who offered them money and seduced them before revealing his true nature and teaching them how to use herbs to create poisons and perform witchcraft.[101] In England, several meetings with anthropomorphic demons are found in the pamphlets relating to the East Anglia trials (1645-7), such as Jane Wallis's confession that a man in black clothes appeared to her in her bedchamber and promised to 'do any thing for her'.[102] Encounters with demons in human form are not limited to the 1640s, for they also appear in Thomas Potts' account of the witch trials in Lancaster (1613) and in later pamphlets.[103] These human demons in England were still interpreted as familiars. In Potts' pamphlet, for example, the human demons are given names, such as Fancie, in the same fashion as the animal familiars.[104]

The demons in Germany, as explained above, were often labelled as *Buhle* or *Buhlteufel*. The name originates from the word *buhlen,* which has several meanings. One translation is 'to be intimate with', and in some contexts the term specifically refers to illicit or forbidden intimacy, a definition that reflects the

[100] VD17 14:679199Q, p. 18.
[101] VD16 N 624, sigs. Aii^{r}-[Aiiii^{r}].
[102] ESTC R200949, p. 12.
[103] ESTC S114979, sig. [B4^{r}]; ESTC R209814, sig. A4^{v}; ESTC R219139, p. 2.
[104] ESTC S114979, sig. D3^{r}.

secret sexual relationship between the witch and the *Buhlteufel*.[105] Another translation is 'to court or seek favour with someone'. This definition is also relevant to the *Buhlteufel*, who wooed and enticed their targets to sign their souls away to the Devil. The *Buhlteufel* were frequently found in the German pamphlets, suggesting that many witches were believed to have a close personal relationship with a demon that assisted them with their witchcraft.[106] Meder stated that one of the conditions of the diabolic pact was that each witch got their 'own particular incubus' who, among other things, instructed the witch on the performance of wicked deeds.[107] The *Buhlteufel*, then, appears to have played an equivalent role in witchcraft narratives to the role that the familiar played in England: a representation of the close personal relationship between the Devil and the witch.

In fact, there are several parallels between the English familiar and the German *Buhlteufel*. As mentioned above, one of the roles played by the *Buhlteufel* was to persuade the witch to join the Devil. The *Buhlteufel* encountered by the witches in the Bernburg pamphlet enticed them into witchcraft with gifts of money.[108] This narrative can also be found in Lutz's pamphlet: one of the witches in the account was given money by the demon she met, which later transformed into horse dung.[109] As Dillinger and Warfield have noted, this narrative was common and remained relatively unchanged in German witch confessions and reports.[110] In England, the familiar acted in a similar manner. In a report about witches in Chelmsford printed in 1589, one of the witches claimed that two spirits in the form of frogs appeared and declared themselves 'ready to do for her what she would desire, so that she would promise to give them her soul for their travail, for otherwise: they would do nothing for her.'[111] Similar accounts – sometimes including the exchange of money – are

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[105] 'Buhlen', *Deutsche Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*, accessed at: <https://woerterbuchnetz.de/?sigle=DWB#1> Accessed 12.7.2022.
[106] *Urgicht und Verzaichnuß* 1588, sig. A3^{r}; *Newe Zeitung von Hexen unnd Unholten* 1612, sig. A^{v}; VD17 23:293541Q, sig. Aii^{v}.
[107] VD17 12:205316B, f. 43^{r}.
[108] VD16 N 624, sig. Aii^{v}.
[109] VD16 L 7693, sig. Ciii^{v}.
[110] Dillinger, *'Evil People'*, p. 152; Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 48.
[111] ESTC S119280, sig. [Aiiii^{r}].

found in other English pamphlets throughout the period.[112] The familiar and *Buhlteufel* both tempted and deceived, closely mirroring the role that the Devil often played in the Bible and in popular culture more widely.

Additionally, the two are an embodiment of the pact made with the Devil. The physical, sexual relationship that witches had with the *Buhlteufel* is its key function in the narrative. Sex with devils is a core idea in German witchcraft studies. The sexual depravity of the witch tied in well with both learned and popular understandings of witchcraft. Behringer argues that the sexual immorality and insatiability of the witch constructed her as the antithesis of the Virgin Mary, the ideal Christian woman.[113] Roper notes that sex commonly features in the witches' confessions, suggesting that the act of sex with the devil was a physical counterpart to the spiritual agreement made in the diabolic pact. It was an idea that Roper argues would have been more comprehensible to the wider populace at a time when signing written contracts was unfamiliar for many.[114] The sexual relationship with the attendant demons was a recurrent idea in both the German sermons and pamphlets and certainly emerges as central to witchcraft theory. The *Buhlteufel* is an important physical reminder for readers of the spiritual pact that the witch made with the Devil.

The exact nature of the physical relationship between the familiar and the witch in England is disputed. Millar contends that features of the relationship, such as the fact that familiars sucked teats often located near the genitals, demonstrate that it was intended to be read as sexual.[115] In one pamphlet, printed in 1606, the witch described her familiar as 'her incubi'. [116] At least in some cases, therefore, the relationship between the witch and the familiar was unambiguously sexual. There are also several examples of witches having sex with demons in pamphlets printed during the 1640s. Overall, however, sexual connotations in English pamphlets are far less explicit than in the German equivalents. A more convincing explanation for the relationship

[112] ESTC S114979, sigs. [B4^{r-v}]; ESTC R200218, pp. 4, 11; ESTC R209814, sigs. A4^{v}-A5^{r}; ESTC R219139, p. 2.
[113] Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria,* p. 107.
[114] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 84.
[115] Millar, *Witchcraft, The Devil, and Emotions,* p. 118.
[116] ESTC S113484, sig. C4^{r}.

between the witch and familiar is that it represents a twisted parent-child dynamic, with the witch nourishing their familiar with their blood rather than milk. [117] In either case, the act of sucking a teat left a physical mark which became key to identifying witches in English pamphlets (see Chapter Four for more on this idea). On the rare occasions where witch's marks appeared in German reports, they were inflicted by the witch's *Buhlteufel*.[118] The nature of the physical relationship between the *Buhlteufel* and the witch may have been different to the relationship between the familiar and witch, but the physicality in both cases was similar.

There is, however, one key point of divergence: diabolic marriage. There are several accounts in German pamphlets of witches marrying a personal devil. In the 1576 report on trials in Breisgau, for instance, an old woman offered her daughter's hand in marriage to a demon in a ceremony witnessed by witches from across the land.[119] Similarly, in 1626, a report described a boy (aged 13) who confessed to marrying a devil in the form of a woman in front of 3000 witnesses.[120] As Warfield notes, the diabolic marriage is a concept found in learned sources such as Jean Bodin's *Of the Demon-Mania of Sorcerers*.[121] It can also be found in Meder's sermons. Meder includes marriage to the *Buhlteufel* as one of the common elements of the pact.[122] It is not surprising that the diabolic marriage was a captivating idea. On the one hand, it provided another example of the learned notion that the Devil sought to invert religious rites. On the other hand, marriage was a form of contract that was widely understood, acting as a further illustration of the pact made between the Devil and the witch.

Demonic marriages were not a common feature in England. They were not discussed in the religious tracts, and did not appear in James VI's *Daemonologie*, although he did discuss the idea that the Devil had sex with witches.[123] There

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[117] D. Willis, *Malevolent Nurture: Witch-Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England* (London, 1995), p. 52; D. Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London, 1996), p. 130.
[118] VD17 23:253394W, sig. Aiii^{v}.
[119] VD16 ZV 29945, f. 95a^{r}.
[120] VD17 23:250479P, [unpaginated: p. 1].
[121] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft,' p. 57.
[122] VD17 12:205316B, f. 43^{r}.
[123] ESTC S107574, pp. 67-70.

was only one case in print of a witch marrying a devil: Rebecca West in a pamphlet about trials in Essex printed in 1645.[124] The absence of marriages between familiars and witches supports the theory that the relationship resembled a parental one rather than a sexual union. The settings of the diabolic marriages in Germany may also hold a key to explaining their absence in English print. The one case in England was described as a private affair; the German marriages, conversely, were very public, and the pamphleteers emphasised that they were witnessed by thousands of witches. The public nature of this ceremony was only possible because of the existence of another element of witchcraft theory: the belief that witches attended large nocturnal gatherings known as sabbaths.

Before exploring the sabbath, however, it is worth summarising the findings regarding the familiar and *Buhlteufel.* Both were important in their respective countries and played a significant role in the printed discussions of witchcraft. Comparing the characteristics and functions of the two in printed witchcraft narratives, several similarities emerge, particularly in the role they played as tempters and as physical representations of the Devil's relationship with the witch. Ideas which initially appeared to be specific to an English context, such as the idea of an animal attendant demon, can also be found in Germany. These findings demonstrates that there is scope to re-evaluate the role played by attendant demons in printed discussions of witchcraft and indicates that they may have been shaped by similar demonological ideas. It is important, however, to acknowledge that the two phenomena were not identical. The incorporation of familiar spirits into translations of the Bible in English did not occur in German. The nature of the physical relationship differed, with a far greater emphasis on sex in the German sources. This emphasis on sex was confirmed through marriage to demons, an idea which was not widely present in England, and which reflects wider differences in perceptions of witches as either part of a larger sect or isolated individuals.

[124] ESTC R200218, pp. 14-15; C. Millar, 'Rebecca West's Demonic Marriage: Exploring Emotions, Ritual and Women's Agency in Seventeenth-Century England', *Women's History*, 2/4 (2016), p. 4.

2.3. The Witches' Sabbath

Belief in the witches' sabbath (or sabbat) is seen by many historians as a 'cultural precondition' for mass witch-hunting.[125] The idea that witches gathered to worship the Devil collectively and plot with him allowed authorities to question accused witches about who else had attended such meetings. As Levack argues, 'without the belief in the sabbath European witch-hunting would have been much more limited in its scope and intensity.'[126] Despite the acknowledged importance of the sabbath, Willem de Blécourt claims that the sabbath 'has hardly been pursued as a proper topic of historical research'.[127] Although this chapter will refer to the 'sabbath', as this is the term most frequently used by scholars, primary sources did not solely use this label, but also referred to gatherings (*Zusammenkünfte*), assemblies (*Versammlungen*), and witches' dances (*Hexentänze*).

Like the witch's familiar, there is some disagreement about how the belief in the witches' sabbath developed and what exactly it represented. Some of the most vivid descriptions of the sabbath were found in demonological works such as those of Remy, Francesco Maria Guazzo, and de Lancre.[128] In its most elaborate form, the sabbath was a black Mass, where witches worshipped the Devil, kissed his behind (*osculum infame*), desecrated the host, engaged in orgies and cannibalism, feasted, and danced.[129] Several historians, most notably Stuart Clark, interpret the sabbath as a site of misrule and inversion of Christian society and values.[130] It built on medieval beliefs that heretical sects such as the Cathars gathered to perform similar rituals and ceremonies.[131] Yet, others such as Roper note that many aspects of the sabbath reflected contemporary life

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[125] Levack, *The Witch-Hunt,* p. 55; W. de Blécourt, 'Sabbath Stories: Towards A New History of Witches' Assemblies', in B. P. Levack (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 85; J. L. Pearl, 'Sabbat', in R. M. Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 990-1.
[126] Levack, *The Witch-Hunt*, p. 55.
[127] de Blécourt, 'Sabbath Stories', p. 86.
[128] S. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1999), p. 14; J. Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt* (London, 2016), p. 74.
[129] Hille, *Der Teufelspakt in frühneuzeitlichen Verhörprotokollen*, p. 45.
[130] Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, pp. 14-28.
[131] Hille, *Der Teufelspakt in frühneuzeitlichen Verhörprotokollen*, p. 45; Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 122.

rather than inverted them; Roper notes that village structures were maintained at the sabbath, with rich and poor divided, and descriptions of dances and festivities drew inspiration from accused witches' own experiences.[132] Indeed, several historians, especially Carlo Ginzburg, argue that the early modern witches' sabbath had its roots in ancient folkloric beliefs in nocturnal processions of spirits of the dead following a female leader, often the classical goddess Diana.[133] This association with a nocturnal procession of the dead, known as the Wild Hunt, has, however, been questioned by Hutton, who claims that 'parades of the dead' very rarely featured in witches' confessions.[134]

Similarly, historians are divided regarding the extent to which ideas about the sabbath became standardised across Europe. Richard van Dülmen identifies several cases in Germany which he claims are representative of the development of ideas about the witches' sabbath there. He argues that the sabbath gradually developed to place the devil at the centre of proceedings, moving from something resembling an agricultural festival focused on eating, drinking, and dancing to fully-fledged satanic worship by the end of the seventeenth century.[135] Hutton claims that a 'standard range of options' about the sabbath and what took place there gradually developed across Europe as learned notions spread.[136] Similarly, Robert Rowland suggests that belief in the sabbath developed during trials through an interplay of demonological ideas and folkloric belief; ideas were imposed from above during interrogations while those on trial incorporated their own ideas into their confessions. [137] De Blécourt, however, stresses the diversity of sabbath stories that persisted across Europe. He suggests that van Dülmen's argument is limited in its use of selective evidence and fails to consider other ideas about the sabbath which existed simultaneously.[138] In particular, several historians argue that belief in the sabbath was shaped by confessional

[132] Roper, *Witch Craze,* p. 111.
[133] C. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. R. Rosenthal (London, 1990), p. 101; R. Hutton, 'The Wild Hunt and the Witches' Sabbath', *Folklore*, 125/2 (2014), p. 162.
[134] Hutton, 'The Wild Hunt', p. 174.
[135] R. van Dülmen, 'Die Dienerin des Bösen: Zum Hexenbild in der frühen Neuzeit', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, 18/4 (1991), pp. 390-2.
[136] Hutton, *The Witch,* p. 205.
[137] Rowland, '"Fantasticall and Devilish Persons"', p. 181.
[138] de Blécourt, 'Sabbath stories', p. 94.

differences.[139] Clark argues that the 'pronounced anti-ritualism' of the sabbath was far more significant to Catholics than to Protestants.[140]

Sermons are one way that demonological ideas about the sabbath circulated and ended up in witches' confessions.[141] In fact, de Blécourt emphasises Meder's sermons as a prime example of this form of dissemination.[142] Meder mentioned witches' gatherings on multiple occasions in his sermons. He observed that these gatherings traditionally happened at night and in remote locations such as mountains and forests.[143] Later, he argued that witches truly travelled to these locations and provided a description of their activities there. The witches feasted, drank, and danced to a special tune; the rich women bought meat, wine, and beer, while the minstrels offered money; the Devil presided over the events as the ringleader; there was no bread or salt, and the names of God and Christ were forbidden.[144] Although Meder discussed the feasting and dancing, he emphasised that these events were not enjoyable for the witches.[145] Meder's description is notable in several respects. The absence of bread and salt is a common motif; the two were associated with Christianity and, therefore, repellent to the Devil.[146] The fact that the names of God and Christ were forbidden also highlights the anti-Christian notions underpinning the sabbath. Julian Goodare notes that a common story regarding sabbaths was that someone would say God's name and the whole assembly would vanish; the fact that the Devil banned these names, then, also reminds the reader that God's power was greater.[147] In these ways, Meder's description fits Clark's characterisation of the sabbath as a site of misrule and inversion. Nevertheless, the structure of the sabbath, with different responsibilities for different social groups, also reflects

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[139] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 115; Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt,* p. 73.
[140] Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, p. 52.
[141] Roper, *Witch Craze,* p. 92; de Blécourt, 'Sabbath stories', p. 97; R. Voltmer, 'Witch Finders, Witch-Hunters or Kings of the Sabbath? The Prominent Role of Men in the Mass Persecutions of the Rhine-Meuss Area (Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries)', in A. Rowlands (ed.), *Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2009), p. 82.
[142] de Blécourt, 'Sabbath stories', p. 97.
[143] VD17 12:205316B, f. 27^{v}.
[144] Ibid., f. 71^{v}.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 115.
[147] Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt*, pp. 78-9.

traditional social structures. Additionally, while Meder did place the Devil at the centre of the events, his description did not suggest that what happened at the sabbath amounted to full-blown satanic worship or a black Mass.

Schaller also included a summary of contemporary ideas about the sabbath in his witchcraft sermon collection. He claimed that the Devil would summon the witches to gather at his behest in the Black Forest or on Blocksberg, rejecting popular notions that the meetings took place at specific times of year such as Walpurgis night.[148] At the sabbath, the witches would reaffirm their adoration of the Devil – who appeared in the form of a man or a goat – by kissing and worshipping him. Although the witches did dance, feast, and have sex, Schaller's depiction of the sabbath focused on the witches' reporting their evil deeds to the Devil and seeking instruction for further evil works; if they had not performed enough wicked deeds, the witches were punished and beaten.[149] Published six years after Meder's sermons, Schaller's description emphasised devil-worship at the sabbath more than did Meder's, but it still suggested that the sabbath served a functional organisational purpose.

In 1661, Waldschmidt described the sabbath in his sermon collection. His account primarily portrayed the sabbath as a place where the witches would reaffirm their pact with the Devil, although he still included feasting and dancing.[150] Like Meder's account, Waldschmidt stated that the witches were forbidden from saying the name of God or Christ.[151] Additionally, he placed the witches' practices in opposition to good Christian behaviour, noting that, whereas Christian people pray for God to bless the land and crops, witches at the sabbath wish for thunder and hail to destroy the crops and kill livestock.[152] This portrayal is a clear inversion of Christian practice. Nevertheless, even this sermon collection published in the second half of the seventeenth century still did not include the level of satanic worship that van Dülmen argues was prevalent in Germany by this period. The fact that all three of these writers were

[148] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Lii^{r}.
[149] Ibid., sig. Lii^{v}.
[150] VD17 12:627125P, p. 80.
[151] Ibid., p. 82.
[152] Ibid.

Protestant may well account for the relative lack of discussion of inversion of rites and rituals.

German news pamphlets, including the *Expanded Witch Report* (1590), are also cited by de Blécourt as a mode of dissemination of ideas about the sabbath to a wider audience.[153] The idea that witches attended meetings with the Devil was present in some of the earliest examples of German witchcraft news reports. The report from 1580 about witches in Bernburg, for example, included a description of one such gathering, stating that the witches reportedly met twice a year – on Walpurgis Night (30th April) and St John's Eve (23rd June – at Blocksberg to dance, drink, feast, and learn how to perform witchcraft.[154] As Warfield observes, the scale of these gatherings escalated quickly: while early pamphlets such as Lutz's reported the gatherings were of around twenty people, this number had become 18,000 by 1588, and 100,000 by 1596.[155] Despite the rapid growth in numbers, these events were normally described as real events. Abraham Saur, a Marburg lawyer, was the only writer studied here to express doubt about the sabbath in his tract and news report. Saur considered the events of the sabbath described in witches' confessions to be nothing more than a diabolic illusion, intended to trick and delude the witches.[156] The vast majority of pamphleteers, however, were not concerned with this debate: references to witches attending nocturnal meetings with the Devil remained a common feature throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Warfield notes a particularly striking depiction of the witches' sabbath: a broadside describing witchcraft in the Bishopric of Trier and surrounding areas.[157] This broadside primarily consisted of a large woodcut, accompanied with an alphabetical key that linked to explanatory verse below. Several images relate to the sabbath, particularly between letters A to G. There are several allusions to death and decay: section D of the image depicts witches processing behind a dead horse, and dead horses can also be seen near section N; bones are

[153] de Blécourt, 'Sabbath stories', p. 97.
[154] VD16 N 624, sig. [Aiiii^{r}].
[155] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 228.; VD16 L 7693, sigs. Bii^{r-v}; VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p. 1]; *Brockersberg* 1596, sig. A^{v}.
[156]VD16 S 1915, sig. Biii^{r}.
[157] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft,' pp. 235-8; USTC 750674.

also scattered on the ground near section I. The references to death, and particularly the procession, may indicate some connection to the Wild Hunt. Animals also feature at several points in the image, supporting Hutton's argument discussed above than animals often featured in European witchcraft in the context of the sabbath. The image also shows the witches dancing, feasting, and engaging in explicit sexual behaviour. The text describes how witches would cook up storms to cause destruction as part of these gatherings. This example is striking in its detail and represents one of the only visual depictions of the sabbath in the news pamphlets.

FIGURE 7 Woodcut depicting a witches' sabbath (USTC 750674).



Print in the British Museum:
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1880-0710-582

This broadside is, however, highlighted by Warfield because it is unusual. The majority of German news pamphlets did not include detailed accounts of the sabbath. Like the sermons, there were some references to the absence of bread and salt at the feast, emphasising the anti-Christian nature of the gatherings, but there was generally little explicit discussion of devil-worship. The feast is not often described in detail, and Warfield notes that cannibalistic elements of the sabbath in demonological sources were not commonly found in the news reports.[158] There are also no references to processions of the dead or anything resembling the Wild Hunt. The meetings described in the pamphlets seem to be primarily functional. They allowed witches to gather together to plot with the Devil, as described in the Osnabrück report (1588).[159] They were also the site of reaffirmation of the pact through collective ceremonies such as the diabolic marriages discussed above. Pamphleteers were largely concerned with the purpose of the meetings, rather than their symbolic significance. As argued with relation to the pact, this limited discussion of the sabbath may be partially due to the brief nature of the pamphlets. While the sabbath was a 'cornerstone of the learned witchcraft notion', Robert Walinski-Kiehl and Warfield correctly argue that German pamphlets primarily focus on the folkloric aspects of the sabbath such as dancing and feasting that would have been familiar to a wider audience.[160]

A further question regarding the pamphlets is whether reports from Catholic territories showed more interest in the sabbath. Jonathan L. Pearl credits the sabbath with the role of a 'crucial multiplier' in the trials in the bishoprics of Bamberg and Würzburg, Catholic territories where hundreds of individuals were executed for witchcraft in the 1620s.[161] It may be expected, then, that the pamphlets reporting these trials would give more detail on the sabbath than the pamphlets concerning Protestant territories and the sermons written by Lutheran preachers. One pamphlet reporting the trials in these

[158] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 258.
[159] VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: pp. 1-2].
[160] R. Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda and Witch-Hunting in Germany c.1560 – 1630', *Reformation*, 6/1 (2002), p. 60; Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 259.
[161] Pearl, 'Sabbat', p. 991.

territories, printed in 1627, did place more emphasis on the devil-worship and anti-Christian aspects of the sabbath. It described how the witches carried a flag bearing the image of the Devil and trampled the image of Christ underfoot; they also cursed God and the Holy Trinity and revered the Devil.[162] This example is, however, an anomaly. Another pamphlet printed in the same year and discussing the same trials mentioned that the witches in Würzburg gathered to dance on Heuberg but did not elaborate further.[163] An earlier pamphlet printed in 1616 reported trials in Catholic Würzburg and Protestant Württemberg, but there is no clear distinction between the ideas about the sabbath reported in it, which mainly focus on the feast and dance.[164] Overall, there is little evidence to suggest confessional differences made a distinct impact on reporting of the sabbath in German news pamphlets.

Confessional identity is also significant for English interpretations of the sabbath. The near-total absence of the sabbath in English witch trials is well-established.[165] Sharpe, building on Clark's argument, argues that authors of English religious tracts concerning witchcraft were 'relatively unconcerned' about the sabbat because it was not as significant in Protestant belief.[166] Certainly, some authors, including Gifford and Perkins, did not devote attention to anything resembling a sabbath in their treatises. Others, however, did. Holland, for example, described it in his tract:

> [The witches make their pact with the Devil] at their common meetings, which they call their sabbath, for there the devil hath many witnesses, and there these obligations are authentically sealed [...] thou knows Satan's purpose is ever most to rebel against God: so his drift in all the arts of magic principally is, to use all the mockery that ever he can invent against God, and his Word, and all the parts of true religion. And to this end, he has ordained his sabbaths for his service. In these horrible meetings, Satan himself appears sometimes in one form, sometime in

[162] VD17 23:293541Q, sig. A^{v}.
[163] *Druten Zeitung 1627.*
[164] VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: pp. 7-8].
[165] G. L. Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (Cambridge, MA, 1929), pp. 247-51.
[166] J. Sharpe, 'In Search of the English Sabbat: Popular Conceptions of Witches' Meetings in Early Modern England', *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 2 (2013), p. 165.

> another [...] for sometimes his ministers behold him in the likeness of a man, but most commonly of a foul stinking goat. There they have sundry suits unto him: and he ministers and teaches them to confect poisons and powders, and many things for the destruction of man and beast.[167]

Sharpe describes this account of the sabbath as 'unsensational and not in any way prurient', and it is true that it lacks the focus on dancing, feasting, and sex that is characteristically found in both sermons and pamphlets in Germany.[168] There are, however, some similarities to the German depictions of the sabbath. The sabbath is a clear inversion of Christian religion. The idea that witches learned how to perform magic and make poisons was echoed in Schaller's and Waldschmidt's sermons and was a primary function of the sabbath in the German pamphlets. The notion that the witches reaffirmed their pact with the Devil at the sabbath is likewise similar to the ideas expressed by Schaller and Waldschmidt.

Other English writers also claimed that witches gathered together to reaffirm their devotion to the Devil. Cooper described several ceremonies and meetings ordered by the Devil. His discussion included the idea that Satan's subjects kissed his backside; the Devil then instructed the witch on the 'rules of his art', such as making poisons; the witches also renounced their baptism, offered blood to the Devil, and had sex with him.[169] This description, with its inclusion of diabolic kiss, the renunciation of baptism, and the sexual components, is fairly elaborate and certainly mirrors ideas in the German sermon literature. Another English clergyman, Bernard, also mentioned witches' meetings. Bernard noted that the Devil sought to imitate God as far as God would permit; one of the ways that the Devil did this was for the witches and the Devil to have meetings 'which they called their sabbath'.[170] Additionally, Bernard also acknowledged the existence of such meetings in England, referring on several occasions to the witches of Lancashire, a case where 'nineteen or

[167] ESTC S104153, sig. F1^{r}.
[168] Sharpe, 'In Search of the English Sabbat', p. 165.
[169] ESTC S108665, pp. 90-2.
[170] ESTC S101683, p. 263.

twenty assembled' at Malkin tower.[171] Clearly, several English preachers believed in the existence of the witches' sabbath. The extent to which this was a shared concept between German and English preachers has not previously been recognised.

The case referred to by Bernard was the subject of the Potts' news pamphlet (1613). This account, described by Gibson as 'probably the most famous account of English witches ever written', reported witch trials in Pendle, Salmesbury, Padiham, and Windle, and is considered by de Blécourt to be 'one of the rare instances of an English sabbath account.'[172] The main evidence of a witches' meeting was the testimony of Jennet Device, the young relative of several of the suspects. Jennet claimed that 'on Good-Friday last, there was about 20 persons, […] at her said Grand-mothers house at Malkin-Tower, about twelve of the clock; all which persons, this examinant's said mother told her, were witches'.[173] The gathering is described as a 'great feast' and a 'great assembly of the witches'.[174] There is little detail about what the witches did at these meetings, but the purpose was reportedly to plot to kill the officer investigating witchcraft and to blow up Lancaster castle, as well as taking revenge on other enemies.[175] This case reflects some of the ideas of the sabbath found in German pamphlets, namely the idea that witches gathered and feasted at a specific time and location and plotted collective evil deeds. Yet its character is also somewhat different from the German pamphlets. In particular, although the witches are described as a 'devilish band', the pamphlet does not give any indication that the Devil was actually present at the meeting. The absence of the Devil, central to the German sabbaths, is a key difference.

There are other brief references to witches gathering in the English news pamphlets. In a report about witches in Windsor printed in 1579, Elizabeth Stile, one of the accused witches, confessed that she met with five other witches to

[171] Ibid., pp. 92, 221.
[172] M. Gibson, *Early Modern Witches: Witchcraft Cases in Contemporary Writing* (London, 2000), pp. 173-4; de Blécourt, 'Sabbath stories', p. 97.
[173] ESTC S114979, sig. P^{v}.
[174] Ibid., sig. Q^{r}.
[175] Ibid., sig. C3^{r}.

discuss and plan their 'villainous practices'.[176] Like Potts' pamphlet, this account implies that English witches sometimes gathered to perform witchcraft collectively, but does not feature any involvement of the Devil. The Devil did, however, feature in another report of a gathering of witches found in a pamphlet printed in 1645 reporting witch trials in Faversham, Kent. One of the witches, Joan Cariden, claimed that there was a 'great meeting' in a fellow witch's house, and that 'the Devil sat at the upper end of the table'.[177] Although this brief statement does suggest that witches gathered with the Devil, there is no description of what activities took place or the purpose of the meeting. The same issue exists with another example that has been considered evidence of a sabbath in England, Matthew Hopkins's report (1647). Hopkins reported that:

> in March 1644 he had some seven or eight of that horrible sect of witches, living in the town where he lived […] with diverse other adjacent witches of other towns, who every six weeks in the night (being always on the Friday night) had their meeting close by his house, and had their several solemn sacrifices there offered to the Devil.[178]

Hopkins's account is marginally more detailed; the suggestion that witches were offering sacrifices to the Devil does reflect the notion that witches worshipped the Devil at the sabbath. The suggestion that witches met in a specific location at a regular time also chimes with the German reports of witches meeting on mountains on certain nights. Aside from these parallels, however, it is difficult to draw a connection between this description of witches meeting and the examples in the German reports. The scattered references to witches' gatherings in English witchcraft reports suggest that there was some notion that witches acted collectively. In contrast to the ubiquity of the witches' sabbath in Germany, however, the sabbath appears to have been an idea that failed to gain significant traction in English witchcraft pamphlets.

Although there were clear similarities between German and English preachers' descriptions of the sabbath, then, pamphleteers' approaches in the

[176] ESTC S101967, sig. [Avi^{v}].
[177] ESTC R200303, p. 3.
[178] ESTC R201499, p. 2.

two countries were distinctive. Neither German nor English pamphlets strongly emphasised devil-worship at the sabbath, but the devil was at least commonly present at the German gatherings. On the whole, pamphleteers in Germany presented the sabbath as a real event. The idea of mass gatherings was one that German pamphleteers could draw from trial evidence and helped to contribute to the view of witchcraft in Germany as an activity carried out by large groups of witches rather than isolated individuals. The descriptions of the meetings, with their focus on dancing and feasting, were closer to popular festivals than diabolic rites. They also appeared to be primarily functional, serving as a way for witches to plan and enact further misfortune. In this sense, the few English meetings described in the pamphlets were similar. They too offered an opportunity for witches to plot and practice magic as a group. In England, however, such meetings were rare. English witches, for the most part, seemed to work independently, or in small groups, and in a less organised manner.

Given these evident differences in the news reports, the similarities in the discussions of the sabbath by Protestant German and English preachers are all the more striking. Although it is true that some English clergymen were unconcerned with the concept of the sabbath, others did include descriptions of meetings and ceremonies. These descriptions, like their German counterparts, emphasised the anti-Christian components of the sabbath far more than the news pamphlets did. German and English preachers both also focused more on the role of the Devil as the leader and organiser of the meetings. The parallels between these descriptions are indicative of 'a supra-national level of religious integration', demonstrating 'the relatively uniform theology and demonology of western Christendom.'[179] Significantly, neither the English nor German preachers studied described a fully developed black Mass. While the German pamphlets did not reflect confessional differences, it is possible that Catholic preachers may have explored this idea further. As far as Protestant writers were concerned, the sabbath was evidently an anti-Christian gathering. Like the pamphlets, however, the preachers also focused on the function of the sabbath as a site for learning witchcraft and planning to perform evil with the Devil's

[179] Rowlands, '"Fantasticall and Devilishe Persons"', p. 176.

assistance. This aspect emerges as the most essential part of the sabbath across the different media in both countries.

2.4. Flight

The image of the witch flying on a broomstick endures in western culture, but the question of whether witches could fly was hotly debated in early modern Europe.[180] Unlike the other elements of the elaborated concept of witchcraft, there is a consensus that the belief in the witches' flight had popular, pre-Christian origins.[181] One idea, found in the earliest surviving Germanic law code, was the belief in the *Strigae* or *Strix,* women who transformed into screech owls at night and cannibalised infants.[182] The other was the Wild Hunt, briefly discussed above as potential precursor for the witches' sabbath.[183] In fact, the medieval Church was generally sceptical about the reality of witches' flight. The key source for this debate is the *Canon Episcopi*, written in the tenth century and incorporated into canon law in the twelfth century. The *Canon* argued that these supposed nocturnal flights were diabolic illusions and fantasies.[184] Yet others increasingly questioned the *Canon*; the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486/7), for example, argued that, while some women only travelled in their imagination, some were truly bodily transported by the power of the Devil.[185]

The approach of the *Episcopi,* which emphasised delusion and fantasy, and that of the *Malleus*, also known as the 'fearful' or 'realist' tradition, both continued to be influential in the early modern period. Their approaches applied not only to flight but also to other aspects of witchcraft, such as whether witches could truly transform into animals or create storms through magic. In a similar way to the confessional differences regarding the sabbath, several scholars have also identified a gradual confessionalisation of approaches to the question of flight, with Protestants primarily following the *Episcopi* tradition and Catholics

[180] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 104; de Blécourt, 'Sabbath stories', p. 85.
[181] Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, p. 46; Hille, *Der Teufelspakt in frühneuzeitlichen Verhörprotokollen*, p. 46.
[182] Hutton, *The Witch*, p. 156.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, p. 61.
[185] Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt*, p. 72.

embracing the *Malleus* tradition.[186] Belief in the witches' flight was also often connected to the belief in the sabbath, because it explained how large groups of witches were able to travel considerable distances undetected.

Clergymen in Germany and England acknowledged that there was significant disagreement about whether witches could fly. In England, Holland noted that 'many fabulous pamphlets are published, which give little light and less proof unto this point in controversy.'[187] He claimed that many of the transportations reported, particularly those of nocturnal flights to meet Herodias or Diana, were simply delusions, but he also argued that it was agreed among learned men that the Devil could transport people through the air.[188] This statement appears to be a clear reference to the night flights condemned in the *Canon Episcopi*, but, overall, Holland supports the *Malleus* approach. In Germany, Meder also recognised that there were differing opinions about the reality of witches' flight. The first argument that he presented, which he labelled 'the incorrect opinion', was that the salve witches applied did not make them fly, but caused them to fall into a deep sleep where they dreamt that they attended the sabbath.[189] The correct opinion was, in his view, that the witches – as well as the rams, goats, cooking forks, and other instruments that witches rode – were lifted through the air by Satan.[190]

Meder's argument was one that several preachers in Germany and England followed. Several scriptural stories were repeatedly cited as evidence that Satan had the power to transport individuals from one place to another; these were the Book of Job, the sorcerer Simon Magus, and Matthew 4. The transportation of Jesus across the world at Satan's hands in Matthew 4 was particularly persuasive; as Zehner argued, if Satan could do that to the son of God, it was logical that he would be able to do the same and more to people who had consented to serve him.[191] Overall, there was a greater cohesion in the

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[186] H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch-Hunting in South-West Germany 1562–1584: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, CA, 1972), pp. 64-6; G. K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 127.
[187] ESTC S104153, sig. E3^{v}.
[188] Ibid.
[189] VD17 12:205316B, f. 69^{v}.
[190] Ibid., f. 70^{r}.
[191] VD17 23:328851P, p. 26.

German preachers' attitudes to witches' flight. Their discussion is usually centred on transportation to the sabbath, and, given that they argued the sabbath was a real event, it is unsurprising that they also affirm the reality of flight. It does, however, directly contradict the *Episcopi* tradition, indicating that the connection between Protestantism and scepticism about the reality of flight was not absolute.

Opinions on this issue varied more in England. Cooper, who, as shown above, believed that witches gathered in remote places, was also convinced that they flew there. He claimed they were carried by 'Satan's power', and suggested that this was easy for Satan to do 'by thickening the air under and about them.'[192] Bernard, who also accepted the reality of the sabbath, claimed that witches were carried to their meetings by their familiars, and recommended that suspected witches could be asked about how they were transported from place to place, but he did not explicitly explore whether witches could fly.[193] Others were more dismissive of the possibility of bodily flight. Gifford emphasised the Devil's ability to delude witches, specifically highlighting Germany as a country where witches mistakenly believed that 'sometimes they fly or ride in the air.'[194] Similarly, Perkins argued that, once witches had agreed to the pact with the Devil, their senses were corrupted so that they believed they flew through the air to other countries.[195] These two authors also denied the physical reality of (or refused to discuss to existence of) the witches' sabbath. There is a pattern among the English clergymen, therefore, where belief in flight went hand-in-hand with belief in the sabbath.

Flight is similarly linked to the sabbath in the German news pamphlets. Much like their cursory treatment of the sabbath, most of the pamphleteers did not explore the intricacies of the debate about the reality of witches' flight. In some cases, the pamphleteers briefly explained how the witches flew. The Bernburg pamphlet stated that witches flew on goats and cows; a pamphlet from 1612 explained that a female innkeeper created a salve from the body parts of

[192] ESTC S108665, p. 257.
[193] ESTC S101683, pp. 220-1, 235.
[194] ESTC S105690, sig. K3r.
[195] ESTC S114525, p. 196.

murdered children which she smeared on a broom to enable her to fly; and a pamphlet printed in 1616 described how the witches from Württemberg travelled on cooking forks.[196] In other pamphlets, such as the Osnabrück pamphlet and report of a mass gathering on Blocksberg in 1596, there was no explanation provided for how the witches were able to travel such long distances.[197] Flight, on the whole, was not a major concern for German pamphleteers.

Notable exceptions, however, are Lutz's and Saur's discussions, both of which may best be understood as hybrids of a news pamphlet and witchcraft tract. Lutz's preface discussed what witches do, and included the idea that witches 'travel together with the Evil Spirit through the air over towns, villages, mountains, and valleys'.[198] Like Meder, Lutz argued that the salves that witches created from body parts of animals and children were ineffective, and that the actual source of their ability to fly was the Devil.[199] He likewise criticised the opinion held by 'many' that these flights were simply imaginary or diabolic illusions; he pointed out the surprising uniformity of the witches' confessions and argued that such uniformity would not be possible if they had merely dreamt about it.[200] In contrast, as Warfield notes, Saur's tract is the only German news report to cast doubt on the reality of witches' flight. Saur referenced the *Canon Episcopi* as evidence that these reported flights were not real.[201] He explained that the uniformity in witches' confession highlighted by Lutz was simply part of the Devil's illusion, which was so convincing that the witches truly believed these events had taken place.[202] Saur's tract is a reminder that the reality of flight was not uniformly accepted. He was also the only German author of these pamphlets to reject the reality of the sabbath, once again connecting belief in one aspect with the other.

Given the clear connection between belief in the reality of the sabbath and witches' flight demonstrated thus far, it may be expected that English news

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[196] VD16 N 624, sig. [Aiiii^{r}]; *Newe Zeitung von Hexen unnd Unholten* 1612, sig. Aii^{r}; VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p. 8].
[197] VD16 W 337*; Brockersberg* 1596.
[198] VD16 L 7693, sigs. Bii^{v}-Biii^{r}.
[199] Ibid., sig. Bii^{v}.
[200] Ibid., sig. Biii^{r}.
[201] VD16 S 1915, sig. Biii^{r}.
[202] Ibid., sig. Biii^{r}.

pamphlets would have little to say on the subject. Certainly, in the few examples of witches' gatherings in the English reports, there is no mention of how they reached these meetings. Because the meetings often seemed to be located in the vicinity of either a witch's house or other similar domestic setting, it may have been considered unnecessary to explore how they had travelled to these meetings. The notion of witches' flight did, however, appear elsewhere. A pamphlet discussing trials in Essex in 1645 raised the question of whether witches could be bodily transported from place to place. The author, H.F., suggested that some believed such flight was a delusion, but argued that it was 'very probable that the Devil has power to dispose and transport the bodies of men and women' if permitted by God.[203] He drew on the same evidence used in the sermons and religious tracts, namely the Devil's transportation of Jesus in Matthew 4.[204] The inclusion of this debate is somewhat odd, considering that none of the witches in the pamphlet claimed to have travelled through the air to attend the sabbath or for any other reason. As noted above regarding the witches' pact with the devil, this discussion is evidence of the disconnect between prefaces and the main text. This example suggests that, while the pact was gradually also incorporated into the accounts of the witches themselves, the reality of their flight was not so widely accepted.

While English news pamphlets did not often discuss the witch's ability to fly, flight still emerged as a theme. Rather than the witch themselves flying, however, the victims of witchcraft were transported through the air, as seen in an account printed in 1592. Despite referring to the witch in the title, the accused witch, Mother Atkins, was not a major figure in the narrative; the story mainly focused upon Richard Burt, a servant of a local gentleman in Pinner, Middlesex.[205] Burt had an encounter with Mother Atkins and seemingly provoked her wrath by accusing her of being a witch. As a result, he was 'suddenly hoisted up in the air' and carried to Hell, where he was tortured and left unable to speak on his return to Pinner.[206] He was reportedly missing for

[203] ESTC R200218, sig.)(3r.
[204] Ibid.
[205] ESTC S119200, sig. A2r.
[206] Ibid., sig. A3r-v.

four days.[207] The account is presented as a real event and was included in another pamphlet printed in 1595 summarising recent witchcraft cases, suggesting that it was a popular tale.[208]

Similar instances can be found in later pamphlets. In a pamphlet printed in 1645, a boy who disobeyed his father ended up as an apprentice to the Devil, who carried him away to Hell.[209] Unlike Burt's narrative, there is no involvement of a witch in this tale. Nevertheless, his transportation through the air at the hands of the Devil still illustrates a belief that the Devil was capable of this act. In a pamphlet printed in 1653 reporting the crimes of suspected witch Anne Bodenham, she was accused of being able to 'convey either man or woman 40 miles an hour in the air'.[210] An account printed in the early 1680s presented first-hand testimony of Margaret Gurr, who was reportedly possessed; Gurr claimed that witches and devils had lifted her up into the air.[211] These examples demonstrate that although belief that witches flew to the sabbath was not a common feature of the English pamphlets, there was a belief that the Devil and witches could make people fly. The power of the Devil in these accounts is not diminished, therefore, when compared to the German accounts of the Devil carrying witches to the sabbath. It was simply redirected for a different purpose.

In many cases, then, printed discussions of witches' flight were connected to belief in the physical reality of the sabbath. Clergymen in Germany and England who affirmed the reality of the sabbath likewise argued that the witches truly flew there. Similarly, flight was briefly mentioned in German news pamphlets, but only as it related to their journey to the sabbath. The need to explain the transportation to the sabbath seems to have outweighed the *Episcopi* interpretation of flight as a diabolic delusion. Although longer tracts and sermons did acknowledge the controversy regarding the reality of flight, German pamphleteers were, in the vast majority of cases, content to portray it as a real event. They also offered the most credulous explanations for the flight,

[207] Ibid., sig. A4^{v}.
[208] ESTC S126714, sigs. [E4^{r}]-F^{r}.
[209] ESTC R200458.
[210] ESTC R207118, p. 7.
[211] ESTC R184269, p. 4.

suggesting that the witches' salves were efficacious. Nevertheless, the examples in England demonstrate that the question of flight was not always considered solely in relation to the sabbath. While witches in England did not fly to the sabbath, several news reports indicate that there was a wider belief that witches and the Devil could make people fly. This approach to flight still shows a firm belief in the reality of the Devil's power, much like the belief expressed by the preachers who discussed flight to the sabbath and is indicative of underlying similarities in thought in the two countries that have not been fully recognised previously.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has compared four aspects of witchcraft theory: first, the role of the Devil and the diabolic pact; second, familiars and *Buhlteufel*; third, the sabbath; and finally, flight. These components are all recognisable to historians of witchcraft and offer a foundation for defining witchcraft in early modern Germany and England. Naturally, it has not been possible to cover every aspect of witchcraft theory. It was not within the scope of this chapter to explore whether witches could transform into animals (metamorphosis); this is an area that would benefit from further analysis, particularly as it relates to connections between witches and the animal world which have been noted as particularly strong in England. Nevertheless, the four components studied here provide significant insights into conceptions of witchcraft in popular print in Germany and England.

Given the dominant historiographical characterisation of English witchcraft as distinctive from so-called 'Continental' or 'European' witchcraft, it is striking that several similarities have emerged. In particular, there were numerous parallels between the arguments put forward in the printed sermons and tracts of German and English preachers. As this chapter has shown, there was significant agreement among these authors on a number of the key issues, including the centrality of the Devil and the pact to witchcraft, the methods through which this pact was sealed, the events of the witches' sabbath, and the reality of flight. Some English authors did express more scepticism than did their

German counterparts, particularly relating to the reality of flight. Belief in the pact also seems to have taken slightly longer to be accepted among English clergymen. Yet, it cannot be denied that, on the whole, the same arguments appeared frequently among these authors in both countries. These connections indicate that the argument put forward by Rowland regarding the witches' sabbath, that there was 'supra-national' level of shared demonology across western Christendom, is accurate for understanding witchcraft in general.[212] Although preachers did sometimes draw on examples from their own countries, as Bernard did when discussing the sabbath, they often primarily drew their justification from scriptural evidence and other demonological writings. Their arguments were, therefore, one step removed from the events happening in their own countries and reflect a broader conception of witchcraft.

There are also some connections which seem less immediately obvious, and comparison is particularly fruitful in these cases. The discussion of familiars in England and *Buhlteufel* in Germany is a case in point. Although familiars have been considered 'almost unique' to England, this chapter has demonstrated that there were, in fact, several similarities between familiars and *Buhlteufel*. Attendant demons in animal form were more common in England but did exist in Germany. Both *Buhlteufel* and familiars acted as reflections of the personal relationship between the witch and Devil; they also performed similar functions in the narrative, often acting as the tempter who drew the witch into witchcraft and encouraged them to surrender their soul. This finding suggests that more exploration is needed regarding attendant demons in European print, especially when scholars consider what other parallels could be found elsewhere. Another area which initially seems distinctive, but where similarities emerge on closer inspection, is the reality of witches' flight. Flight was, on the whole, accepted in the German sources studied here as something that the Devil had the power to perform. The reality of flight was necessary to explain travel to a distant sabbath, and it is in this context that it was most commonly discussed in German sermons and pamphlets. The relative absence of the sabbath in England may lead to the assumption that the reality of flight was not accepted there.

[212] Rowlands, '"Fantasticall and Devilishe Persons"', p. 176.

Examination of the news pamphlets, however, demonstrates that English pamphleteers also believed the Devil had the power to make people fly. The difference was that, without the need to travel to the sabbath, this power of flight was primarily directed at victims of witchcraft rather than the witches themselves.

Of course, definitions of witchcraft in Germany and England were far from identical. There is, generally, more variation between the interpretations in the German and English news pamphlets. This variation may be due in part to the fact that these sources, at least nominally, were reports of actual trials. Unlike the sermons and tracts, then, which could offer arguments in the abstract, the pamphlets were primarily concerned with significant points in the trials. The difference between German and English witchcraft trials (as repeated in print) is most evident in discussions of the sabbath. While the sabbath is not treated as a fully developed black Mass in either country, the German pamphlets do regularly mention the existence of mass gatherings of witches and normally include the Devil as a key participant in these meetings. These meetings seem to be primarily functional and draw more on popular agricultural festivals than demonological ideas. English witchcraft, on the whole, lacks the understanding of witchcraft as a collective act. The focus on individual witches or very small groups also explains the lack of discussion of diabolic marriage, a common feature of German pamphlets and a key point of difference between familiars and *Buhlteufel*.

Defining witchcraft in German and English print proves to be a complicated task. There were numerous points of convergence and contestation. Discrepancies were not only due to different national contexts, but also related to the types of sources. The length of the pamphlet, unsurprisingly, had a significant influence on how far it engaged with wider debates in witchcraft theory. Comparison of the two countries has, nevertheless, offered nuanced insights into witchcraft in both countries. The most important finding is that popular printed sources in both countries presented witchcraft primarily as diabolic and considered the devil to wield significant power through witches. The

next chapter explores how this understanding of witchcraft shaped approaches to witchcraft as an exceptional crime in the two countries.

Chapter Three: Criminalising Witchcraft

In early modern England and Germany, crime was on the rise. At least, it certainly appeared that way in contemporary print. One English pamphleteer described in 1595 how 'carnal and most unnatural murders, detestable perjuries, cankered covetousness, incestuous adultery [...] and diverse such most horrible and abominable practises yearly, monthly, nay hourly are used and practised'.[1] In Germany, a writer in 1627 lamented the increasingly 'wicked' state of the world, claiming that 'in every land there is warfare, bloodshed, murder, and fire.'[2] Several factors influenced the perceived growth in scale and awareness of crime and punishment during this period. One was the Little Ice Age, which led to socio-economic hardship and increased social tensions.[3] Another was the Reformation. Felonies 'violated basic Biblical injunctions; they were sinful acts as well as crimes'.[4] The blurred boundary between crime and sin meant that both church and state had a vested interest in dealing with crime and disorder. The religious and political upheavals caused by the Reformation led to renewed focus on the shared goal of 'a purified godly commonwealth'.[5] Collective consciousness of crime increased, thanks in part to public executions and in part to occasional news reports, which spread tales about the criminals and their gruesome deaths far beyond the communities where the crimes occurred.[6]

As state control and regulations expanded to police and monitor individual behaviour, new forms of crime rose to prominence.[7] One of these crimes was witchcraft. During the sixteenth century, rulers in England and Germany introduced new legislation which, among other things, defined the crime of witchcraft and outlined appropriate modes of punishment. Beyond this common interest in prosecuting witches, however, the two countries diverged in their

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[1] ESTC S126714, sig. A2^{r}.
[2] VD17 23:293541Q, sig. Aiii^{r}.
[3] J. Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture in Early Modern Germany* (Charlottesville, VA, 2012), p. 6.
[4] C. B. Herrup, *The Common Peace: Participation and Criminal Law in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 3.
[5] M. Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 10.
[6] A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (London, 2014), pp. 88-94.
[7] J. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England* (2nd edn., London, 1999), p. 242.

approach to witchcraft as a crime. In the politically and judicially fragmented Holy Roman Empire, multiple understandings of and attitudes towards the crime of witchcraft coexisted and conflicted, contributing to the substantial regional variations in the scale and intensity of prosecutions. In particular, the definition of witchcraft as an exceptional crime (*crimen exceptum*) in some territories played a crucial role in intensifying the trials, leading to the burning of thousands of people as witches.[8] By contrast, England's legal system was fairly centralised; legislation was notably vague about what witchcraft constituted but was clear that it was to be treated in the same way as were other felonies.[9] Given the complexity of the judicial processes and their importance to shaping the witch-hunts, the first section of this chapter explains the legal definitions of witchcraft in Germany and England respectively.

Yet, the law was just one component in a wider discourse about the crime of witchcraft. Several scholars have emphasised the important role played by pamphlets and sermons in disseminating ideas about witchcraft prosecutions.[10] Some have even suggested that print, and especially news pamphlets, acted as witch-hunting propaganda, supporting the legal system and promoting further prosecutions.[11] Joy Wiltenburg, however, cautions against viewing these sources simply as 'tools of the state apparatus'.[12] Although there was widespread support of witch-hunting in printed media, the legal definition of witchcraft was by no means accepted uniformly. One particularly contentious point was whether witches were prosecuted for the real harm they caused through *maleficium* or

[8] B. P. Levack, 'Witchcraft and the Law', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America (*Oxford, 2013), p. 475.
[9] G. Walker, 'The Strangeness of the Familiar: Witchcraft and the Law in Early Modern England', in A. McShane and G. Walker (eds.), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Works of Bernard Capp* (London, 2010), pp. 107-8.
[10] R. Voltmer and L. Helene Willumsen, 'Introduction: Demonology and witch-trials in dialogue', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer, and L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), pp. 6-8; C. Holmes, 'Popular Culture? Witches, Magistrates, and Divines in Early Modern England', in S. L. Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (New York, NY, 1984), pp. 92-3; Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and Evidence', p. 46.
[11] H. Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung. Marginalen zur Flugblatt – und Flugschriftenpublizistik sowie zur Druckgraphik im Kontext der Hexenverfolgung', in S. Lorenz (ed.), *Hexen und Hexenverfolgung im Deutschen Südwesten. Aufsatzband* (Ostfildern, 1994), p. 87; R. Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda, and Witch-Hunting in Germany, c. 1560-1630', *Reformation*, 6/1 (2002), p. 54.
[12] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 16.

because of their heretical pact with the Devil. Another was whether authorities were doing too much – or, indeed, too little – in their actions against witches.

The second section of this chapter explores how these questions were addressed in German and English printed media. It argues that, although German and English preachers' attitudes have been characterised as somewhat distinct from each other, comparison of religious tracts and sermons from both countries demonstrates that their positions were essentially the same. The situation with news pamphlets was more complex. In some cases, such as their focus on harmful magic, there was significant overlap. In other respects, English and German pamphleteers differed, particularly in the extent to which they critiqued judicial practices. Alongside exploring these questions, therefore, this section also interrogates the reasons for the differences in German and English pamphleteers' approaches to the crime of witchcraft.

While witchcraft was considered by some contemporaries to be an exceptional crime in a legal sense, it has also been treated as a crime deserving exceptional attention in the historical record. The third section of this chapter considers this special status which, according to Brian Levack, stems from the idea that it was 'the worst possible crime one could commit', a composite crime encompassing violence, rebellion, and moral transgressions.[13] Additionally, witchcraft differs from other crimes such as murder or theft because it is no longer categorised as a crime in modern Western societies. Distinguishing witchcraft from other crimes in this way is, however, somewhat anachronistic. In Germany and England, witches were prosecuted alongside a range of other criminals, and there was little distinction between crimes which could be proven by, for instance, finding stolen goods, and those which may be considered unprovable today.[14] Contextualising witchcraft alongside other crimes offers the opportunity to understand whether and how witchcraft was exceptional. Elisabeth Biesel takes this approach in her study of court proceedings in early modern Toul; her research suggests that,

[13] Levack, 'Witchcraft and the Law', p. 481.
[14] K. J. Kesselring, 'Bodies of Evidence: Sex and Murder (or Gender and Homicide) in Early Modern England, c. 1500-1680', *Gender and History*, 27/2 (2015), p. 245; E. Biesel, 'Hexerei und andere Verbrechen: Gerichtspraxis in der Stadt Toul um 1570-1630', in H. Eiden and R. Voltmer (ed.), *Hexenprozesse und Gerichtspraxis* (Trier, 2002), pp. 151.

despite Toul's prosecutions being mild compared to other prosecutions in surrounding territories, local authorities treated witchcraft less leniently than other crimes.[15] In England, Malcolm Gaskill's study of murder, witchcraft, and coining offers a wider insight into the social and cultural meaning of crime.[16]

This contextualisation is especially important for witchcraft news pamphlets as part of the wider news genre that developed in the later sixteenth century. In his PhD thesis, Simon Francis Davies contends that English witchcraft pamphlets have been mischaracterised as a distinct genre, when in fact they were heavily influenced by the conventions of the English news publishing industry.[17] This chapter agrees with Davies's assertion; the final section builds on his work by placing German and English witchcraft pamphlets into the broader context of crime reporting. It argues that witchcraft pamphlets used stylistic conventions to construct their narratives and that these conventions have implications for our understanding of witchcraft. Additionally, this final section demonstrates that differences between German and English reporting on witchcraft are representative of wider variations.

3.1. Witchcraft and the Law

3.1.1. Germany

Secular laws against the practice of magic preceded the early modern witch-hunts and the elaborated concept of witchcraft; these medieval law codes exclusively punished harmful magic.[18] In this endeavour, secular and ecclesiastical authorities worked together closely. Increasingly, however, law codes proposed that sorcery should be dealt with by secular authorities: the *Sachsenspiegel,* a thirteenth-century law book, stated that sorcery and poisoning should be punished with execution by the secular arm.[19] Despite this recognition of harmful magic as a crime, Winfried Trusen argues that mass witch-hunts would not have been

[15] Biesel, 'Hexerei und andere Verbrechen', pp. 150-1.
[16] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities*.
[17] S. F. Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England' (PhD Diss., University of Sussex, 2012), p. 29.
[18] J. Dillinger, *Hexen und Magie* (2nd edn., Frankfurt, 2018), p. 80.
[19] Ibid., p. 81.

possible under medieval law codes in Germany.[20] Two legal developments fundamentally altered the scale of witch trials: one, the transition from accusatorial to inquisitorial procedure; and two, the treatment of witchcraft as an exceptional crime.[21]

Key differences between accusatorial and inquisitorial procedures were the initiation of criminal action and the process for determining guilt.[22] In the accusatorial system, criminal proceedings were initiated by a private party. If the prosecution was unsuccessful, this party risked a countersuit from the accused. Private parties were able to initiate prosecutions under the inquisitorial procedure, but they could also be commenced by the community or by court officials. Regarding the determination of guilt, the accusatorial system placed its faith in God's judgement. Trial by ordeal or compurgation (where individuals would swear to the good character of the accused) were used to decide whether people were innocent. The inquisitorial system placed greater emphasis on the judgement of court officials and required the gathering of evidence and testimony through interrogations.[23] In the case of witchcraft, the accusatorial procedure used testimony from victims, while the inquisitorial procedure allowed for interrogation of the suspects and could lead to a greater focus on demonic witchcraft should the interrogator be familiar with demonological thinking.[24]

German witchcraft prosecutions were also shaped by the designation of witchcraft as an 'exceptional crime'. Crimes were divided into *crimina ordinaria* and *crimina excepta.* Other crimes in the latter category include high treason, counterfeiting, piracy, and heresy.[25] In these cases, normal regulations and procedures of the court were disregarded. This designation allowed for the unrestrained use of torture to gain confessions and to gather names of other suspected witches; this application of torture is widely recognised as a key factor

[20] W. Trusen, 'Rechtliche Grundlagen der Hexenprozesse und ihrer Beendigung', in S. Lorenz and D. R. Bauer (eds.), *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung* (Stuttgart, 1995), p. 205.
[21] W. G. Soldan, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse: Band 1* (Stuttgart, 1880), p. 332.
[22] J. Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt* (London, 2016), p. 194.
[23] Levack, 'Witchcraft and the Law', pp. 471-4.
[24] Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt*, p. 194.
[25] Soldan, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse,* p. 332.

in the German mass witch-hunts.[26] Although it was widely acknowledged that witchcraft was a serious crime, there was significant disagreement about what the crime of witchcraft involved. Should only harmful magic be prosecuted? Or should all practitioners of magic be punished because they made a pact with the devil to gain their powers?[27]

This ambiguity was compounded by the various statutes introduced across Germany. The *Bamberger Peinliche Halsgerichtordnung* (1507) directly connected witchcraft to heresy and ordered that both heretics and witches be executed by burning (Art. 131).[28] By contrast, the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* – the imperial law code introduced in 1532 – reserved the most severe punishments for harmful magic. Article 109 stated that those who caused harm or injury through sorcery should be burned to death, while those who used sorcery without causing injury should be punished at the discretion of the judge and court.[29] In fact, several articles in the *Carolina* limited the prosecution of witchcraft. These included restrictions on the use of torture without sufficient evidence, the threat of punishment and fines for judges and prosecutors who acted inappropriately, and the stipulation that confessions extracted with torture were not legally admissible.[30] There is a scholarly consensus that if the *Carolina* had been strictly followed, the German witch-hunts would never have reached the scale that they did.[31]

The *Carolina* was, however, not adopted uniformly across Germany because of a clause allowing imperial estates to retain their own legal procedures.[32] During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, several territories issued their own guidance for the prosecution of witchcraft. Many proposed harsher punishments than the *Carolina* and explicitly connected witchcraft, heresy, and devil-worship. A key example is the legal code introduced in the Electorate of Saxony in 1572.

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[26] Soldan, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse*, p. 356; Trusen, 'Rechtliche Grundlagen der Hexenprozesse', p. 208; V. J. Dorn-Haag, *Hexerei und Magie im Strafrecht: Historische und dogmatische Aspekte* (Tübingen, 2016), pp. 59-62.
[27] Dorn-Haag, *Hexerei und Magie im Strafrecht,* pp. 46-7.
[28] Trusen, 'Rechtliche Grundlagen der Hexenprozesse', p. 207.
[29] VD16 D 1069, f. xxiii^{v}.
[30] Trusen, 'Rechtliche Grundlagen der Hexenprozesse', p. 208.
[31] J. Dillinger, 'The Political Aspects of the German Witch Hunts', *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 4/1 (2009), p. 64; Dorn-Haag, *Hexerei und Magie im Strafrecht,* p. 55.
[32] Dorn-Haag, *Hexerei und Magie im Strafrecht*, p. 55.

This code emphasised that the central crime committed by witches was their pact with the Devil, 'even if they harm no one with their sorcery'.[33] It called for the prosecution of those who used sorcery for non-harmful means, albeit with a milder penalty of execution by sword. This group included those who had not made a diabolic pact, those who 'used devilish arts to report future events', or even those who consorted with such people.[34] Another example is the mandate issued by the Duke of Bavaria in 1611. Unlike the *Carolina* or the Saxon law code, this mandate only addressed witchcraft, sorcery, superstition, and devilish arts. It outlined different forms of magic and superstition, followed by sixteen articles outlining the correct punishment for each form of magic. The harshest punishments – execution by fire and confiscation of goods – were reserved for those who knowingly consulted with the Devil (Art. 1).[35] Those who unknowingly interacted with the Devil and did not worship him were punished with execution by sword. This group included fortune-tellers, sorcerers, and practitioners of the dark arts (Arts. 2 and 3).[36] Even seeking assistance from a sorcerer was punishable with permanent banishment and confiscation of goods (Art. 5).[37]

A strict witchcraft statute did not necessarily equate to more severe witch-hunting. In territories such the Duchy of Württemberg – which introduced its own regulations for the prosecution of witchcraft in 1567 – there were relatively few trials because local courts were carefully monitored and controlled by central authorities.[38] The Bavarian mandate faced significant opposition from a faction in the duke's court, some of whom were related to suspects of witchcraft; they opposed its publication and, as a consequence, the mandate had little impact.[39] These examples are a reminder that law codes are one thread of a wider entangled web. Trials across the Holy Roman Empire were influenced by a complex mixture of imperial law, the authority of the territorial lord, and local rights and customs.[40]

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[33] VD16 S 895*,* ff. 71^{v}-72^{r}.
[34] Ibid., f. 72^{r}.
[35] VD17 12:128322V*,* f. XXX.
[36] Ibid., ff. XXX-XXXI.
[37] Ibid., f. XXXII.
[38] T. Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America (*Oxford, 2013), p. 194.
[39] Dillinger, 'The Political Aspects', p. 76.
[40] H. Eiden and R. Voltmer, 'Hexenprozesse und Gerichtspraxis – Zur Einführung', in H. Eiden and R. Voltmer (ed), *Hexenprozesse und Gerichtspraxis* (Trier, 2002), p. 2.

During the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, legal institutions, jurisdictions, and policing of crime were also in a state of flux; in Frankfurt am Main, for instance, the number of legal and semi-legal institutions grew from two in the early sixteenth century to twenty by the eighteenth.[41]

The political and judicial fragmentation of the Empire, coupled with the development of new legal institutions, resulted in a wide variety of approaches to witch-hunting. While some territories like the Duchy of Württemberg succeeded in maintaining central oversight of witch trials, in other places, such as the Moselle-Hunsrück-Eifel region, village communities retained substantial control over criminal cases.[42] In these communities and others, including the County of Sponheim, witch-hunting commissions (*Hexenausschüsse*) were created; the participants in these commissions benefitted financially from the capture of witches.[43] These commissions could bypass legal administrations, and were consequently sometimes in conflict with territorial rulers. Prince Elector of Trier Johann VII von Schönenberg, for example, passed a *Witch Trial Ordinance* in 1591 that, among other things, banned the creation of witch-hunting committees.[44] At the other end of the spectrum, those accused of witchcraft could refer complaints about trial procedure to the highest courts in the Empire, the Imperial Chamber Court and the Imperial Aulic Court, which went some way to restraining prosecutions and demonstrated concern about the legal procedure.[45] Ultimately, the only clear picture that emerges of witch-hunting in Germany is one of a patchwork of conflicting jurisdictions and opinions.

3.1.2. England

The legal approach to witchcraft in England was markedly different to that in Germany. Witchcraft was first made a criminal offence in secular law in 1542. The act was fairly brief and, although it mentioned the 'invocation and conjuration of

[41] J. Kamp, *Crime, Gender and Social Control in Early Modern Frankfurt am Main* (Leiden, 2019), p. 35.
[42] J. Dillinger, *'Evil People': A Comparative Study of Witch Hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier*, trans. L. Stokes (Charlottesville, VA, 2009), p. 36.
[43] Soldan, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse*, p. 329.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Dillinger, 'The Political Aspects', pp. 64-5; P. Oestmann, *Hexenprozesse am Reichskammergericht* (Cologne, 1997), p. 530.

spirits', primarily focused on punishing those who had used sorcery to seek treasure or recover lost goods.[46] The act stated that witchcraft should be treated as a felony and judged by the 'course of the common laws of this realm'; it also stated that offenders would lose benefit of clergy and sanctuary.[47] It is unclear exactly why this act was passed, and it was almost entirely unused before it was repealed in 1547.[48]

Witchcraft re-entered the statutes in 1563. The Elizabethan witchcraft act was far more detailed than was its predecessor. The descriptions of offenders were more emotive and damning: witches were 'fantastical and devilish persons [who] have devised and practised invocations and conjurations of evil and wicked spirits […] to the destruction of the persons and goods of their neighbours and other subjects of the realm'.[49] Like its antecedent, this act defined witchcraft as a felony and removed benefit of clergy or sanctuary. Yet, to an even greater extent than the Henrician act, the Elizabethan act defined the purpose and outcome of the sorcery as the measure of the severity of the crime. Those who killed with witchcraft were to be executed; those who caused harm but not death were to be imprisoned for a year and pilloried for six hours on Market Day for the first offence, and executed for a second offence; those who used sorcery to recover stolen or lost goods or to bewitch a lover were to be imprisoned for a year and pilloried for six hours for the first offence, and to suffer forfeiture of goods and life imprisonment for a second offence.[50]

In 1604, the Elizabethan act was repealed and replaced with a new act 'for the better restraining of the said offenses, and more severe punishing the same'.[51] The creation of a new witchcraft act at the beginning of the reign of James I (VI of Scotland), who published his own demonological work in 1597 and again in 1603, has prompted significant interest from historians. There is, however, disagreement about how involved James himself was in the drafting of this act,

[46] *Witchcraft Act 1542.*
[47] *Witchcraft Act 1542.*
[48] B. Rosen, *Witchcraft* (London, 1969), p. 22.
[49] *Witchcraft Act 1563.*
[50] Ibid.
[51] *Witchcraft Act 1604.*

and how far this act represents a significant change from the previous acts.[52] As quoted above, the act itself claimed to be harsher than the act it replaced. The Jacobean act explicitly condemned any attempts to 'consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil and wicked spirit to or for any intent and purpose'.[53] The censure of interaction with spirits *regardless* of intent is a marked shift from the previous act. The additional focus on spirits supports the argument made in Chapter Two that familiar spirits, potentially from popular origins, were increasingly incorporated into demonological thought in England during the seventeenth century. Unlike the previous act, the use of sorcery to injure but not kill was also grounds for the death penalty. Using sorcery to seek treasure, recover lost goods, or bewitch a lover was punishable by imprisonment for a year and pillorying for six hours on market day; a second offence was grounds for execution.[54]

There are several notable features of these acts. The first is that the definition of witchcraft remained obscure and vague.[55] Although the Jacobean act placed greater emphasis on the invocation of spirits than had its predecessors, none offered clarity about the source of witches' power. Compared to the descriptions of witchcraft in the Saxon or Bavarian law codes, which unambiguously connect witchcraft with devil-worship, the English witchcraft acts did not clearly link diabolism and witchcraft. The second is that, in all three acts, witchcraft was considered a felony that should be prosecuted according to common law. As Garthine Walker notes, the removal of the benefit of clergy and sanctuary does categorise witchcraft as an aggravated offence, alongside other offences such as murder, rape, sodomy, and burglary.[56] Nevertheless, the statutes do not define witchcraft as an exceptional crime and there is no provision or clause allowing special legal procedure. The third is the relative leniency of these acts compared to the German legal codes discussed above. Particularly for first offences, all three acts allowed that someone could avoid execution if accused of using witchcraft for

[52] For an overview of the debates, see: J. Newton, 'Introduction: Witchcraft; Witch Codes; Witch Acts' in J. Newton and J. Bath (eds.), *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604* (Leiden, 2008), pp. 10-17.
[53] *Witchcraft Act 1604.*
[54] Ibid.
[55] Rosen, *Witchcraft*, pp. 24-7; Newton, 'Introduction', p. 9.
[56] Walker, 'The Strangeness of the Familiar' p. 108.

non-harmful means. While some of the German law codes, such as the Bavarian mandate, criminalised those who sought the advice of sorcerers, the employment of witches or sorcerers is not explicitly criticised in the English laws.

Prosecution of witchcraft in English courts also differed significantly from Germany. The inquisitorial procedure adopted in Germany did not reach England, which retained a form of the accusatorial procedure.[57] Cases were brought by private plaintiffs and could not be initiated by the court themselves. The burden of proof lay with the plaintiff, and the use of judicial torture to extract a confession was not allowed.[58] As in Germany, several different courts carried out witchcraft trials. There are, for example, cases of witchcraft executions in borough court records, such as the trials in Harwich, Essex, in 1601.[59] Similarly, witchcraft sometimes appeared in church courts, despite its being defined as a secular crime in law.[60] Nevertheless, English witchcraft cases were most likely to be tried at the assizes; these cases were commonly overseen by a professional judge who represented central government, was trained in law, and was removed from the local gossip and community dynamics that sometimes preceded a witchcraft accusation.[61] The prosecution of witchcraft was, overall, more centralised in England than Germany. Only during the political turmoil and disruption of the British Civil Wars (1642-51) was it possible for witch-finders Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne – comparable in their proceedings to witch-hunting committees or dedicated witch-hunters like Peter Binsfeld – to operate in England.[62]

3.2. The Crime of Witchcraft in Print

Crime and law were central features of both German and English religious tracts and sermons about witchcraft. Some signalled on the title page that questions of judicial authority and responsibility would feature heavily. The subtitle of Johannes Brenz's sermon on witchcraft and storms read: 'why imperial law should

[57] Levack, 'Witchcraft and the Law', p. 473.
[58] Walker, 'The Strangeness of the Familiar', p. 108.
[59] J. Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in England, 1550-1750* (London, 1996), p. 93.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid., p. 92.
[62] M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and Evidence in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 198 (2008), p. 46.

punish witches and sorceresses and decree that they be put to death.'[63] English clergyman Richard Bernard's tract was titled *A Guide to Grand Jury-Men.*[64] Others in Germany and England devoted whole chapters or sermons to the necessity of punishing witches, the duty of secular authorities, and the correct methods for uncovering, examining, and convicting witches.[65] The explanation for their interest lay in the blurred boundaries between crime, immorality, and sin in early modern England and Germany. German and English preachers consistently cited Exodus 22:18 as irrefutable evidence that God condemned witches to die.[66] This biblical command was, in the eyes of these preachers, the key justification for prosecuting witches.

Preachers considered themselves central to the wider learned conversation about appropriate measures for dealing with witchcraft; in his sermon printed in 1611, Daniel Schaller stated that most 'theologians, lawyers, and doctors' agreed on the matter.[67] Schaller's decision to list theologians first indicates that he believed that theologians had the greatest authority in this case. He and other preachers justified this position by emphasising that all worldly authorities are subject and subservient to God's ultimate authority.[68] David Meder cited Romans 13:1, which states that 'there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God'.[69] The role of secular authorities was to uphold God's laws and to enact his wishes by punishing those who transgressed.

The harmonious relationship between Church and state envisaged by these preachers, however, did not exist in practice. A significant point of contention was why witchcraft should be considered a crime. The problem was illustrated in this exchange from George Gifford's *Dialogue*:

> **Dan.:** A witch by the word of God ought to die the death not because she kills man, for that she cannot [...] but because she deals with devils. And so

[63] VD16 B 7917, sig. A^{r}.
[64] ESTC S101683.
[65] See, for example: ESTC S103141, Chapter 10; VD17 12:205316B, Sermon 8; ESTC S114525, Chapter 6; VD17 12:627125P, Sermon 14.
[66] See, for example: VD16 B 7917, sig. [A6^{r}]; VD17 23:258775K, sig. Qii^{r}; VD17 23:328851P, p. 35; ESTC S103141, sig. [H4^{v}]; ESTC S104153, sig. E2^{v}; ESTC S115983, p. 74.
[67] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Q^{r}.
[68] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Q^{v}; VD17 12:205316B, f. 108^{r}; VD17 12:627125P, p. 325.
[69] VD17 12:205316B, f. 107^{v}.

if a jury do find proof that she has dealt with devils, they may and ought to find them guilty of witchcraft.

M.B.: If they find them guilty to have dealt with devils, and cannot say they have murdered men, the law does not put them to death.

Dan.: It were to be wished, that the law were more perfect in that respect, even to cut off all such abominations. These cunning men and women which deal with spirits and charms seeming to do good [...] with all other which have familiarity with devils [...] ought to be rooted out.[70]

Rather than focusing on harm, as legislation did, Gifford argued that the crime committed by witches was their pact with the Devil and rejection of God. Other English writers agreed. William Perkins wrote that the reason witches deserved death was 'not the hurt, which they bought upon men [...] the cause [...] is the very making of a league with the devil, whether secret or open'.[71] Bernard stated that 'to convict anyone of witchcraft is to prove a league made with the Devil [...] without this league, they be free.'[72] While the Jacobean witchcraft act did condemn consulting or covenanting with spirits, Augustin Mendez notes that the severity of punishment was still influenced by the use of *maleficium*.[73] The preachers' emphasis on punishment regardless of harm was a significant departure from the legal reality.

The emphasis on heresy over harm was also a position adopted by German preachers. Brenz argued that witches should not be punished for conjuring storms, because only God had the power to create storms; rather, witches should be punished for aligning themselves with the Devil and desiring to harm people.[74] Matthäus Alber and Wilhelm Bidembach wrote:

Both divine law and imperial law condemn witches to punishment and death, not because they can confuse the senses and the elements at their

[70] ESTC S105690, sigs. K3^{r-v}.
[71] ESTC S114525, pp. 182-3.
[72] ESTC S101683, p. 216.
[73] A. Mendez, 'To Accommodate the Earthly Kingdom to Divine Will: Official and Nonconformist Definitions of Witchcraft in England (ca. 1542 – 1630)', *Preternature,* 6/2 (2017), p. 283.
[74] VD16 B 7917, sig. [A6^{v}].

> will and inclination, but because they reject God and Christian beliefs and give themselves entirely to the Devil.[75]

This statement was somewhat misleading, given that imperial law *did* make a distinction between harmful and non-harmful magic, and condemned witches at least in part on the consequences of their actions, rather than solely on their diabolic pact. The fiction created here that religious and secular authorities were in total agreement was necessary for Alber and Bidembach to convince their audience of the true reason witches deserved punishment. Other German preachers continued to emphasise the diabolic pact as the core act that defined the crime of witchcraft.[76]

The gap between the official position and the approach advocated by preachers naturally created tension. Several English preachers were critical of perceived leniency in witchcraft prosecutions and advocated harsher treatment and punishments. Thomas Cooper suggested that torture may be necessary to gain a confession if the individual was 'obstinate'.[77] Bernard likewise argued that 'sharp speeches' or threats of imprisonment could be used to get a confession when there was strong evidence; if these methods did not work, he also advocated torture as an effective method, noting its use in other countries.[78] Bernard was not alone in promoting the adoption of foreign approaches in England. Alexander Roberts, who used German evidence for his explanation of the diabolic pact, also seems to have employed the *Carolina* in his description of best legal practice. Roberts stated that 'the civil laws in this case are most strict, decreeing them to be burned, and their goods confiscate'.[79] Clearly, Roberts was not referring to any English witchcraft statute here because they did not condemn witches to be burned; later, he mentioned a 'severe constitution by Charles the fifth'.[80] The broad reference to 'civil laws' situated England in an international struggle against witchcraft, while the decision to cite the *Carolina* indicates that Roberts believed that the Holy Roman Empire was a particularly good example for England to follow.

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[75] VD16 ZV 284, sig. Bii^{v}.
[76] VD17 23:328851P, p. 40.
[77] ESTC S108665, p. 276.
[78] ESTC S101683, pp. 239-40.
[79] ESTC S115983, p. 75.
[80] Ibid.

Yet, while Germany was lauded by some English preachers for its strong stance against witchcraft, several historians claim that the viewpoint of German Protestant preachers led them to advocate restraint in witchcraft prosecutions.[81] Propagated by Brenz and adopted by subsequent preachers – particularly in the Duchy of Württemberg – the argument that witches could not enact real harm and that misfortunes were punishments from God redirected the preachers' message from prosecution to introspection.[82] Sin was the true cause of God's wrath, and preachers encouraged their congregation to focus on repentance and godly lives as the solution to their problems rather than calling for further witchcraft prosecutions. Alber and Bidembach cautioned authorities and judges not to be easily led by the 'reckless and fickle mob' and to resist their calls for suspected witches to be arrested and tortured on the basis of rumour and gossip.[83] They were concerned about false confessions extracted through torture and stated that 'it is better in every way that a thousand guilty people should go free than one innocent person be condemned and killed.'[84] Warnings against reliance on gossip and hearsay and concerns about the unrestrained use of torture were echoed by other preachers. As Joachim Zehner reminded his readers, the Bible did not say 'thou shalt not suffer a person suspected of witchcraft to live'; while every individual had a responsibility to root out witches, the responsibility for identifying witches lay with the authorities.[85]

Still, to suggest that all German preachers were moderate and all English preachers overzealous would be misleading. Not all German preachers were in favour of judicial restraint and caution. Waldschmidt, writing in 1660, agreed with fellow preachers in several respects. He was wary of confessions extracted through torture, noting that it could lead some to confessing to crimes they did not commit.[86] He similarly warned against relying too heavily on accusations made by

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[81] H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in South-West Germany 1562-1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, CA, 1972), pp. 36-45; L. Kounine, *Imagining the Witch: Emotions, Gender and Selfhood in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 127-8.
[82] S. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 446-7.
[83] VD16 ZV 284, sig. Biii^{r}.
[84] Ibid., sig. [Biv^{r}].
[85] VD17 23:328851P, p. 41.
[86] VD17 12:627125P, p. 351.

convicted witches because their association with the Devil, the father of lies, made their word particularly untrustworthy.[87] He disagreed, however, with Alber and Bidembach's claim that it was better to let a thousand guilty go free than kill one innocent; while Waldschmidt acknowledged that some innocent may be unjustly killed, he believed that to allow any guilty party to go free would be to directly contravene God's wishes.[88] Notably, Waldschmidt also offered the broadest definition of the crime of witchcraft. While he argued that the primary crime and sin committed by witches was their pact with the Devil, he also accused witches of a range of other crimes including adultery, theft, and murder.[89] The implication was that the crime of witchcraft was both heresy *and* harm.

On closer inspection, there are several similarities between the German and English preachers' approaches. While English preachers did encourage firmer action against witches, they also warned authorities not to be misled by the masses. Gifford claimed that, although support for witch-hunting was widespread, most pursued it because they believed punishing witches would end their own misfortune; they were motivated by 'mad rage' and not 'good zeal'.[90] He advised those involved in trials to be wary, especially considering the severity of the sentence.[91] 'Popular' practices to identify witches, such as 'swimming' them or scratching them to draw blood were condemned by English preachers including Cooper and Bernard.[92] German preachers Meder and Waldschmidt were similarly dismissive of such techniques, considering them to be illogical and ineffective.[93] Preachers in both countries were concerned about unrestrained prosecutions of witches and the use of unlawful practices to identify them.

Nevertheless, neither German nor English preachers sought to curb prosecutions entirely. Gary Waite claims that religious reformers 'shied away from capital punishment' unless real harm could be proven.[94] As demonstrated above, however, preachers in England and Germany both considered Exodus 22:18 to be

[87] Ibid., p. 346.
[88] Ibid., p. 334.
[89] Ibid., pp. 329-31.
[90] ESTC S103141, sig. I^{v}.
[91] Ibid.
[92] ESTC S108665, p. 277; ESTC S101683, p. 215.
[93] VD17 12:205316B, ff. 107^{v}-108^{r}; VD17 12:627125P, p. 343.
[94] G. K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 126.

evidence that witches must be put to death. Augustin Mendez counters Waite's argument, stating that the intention of English writers such as Gifford 'was not to moderate the prosecutions but to orientate them to punish a crime that was real and possible'.[95] Mendez's argument is not only correct, but is also applicable to the German preachers. In both countries, the preachers' focus on the diabolic pact rather than *maleficia* meant that a wide range of magical practices deserved the death penalty. According to Schaller, 'sorcerers, necromancers, conjurors, soothsayers [...] and witches' all made a diabolic pact and so must be executed.[96] He emphasised that fortune tellers and soothsayers were still guilty, even if they did no harm. In England, Bernard offered a similar list, encouraging his audience to 'hate witches, wizards, magicians, soothsayers, fortune tellers, astrologians, enchanters [and] juggling companions'.[97] According to Bernard, 'the distinction of witches into good and bad is only according to the use of speech among the people: for witches are all bad and condemned by God.'[98] Earlier, Perkins made a slightly different argument, acknowledging that there were good witches who did no harm; still, 'because he has renounced God [...] and has bound himself by other laws to the service of the enemy of God [...] death is his portion.'[99] Clearly, it is incorrect that preachers in either country 'shied away' from prosecutions. Rather, they redefined the crime to make the death penalty applicable to a wider group of people.

Furthermore, it was not only practitioners of sorcery (whether it be beneficial or harmful) who deserved punishment in view of German and English preachers. Roberts called for the 'straight rigor of the law [to] be inflicted upon all, both practisers and partakers with wizards'.[100] Henry Holland was likewise critical of those who sought assistance from witches, comparing them to the biblical figure Saul who consulted with the witch of Endor and incurred God's wrath (1 Samuel 28).[101] This comparison was also drawn by several German

[95] Mendez, 'To Accommodate the Earthly Kingdom to Divine Will', p. 286.
[96] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Q^{v}.
[97] ESTC S101683, p. 251.
[98] Ibid., p. 241.
[99] ESTC S114525, p. 185.
[100] ESTC S115983, pp. 79-80.
[101] ESTC S104153, sig. G2^{r}.

preachers.[102] Holland suggested that the authorities had a duty to prosecute those who associated with witches, citing Deuteronomy 18:10-11 and Leviticus 20:6 as supporting evidence.[103] Once again, these biblical passages were also used by German preachers, and the consultation with witches or use of protective charms condemned.[104] Brenz's sermon primarily directed his ire at the 'idolatry' of those who falsely believed in witches' power and used 'weather noise' (ringing of church bells) to ward off evil spirits.[105] Schaller argued that 'whether one seeks fortune-tellers out of naivety or wickedness, in both cases judgement and punishment must be maintained.'[106] This condemnation of 'good' witches and those who consulted with them aligned these preachers with the harsher law codes such as the Bavarian witchcraft mandate.

The belief that 'good' witches and those who employed their services needed to be criminalised was a central tenet in both the German and English religious tracts examined here. It is indicative of a broad Protestant consensus that so-called 'superstitious' practices needed to be expelled from Christian communities. This message did not fully filter down to other forms of popular print. Of course, it was not wholly absent. In Germany, Martin Marckwart's report about a witch in Szczecin (1580) dedicated the majority of his preface to criticising those who sought 'guidance and help' from the Devil via soothsayers or who used enchanted herbs to bring good fortune to their homes.[107] Such actions could not, in Marckwart's view, go unpunished. In England, Stearne's report (1648) addressed both bad witches and 'witches untruly called good or white witches'.[108] He stated that 'I hope there is none so ignorant or blind, as to believe it is lawful for any to go or send to such [...] seeing by the law of God they ought to die, as well as the other'.[109] Both Marckwart and Stearne referenced Leviticus 20:6 in their condemnation of 'good witchcraft'.[110] Other reports, however, were not as

[102] VD16 B 7917, sig. Cii^{r}; VD17 23:258775K, sig. A^{r}.
[103] ESTC S104153, sig. G2^{r}.
[104] VD17 12:205316B, f. 1^{r}; VD17 23:258775K, sig. Diii^{r}.
[105] VD16 B 7917, sigs. [A7^{r}]-[A8^{r}].
[106] VD17 23:258775K, sig. H^{r}.
[107] VD16 M 947, sigs. Aii^{r}-Aiii^{r}.
[108] ESTC R28178, sig. A^{r}.
[109] Ibid., sig. F3^{r}.
[110] ESTC R28178, sig. F3^{r}; VD16 M 947, sig. Aii^{v}.

concerned about this issue. Some, such as those by Richard Galis and Mary Moore, even included personal accounts of seeking assistance from cunning men or women to identify witches.[111]

In contrast to the religious tracts, German and English pamphleteers were primarily concerned with harm. As explored in Chapter Two, German witchcraft pamphlets connected witchcraft to devil-worship but did not devote significant attention to this component of witchcraft. Rather, they focused on the devastation wreaked by the witches. Wolfgang Behringer rightly observes that while learned texts often expressed doubts about the reality of witches' magic, pamphlets hardly ever did.[112] Commonly, German pamphleteers highlighted the sheer scale of the disaster. One of the earliest *Hexenzeitungen*, printed in 1563, listed the many crimes the witches had committed, which included making numerous cows, horses, sheep, and goats weak and sick, bewitching nearly 100 people so they were lame, deaf, or blind, and snatching 208 children before they could be baptised.[113] A report printed in 1590 claimed that witches wrought havoc in 'every town, market, and village across Germany', and described their actions:

> [Witches] not only attack the blessed crops in the field with abnormal thunder, lightning, rain, hail, storm winds, frosts, floods, mice, worms, and many other similar things […] they also destroy our sustenance by killing livestock [...] they will not even spare young and unbaptised children but execute huge numbers of them and use their body parts for their sorcery. They make old people infirm and lame, causing painful illness and eventually death.[114]

This report also emphasised one particularly shocking case in Augsburg where a midwife-witch reportedly tore 100 babies from their mothers' wombs and killed them.[115] A similar tale can be found in a report printed in 1616, where one witch confessed to killing around 400 babies.[116] As these cases demonstrate, German

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[111] ESTC S124945, sig. [Ciii^{v}]; ESTC R206348, sig. [B4^{r}].
[112] W. Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', in M. E. Plummer & R. B. Barnes (eds.), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H. C. Erik Midelfort* (Farnham, 2009), p. 226.
[113] VD16 W 535, sig. Aii^{v}.
[114] VD16 E 3889, sigs. A^{v}-Aii^{r}.
[115] Ibid., sig. Aii^{v}.
[116] VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p. 4].

pamphleteers often stressed innocent and vulnerable victims, particularly young children or the elderly. By presenting witchcraft as a real, tangible threat to readers, German pamphleteers promoted the prosecutions on the assumption that the crime of witchcraft was fundamentally *maleficium*.

English accounts likewise focused on the alleged victims' suffering, particularly in reports largely composed of pre-trial material.[117] The St Osyth pamphlet (1582), for example, featured over 100 pages of statements from multiple individuals who, reflecting on recent misfortunes and strange occurrences, identified witchcraft and its perpetrators. The witches were accused of conjuring storms, harming and killing livestock, and bewitching several people to death; the pamphlet particularly highlighted several 'most piteous' cases of children killed through sorcery.[118] It also concluded with a list of each of the accused witches and the names of those they had killed.[119] In other cases, the victim's plight dominated the narrative, with the witch appearing only as a secondary character. The tale of Richard Burt, a servant carried through the air by witchcraft in Pinner, Middlesex, was printed in a report in 1592 and referenced in another printed in 1595.[120] The 'tragedy' of Burt's narrative occupied the majority of the report, with the pamphleteer briefly noting that Mother Atkins, the accused witch, had performed 'many and sundry like actions of extreme rage and cruelty'.[121] By focusing on the victim and providing scant detail about the witch herself, the pamphleteer encouraged the reader to identify with the victim and portrayed the witch as a criminal 'other' whose punishment was wholly necessary. While the German accounts focused on widespread devastation to emphasise the severity of the crime, reports such as these used apparent first-hand statements from victims and witnesses to legitimise the prosecution of witches and emphasise the threat they posed to the community.

With the emphasis placed on harm and suffering, some suggest that news pamphlets not only supported witch prosecutions, but actively encouraged them.

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[117] For examples, see ESTC S114979, ESTC R200218.
[118] ESTC S101821, sigs. B^{r}, E^{r}, [D6^{r}], [G6^{r}].
[119] Ibid., sigs. [G9^{r-v}].
[120] ESTC S119200; ESTC S126714.
[121] ESTC S119200, sigs. A3^{r}, A4^{v}.

From the German perspective, both Harald Sipek and Robert Walinski-Kiehl characterise news pamphlets as witch-hunting propaganda.[122] Sipek particularly highlights the reports produced during the major trials in southern ecclesiastical territories in the 1610s and 1620s as evidence that pamphlets promoted witch-hunts and pressured surrounding territories to follow suit.[123] Certainly, some German pamphleteers stressed that witch-hunting was imperative. The report from 1590 mentioned above praised the actions of the Count of Wiesensteig – who oversaw a trial of sixty-three women in 1563 following a major hailstorm – and the laws implemented to deal with witchcraft.[124] It also commended the proactive steps taken by several territorial leaders, including the Bishops of Augsburg and Eichstätt, the Count of Öttingen, and Duke Wilhelm V of Bavaria.[125] The pamphlet concluded by reminding authorities of their responsibility to follow God's commandment and 'eradicate' witches.[126] A report on trials in the Bishopric of Würzburg and the Duchy of Württemberg (1616) similarly praised rulers for taking a strong stance on witchcraft.[127] Likewise, a pamphlet discussing trials in Bamberg and Würzburg (1627) emphasised that, whether they were burned or otherwise executed, witches could not be permitted to remain alive.[128] These examples are unambiguous statements in support of witch-hunting, and could justifiably be considered witch-hunting propaganda.

Other German reports did not engage explicitly with discussions of the law, but there were implicit indications that they supported the judicial authorities. In Hans Kuntz's report about a witch in Dillingen (printed in 1579 and 1580), the witch initially evaded prosecution.[129] Eventually, however, 'God could no longer watch such sin and idolatry' and intervened to expose the witch.[130] This narrative reflects the legal difficulties faced by authorities in prosecuting witchcraft. It also creates a close connection between divine justice and the actions of worldly

[122] Sipek, 'Newe Zeitung', p. 87; Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda, and Witch-Hunting in Germany', p. 54.
[123] Sipek, 'New Zeitung', p. 87.
[124] VD16 E 3889, sig. Aii^{r}.
[125] Ibid., sigs. Aii^{r}-B^{r}.
[126] Ibid., sig. Bii^{r}.
[127] VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: pp. 2-4].
[128] VD17 23:293541Q, sigs. Ai^{v}-Aii^{r}.
[129] VD16 ZV 21532, sig. Ai^{v}.
[130] Ibid., sig. Aiii^{r}.

authorities, suggesting that the prosecution of witchcraft is divinely sanctioned. Use of torture is also tacitly supported by German pamphleteers. Reports commonly stated that witches were questioned 'under torture', but there was no discussion in the pamphlets about the evidentiary value of confessions extracted using this method.[131] Instead, the use of torture appears an accepted and routine part of trial procedure.

In contrast to the opposition posed by preachers, German witchcraft pamphleteers were generally supportive of the authorities' actions towards witches. The extant German pamphlets all report cases where the accused witches were found guilty, creating a narrative where the law always appeared just and unfailing. Nevertheless, German pamphleteers and authorities did not always see eye to eye. Walinski-Kiehl highlights the *Druten Zeitung*, printed in Nuremberg in 1627, which described witch trials in Franconia.[132] The report was typical in many respects and offered vivid descriptions of the shocking confessions of the witches, including a midwife who claimed to have murdered over one hundred babies.[133] As with previous examples, these descriptions were evidently intended to encourage readers to hunt witches. Nuremberg, however, had relatively few witch trials, and local authorities were concerned about this apparent call to action. The suspected printers, Ludwig Lochner and his brother, were arrested; the printing block was destroyed; and further printing or distribution was prohibited.[134] This example demonstrates that it would be incorrect to state that pamphleteers simply followed the lead of local authorities regarding witchcraft. The *Druten Zeitung* is evidence that some took considerable risks to promote a stronger stance against witchcraft than the local authorities desired.

Moreover, while the German witchcraft pamphlets all appear to be supportive of the trials, Ursula Maria Krah argues that one was, in fact, a covert criticism of witch prosecutions. The pamphlet, printed in 1615 in Nuremberg, conformed to conventions in witchcraft news reports in many respects: it claimed

[131] See, for example: VD16 W 1261, sig. [A4^{r}]; *Brockersberg* 1596, sig. Aii^{v}; VD17 1:693782T, sig. Aiii^{v}.
[132] Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda, and Witch-Hunting in Germany', p. 64.
[133] *Druten Zeitung* 1627.
[134] Walinski-Kiehl, 'Pamphlets, Propaganda, and Witch-Hunting in Germany', p. 68.

to be a 'believable' account and reported the confession of a 'poor witch'.[135] The introduction offered no information regarding the location of the events or those involved, but simply stated they occurred in 'a noble city, whose name is well-known'.[136] Krah suggests that this introduction is a parody of other witch pamphlets, and the lack of identifying details is intended to alert the reader to the fact that it is fiction.[137] The majority of the report described a dispute between the Devil and the witches. The witches wished to conjure up a storm to destroy crops and cause widespread poverty, but the Devil forbade this action; he stated that poverty caused people to turn to God for assistance, while prosperity led people to gamble, swear, and forget their duty to God. [138] The Devil, therefore, did not want the witches to cause more harm. Krah interprets this exchange as satirical, demonstrating the logical fallacy in the belief that the witches conjure storms and wreak havoc with the Devil's assistance. [139] That the report was published in Nuremberg, where – as the *Druten Zeitung* demonstrates – authorities were wary about encouraging witchcraft, lends weight to Krah's suggestion that this report is satirical. Yet, as Abaigéal Warfield points out, it is difficult determine the object of the satire: the witches appear worse than Satan himself.[140] She rightly questions whether such an argument would have been an effective deterrent for witch-hunting. This pamphlet is also seemingly an outlier, although it is possible that other overtly critical pamphlets have not survived or were destroyed by censors. Overall, there is little extant evidence to suggest that German pamphleteers routinely questioned judicial practice or even expressed explicit opinions on the matter.

In this regard, English pamphlets differed significantly. Malcolm Gaskill claims that it is difficult to establish how far learned debates about the law and

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[135] *Zwo Hexenzeitung* 1615, [unpaginated: pp. 6-7].
[136] Ibid., [unpaginated: p. 6].
[137] U. Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität in frühneuzeitlichen Kleinschriften (Einblattdrucke und Flugschriften)', in K. Moeller & B. Schmidt (eds.*), Realität und Mythos: Hexenverfolgung und Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Hamburg, 2003), p. 80.
[138] *Zwo Hexenzeitung* 1615, [unpaginated: p. 6].
[139] Krah, 'Fiktionalität und Faktizität', p. 81.
[140] A. Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany: An Investigation of Non-Periodical Newsheets and Pamphlets, 1533-1669' (PhD. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2013), p. 182.

witchcraft in England filtered down into popular thinking.[141] Yet, compared to Germany, the English witch reports demonstrate a far greater engagement with such debates. As noted in Chapter Two, English pamphlets were more likely to include a preface than their German equivalents, and it was often here that pamphleteers offered their viewpoints. Some simply supported the law and its proceedings. A pamphlet printed in 1612 emphasised the existence of witches, noting that judges had witnessed 'plain and manifest evidences' against witches and claiming that those who questioned the threat they posed 'do palpable wrong and open injury to the discretions, or consciences of our learned judges, and the power and virtue of our laws, in the execution of justice'.[142] In 1645, another pamphlet reproduced the text of the Jacobean witchcraft act, enabling a wider audience to read and understand the law.[143]

In addition to reproducing the law, this particular pamphlet included a section instructing readers on the discovery of witches. This section noted the witch's mark (a teat on the body for feeding familiars) as one way to identify the witch initially, and listed the types of proof required including a confession from the witch, the testimony of other witches, or the declaration of a victim.[144] It also explained the specific circumstances whereby a witch could be prosecuted:

> That the witch (or party suspected) has used invocation of some spirit.
>
> That they have consulted or covenanted with their spirit.
>
> That they employed their spirit.
>
> That they have fed or rewarded their spirit.
>
> That they have killed, or lamed, etc. some person etc.
>
> And not to indict them generally for being witches etc.[145]

This explanation and clarification of the law is noteworthy because it suggests that the wording of the law left too much uncertainty. Such uncertainty is evident in other English pamphlets, advocating measures that were not strictly legal. A

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[141] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England*, p. 44.
[142] ESTC S115086, sigs. A3^{v}-A4^{r}.
[143] ESTC R200343, pp. 2-3. The text in this pamphlet appears to be a faithful reproduction of the original law. See: 'Appendix II: The Witchcraft Act of 1604' in J. Newton and J. Bath (eds.), *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604* (Leiden, 2008), p. 238, n. 1.
[144] ESTC R200343, pp. 4-5.
[145] Ibid., p. 6.

report from Bedford (1613) suggested that drawing blood from the witch could provide relief to their victim; it also recommended the water test or 'swimming' the witch to determine guilt and included a depiction of the test on its title page.[146] Neither of these practices were legally permissible, although both are recurring features in English reports.[147] Matthew Hopkins wrote his pamphlet (1647) in question-and-answer format and defended himself against detractors. He acknowledged that torture was not lawful, and that any confession extracted through torture would be void, but he argued that his methods – including exhausting suspects through constant walking and sleep deprivation – were necessary and did not amount to torture.[148] The questions that Hopkins addressed, including suggestions that he was 'fleecing' the country and doubts about the legality of using witch's marks as proof, highlight a further contrast between the German and English pamphlets. German reports followed a familiar narrative structure (the witches are discovered, questioned, condemned, and sent to their deaths) which portrayed the law as an infallible and just force. In England, however, the validity and necessity of prosecutions was more contested.

One particularly controversial case was the witch of Wapping, discussed in three pamphlets in 1650. The eponymous witch was Joan Peterson, a woman who all three pamphlets agreed was involved in healing and medicine. They diverged, however, in their descriptions of her supposed crimes and her guilt. The first was printed while the trial was still ongoing; the outcome was uncertain, and the author encouraged readers to check the serial newspaper, *The Faithful Scout,* for further information.[149] A brief account, this pamphlet stated that Peterson had been arrested on suspicion of poisoning Lady Powell, an eighty-year-old woman.[150] The second pamphlet made no mention of this charge; instead, it presented a formulaic description of Peterson as a witch, stating she had bewitched several individuals and that she had familiars in the forms of a squirrel and a dog.[151] The

[146] ESTC S120192, sigs. C^{r}-C2^{v}.
[147] See, for example: ESTC S95729, sigs. B4^{r-v}; ESTC R206348, sig. B4^{v}; ESTC R26759, p. 2.
[148] ESTC R201499, sigs. B^{r}-B2^{r}.
[149] ESTC R206710, sig. A4^{v}. The execution of Joan Peterson was indeed reported the following week: ESTC P1269, pp. 508-9.
[150] ESTC R206710, sig. A4^{v}.
[151] ESTC R206717, pp. 4-7.

final pamphlet denounced other 'lying' reports and sought to convince readers of Peterson's innocence.[152] It revealed that Peterson had been unwillingly drawn into a plot to accuse Anne Levingston, a beneficiary of Lady Powell's will, of witchcraft. Peterson's lack of cooperation had caused the plotters to turn on her and accuse her of witchcraft in retaliation.[153] The pamphlet was particularly critical of the methods used to try Peterson, noting on several occasions that her treatment was 'contrary to the law', and 'unnatural and barbarous'.[154] It also included a document from several doctors who examined Powell and concluded that there was insufficient evidence that she was killed through witchcraft.[155] Despite this document, Peterson was hanged on 12 April 1652. The survival of three different versions of this case demonstrates that trials were by no means uniformly supported.

Of course, caution was not advocated across the board in English reports. On the contrary, some were critical of what they perceived to be undue leniency in English prosecutions. A report about six witches in Maidstone, Kent, in 1652 noted dissatisfaction about the form of punishment used, stating that 'some there were that wished rather they might be burnt to ashes'.[156] Others made similar demands. The St Osyth pamphlet was particularly severe in its condemnation of England's approach:

> The magistrates of foreign lands, noted so precisely, that weighing the quality of the crime, they kept a due analogy and proportion of punishment, burning them with fire, whom the common law of England (with more measure of mercy than is to be wished) strangles with a rope. An ordinary felon, and a murderer offending against the moral law of justice, is throttled: a sorcerer, a witch [...] defying the Lord God to his face [...] is stifled: the one dies on the gallows, and so does the other: wherein doubtless there is a great inequality of justice.[157]

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[152] ESTC R171711, p. 1.
[153] Ibid., pp. 3-4.
[154] Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[155] Ibid., pp. 10-11.
[156] ESTC R202164, sig. A3^{r}.
[157] ESTC S101821, sigs. A3^{v}-A4^{r}.

While German pamphlets also encouraged further prosecutions, they did not criticise existing measures in this way, preferring instead to praise those who had taken proactive action rather than highlight their failings.

The St Osyth pamphlet is one of several English pamphlets commissioned to portray the personal viewpoint of someone involved in the legal proceedings. The author of the St Osyth pamphlet is given only as W.W. There is some debate about who this author was. Marion Gibson suggests it was William Whetcrofte. A local figure who held several positions including MP and town clerk, Whetcrofte was also closely connected to Brian Darcy, the magistrate at the centre of the pamphlet.[158] The pamphlet was heavily influenced by the work of French demonologist Jean Bodin and included a translation of an extract of his work in the preface. Gibson argues that the pamphlet was conceived by Darcy 'as a textbook example of how in general one should take demonological ideas from an alien context [...] and apply them to one's own locality'.[159] She notes that Darcy used techniques advocated by Bodin to trick suspected witches into confessing by promising them leniency; this trickery, according to the pamphlet, was successful in broadening the scope of the prosecutions and revealing more witches.[160] Given Darcy's advocacy for new techniques in the prosecution of witchcraft, it is unsurprising that the preface is so critical of existing measures.

Criticisms levied in other pamphlets were similarly coloured by individual experience. Galis, son of a mayor of Windsor, wrote in his pamphlet (1579) that witchcraft had been allowed to flourish because of the 'little regard and great negligence of the magistrates'; in the conclusion of the pamphlet, he railed against 'the foolish pity and slackness of the magistrates of Windsor'.[161] Galis depicted himself as someone who suffered greatly at the hands of several witches, who tormented him mentally and physically, harmed his livestock, and killed his father. He also described several instances where he sought assistance from legal officials but was turned away, only to be vindicated ultimately with the

[158] M. Gibson, 'French Demonology in an English Village: the St Osyth Experiment of 1582', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer & L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and witch-hunting in early modern Europe* (London, 2020), p. 111.
[159] Ibid., p. 109.
[160] Gibson, 'French Demonology in an English Village', pp. 114-6; ESTC S101821 sigs. [A7^{r}]-B5^{r}.
[161] ESTC S124945, sigs. Aiii^{r}, Diii^{v}.

prosecution of four witches.[162] In 1650, Mary Moore – author of the only extant English witchcraft pamphlet known to have been written by a woman – described the challenges her family faced in convincing justices to arrest the woman she suspected of tormenting her children through witchcraft. She claimed that she had been unable to convince local justices to issue a warrant for Dorothy Swinnow's arrest, an issue that remained unresolved when she wrote the pamphlet.[163] She also reported the dying declaration of her afflicted daughter, who stated that 'those that are to do us justice will not; though they deny us justice, yet God can and will in his due time, grant us justice over them all.'[164] Despite Moore's efforts in this pamphlet, it appears that Swinnow, a colonel's widow, was not prosecuted for witchcraft.[165]

These personal perspectives, so prevalent in English examples, were almost wholly absent in Germany. Overall, there are significant differences between the German and English pamphleteers' approaches to the crime of witchcraft. How can these differences be explained? One factor is the ways that trials were initiated. As discussed in section one, the inquisitorial procedure in Germany allowed court officials or communities to instigate a trial; in England, the accusatorial procedure remained, and cases were brought by private plaintiffs. The pamphlets in England written by individuals involved in the trials reflect the personal stakes for the plaintiffs. Both Galis and Moore emphasised their issues with convincing authorities to take their cases seriously, and both appear to have turned to print to convince wider audiences of the legitimacy of their cause. In Galis's case, the suspects were eventually prosecuted, so his pamphlet can be considered a justification and vindication of his actions; Moore, on the other hand, appears to have been actively seeking support for her case against Swinnow. In Germany, criticising trials initiated by court officials may have been riskier. The prosecutions were larger in terms of numbers of accusers and those accused. The

[162] Ibid., sigs. Bi^{v}, Biii^{v}, Di^{r}.
[163] ESTC R206348, sig. C^{v}.
[164] Ibid., sig. D2^{v}.
[165] F. E. Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550 – 1700* (London, 1994), p. 233.

focus on groups rather than individuals meant that opinions on the case were not overtly expressed.

Access to trial documents and materials provides a further explanation for the different natures of the German and English pamphlets. Several English pamphlets used pre-trial examinations and trial documents to create their reports. Alan Macfarlane compared the assize records and pamphlets in Essex and concludes that 'those who wrote the pamphlets were accurate and almost certainly eye-witness reporters'.[166] Of course, as Gibson notes, pamphlets were rarely straightforward reproductions of trial documents; pamphleteers adapted, edited, and reshaped documents for their own purposes.[167] Nevertheless, they do offer some insight into the details of individual trial proceedings.

German reports, on the other hand, seldom employ this kind of material. In some cases, the report was actually a compilation of other reports from elsewhere.[168] Even if the report focused on one trial, it rarely included much direct information from the trial itself, save for aspects of the confession which may have been read out prior to a public execution. Where there is more information about the case, this information appears to have been gained contrary to the wishes of the authorities. Wolfgang Behringer highlights the case of Walpurga Hausmännin, whose trial and confession was reported in a pamphlet in 1588, as well as appearing in the Fugger newsletter.[169] Hausmännin's confession was leaked by the town's secretary in Dillingen, an action condemned by the prince-bishop of Augsburg's government.[170] The lack of direct access to trial documentation means, therefore, that the German reports were far less detailed and, therefore, did not offer informed opinions on the intricacies of the legal proceedings.

Differences in judicial procedure and access to trial documentation are, therefore, partial explanations for the diverging approaches to the crime of witchcraft in German and English news. A further consideration is whether these

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[166] A. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London, 1970), p. 120.
[167] M. Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft: Stories of Early English Witches* (London, 1999), pp. 36-42.
[168] See, for example: VD16 E 3889.
[169] Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 226; *Urgicht und Verzaichnuß* 1588.
[170] Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', p. 226.

differences are reflected in crime reporting more broadly. For, as Chapter One noted, witchcraft news reports were part of wider developments in the printing industries of both countries, and sit alongside other occasional news pamphlets about crime and criminality. Scholars of witchcraft have compared witchcraft pamphlets to other sources linked directly to witchcraft, such as demonologies and trial documentation. This approach is logical, but it is equally important to understand the genre to which these sources belonged. The final section of this chapter broadens its view to examine other crime reports alongside witchcraft to determine how far witchcraft was treated as an exceptional crime.

3.3. An Exceptional Crime

Hyperbolic and sensationalist language filled the pages of German and English witchcraft reports. Several German reports described witches as 'vermin' (*Unzifer*) in need of extermination; English reports considered them monstrous creatures that needed to be 'weeded out'.[171] German pamphlet titles characterised witches' deeds as 'terrifying' (*erschrecklich*), 'scandalous' (*unerhört*), and 'inhuman' (*unmenschlich*); English accounts detailed 'strange', 'cruel' and 'wicked' actions.[172] One *Hexenzeitung* described trials in Bamberg in 1628 and encapsulated the idea that witchcraft encompassed a multitude of crimes, writing that the witches had 'confessed to so many murders and unspeakable harms and conspired in several places so that no fruit would grow.'[173] In England, some pamphleteers singled out witchcraft as the worst crime imaginable. The St Osyth pamphleteer's outrage that witchcraft was punished in the same manner as murder or a common felony has been noted above. In 1612, a report on witchcraft in Northamptonshire similarly emphasised the exceptional nature of witchcraft as a crime and sin: 'amongst the rest of sins[...] there is none (I suppose) more distasteful or detestable to [God's] purity, than this damnable and devilish sin of witchcraft.'[174]

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[171] VD16 E 3889, sig. A^{v}; VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p. 1]; ESTC S124945, sig. [Diiii^{r}]; ESTC S102363, sig. C3^{r}.
[172] See, for example: VD16 W 560, sig. A^{r}; VD17 1:692160C, [unpaginated: p. 1]; ESTC S124945, sig. A^{r}; ESTC S119200, sig. A^{r}; ESTC R207115, p. 1.
[173] VD17 23:293541Q, sig. Aiii^{v}.
[174] ESTC S115086, sig. A3^{r}.

These reports implied that witchcraft was the greatest sin and the worst crime that an individual could commit; it was, in short, an exceptional crime. Studies of the history of witchcraft have, to some extent, perpetuated this view by examining witchcraft in isolation from other crimes. Studies which extensively compare attitudes towards witchcraft to other crimes – such as the work by Biesel in Germany and Gaskill in England – remain the exception rather than the rule.[175] Still, even a brief glance at murder pamphlets in England and Germany reveals that witchcraft was far from the only crime that sparked shock and consternation. An English pamphlet printed in 1573 recounted events from the previous year, detailing 'an horrible, woeful, and most lamentable murder' of a woman, 'wickedly' slain by her own husband.[176] The tone of this title continued in other English reports, which described murders as 'horrible', 'cruel' and 'bloody'.[177] One, printed in 1655, emphasised the exceptionality of the murder stating that the 'the like [was] never known in any age before'.[178] Similar terminology can be found in German reports. One described a 'terrifying, despicable, wretched, and scandalous' murder in Lobenstein in 1606.[179] As well as 'terrifying', other common descriptors in German murder reports included 'gruesome' and 'tragic'.[180] Joy Wiltenburg notes the presence of sensationalism in the earliest printed crime reports; the use of such rhetoric was, she suggests, intended to create a 'unanimity of response' among the diverse and varied audience of these printed texts.[181] While Wiltenburg's study focuses on Germany, the sensationalism was clearly present in English print too. Davies suggests that the sensationalism in witchcraft pamphlets has often been misinterpreted and needs to be understood as part of the wider crime genre, rather than as reflecting contemporary attitudes towards witchcraft specifically.[182]

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[175] Biesel, 'Hexerei und andere Verbrechen', pp. 123-69; Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities*.
[176] ESTC S110536, sig. A^{r}.
[177] See, for example: ESTC S103014; ESTC S119710; ESTC R209090.
[178] ESTC R209090, sig. A^{r}.
[179] VD17 23:254219F.
[180] See, for example: VD16 N 1251.
[181] J. Wiltenburg, 'True Crime: The Origins of Modern Sensationalism', *American Historical Review,* 109/5 (2004), p. 1397.
[182] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 51.

Davies's argument reveals the issues inherent in studying the crime of witchcraft in isolation. With no benchmark to measure against – in this case other crime reports – it is impossible to judge whether witchcraft was truly an exceptional crime in contemporaries' eyes. Scholars emphasise the importance of these texts as *representations* of crime, and not merely reflections of events. Pamphleteers selected narratives, shaped the stories, and used them to convey a variety of social and religious messages.[183] Given that, as Wiltenburg argues, most people primarily encountered crime through these representations rather than personal experience, the depiction of crime had a powerful influence on its cultural meaning.[184] It is crucial, therefore, to place witchcraft reports into this broader context.

Undoubtedly, one clear feature of crime reporting is its religious tone; Sandra Clark argues that 'the religious dimension of early modern crime news is what separates it from modern journalism'.[185] The connections between crime and sin had important implications for the crime pamphlet genre as a whole. German murder pamphlets commonly concluded with warnings to avoid sin and calls to God for protection, as these examples show:

> Dear God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ/ preserve him and us body and soul/ that we may all be blessed/ thus say all Christians/ Amen/ Amen/ Amen.[186]
>
> Go forth Christian people all/ whether poor or rich/ and serve God diligently with all your heart / that he may be merciful/ and safeguard us from hellish torment.[187]

English crime pamphlets had similar messages for their readers. A report printed in 1676 claimed to be 'published as a warning to both young and old, to […] exercise themselves in the practice of godliness'.[188] Another report printed in 1649 concerning criminals hanged at Tyburn stated that 'all others may learn not to

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[183] Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars,* p. 3; Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 3.
[184] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 3.
[185] S. Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (London, 2003), p. 147.
[186] VD16 N 911, sig. [Aiiii^{r}].
[187] VD17 1:670403N*,* [unpaginated: p. 5].
[188] ESTC R11200, sig. A2^{r}.

rely upon themselves but on the strength of Christ Jesus; for the Devil either by ignorance or insolence, will still be inciting men unto sin.'[189] This example sets up the core battle that featured in many pamphlets between God and the Devil, with judicial authorities and criminals as proxies for each of the actors. Gaskill describes crime pamphlets as one example of the 'wider cosmic scheme', alongside myths and biblical histories, which provided a moral framework by which readers were to abide.[190]

One recurring religious theme was the notion that God intervened to reveal criminals. This technique was used by Hans Kuntz in his witchcraft pamphlet. Wiltenburg notes the ubiquity of this notion; she highlights an example from 1519 in which God was credited with revealing the perpetrator among a large group of suspects, demonstrating that it was a feature in some of the earliest crime reports.[191] Gaskill and Clark also both note the use of this idea in English crime pamphlets, suggesting that it connects the process of justice with God's plan.[192] An English report about a woman who poisoned her husband in 1608 proclaimed that

> the grossest part of folly [...] is to think that our hidden abominations can be concealed from the eye of the Almighty, or that he seeing our bloody and crying sins, will not either reveal them before his ministers of public justice, or in his best pleased time, power down sharp vengeance for such presumptuous and rebellious offences.[193]

In some cases, the criminals were discovered thanks to miraculous circumstances only possible with God's assistance. One case printed in two pamphlets during 1606 centred on a young girl who had her tongue cut out after witnessing the murder of her family.[194] The report details how Annis Dell and her son were suspected of murder but also that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute them; after four years, however, the girl suddenly regained the power of speech and accused Dell and her son of murdering her brother. This case appears to be a

[189] ESTC R206139, p. 4.
[190] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities*, p. 210.
[191] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 96.
[192] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities*, p. 215; Clark, *Women and Crime*, p. 149.
[193] ESTC S113069, sig. A3r.
[194] ESTC S113484; ESTC S113482.

perfect example of Gaskill's observation that 'in print, providence bolstered an unreliable system of law enforcement, sustaining a belief in certainty of punishment by rationalizing retrospectively occasions where murderers were brought to justice.'[195] Although witchcraft was a 'hidden' crime and particularly difficult to prove, providence was a convenient way to explain and rationalise challenging criminal cases generally.

Another shared characteristic between witchcraft pamphlets and other crime pamphlets is the focus on the victims and their suffering. Wiltenburg observes that English and German crime pamphlets differed slightly in this respect; reports in England tended to focus on individual victims, while in German cases there was usually a group of victims.[196] This pattern fits with the witchcraft pamphlets, where, as we have seen, German reports offered wide ranging lists of the devastation caused, while English reports often had a more personal perspective. Some German murder pamphlets focused on high-profile criminals. One account from Ewantzitz (Eibenschütz/Ivančice, in present-day Czech Republic) published in 1570 contained Paul Wasansky's confession to murdering 124 people, including pregnant women and children.[197] Seven years later, the case of Peter Niersch hit the headlines. A report printed in 1577 detailed the arrest of Niersch and fellow gang members; the title stated he had confessed to the murder of 440 people, and the text of the report lists the places he travelled, and the numbers killed in each location.[198] He seemingly escaped and was finally re-arrested and executed in 1581, by which point he had reportedly committed 520 murders.[199] Another pamphlet printed in 1582 reported his gruesome and protracted execution and detailed that, among his many victims, Niersch had murdered twenty-four pregnant women.[200] Serial killers continued to appear in pamphlets in the seventeenth century. The confession of one, Melchior Hedloff, who murdered 251 people, was printed in 1654. Like the Niersch pamphlet from

[195] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities*, p. 215.
[196] J. Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany* (Charlottesville, VA, 1992), p. 239.
[197] VD16 ZV 5770, sigs. Aii^{r}-Aiiii^{r}.
[198] VD16 W 624, sigs. Aii^{r}-Aiiii^{v}.
[199] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 97.
[200] VD16 W 447, sig. Aiiii^{r}.

1577, this account offered a detailed list of the locations Hedloff visited, the people he murdered, and the objects and money he stole.[201] The structure of these reports, with their emphasis on scale of devastation, is very similar to many of the German witchcraft pamphlets, demonstrating that it was an effective rhetorical device.

England's crime pamphlets, like its witchcraft reports, tended to focus on individual victims or small groups for the most part. One overlap between English and German victims of crime was the emphasis on innocent victims, particularly children or pregnant women. These victims were the focus in the serial killer pamphlets in Germany, and they were also commonly found in smaller scale narratives too. An account from Bremen in 1581 reported that a man had sold his pregnant wife to murderers, although she was fortunately rescued.[202] A report from Silesia printed in 1597 described how a man addicted to gambling murdered his 'faithful wife and six children' at the behest of the Devil.[203] The murder of a heavily pregnant woman and her six children along with the household servants in Lobenstein in 1606 was reported in several pamphlets.[204] In England, a report in 1591 described how an 'unnatural father' plotted to have his four children murdered and succeeded in killing three of them.[205] A pamphlet printed in 1605 reported that in Yorkshire a man had murdered his own children, the oldest of whom was four years old, and his wife.[206] In 1689, an account detailed the 'murder' of a woman 'great with child' who was attacked by dogs unrestrained by their owners.[207]

The focus on innocent and helpless victims in these murder pamphlets mirrors the way that witchcraft pamphlets in both Germany and England often specifically mentioned children or pregnant women as victims. The killing of such victims added to the sensationalist nature of these reports. It is also significant that many of these crime pamphlets featured attacks within families. Wiltenburg identifies this as a particularly popular trope, despite its being a rare occurrence

[201] VD17 12:629682R, sigs. A^{v}-Bii^{v}.
[202] VD16 ZV 29536, sigs. Aii^{v}-Aiiii^{r}.
[203] VD16 ZV 15395, sig. A^{v}.
[204] VD17 23:254219F; VD17 3:604082E.
[205] ESTC S2242, sigs. A2^{r}-B^{v}.
[206] ESTC S120705, pp. 1-18.
[207] ESTC R33578, pp. 1-2.

in reality.[208] Additionally, she notes that, like witchcraft reports, the murderous attacks on pregnant women and children reported in these crime pamphlets speak to wider concerns about fertility and reproduction.[209] The role of family and intra-familial crime in these reports is, however, also distinct from witchcraft pamphlets in some respects. While murder pamphlets reflect conflict within families, witchcraft pamphlets often highlight familial connections among witches. The role of family is an area which will be explored more in Chapter Four.

There are several aspects of witchcraft pamphlets, therefore, that are also reflected in crime reporting more broadly: the sensationalist rhetoric, moral message, and the sympathy elicited for victims are all part of the crime genre. As Gaskill observes, crime reports 'were highly stylized, and despite titular protestations that they were "true", "exact", or "faithful", it was only really important that they remained faithful to the genre'.[210] Acknowledging that these stylistic features are an intrinsic part of English and German witchcraft pamphlets does not necessarily mean that witchcraft was an unexceptional crime. Most of the crimes selected by pamphleteers were exceptional in some form; after all, rare and uncommon crimes were most likely to entice readers to purchase the reports. Nevertheless, placing witchcraft pamphlets into a wider context signals areas where pamphleteers may have been relying more on convention than reality.

Given the importance of genre and convention in shaping witchcraft reports, it is worth considering the role that stylistic variations in England and Germany played in shaping differences between the witchcraft reports. As outlined in section two, English witchcraft reports engaged in more direct criticism of the legal proceedings relating to witchcraft than German accounts did; they also seemingly used more direct evidence, such as first-hand testimony and documentation from the trials themselves. Clark suggests that these features are unique to witchcraft reporting. She considers the long witchcraft reports that mused on the effectiveness or legitimacy of prosecutions to be 'a distinctively hybrid text' and argues that such reports have different aims to standard crime

[208] J. Wiltenburg, 'Family Murders: Gender, Reproduction, and the Discourse of Crime in Early Modern Germany', *Colloquia Germanica*, 28/4 (1995), pp. 258-9.
[209] Ibid., p. 361.
[210] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities*, p. 214.

reports.[211] Gibson, too, sees witchcraft reports as distinctive; she claims that 'early witchcraft pamphlets are unique amongst popular crime literature in their use of documentary proof'.[212] This assertion has, however, been refuted by Davies, who argues that documentary evidence was more common in witchcraft reports but not restricted to them.[213]

Some English murder reports are closer in style to the German witchcraft accounts than to English witchcraft reports. An account printed in 1573 of a murder in Bristol was printed entirely in rhyming couplets, with no documentary evidence attached.[214] In 1635, a broadsheet offered a summary of the deeds of James Franklin – accused primarily of murder but also poisoning and conjuring – in ballad form.[215] Other English crime reports were brief, usually only numbering around eight pages. Yet, even in these cases, there was a greater emphasis on a first-hand perspective than in Germany. The account from 1573 was written in the first person, purportedly by an eyewitness who had apprehended the murderer. It also listed several other witnesses to attest that the narrative was true.[216] The broadsheet in 1635 was written in the first person from the perspective of Franklin and seems to have used his confession as its basis.[217] Like English witchcraft pamphlets, English crime reports sometimes included a preface or address to the reader where the author outlined their credentials and reasons for writing the pamphlets. In one example from 1609, the anonymous author claimed to have attended the trial, writing that 'I heard the offenders trial and conviction, at the Sessions house, and according to the instructions, there delivered in evidence, have briefly set down the whole sum in effect.'[218] While the pamphlet itself is in a narrative form and does not directly use documentary evidence, there was clearly a wider recognition that a personal insight into the trial would be more appealing to readers. Moreover, although they may not have used documentation as extensively, several reports about murderers did attach

[211] Clark, *Women and Crime*, p. 171.
[212] Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, p. 114.
[213] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 37.
[214] ESTC S110536.
[215] ESTC S3213.
[216] ESTC S110536, sig. A^{v}.
[217] ESTC S3213.
[218] ESTC S750, sig. A3^{r}.

transcripts of confessions or letters written by the accused.[219] Davies is, therefore, correct. The use of documentary evidence was not exclusive to witchcraft reporting. Claims to offer first-hand insights into the trials and supplementing this claim with some documentation from the trials were recurrent features of the English crime genre more broadly.

Clark's assertion that longer witchcraft reports were distinct from other crime reports in England is also questionable. For example, a report printed in 1607, describing a murder in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes in London, was 48 pages long.[220] It included a letter from one of the accused and a transcript of the confession of another suspect.[221] The pamphlet opened by claiming that they were in 'the declining age of the world', highlighting the sinful nature of many people, and assuring readers of God's wrath.[222] It included numerous citations from the Bible, as well as quotes in Latin and Greek from Cicero and Herodotus.[223] Marginal references to Biblical passages and in-text quotations in Latin featured throughout the pamphlet. Evidently, this account was not simply reporting the news, for it was aimed at a learned audience familiar with multiple languages. It shares many similarities with longer witchcraft reports. A later report printed in 1676 is an even clearer example. The report, written by a minister named John Quicke, was 96 pages long.[224] It included an epistle, a preface, transcripts of examinations of witnesses in the case (a poisoning trial), confessions, and advice to readers as to how to conduct themselves. This case is the epitome of a 'hybrid' text, incorporating several different forms of written document not only to report the news but interpret it and directly instruct readers. Witchcraft was, therefore, clearly not the only crime to warrant this treatment in England, although it may have happened more frequently in witchcraft cases than for other crimes.

Trial documentation and longer form reports may have been more common for witchcraft because, as Davies acknowledges, it did provoke more controversy

[219] See, for example: ESTC S110927, sigs. B4^{v}-C4^{v}; ESTC S113069, sigs. B2^{v}-B4^{r}.
[220] ESTC S104665.
[221] Ibid. sigs. C4^{r-v}, D3^{v}-D4^{v}.
[222] Ibid., sigs. A3^{r}-A4^{v}.
[223] Ibid, sig. A4^{r}.
[224] ESTC R11200.

than other crimes.[225] As shown in section two, some witchcraft pamphlets were highly critical of the judicial proceedings or were printed to try and encourage further prosecutions. This approach appears to have been less common in crime reporting generally, as crime reports were commonly printed after the trial; the intermingling of providence and justice discussed earlier often led pamphleteers to follow a set narrative where the criminal was caught and prosecuted. Sometimes, though, there were cases where the perpetrator had not been found or pamphlets were written in defence of someone who had been condemned.[226] One, written in 1695, sought to vindicate a man who had been executed for murder, and argued that 'examples in history there are many of unquestionable truth, of persons condemned and executed for crimes of which they were not guilty'.[227] While witchcraft was more controversial, then, pamphleteers could and did criticise other criminal cases too.

In Germany, witchcraft pamphlets were broadly representative of the wider crime genre. The first-person perspective so common in England was a rarity across all forms of German crime reporting.[228] Occasionally, some German reports did make use of it. The pamphlets about the serial killers Wasansky and Hedloff discussed above both printed the killers' confessions in the first person.[229] Wiltenburg argues, however, that these insights into the criminal's perspective were reserved for cases 'that fit no expected model'; they were, in other words, particularly exceptional criminal cases.[230] The Wasansky pamphlet was especially noteworthy because it was an early example of a German report claiming to use trial documentation. As section two discussed, the use of court records in German pamphlets was rare. The same can be said for sixteenth-century German crime reports, although Wiltenburg suggests that, by the later seventeenth century, court records were more frequently incorporated into pamphlets.[231] Even then German pamphleteers did not make use of such records to the same extent as their

[225] Davies, 'Witchcraft and the Book Trade in Early Modern England', p. 40.
[226] See, for example: ESTC R226823, pp. 2-3.
[227] ESTC R221841, p. 3.
[228] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 155.
[229] VD16 ZV 5770; VD17 12:629682R.
[230] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, p. 155.
[231] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture,* p. 167.

English counterparts did. Overt criticism was also uncommon. One report printed in 1570 was an outlier; it was much longer than most reports, numbering forty-one pages, and it criticised handling of a theft case which resulted in a man being wrongfully executed.[232] For the most part, however, pamphleteers did not criticise authorities.[233] Overall, therefore, witchcraft reports fit neatly into the wider category of crime reporting in Germany.

3.4. Conclusion

Crime and criminality are central to studies of witchcraft. This chapter has compared attitudes to the crime of witchcraft in German and English print and demonstrated that these attitudes were shaped by wider conventions in crime reporting in each country. The significant differences in the German and English legal systems had an important influence on the criminalisation of witchcraft. One key disparity was the adoption of inquisitorial procedure in Germany and the retention of accusatorial procedure in England. Another was the designation of witchcraft as an 'exceptional crime' in some German territories. In both countries, the definition of witchcraft as a crime remained ambiguous and contested. In Germany, this was due to the existence of multiple legal codes and jurisdictions, each with their own views and priorities regarding witchcraft. In England, the ambiguity sprang from the vague wording of the statutes, which, although they became increasingly detailed and placed more emphasis on familiar spirits, never explicitly connected witchcraft with devil-worship in the same way that some German law codes did.

In print, both German and English authors sought to compensate for or capitalise on the lack of clarity in the official legal record. Chapter Two found parallels in the arguments of German and English preachers regarding their demonological understandings of witchcraft; this chapter demonstrates that such similarities continued in their treatment of witchcraft as a crime. The overlap in their arguments were, in fact, linked to their demonological position, namely the notion that witchcraft is rooted in a pact with the Devil. While it may seem that

[232] VD16 ZV 15505.
[233] Wiltenburg, *Crime and Culture*, pp. 16-17.

English preachers were stronger advocates for harsh punishments than German preachers, this chapter argues that both were primarily concerned with ensuring that witches were prosecuted for the right reason. English preachers faced more of an uphill battle in redefining the crime of witchcraft as heresy than did German preachers because of England's legal codes; this explains why they adopted a more critical tone. Both English religious tracts and some pamphlets show that some English authors considered mainland European approaches to witchcraft to be far stricter and more effective than their own. Neither German nor English preachers were zealous witch-hunters; they expressed caution about unrestrained torture or 'popular' methods of detecting witches. They were not sceptics of witch-hunts either. Their interpretation of witchcraft as heresy meant that German and English preachers categorised a far wider range of activities as witchcraft than the law did and, if their recommendations had been followed, they would likely have resulted in far more prosecutions.

While preachers focused on heresy, however, pamphleteers remained concerned primarily with harmful magic. This distinction was true in Germany and England. In emphasising the plight of victims of witchcraft, pamphleteers in both countries encouraged readers to fear witches and the tangible threat that they posed to society. In other ways, though, German and English news reports diverged. It may be expected that, given the complex web of legal approaches to witchcraft in Germany, there would be a wider variety of attitudes to its prosecution in German news reports. Yet, this was not the case in practice. German witchcraft pamphlets were, in fact, surprisingly uniform. Some could be considered overt witch-hunting propaganda, while others tacitly supported the proceedings. There was very little, if any, direct criticism of the witchcraft trials, although it is possible that such sources have not survived. English news reports were, in contrast, much more detailed. They offered personal insights into individual trials through documentation and, unlike the German reports, often engaged directly with debates about the effectiveness of witchcraft prosecutions. To an extent, these differences are explained by the different prosecution procedures and access to trial documentation in each country.

This chapter argues, however, that the key to understanding these differences is to place witchcraft pamphlets in the context of the wider crime genre. Witchcraft has sometimes been considered exceptional and, consequently, the influence of the crime genre on witchcraft reporting has not been fully recognised. German and English witchcraft pamphlets shared a number of characteristics with crime news reporting, particularly in their sensational rhetoric, their moral message, and their focus on the suffering of innocent victims. The witchcraft cases reported in these pamphlets may have been unusual, reflecting a wider tendency to report only the most shocking and dramatic crimes. They were not, however, unique. An understanding of the tropes used in English and German crime reporting shows that, far from being a distinct genre, witchcraft reports were shaped by reporting styles and methods in crime news as a whole. English witchcraft pamphlets were not alone in their use of trial documentation or their criticism of judicial proceedings; similarly, the short German witchcraft pamphlets reflect the narrative form and structure of other crime reports. This context is particularly crucial for comparative research; without it, there is a risk that the differences between German and English pamphleteers' approaches to the crime of witchcraft may be misinterpreted as unique to witchcraft. In fact, this chapter demonstrates that, at a theoretical level, there was a clear overlap in German and English attitudes to witchcraft as a crime.

Chapter Four: Identifying Witchcraft

The witch is an enigma. Historically (and in some countries today) being labelled a witch was a serious threat and potentially life-threatening.[1] Much like the label 'heretic', 'witch' was generally an identity imposed on an individual, rather than self-fashioned. Yet, in certain circles today – namely in some feminist and neopagan groups – the witch is an inspiration, representing the forerunner of radical opposition to patriarchal structures.[2] This appropriation of the witch figure makes establishing the early modern witch identity a thorny issue for historians. The problem is compounded by the extant source material, particularly trial records, which offer an incomplete picture of those accused and their social backgrounds.[3] Even witches' confessions, recorded in trial documents and news reports in the first person, are not unmediated windows to their thoughts and feelings.[4] There are, therefore, a number of challenges associated with recovering the identity of the witches themselves.

It is possible, however, to explore how the witch identity was moulded, constructed, and imposed by others. This chapter compares the creation of the witch identity in German and English print. Section one examines the key characteristics of the witch identity in both countries, starting with the theme that has dominated scholarship on witchcraft and identity: sex and gender. The notion that 'witch' is synonymous with 'woman' is pervasive and enduring. In March 2022, for instance, Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, issued a formal apology to all those executed for witchcraft in Scotland during the early modern witch trials. The apology was timed to coincide with International Women's Day, and during her speech Sturgeon claimed that witches were prosecuted 'in many

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[1] R. Hutton, *The Witch: A History of Fear, From the Ancient Times to the Present* (London, 2017), pp. 28-34.
[2] L. Zwissler, '"*In Memorium Maleficium*": Feminist and Pagan Mobilizations of the Burning Times', in L. Kounine and M. Oestling (eds.), *Emotions in the History of Witchcraft* (London, 2016), pp. 249-68; L. J. Jencson, 'Wicca', in J. Dillinger (ed.) *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 317.
[3] B. P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (4th edn., London, 2016), pp. 143-4.
[4] L. Kounine, *Imagining the Witch: Emotions, Gender, and Selfhood in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, 2018), p. 7.

cases, just because they were women.'[5] The description of a recent popular history podcast on the subject of the European witch-hunts read: 'enter the dark days of the European Witch Craze, where no woman was safe'.[6] The suggestion that witch-hunting was, in reality, women-hunting emerged from second-wave feminist scholarship in the 1960s and 1970s. Andrea Dworkin and Mary Daly argued the witch-hunts were 'gynocide', claimed erroneously that the hunts cost the lives of nine million women, and suggested that the high proportion of widows and spinsters among the accused is evidence that witch-hunts targeted women 'whose crime was independence.'[7] These claims have been criticised for their ahistorical use of terms such as misogyny and patriarchy, neglect of archival evidence, and their refusal to treat male witches as a worthy subject of investigation.[8] They did, nevertheless, provide the impetus for wide-ranging research examining the connections between gender, sex, and witchcraft.

The subsequent outpouring of research is, in fact, too extensive to comprehensively outline here. Fortunately, several detailed and instructive historiographical reviews of the field already exist.[9] Recent major developments include the sustained incorporation of male witches and masculinities, exploration of the link between gender and emotions in witchcraft prosecutions, and a recognition that research needs to consider 'how and to what extent gender was

[5] 'Meeting of the Scottish Parliament 8 March 2022: International Women's Day' <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/official-report/what-was-said-in-parliament/meeting-of-parliament-08-03-2022?meeting=13624&iob=123634#1848> accessed: 1.4.2022.

[6] G. Jenner (2019), You're Dead to Me: The Witch Craze [Podcast] 20 September: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07nx05j>.

[7] A. Dworkin, *Woman Hating* (New York, NY, 1974), pp. 125-50; M. Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism, with a New Introduction by the author* (London, 1991), pp. 179-85.

[8] A. Rowlands, 'Witchcraft and Gender in Early Modern Europe', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 451-3; L. Apps and A. C. Gow, *Gender at the Stake: Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester, 2003), p. 26.

[9] E. Whitney, 'The Witch "She"/The Historian "He": Gender and the Historiography of the European Witch-Hunts', Journal of Women's History, 7/3 (1995), pp. 77-101; U. Bender-Wittmann, 'Gender in der Hexenforschung: Ansätze und Perspektiven' in I. Ahrendt-Schulte, D. R. Bauer, S. Lorenz and J. M. Schmidt (eds.), *Geschlecht, Magie und Hexenforschung* (Tübingen, 2002), pp. 13-38; Rowlands, 'Witchcraft and Gender in Early Modern Europe', pp. 449-67.

intrinsic to the identity of the witch.'[10] The first section of this chapter discusses gender but places it within a wider framework of social categories including age, familial connections, wealth, and employment. It demonstrates how, through selective focus and reporting, German and English pamphleteers intentionally manipulated and moulded the identity of the witch in their reports. In many respects, there are considerable parallels between the image of the witch that German and English print constructed, particularly in preachers' sermons and tracts. They were, however, not identical; some differences emerged in the use of tropes, such as the witch-midwife. This chapter argues these differences stem from distinctions between German and English witchcraft discussed earlier in this thesis.

Having explored the various characteristics associated with witches, section two of this chapter considers whether the witch stereotype changed over time. Some historians, particularly of German witchcraft, have suggested that the witch stereotype – an old, poor, woman – broke down during periods of intense witch-hunting or in the immediate aftermath.[11] This argument was first made by Hans Christian Erik Midelfort, who focused on the increased number of men among the accused during the large-scale witch-hunts in the southern parts of the Empire in the 1610s and 1620s.[12] Historians have also associated the formation of new witch identities, such as the child-witch, with the latter stages of the witch-hunts.[13] England's witch-hunts never reached the same heights as their German counterparts, but the East Anglian hunts (1645-7) marked significant departure from previous cases. Just as this period has been considered unique in England for its emphasis on diabolism (a claim this thesis disputes in Chapter Two), so too have some suggested that these trials involved unusual suspects because of the

[10] R. Schulte, *Man as Witch: Male Witches in Central Europe,* trans. L. Froome-Döring (Basingstoke, 2009); A. Rowlands, 'Not the Usual Suspects? Male, Witchcraft, and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe', in A. Rowlands (ed.), Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 1-30; Kounine, *Imagining the Witch*, p. 90.
[11] T. Robisheaux, 'The German Witch Trials' in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 187.
[12] H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562-1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, CA, 1972), pp. 178-85.
[13] L. Roper, '"Evil Imaginings and Fantasies": Child-Witches and the End of the Witch Craze', *Past & Present*, 167 (2000), p. 109.

'exceptional circumstances.'[14] Although diverse witch identities were present in print during these periods, this chapter demonstrates that the witch identity was never fixed and could always be adapted. The flexibility of the witch identity was fundamental for preachers and pamphleteers in both countries; its universality made the moralistic warnings of the reports and tracts widely applicable.

In spite of this adaptability, there was one core and quintessential feature of the witch identity in German and English print: a witch was someone who had submitted to the Devil. The final section of this chapter illustrates how rhetoric focused on wicked and devilish traits in both countries. It also considers how this wickedness was conveyed to readers. In England, physical appearance played a significant role in identifying witches, particularly due to the focus on searching for the witches' mark. In Germany, this concept was not so readily accepted, and physical appearance was consequently less important. In both countries, however, an individual's behaviour, and, in particular, deviation from social or religious norms, was a clear indicator of an inherent wickedness. Johannes Dillinger suggests that, rather than seeking commonalities in the social characteristics of those accused of witchcraft, scholars should consider that the individual's reputation for conflict or disruption was the key to their identification as a witch: he terms this the 'evil people paradigm.'[15] This chapter supports this paradigm and demonstrates that it applies to both German and English contexts. Overall, this chapter argues that there were significant parallels in the characterisation of the witch in both countries. The witch identity was intentionally unfixed, offering pamphleteers and preachers the opportunity to adapt and mould it for sensational and didactic purposes. Fundamentally, the witch was portrayed as a wicked, diabolical other as a contrast to the ideal Christian reader.

4.1. Key Characteristics

In England, around 90 percent of those executed for witchcraft were women; in Germany, the figure was closer to 80 percent, although this masks significant

[14] A. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London, 1970), p. 162.
[15] J. Dillinger, 'Germany - "The Mother of the Witches", in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 98.

regional variations across the Empire.[16] These statistics are particularly notable because the female criminal was an anomaly in early modern England and Germany, although the exact proportions of men and women accused varied from place to place. Some major European cities such as London, Leiden, and Glasgow had relatively high proportions of female criminals (30 to 50 percent), but others, such as Frankfurt am Main, had a much lower rate of female prosecution (22 percent).[17] Nevertheless, the majority of those officially prosecuted were men.[18] Men and women were also traditionally accused of different crimes. Men were the chief offenders in major crimes including treason, heresy, and murder. Women tended to be involved in crimes which undermined public order, such as slander, scolding, sexual impropriety, or property offences.[19] Witchcraft was one of only two major crimes (the other being infanticide) commonly attributed to women.

It may be expected that contemporaries devoted significant attention to explaining the connection between witches and women, but Stuart Clark writes that it is 'striking' that demonologists 'showed little interest [...] in exploring the gender basis of witchcraft.'[20] He suggests that the connection between witchcraft and women was 'so obvious to them, so deep-rooted in their beliefs and behaviour, that they felt no need to elaborate on it.'[21] Examining the writing of German and English preachers, however, shows that Clark overstates their indifference to this topic. It is true, as Clark notes, that some preachers, such as David Meder in Germany and Henry Holland in England, either offered cursory comments on the subject or neglected it entirely.[22] Yet, it was far more common for preachers to directly address the issue. In fact, they often devoted a specific section of their sermons and tracts to variations of the question 'why are more witches women

[16] J. Sharpe, 'Witch Hunts in Britain', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 151; Dillinger, 'Germany -"The Mother of the Witches"', p. 97.
[17] J. Kamp, *Crime, Gender and Social Control in Early Modern Frankfurt am Main* (Leiden 2019), p. 6.
[18] G. Walker and J. Kermode, 'Introduction' in J. Kermode & G. Walker (eds.), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), p. 4.
[19] S. Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (London, 2003), p. 34.
[20] S. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1999), p. 115.
[21] Ibid., p. 117.
[22] Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, p. 117; VD17 12:205316B, ff. 21^{v}-22^{v}; ESTC S104153.

than men?'[23] Gender was the characteristic that preachers most consistently returned to in their descriptions of witches. Granted, their explanations for the connection were hardly novel. Both German and English preachers cited Eve as evidence that the Devil targeted women over men; preachers in both countries also offered several character traits that they associated with women – weakness, impatience, obstinance, propensity to gossip, and lust – as explanations for their association with witchcraft.[24] Several preachers also repeated a proverbial phrase: 'the more women, the more witches.'[25]

Nevertheless, it is incorrect to suggest that preachers simply took this connection for granted. The majority stressed that witches could be of either sex. William Perkins, for example, stated that 'in this general term, I comprehend both sexes [...] men and women, excluding neither from being witches.'[26] Richard Bernard not only agreed but offered biblical examples of male witches (Balaam and Elymas) and female witches (the Witch of Endor).[27] In Germany, Meder noted in his definition of a witch that 'they may be a man or a woman.' Bernhard Waldschmidt and Christian Otto both likewise commented that witches existed among 'both men and women.'[28] While the ideas that these writers put forward were not particularly new or innovative, the sustained engagement with the connection between witchcraft and women across multiple texts throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicates that it was significant to both the preachers and their audience.

Alongside scriptural evidence and histories, some preachers also drew their arguments from contemporary reports. Bernard, in particular, references several famous cases where the women outnumbered men, including the witches of Warboys (1593), the Lancashire witches (1613), and the witches of Belvoir Castle

[23] See, for example: ESTC S115983, pp. 40-43; ESTC S108665, p. 206; ESTC S101683, pp. 91-95; VD17 23:258775K, sig. Dii^{r}; VD17 23:328851P, pp. 7-8; VD17 12:627125P, pp. 30-31; VD17 14:679199Q, pp. 12-14.
[24] ESTC S115983, pp. 40-43; ESTC S108665, p. 206; ESTC S101683, pp. 91-95; VD17 23:258775K, sig. Dii^{r}; VD17 23:328851P, pp. 7-8; VD17 12:627125P, pp. 30-31; VD17 14:679199Q, pp. 12-14.
[25] ESTC S114525, p. 169; VD17 12:627125P, p. 30.
[26] ESTC S114525, p. 168.
[27] ESTC S101683, p. 91.
[28] VD17 12:627125P, p. 30; VD17 14:679199Q, p. 12.

(1619).[29] All three of these cases featured in news reports, demonstrating that preachers such as Bernard were, at least in part, using news reports to construct their concept of the witch identity.[30] Most German and English news reports solely discussed female witches. The reports' illustrations particularly linked witchcraft to women. One of the earliest English reports, for example, warned its reader about 'feminine dames [...] whom Satan has infected' and contained depictions of each of the three women featured in the text.[31] In 1579, another English report included two illustrations of women interacting with familiars.[32] In Germany, the first of the Osnabrück *Hexenzeitungen* (1588) featured a woman on the title page whose crooked stance and supporting stick gave her an aged appearance, reaching out to a scaly, horned creature (the Devil).[33] Reinhard Lutz's report (1571) portrayed four women, naked or barely dressed, with long flowing hair, gathered around a cooking pot with bones strewn on the ground around them.[34] The nakedness, loose hair, and the cooking pot are all symbols which Charles Zika suggests represented the connection between witchcraft and women in art during the late fifteenth century.[35] The inclusion of this woodcut in a news report, therefore, demonstrates the dissemination of learned ideas about witch identities to a wider audience. The connection was reinforced in the text of some reports. Several German reports from the late 1570s and early 1580s included the phrase 'as the old saying goes, what the devil cannot do himself, he does through an old woman', suggesting that it was a received wisdom that the Devil usually chose old women to do his bidding.[36]

These reports did not merely reflect the high proportion of women prosecuted. Malcolm Gaskill notes, for example, that the report about witches in Maidstone in 1652 was selective in its description of the witches: the report focused on six widowed women, neglecting the five married women and six men who were

[29] ESTC S101683, p. 92.
[30] ESTC S95729; ESTC S114979; ESTC S102363.
[31] ESTC S2279, sigs. Aiii^{v}, [Avi^{r}], Biii^{r}.
[32] ESTC S101967, sigs. A^{r}, Av^{r}.
[33] VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p. 1].
[34] VD16 L 7693, sig. A^{r}.
[35] C. Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London, 2007), pp. 12-26.
[36] VD16 ZV 21532, sig. Aiii^{r}; VD16 ZV 28968, sig. Aiii^{r}; VD16 N 624, sig. B^{r}.

tried at the same assize.[37] In other cases, the male witch was acknowledged but downplayed. Two reports printed in 1579 discussed the same trial in Windsor. The first named 'four notorious witches' on its title page: Elizabeth Stile alias Rockingham, Mother Dutten, Mother Devell, and Mother Margaret.[38] The text focused on the testimony of Elizabeth Stile, who began by naming other witches. The first name she gave was Father Rosimond.[39] Father Rosimond reappeared later in Elizabeth's confession, as she described meeting with the other witches to perform 'heinous and villainous practices': he is, once again, the first person she named.[40] The second report was written by Richard Galis, an apparent first-hand victim of the witches. Galis also referred to Father Rosimond. He described seeking Father Rosimond's advice about suspected sorcery and witchcraft, indicating that Father Rosimond acted as a cunning man.[41] Galis reported that Elizabeth named 'diverse men as well as women, that used to do much harm by sorcery, witchcraft, and enchantments.'[42] In both pamphlets, however, Elizabeth's naming of Father Rosimond as a witch was disregarded in the overall narrative. The pamphlets informed readers that Elizabeth and three other women that she named were executed, but Father Rosimond's fate remained unclear. Galis's choice of language makes his position clear. He talked of how the 'sisters' gathered to perform their sorcery – a gathering at which Elizabeth states Father Rosimond was present – and, in his conclusion, warns his readers about the 'daughters of the devil'.[43] The reader is left with the distinct impression that witches are women.

German news reports employed a similar method, as a pamphlet printed in 1582 demonstrates. In the title, the writer chose to refer to 225 '*Weiber*' which translates as 'women' or, alternatively, 'hags'. [44] A common choice of terminology among pamphleteers was '*Unholden*' (fiends), which encompassed both men and

[37] M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent: Stereotypes and the Background to Accusations', in J. Barry, M. Hester, and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 261.
[38] ESTC S101967, sig. A^{r}.
[39] Ibid., sig. Av^{v}.
[40] Ibid., sig. [Avi^{v}].
[41] ESTC S124945, sig. [Ciii^{v}].
[42] Ibid., sig. D^{v}.
[43] Ibid., sigs. Cii^{v}, [Diiii^{r}].
[44] VD16 ZV 29564.

women. [45] The decision to use *Weiber* in this case, therefore, indicates that the pamphleteer particularly wanted to emphasise that the witches were female, an odd decision considering that the text included scattered references to male witches. It stated that '44 women and three men' were captured and burned in the county of Montbéliard.[46] It also mentioned a male sorcerer (*Hexenmeister*) in Colmar.[47] At the end of the report, however, the author warns of Satan's power over 'his weak instruments of the female sex'.[48] Evidently, this pamphleteer believed that witches were women, despite the evidence in their own report to the contrary. These examples demonstrate that in both England and Germany, news pamphlets did not simply relay facts, but actively sought to mould the witch identity to fit an ideal image.

Andrew Pettegree suggests that in popular print there was 'a particular fascination with the crimes of women [...] because they were so rare'.[49] Nevertheless, while the connection between witchcraft and women was generally emphasised, it was not a fixed binary. Several prominent male witches hit the headlines in Germany and England including Peter Stumpf, the Pappenheimer family, Lewis Gaufredy, and Doctor Lambe.[50] Most of these male witches featured in translations of news from abroad, or in Doctor Lambe's case, had a connection to political unrest. The atypical circumstances surrounding each of these reports may have contributed to their sensational appeal. In England, the men were described using particularly hyperbolic language. In the Stumpf report, for example, the pamphleteer wrote that 'of all other that ever lived, none was comparable to this hellhound'.[51] Doctor Lambe, similarly, was proclaimed 'the Devil of our nation', with the ballad reporting his murder noting that 'such a wicked wretch in England had liv'd seldom'.[52] The male witches were also

[45] See, for example: VD16 ZV 11599, VD17 1:691858R.
[46] VD16 ZV 29564, sig. [Aiii^{r}].
[47] Ibid., sig. [Aiiii^{r}].
[48] Ibid., sig. [Aiiii^{r}].
[49] A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (London, 2014), p. 92.
[50] *Ein Zauberer Stump Peter genant* 1589; *Newe Zeitung von einem Bawren* Augsburg 1589; *Newe Zeitung von einem pauren* Nuremberg 1589; VD16 W 516; ESTC S101735; ESTC S115808; VD16 ZV 21490; ESTC S102950; ESTC S126177.
[51] ESTC S101735, p. 2.
[52] ESTC S126177.

frequently accused of multiple crime alongside witchcraft, including arson, rape, theft, and murder. While the very existence of female criminals as witches fulfilled the sensationalism quota for German and English pamphleteers, male witches could and did feature prominently if the circumstances were especially shocking.

Although gender now dominates the study of early modern witchcraft, the witch identity was multifaceted. Historians increasingly emphasise that, although gender is an 'indispensable analytical category', it should not automatically take priority; there is a risk, warns Rowlands, of making gender 'do too much work.'[53] One other significant factor is age: there is a consensus that 'older women are over-represented among those accused of witchcraft in many places, even in places where male witches dominated.'[54] Lyndal Roper states that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Germany 'the old woman was the abiding stereotypical witch.'[55] In England, Keith Thomas claims that 'witches were primarily women, and probably old ones.'[56] It is difficult to be more precise, because age was not consistently recorded in trial documents in either country. A similar challenge presents itself when examining news pamphlets, as these sources also often neglected to mention the witches' age. As discussed above, German reports from the late 1570s and early 1580s did specifically emphasise 'old' women as likely accomplices of the Devil. In these cases, the reports also provided specific ages for the witches to support their claim. Hans Kuntz's report concerning a witch and a Jesuit stated that the witch was seventy-three years old.[57] A report from Bernburg included 'three old women', one of whom was ninety years old.[58] Ages were also sometimes given in England when the witch was exceptionally old. Of the three witches discussed in a report on trials in Chelmsford, Essex, in 1589, only the age of the first, Joan Cunny, was provided. She was eighty years old.[59] This tendency to mention the advanced age of witches was not limited to the sixteenth century.

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[53] J. Dillinger, *Hexen und Magie* (2nd edn., Frankfurt am Main, 2018), p. 126; Rowlands, 'Witchcraft and Gender', p. 466.
[54] R. M. Toivo, 'Witchcraft and Gender', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 224.
[55] Roper, 'Evil Imaginings and Fantasies', p. 123.
[56] K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971), p. 671.
[57] VD16 ZV 21532, sig. Av.
[58] VD16 N 624, sig. Aiir.
[59] ESTC S119280, sig. Aiiir.

In 1653, a pamphlet reported the trial of Anne Bodenham. She too was eighty years old.[60] The trend in reporting witches' ages only when they were particularly old suggests that, as with gender, pamphleteers created a model version of a witch in their reports.

Alan Macfarlane suggests that contemporary commentators in England provide further proof of the tendency to connect witchcraft and old age.[61] While preachers did not discuss age as frequently as they explored gender, it featured briefly in their writing. George Gifford suggested that the Devil was skilled in luring 'the poor silly old woman to be a witch'.[62] Perkins singled out 'aged women' as 'especially' likely to be witches.[63] Similarly, in Germany, Otto wrote that 'one finds sorcery predominantly and most commonly among old women, in part because of their weakness and in part their wickedness.'[64] Otto's emphasis on the weakness of older women was a theme that earlier German preachers also addressed. Daniel Schaller argued that the Devil was more enticing to those who lacked power and authority, and that he was particularly successful with 'the old, lonely, and downcast'.[65] Likewise, Joachim Zehner highlighted the isolation and distress of older women as a reason why they were targeted by the Devil.[66] In some ways, this association of witchcraft with the elderly, vulnerable, and isolated could lend weight to Macfarlane and Thomas's charity-refused paradigm. They suggested that the needy – primarily older, widowed women – were vulnerable to witchcraft accusations because of guilt about unwillingness or inability to offer charity, a shift which they identify in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England.[67] This theory has been heavily critiqued. Gaskill, for example, questions the suggestion that witches were vulnerable and marginal figures, noting that his own research and the research of scholars across Europe indicates that the witch

[60] ESTC R207118, p. 1.
[61] Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England,* p. 161.
[62] ESTC S103141, sig. I2^{v}.
[63] ESTC S114525, p. 186.
[64] VD17 14:679199Q, p. 13.
[65] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Dii^{r}.
[66] VD17 23:328851P, p. 7.
[67] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 665; Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 205.

was often 'active and integrated in local society' and a 'competitor for power, space, and resources'.[68]

In fact, the characterisation of witches as vulnerable elderly women was something that some preachers in both countries disputed. As Raisa Maria Toivo observes, the notion of the 'old impoverished female witch' often appeared in sceptical writing on witchcraft which sought to portray the trials as unjust.[69] In response to this scepticism, German and English preachers broadened the scope of the witchcraft stereotype. Meder argued that witches were 'not only old women [...] but also men, young journeymen, women of a young age, virgins, even boys and girls.'[70] Bernard similarly claimed that witches were 'of all sorts, young, middle, and old age'.[71] Alexander Roberts argued most forcefully against the assumption that witches are 'melancholic, aged, and ignorant women, deluded in their imagination', stating instead that many

> are not stricken in years, but some even in the flower of their youth be nuzzled up in the same and convicted to be practisers thereof; neither be they overflowed with a black melancholic humour, dazzling the phantasies, but have their understanding clear, and wits as quick as other.[72]

Roberts's suggestion that some witches were 'in the flower of their youth' parallels Meder's claim that old women did most harm 'not in their extreme old age [...] but in their youth.'[73] These statements indicate that witches could perform witchcraft for most of their life, a notion also displayed in news pamphlets in both countries. One English witch, Elizabeth Francis, appeared in two separate news reports thirteen years apart (1566 and 1579 respectively); she also appeared in trial records in 1572 and 1573.[74] Clearly, therefore, Elizabeth had a longstanding reputation as a witch prior to her final trial and execution. Commonly, pamphlets reported that witches had first encountered the Devil decades ago. Elizabeth Demdike, one of the Lancaster witches, reportedly met the Devil twenty years

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[68] Gaskill, 'Witchcraft in Early Modern Kent', p. 265.
[69] Toivo, 'Witchcraft and Gender', p. 224.
[70] VD17 12:205316B, f. 22^{v}.
[71] ESTC S101683, p. 91.
[72] ESTC S115983, pp. 4-5.
[73] VD17 12:205316B, f. 21^{v}.
[74] ESTC S2279; ESTC S118977; M. Gibson, *Early Modern Witches: Witchcraft Cases in Contemporary Writing (*London, 2000), p. 41.

previously.[75] Henry Goodcole stated in his report about Elizabeth Sawyer (1621) that 'a great and long suspicion was held of this person to be a witch'; he later recorded that Sawyer confessed she first met the Devil eight years ago.[76] Male witches could also have a long history: John Palmer, one of two witches in a pamphlet printed in 1649, apparently confessed that he had been a witch for sixty years.[77] Similar accounts appeared in German reports. Peter Stumpf, the notorious werewolf-sorcerer, confessed he had been in league with the Devil for twenty-five years prior to his capture.[78] In a report printed in 1650, one of the witches had reportedly been coupled with the Devil for thirty-seven years.[79] These examples demonstrate that, as many historians including Robin Briggs and Rowlands have argued, the reason that witches were often old is because they had built up notoriety over many years prior to a formal accusation.[80] The concept that people had secretly been witches for decades also offered a neat narrative arc for pamphleteers, whereby the witch was suddenly unmasked by divine intervention and their true nature shockingly exposed. Additionally, it added to the threat posed by witches, suggesting that they could be hidden within the community for years undetected. It should be acknowledged, therefore, that in some of these cases pamphleteers may have exaggerated the length of the witches' allegiance with the Devil for dramatic effect.

Seeking to explain the existence of young witches, preachers in both countries suggested that they were inducted into the craft by their parents. Perkins wrote that:

> our witches are wont to communicate their skill to others by tradition, to teach and instruct their children and posterity, and to initiate them in the grounds and practises of their own trade [...] as by the confessions recorded in the courts of all countries.[81]

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[75] ESTC S114979, sig. B2^{v}.
[76] ESTC S117575, sigs. [A4^{r}], C2^{v}.
[77] ESTC R206137, p. 2.
[78] VD16 W 516, sig. A^{v}.
[79] VD17 1:693782T, sig. Aii^{v}.
[80] R. Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (London, 1996), p. 264; A. Rowlands, 'Witchcraft and Old Women in Early Modern Germany', *Past & Present*, 173 (2001), p. 79.
[81] ESTC S114525, pp. 192-3.

Bernard also proposed that witchcraft could be taught; in his discussion of why witches were mainly women, he observed that women were 'less able to hide what they know from others, and therefore in this respect, are more ready to bee teachers of witchcraft to others, and to leave it to children, servants, or to some others.'[82] In Germany, Waldschmidt claimed that 'many children come to [witchcraft] young and small, being offered to the Devil by their parents.' News pamphlets in both countries contained examples of this transmission of witchcraft knowledge from one generation to another. One German news ballad, printed in 1581, reported how an eight-year-old girl had demonstrated her ability to perform weather magic to her father; when questioned by her father about the source of her skill, she claimed that she had learned it from her mother.[83] Warfield notes that this report was not, in fact, based on contemporary events, but was adapted from the *Malleus Maleficarum* and disguised as a current news report.[84] While this discovery means that the pamphlet was not an insight into real child witches in the late-sixteenth century, it is indicative of a popular interest in the concept of child witches. There are also several instances of parents offering their offspring to the Devil in marriage.[85] One of the first English witchcraft reports (1566) also included a mother and daughter, Agnes and Joan Waterhouse, both accused of witchcraft. According to Joan, her mother had intended to teach her witchcraft but had not actually done so; nevertheless, Joan copied her mother's actions and was able to summon a familiar.[86] Thomas Potts' account of the witches of Lancaster (1613) showed that witchcraft could be passed down through the generations: Elizabeth Demdike, the ringleader of the witches, was the mother of Elizabeth Device and the grandmother of Alison Device.[87] Jennet Device, one of Elizabeth Device's other daughters, gave evidence against her mother and her brother James Device.[88]

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[82] ESTC S101683, p. 93.
[83] *Von einer alten Zeuberin* 1581, sig. Aii^{r}-Aiii^{v}.
[84] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany: An Investigation of Non-Periodical Newsheets and Pamphlets, 1533-1669' (PhD. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2013), p. 265.
[85] See, for example: VD16 ZV 29564, sig. [Aiii^{r}]; VD16 W 516, sig. Aii^{v}.
[86] ESTC S2279, sigs. Biii^{r-v}.
[87] ESTC S114979, sig. [C4^{r}].
[88] Ibid., sigs. I^{v}-I2^{v}.

Taken together, these cases point to another facet of the witch identity: the witch-family. This concept has only recently gained the attention of witchcraft scholars of Germany and England. Rowlands explored the witch-family concept in a close analysis of one example in Rothenburg ob der Tauber in 1689.[89] In a study with particular relevance for this present work, Deborah Willis examined the witch-family in Elizabethan and Jacobean print.[90] Willis suggests that the witch-family is a trope which sits alongside other stereotypes of the solitary witch or the member of a witch coven, and one that deserves further examination.[91] Certainly, the language used in both German and English print evoked a connection between witchcraft and family. As mentioned previously, English pamphleteer Galis referred to witches as 'sisters' and 'daughters of the devil.'[92] Two German pamphlets, one printed in 1587 and another in 1616, referred to the notion that one of witches was locally known as the witch mother (*Hexenmutter*).[93] Similarly, a pamphlet from 1580 referred to one individual as a 'witch daughter' (*Hexentochter*).[94] In these examples, the language of familial relationships was used figuratively, indicating that witches were part of one witch-family and related to one another because of their common association with the Devil. Yet – as the cases above demonstrate – witches were also often literally related. Familial connections to convicted witches could make people vulnerable to accusations. One report from a significant trial in Essex, 1645, for example, commented that Elizabeth Clark and her mother were suspected of witchcraft 'for that the said Elizabeth's mother and some other of her kinsfolk did suffer death for witchcraft and murder.'[95]

Notably, the familial language used to describe witches and their relationship focused primarily on female relationships. Willis suggests that this was the predominant form that witch-families took, with the witch-mother often

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[89] A. Rowlands, 'Gender, Ungodly Parents and a Witch Family in Seventeenth-Century Germany', *Past & Present*, 232 (2016), pp. 44-86.
[90] D. Willis, 'The Witch-Family in Elizabethan and Jacobean Print Culture', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 13/1 (2013), pp. 4-31.
[91] Ibid., p. 6.
[92] ESTC S124945, sigs. Ciiᵛ, [Diiiiʳ].
[93] VD16 W 1261, sig. A4ʳ; VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p. 5].
[94] VD16 W 1260, sig. Aiᵛ.
[95] ESTC R200218, sig. Aʳ.

taking a leading role.[96] Rather than seeing this portrayal as an inversion of traditional gender roles, however, Willis claims that 'the witch-mothers were at their most normative when they were passing on spirits and schooling their daughters in witchcraft, and they were acting just like other mothers when they passed along a special cookpot or family recipe.'[97] Rowlands, on the other hand, claims that in Germany the witch family could be 'dual-gendered'; she points to the Pappenheimer family, whose trial and execution featured in several news reports around 1600, as clear evidence of this fact.[98] The Pappenheimer witch family was dominated by men. Yet, although this case may be the most notorious witch-family in German print, it was not typical. Like English witchcraft pamphlets, the majority of the German news reports featuring witch-families focused on female witches. There were reports in both countries where male witches instructed children or subordinates on the art of witchcraft, but in these cases, there did not appear to be a familial connection.[99] Possibly the reason for the dominance of the female witch-family is because, as Rowlands notes, the dual-gendered witch-family was a stronger trope in Catholic territories.[100] The majority of the German news pamphlets were printed in Protestant regions.

Rowlands also cautions against Willis's supposition that the witch-family was an original concept in Jacobean England, noting that it was likely influenced by wider developments across Europe.[101] Comparison of print in both countries confirms Rowlands' argument, demonstrating that the witch-family was indeed a feature of both German and English thought. The shared characteristics also indicate that Willis's claim that concerns about the witch-family sprung from 'the Protestant project of making the individual household into an instrument of ideological reform' is equally applicable to the German texts.[102] As Rowlands and Willis highlight, the witch-family represented concerns about the corrupting influence of bad or 'ungodly' parents who failed to educate their children in the

[96] Willis, 'The Witch-Family', p. 9.
[97] Ibid, p. 9.
[98] Rowlands, 'Gender, Ungodly Parents, and a Witch Family', p. 75.
[99] ESTC R206137, p. 4; VD17 1:693643U, sig. Aii^{r}.
[100] Rowlands, 'Gender, Ungodly Parents, and a Witch Family', p. 85.
[101] Ibid., p. 76.
[102] Willis, 'The Witch-Family', p. 11.

correct Christian manner.[103] The recurrence of familial relationships in German and English witchcraft print, therefore, reflects the moralising and reforming message of many of these sources.

Willis suggests that reports about witch-families 'contributed to an emerging discourse about families of "the undeserving poor" whose hereditary baseness might combine with a perverse education to express itself in a variety of criminal or antisocial behaviours.'[104] Here, Willis connects the witch identity to class, social status, and wealth. She highlights several English news pamphlets to illustrate this connection. One is a report from Northamptonshire, printed in 1612. The author stated that those tempted into witchcraft were 'of the meanest, and the basest sort both in birth and breeding, so are they the most uncapable of any instruction to the contrary'.[105] One witch, Agnes Brown, was described as 'of poor parentage and poorer education'; another, Arthur Bill, was labelled 'a wretched, poor man, both in state and mind.'[106] Another case highlighted by Willis is the Flower family in Leicestershire. This case – reported in a news ballad and a longer pamphlet – was a clear case of conflict between the rich and poor. Joan Flower and her daughters Margaret and Philippa were originally employed by the Earl of Rutland, but they were dismissed because of their poor reputation.[107] As revenge, they cursed the Earl of Rutland's family, resulting in the death of his son. Some English preachers also stressed the propensity of poor, ill-educated people to fall for the Devil's tricks. According to Perkins, those who lived 'in base and low estate, whether in regard of poverty, or want of honour and reputation' would be 'moved to yield himself to the devil [...] to relieve his poverty, and to purchase himself some credit and countenance amongst men.'[108] Bernard commented that most witches were 'ignorant, filly, sottish persons.'[109] And while Willis's study concludes in the 1620s, associations between poverty and diabolic temptation to witchcraft endured in later news pamphlets. A report from 1658 described how one woman,

[103] Rowlands, 'Gender, Ungodly Parents, and a Witch Family', p. 85; Willis, 'The Witch-Family', p. 13.
[104] Willis, 'The Witch-Family', p. 20.
[105] ESTC S115086, sig. A3^{r}.
[106] Ibid., sig. B2^{r}, C^{v}.
[107] ESTC S102363; ESTC S126176.
[108] ESTC S114525, p. 10.
[109] ESTC S101683, p. 95.

Lydia Rogers, 'formerly a great professor of religion', was persuaded to sign a contract with the Devil because he offered her money when she was in financial distress.[110] In 1685, a report described a woman's encounter with the Devil; he sought to persuade her to join him by 'alleging her poverty, and telling many things that had happened to her through want and penury.'[111] Although in this case the woman was able to resist the Devil's advances, it is clear that the connection between witchcraft and poverty persisted.

In some respects, the connection between witches, poverty, and ignorance was also present in German print. This chapter has already demonstrated that some preachers, including Zehner and Schaller, considered the needy to be prime candidates for diabolic temptation. Indeed, Schaller specifically claimed that the Devil had more success 'with poor women than with the rich.'[112] In 1660, Waldschmidt identified poverty as a key characteristic of a potential witch, noting that poor widows and women who were burdened with debts they could not pay would often turn to the Devil.[113] Poverty was also a recurring feature in early German news pamphlets and tracts. Reinhard Lutz's report contained several cases where poverty was the impetus for individuals to pledge themselves to the Devil. One stated that the Devil first sought her out 'in her poverty and distress'.[114] Another reported that she was 'extremely poor' and had 'neither money nor bread in the house'.[115] A third lamented that she was 'greatly afflicted' when the Devil first visited her.[116] Walpurga Hausmännin's confession (1587 and 1588) also included the Devil's promise that he would offer her assistance because of her poverty.[117]

Yet, once German news pamphlets shifted in the 1590s to discuss larger groups of witches, the link between poverty and witchcraft weakened. Rather, German pamphleteers included both 'poor and rich' witches in their accounts.[118]

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[110] ESTC R209814, pp. 3-4.
[111] ESTC R219139, p. 2.
[112] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Dii^{r}.
[113] VD17 12:627125P, p. 36.
[114] VD16 L 7693, sig. Ciii^{v}.
[115] Ibid., sig. D^{v}.
[116] Ibid., sig. [Ciiii^{v}].
[117] *Urgicht und Verzaichnuß* 1588, sig. A2^{v}.
[118] See, for example: VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p.2]; VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p.1].

References to rich, handsome, and stately witches appeared in several German reports during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[119] And, although it was less common, rich or stately witches also featured in English pamphlets. One report from 1645, for example, featured a witch who appeared in 'the habit of a gentlewoman'.[120] Wealthy people, then, could still be enticed to witchcraft. In fact, it may be more accurate to argue that, rather than poverty, it was covetousness which marked out individuals as witches. Critiques of this trait from both German and English preachers focused on witches' desire for material possessions but also for respect, social standing, and knowledge. Waldschmidt, for example, highlighted that witches often sought 'worldly honour and grandeur' and wished to 'rise above others.'[121] Cooper, who offered a history of witchcraft in his tract, suggested that one way the Devil enticed people was through promises of knowledge and power: he argued that because 'men were either more ambitious after honour, or curious after knowledge' and 'were fittest for these ends, either to conquer kingdoms or seek after knowledge', they had been ensnared by the Devil.[122] Gifford, too, linked witchcraft and curiosity. He suggested that, rather than seeking out 'a blunt unlearned fool', the Devil preferred 'a subtle mind, which is also proud, vainglorious, and stiff to maintain any purpose'.[123]

In this discussion of the pursuit of knowledge and witchcraft, Gifford singled out one group: 'the idolatrous and adulterous mass priest'.[124] The witch-priest is a distinctive trope associated with male witches. It has recently been the subject of studies – primarily in a German context – by Rita Voltmer and Rowlands.[125] The association of sorcery and the clergy had a long history. During the Papal Schism, claims that the Pope was a powerful sorcerer proliferated; anti-clericalism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries fuelled concerns that clerics were misusing sacraments and summoning demons; and Catholic demonologists

[119] VD16 W 516, sig. Aiii^{r}; VD16 E 3889, sig. Aiiii^{r}; *Newe Zeitung von Hexen unnd Unholten* 1612, sig. Aii^{r}.
[120] ESTC R232297, p. 3.
[121] VD17 12:627125P, p. 33.
[122] ESTC S108665, p. 186.
[123] ESTC S103141, sig. I2^{r}.
[124] Ibid, sig. I2^{v}.
[125] R. Voltmer, "Debating the Devil's Clergy: Demonology and the Media in Dialogue with Trials (14th to 17th Century)', *Religions*, 10 (2019), pp. 648-80; A. Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype in a Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Context', *German History*, 38/1 (2020), pp. 1-23.

including Heinrich Kramer, Jean Bodin, and Martin Delrio included the idea that witch clerics led witch sects in their works.[126] Comparison of Protestant preachers' writings in England and Germany demonstrates that many of these ideas were adopted by Protestant polemicists as a potent illustration of the corruption and depravity of Catholicism. In England, Perkins stated that there were several popes through the centuries (including Sylvester, II, Benedict VIII, Alexander VI, and John XXI) who, in exchange for the papacy, 'gave themselves to the Devil in the practice of witchcraft.'[127] In fact, this claim was commonplace in English preachers' tracts.[128] German preachers made the same assertions. Zehner, for example, stated that 'in the past [...] the pope and cardinals themselves were infected with the plague of sorcery.'[129] Meder cited contemporary examples of witch-priests in the prince-bishopric of Trier and the bishopric of Mainz and stated that 'experience shows that there are more witches among the papists' than among Protestants.[130] Waldschmidt referenced the execution of a boy who was beheaded and burned for sorcery in Salzburg; in his confession, the boy claimed he had been taught sorcery by the Jesuits in Moltzheim.[131] In fact, Waldschmidt suggested that people who sent their children to Jesuit schools were unknowingly 'sacrificing' their children to the Devil, because 'each and every Jesuit is a sorcerer.'[132]

Voltmer suggests that Protestant polemicists were prone to exaggeration in their descriptions of witch-priests and connections between witchcraft and Catholicism; she notes, for instance, that there is no archival evidence to support Meder's claims about an executed witch-cleric in Mainz.[133] Waldschmidt's emphasis on Jesuits did echo wider attempts to link Jesuits to witchcraft, but, although some were denounced as witches, none were executed for the crime.[134] Similar strategies were also employed by German pamphleteers. Rowlands notes that the sensational appeal of the witch-priest made it an attractive prospect for

[126] Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy', pp. 652-3; Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype', p. 4.
[127] ESTC S114525, p. 10.
[128] ESTC S104153, sig. B^{r}; ESTC S108665, p. 49; ESTC S101683, p. 110.
[129] VD17 23:328851P, p. 3.
[130] VD17 12:205316B, f. 38^{r}.
[131] VD17 12:627125P, p. 56.
[132] Ibid., p. 55.
[133] Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy', p. 664.
[134] Ibid., p. 673.

pamphleteers, and notes that the trope entered news reports in an account from Vienna in 1575 of a witch-priest and his concubine.[135] This report introduced several novel and key ideas including the notion that witch-clerics were particularly powerful witches and that they baptised children on behalf of the Devil.[136] While this particular account was printed in a Catholic city, later reports from Protestant towns seized the opportunity to use the witch-priest in anti-Catholic propaganda. One printed in Basel in 1579 – described by Voltmer as 'sensational faked news' – was an early attempt to connect Jesuits and witches in the popular imagination.[137] It reported that a Jesuit sought out a witch who helped him to make a pact with the Devil and to conjure storms which only damaged Lutheran lands.[138] A later report printed in Nuremberg in 1615 discussed three witch-priests in Catholic town Ellwangen and suggested that the witch-priests had baptised all children in the town in the Devil's name for the past four years.[139] Voltmer notes that such charges of diabolic baptism, which flourished in Protestant print, 'cannot be proved with the surviving trial records.'[140] Indeed, she argues that 'demonology and the media had marked the witch-cleric as a super-witch, driving a flock, or a convent into the devil's snare', contrary to their relatively negligible representation among those prosecuted in the trial records.[141] As with other traits highlighted in this chapter, the witch-priest is clear evidence of the way that print manipulated and actively shaped the witch identity rather than passively reporting events.

The trope of the witch-priest was also present in one of the earliest English news reports. The report concerned John Walsh, a man in Dorset accused of witchcraft who claimed that he learned his art from a 'certain priest named Sir Robert of Drayton'.[142] The majority of the preface was devoted to condemning Catholic clergymen: it stated that as well as 'fat belly fed monks, flattering friars, and idle lusty priests [...] the holy fathers themselves popes, cardinals, and bishops

[135] Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype', p. 5; VD16 W 372.
[136] VD16 W 372, sig. Av^{r}; Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype', pp. 5-6.
[137] Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy', p. 661.
[138] VD16 ZV 21532.
[139] *Zwo Hexenzeitung* 1615, [unpaginated: pp. 1-3].
[140] Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy', p. 672.
[141] Ibid., p. 674.
[142] ESTC S102100, sig. Aii^{r}.

were chiefly and wholly given to the study and exercise of these most wicked and devilish sciences.'[143] Like its German counterparts, this pamphlet also suggested priests taught witchcraft to others and cited a woman accused of witchcraft who confessed 'that she learned the same of a priest whose harlot she had been many a year.'[144] After this report, however, the witch-priest largely disappeared from domestic witchcraft reports in England. The disappearance of this trope is unsurprising, because although Germany remained confessionally-divided, England was officially Protestant following the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558, so did not have a wealth of local reports about Catholic witch-priests. Nevertheless, the witch-priest retained its ability to captivate English audiences, as reporting on the Catholic priest Lewis Gaufredy, executed as a witch in Marseille, France, in 1612 illustrates.[145] Alongside the extant news report, Thibaut Maus de Rolley identifies that the Stationers' Register recorded a ballad written about this trial (now lost) and that it was also discussed in another translated work printed in 1613.[146] The story was, therefore, clearly popular with English audiences.

Aside from Catholic witch-priests, however, English print also featured a Protestant minister executed for witchcraft: John Lowes. Rowlands notes that Lowes is one of 'just four Protestant ministers to suffer execution for witchcraft in early modern Europe and its colonies.'[147] Lowes, a minister in Brandeston, Suffolk, was executed for witchcraft during the witch-hunts led by Hopkins in 1645, but this trial was not the first time he had been accused of witchcraft.[148] Earlier attempts were made to remove him from his role which were reported in a pamphlet from 1642 that stated he had been 'so vehemently suspected of witchcraft, that he hath been twice indicted, and once arraigned for witchcraft'.[149] Notably, this report sought to link Lowes with Catholicism, and claimed that he and the other man in the report 'daily have frequented the company of known

[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid., sig. Aiii^{v}.
[145] ESTC S102950.
[146] T. Maus de Rolley, 'The English Afterlife of a French Magician: The Life and Death of Lewis Gaufredy (1612)', in J. Glomski and I. Moreau (eds.), *Seventeenth-Century Fiction: Text and Transmission* (Oxford, 2016), p. 37.
[147] Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype', p. 9.
[148] C. L'Estrange Ewen, *The Trials of John Lowes, Clerk* (London, 1937), pp. 6-7.
[149] ESTC R9987, sig. A3^{v}.

popish recusants.'[150] It is striking, considering that prosecutions of Protestant ministers for witchcraft were uncommon, that the report on the trials in 1645 did not offer much detail on Lowes' case.[151] There was no suggestion that he undertook any diabolic baptisms. Aside from the charge that he had 'preached about threescore sermons after he had made his Covenant with the Devil', there was little to distinguish Lowes from the other witches discussed in the report.[152] The differences between this report and other cases of witch-clerics in English and German print reinforces that the witch-priest was primarily a useful anti-Catholic trope for pamphleteers. It is logical that Protestant pamphleteers, many of whom – although mostly anonymous – may well have been clergymen themselves, were unwilling to draw their audiences' attention to Protestant witch-ministers. The reluctance of printers to engage with or disseminate a witch-pastor stereotype was undoubtedly a factor in the low numbers of Protestant ministers prosecuted for witchcraft.[153]

The enduring influence of print on popular perceptions of witch identities is strikingly illustrated by the witch-midwife trope. In 1972, Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English claimed that women healers, and especially midwives, were targeted as witches because they threatened the control and power of an emerging male medical professional class.[154] The argument has proven persuasive, and in a review of the trope in 1990, David Harley wrote that 'it is a truth universally acknowledged that midwives were routinely prosecuted for witchcraft.'[155] Harley and others have, however, questioned this characterisation, noting that midwives were more likely to serve as experts or witnesses than to stand trial themselves.[156] The main source cited in support of the link between midwives and witchcraft is the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Question eleven in the *Malleus* concerned the notion that 'in various ways midwife sorceresses kill the fetuses in the womb and cause

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[150] Ibid.
[151] ESTC R200262, sig. A2r.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype', p. 18.
[154] B. Ehrenreich and D. English, *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers* (2nd edn., New York, NY, 2010), p. 31.
[155] D. Harley, 'Historians as Demonologists: The Myth of the Midwife-witch', *The Society for the Social History of Medicine,* 3/1 (1990), p. 1.
[156] Harley, 'Historians as Demonologists', pp. 8-9; Rowlands, 'Witchcraft and Gender', p. 452.

miscarriages, and when they do not do this, they offer the new-borns to demons.'[157] It also claimed that 'no one harms the Catholic Faith more than do midwives.'[158] German news reports gave further credence to this notion. Warfield finds that 'midwifery was the most frequently named profession in the reports, and sorceress midwives were mentioned in at least thirteen reports, nine dating from the sixteenth century and four from the seventeenth century.'[159] Reports commonly claimed that individual midwives had murdered hundreds of babies in the womb or shortly after birth.[160]

Notably, the number of midwives included in each report was never particularly high. A pamphlet printed in 1582, for instance, claimed to report the execution of 225 witches. The numbers listed in the pamphlet give a figure closer to 150, of whom six were midwives.[161] This relatively small proportion does not suggest that witches were overwhelmingly likely to be midwives. The same pattern can be found in a report from 1590 that listed numerous witchcraft executions in locations across southern Germany, including Augsburg, Eichstätt, Donauworth, Ellwangen, Munich, and Nördlingen.[162] In each location, multiple witches were executed. The report, however, highlighted individual cases where midwives were among the accused.[163] Several of these examples were lifted from other earlier reports, suggesting that the author of this report in 1590 specifically chose cases involving midwives. Individually, therefore, the German news reports are not at odds with historians' assertions that midwives account for a relatively small proportion of those accused of witchcraft. Cumulatively, however, they consolidated the stereotype through selective reporting. Clearly, pamphleteers recognised the shock value of witch-midwives. Their decision to discuss individual midwife-witches while offering scant detail about the professions of other witches created the impression that witchcraft and midwifery were intrinsically connected, despite statistics telling a different story. Some German preachers

[157] *Malleus Maleficarum*, p. 211.
[158] Ibid., p. 12.
[159] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 121.
[160] See, for example: VD16 W 2322, sig. [Aiiii^{v}]; VD16 E 3889, sig. Aii^{v}; VD17 23:250479P, [unpaginated: p.1].
[161] VD16 ZV 29564, sig. Aiii^{v}.
[162] VD16 E 3889.
[163] Ibid., sigs. Aii^{v}, [Aiiii^{v}].

similarly reinforced the trope. The index of Waldschmidt's sermons, for instance, included a section titled 'midwives murder many small children'; the sermon referenced two midwives in Basel and Strasbourg who had murdered 'countless' children.[164] This case is the only example given, but the implication is that these two midwives were representative of a wider problem.

In contrast, Harley observes that in England the witch-midwife was 'a very foreign notion'.[165] The witch-midwife is certainly one aspect of the witch identity where there is a clear difference between Germany and England. The witch-midwife was absent from English preachers' tracts and news reports. On the rare occasions where midwives did feature in reports, it was as an expert required to search witches for the Devil's mark, rather than as a suspect.[166] One reason that the witch-midwife trope failed to take hold in England was, according to Harley, because 'the *Malleus* was never fully authoritative in England.'[167] Wider differences in German and English witchcraft print also undoubtedly contributed. Early German news reports established the notion that witches used babies' bodies and fat in their sorcery, and especially to create salves that enabled them to travel significant distances to nocturnal gatherings.[168] As Chapter Two of this thesis has demonstrated, witches' sabbaths and flight were not widely accepted notions in English witchcraft reports, and, consequently, neither was the witch-midwife. English news reports also primarily focused on named individual suspects, while German news reports described numerous large-scale executions and offered little detail about individual cases. The discussion of named individuals, whether the reports were based closely on documentary evidence or written in a narrative style, may have made it easier to identify falsehoods and discouraged the spread of the witch-midwife trope when there was no basis for it in the trials.

The witch identity, then, intersected with various social categories in both Germany and England. There was significant overlap in the assumptions and

[164] VD17 12:627125P, p. 228.
[165] Harley, 'Historians as Demonologists', p. 13.
[166] ESTC R200218, p. 26; ESTC R201499, p. 3; ESTC R40228, p. 6.
[167] Harley, 'Historians as Demonologists', p. 10.
[168] VD16 W 535, sig. Aiii^{r}; VD16 L 7693, sig. Bii^{v}; VD16 E 3889, sig. Aii^{r}.

priorities of preachers in both countries concerning the witch identity; both paid most attention to the connection between witches and women but were also interested in the witch figure more broadly. Responding to scepticism, English and German preachers resisted attempts to categorise the witch solely as an old and feeble woman. They also both seized the opportunity to connect witchcraft with Catholicism and use it to criticise and denigrate Catholic clergy. In many respects, German and English news reports also reflected a shared image of the witch figure. Concepts which may have been considered to originate in one national context – such as the witch family – were, in fact, part of broader Protestant cultural developments. It is clear from examining several different social categories that pamphlets cannot be considered an accurate reflection of the people who were actually tried for witchcraft; rather, in several instances, pamphleteers manipulated the witch image through selective reporting to serve their own ends.

4.2. Collapse of the Witch Stereotype

Part of the challenge inherent in describing the early modern witch figure is that it was not consistent over time. In particular, some historians have claimed that periods of intensive witch-hunting precipitated a breakdown in the witch stereotype. According to Midelfort

> our common picture of the witch as ugly old hag, living alone and known for her eccentricities is not unlike the sixteenth- or seventeenth-century stereotypes [...] it was only during the largest witch-hunts that the stereotype deteriorated dangerously, leaving all social classes and all types of people open to suspicion.[169]

Other historians of German witchcraft have found a similar pattern in their regional studies. Wolfgang Behringer claims that, during the first large wave of prosecutions in Bavaria during the 1590s, the prosecutions spread 'not only geographically, but also socially'; he also highlighted that during the seventeenth century, the typical witch shifted from an 'old woman' to children and young men.[170] As the introduction outlined, the witches prosecuted during the East

[169] Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany*, p. 2.
[170] W. Behringer, *Hexenverfolgung in Bayern: Volksmagie, Glaubenseifer und Staaträson in der Frühen Neuzeit* (3rd edn., Munich, 1997), pp. 410-11.

Anglia trials in England have likewise been considered atypical. This section considers how far the argument that intense witch-hunting led to a breakdown in the witch stereotype was evident in German and English print.

On the one hand, *Hexenzeitungen* from the 1610s and 1620s seem to support this theory. During this period, pamphleteers explicitly emphasised the heterogenous characteristics of the witchcraft suspects featured in their reports. One, printed in 1616 and discussing trials in Würzburg and Württemberg, stated that 'men and women, young and old, poor and rich, have been executed and burned because of their witchcraft and sorcery.'[171] A report on trials in Bamberg and printed in 1628 described how 'gentlemen as well as women' were burned, and claimed that 'many are arrested daily [...] rich, poor, beautiful, men, and women.'[172] A year earlier, another report about Bamberg and Würzburg asserted that *anyone* could be a witch. It opened by lamenting the discovery of 'many witch men and women' and noted that family members could not even be certain whether their own relatives were witches.[173] It also listed the professions of several witches, including a grocer, a butcher, a tanner, and a schoolmaster.[174] These pamphleteers chose to emphasise the variety of individuals accused of witchcraft, evoking a sense of paranoia, fear, and distrust. Witchcraft was clearly not confined to old crones.

A similar pattern emerged during the 1640s in England. More male witches feature in pamphlets published during this decade than any other time.[175] One report, printed in 1643, opened by stating that:

> many are in a belief, that this silly sex of women can by no means attain to that so vile and damned a practise of sorcery, and witchcraft, in regard of their illiterateness and want of learning, which many men have by great learning done.[176]

[171] VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p.1].
[172] VD17 23:293541Q, sigs. Aiii^{v}-[Aiiii^{r}].
[173] Ibid., sig. A^{v}.
[174] Ibid.
[175] C. Millar, 'Diabolical Men: Reintegrating Male Witches into English Witchcraft', *The Seventeenth Century,* 36/5 (2021), p. 8.
[176] ESTC R4848, sig. A2^{r}.

This statement appears to indicate a significant shift in thought about witchcraft and witch identities. The attempt to justify the existence of *female* witches to readers is unusual given that most witches prosecuted in England were women and suggests that the pamphleteer felt that this relationship between witchcraft and women was no longer stable. The increased scale of some trials during this period also led to a slight shift in reporting style to one that more closely resembled *Hexenzeitungen*. One pamphlet printed in 1645, for example, referred to several groups of witches in East Anglia, including 14 witches tried at Chelmsford and 20 executed in Norfolk. [177] Little information was given about the identities of these witches, but, significantly, one of the witches on whom the pamphleteer chose to focus was described as 'a gentlewoman or a great lady', rather than an impoverished elderly woman.[178] Other reports from 1645 also focused on larger numbers of witches, including John Lowes, the witch-pastor discussed in section one.[179] Another pamphlet printed in 1649 focused primarily on a male witch, John Palmer; he was presented as a far more credible threat than his female counterpart who was 'but a novice in comparison of him and as I conceive had made no direct covenant with the devil, as Palmer had.'[180]

There is, however, good reason to question whether these cases amount to a breakdown of the witch stereotype in either country. Several historians have raised objections. Rowlands, for example, notes the existence of male witches prior to major witch-hunts.[181] Nicole J. Bettlé similarly questions the claim that child-witches were primarily a feature of the latter stages of witch-hunts, stating instead that 'beginning, peak and end of the persecution of child-witches corresponded exactly with the persecution of adult suspects.'[182] In England, Sharpe argues that the witches prosecuted during the 1640s 'were firmly in the English mainstream', and Millar agrees that while the period was unusual it did

[177] ESTC R232297, pp. 2-5.
[178] Ibid., p. 3.
[179] ESTC R200218; ESTC R200262.
[180] ESTC R206137, p. 5.
[181] Rowlands, 'Not the Usual Suspects?', p. 6.
[182] N. J. Bettlé, 'Child-witches', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 234.

not include anything that had not previously appeared in witchcraft print.[183] Millar's interpretation is particularly important for this thesis. Examining the corpus of news pamphlets and religious tracts as a whole, the varied characteristics seen during periods of intense witch-hunting were by no means confined to these periods in either country. As shown above, the possibility that child-witches could learn witchcraft from their parents was explored in the 1580s in Germany and the 1610s in England. Preachers (who, with the exception of Waldschmidt and Otto in Germany, wrote their tracts prior to the major witch-hunts in their respective countries) explicitly emphasised that witchcraft was *not* confined to one social group. In fact, the notion of one witch stereotype may be misleading; Julian Goodare suggests that, instead, historians should consider plural stereotypes which could and did overlap.[184] Midelfort and others may be correct in their identification of a change in witch identities during crisis periods. But German and English print indicates that, rather than triggering a breakdown of the witch stereotype, periods of crisis represented an intensification of the enduring flexibility of witch identities in Germany and England.

The theory that any individual – regardless of age, class, education, or gender – could be a witch was established by preachers and put into practice by pamphleteers. The ambiguity of the witch identity was, in fact, key to the message that preachers and pamphleteers each sought to convey. The refusal to lay the sin of witchcraft at the door of one social group definitively was essential for both German and English preachers to convince their audience of the necessity of leading godly lives to protect against the temptation of witchcraft. These moralistic and didactic aims were shared by many witchcraft pamphlets. The malleability of the witch identity also served an additional purpose for pamphleteers, enabling them to mould and reconstruct it in response to the events and concerns of the day. The lack of a fixed witch identity, for example, allowed pamphleteers to tap into and amplify the sense of paranoia and fear surrounding

[183] J. Sharpe, 'The Devil in East Anglia: the Matthew Hopkins Trials Reconsidered', in J. Barry, M. Hester, and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 249; C. Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions in Early Modern England* (London, 2017). p. 8.
[184] J. Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt* (London, 2016), p. 274.

the major witch-trials in southern Germany and the East Anglian trials in England by implying that witchcraft had infected all sections of society. Yet, while witchcraft's omnipresence in society was a frightening prospect, preachers and pamphleteers also needed to explain to their readers what the distinguishing trait of a witch was. In answering this question, German and English pamphleteers and preachers offered one explanation: wickedness.

4.3. Wicked Witches: Diabolic Identities

The primary focus in both German and English printed depictions of witches was undoubtedly their wickedness. Take, for example, this description of a witch in Northamptonshire, printed in 1612:

> This Agnes Brown [...] [was] ever noted to be of an ill-nature and wicked disposition, spiteful and malicious, and many years before she died both hated and feared among her neighbours.[185]

The language used in this case is broadly representative of the terminology commonly found in English and German news reports. In both countries, witches were frequently described as malicious, vengeful, spiteful, and cruel.[186] Crucially, the emphasis was not on social categories such as gender or age, but on character traits and dispositions. And, although certain traits may have been more commonly associated with particular social groups in theory, in practice they could apply to anyone. Individual dispositions were significant for preachers and pamphleteers because they were the means by which the Devil could seek out his targets. A bad-natured person may be ripe for diabolic corruption; alternatively, it could be an indication that they had already succumbed to his influence. In either case, such a person was a cause for concern, suspicion, and reproach. Chapters Two and Three have demonstrated that, despite differences in legal definitions of witchcraft, printed sources in both Germany and England placed devil-worship at the core of the crime of witchcraft. Witch identities in both countries, moreover, concentrated on the witches' relationship with the Devil. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, witches were labelled 'devilish', the 'devil's servants',

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[185] ESTC S115086, sig. B2^{r}.

[186] See, for example: VD16 ZV 21532, sig. Aii^{r}; VD16 ZV 11599, sig. [A4^{v}]; ESTC S124945, sig. Biiii^{v}; ESTC S117575, sig. C2^{r}; ESTC R200262, sig. A2^{v}; VD17 1:693782T, sig. Aiii^{v}.

or 'devil-worshippers'.[187] Millar rightly argues that the role of diabolism in English witchcraft is key to incorporating male witches into the broader paradigm.[188] Not only is she correct in this regard, but it is clear by comparing English and German print that a relationship with the Devil was fundamental to the witch identity in both countries.

Having established that diabolic links were key to the witch identity, pamphleteers still needed to explain to their readers how inherent wickedness and diabolic dispositions could be discovered. Scott Eaton – exploring a range of early modern English literature including news pamphlets – emphasises the role that physical appearance and deformity played in identifying witches. He argues that 'scholars of witchcraft have not fully explored the concept of the witch's body as a readable text which was believed to mirror the individual's spiritual state.'[189] As Eaton notes, several contemporary commentators suggested that physical appearance was commonly considered a signifier of witchcraft.[190] Thomas Potts, for instance, wrote that 'the wrinkles in an old wives face is good evidence to the jury against a witch'.[191] In a report seeking to justify the prosecution of the Samuels family, one of the Throckmorton children is recorded to have said 'did you ever see [...] one more like a witch than [Alice Samuels] is.'[192] These statements are presented in a way that suggests that the belief that physical appearance and witchcraft were connected were widespread in England.

Eaton also highlights the witches' mark as a physical reflection of the witches' evil nature.[193] Some Elizabethan pamphlets referenced the practice of searching for marks which could demonstrate physical contact with the Devil or a familiar. A report printed in 1597, for example, described how it was agreed that the two suspects should be searched 'to see if they could find any such marks on them, as are usually found on witches.'[194] The witches' mark undoubtedly occupied

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[187] VD16 W 535, sig. Aii^{r}; ESTC S102100, sig. Aii^{r}; VD16 W 2322, sig. [Aiiii^{r}]; ESTC S113484, sig. C4^{r}; *Newe Zeitung von etlichen Zauberischen Weibern* 1618, sig. Aii^{r}; ESTC R206717, p. 1.
[188] Millar, 'Diabolical Men', p. 14.
[189] S. Eaton, 'Witchcraft and Deformity in Early Modern English Literature', *Seventeenth Century*, 35/6 (2020), p. 822.
[190] Ibid., p. 818.
[191] ESTC S114979, sig. M2^{r}.
[192] ESTC S95729, sig. B^{v}.
[193] Eaton, 'Witchcraft and Deformity', p. 820.
[194] ESTC S1876, p. 8.

a more central role in the seventeenth century. Perkins, Roberts, Cooper, and Bernard all agreed that witches were marked by the Devil.[195] A report printed in 1645 discussing the laws of witchcraft stated that

> their said familiar has some big or little teat upon where he sucks them; and besides their sucking, the devil leaves other marks upon their bodies, sometimes like a blue-spot, or red-spot, like a flea biting, sometimes the flesh sunk in and hollow which for a time may be covered, yea taken away, but will come to their old form.[196]

The practice of searching witches for marks continued to be reported throughout the seventeenth century.[197] Chapter Two of this thesis argued that the connection between witchcraft and the Devil grew stronger in English print during the seventeenth century. Once this connection became established, preachers needed a clear way to demonstrate it to the reader; the suspected witches' physical appearance and the presumption of evil became more intertwined as a result.

Did the same link between deformity and witchcraft exist in German print? A report from Augsburg in 1654 stated that one of the accused witches, Anna Schäflerin, had witches' marks on her body in 'secret places', inflicted on her by the Devil.[198] Both Waldschmidt and Otto claimed in their sermons that the Devil often inflicted marks on witches in 'secret places' which did not bleed and were discovered during torture.[199] Aside from these references, however, the witch mark was not a major feature of German print. Meder, in fact, was sceptical about whether such a mark could be used to identify a witch and suggested that innocent people may also be afflicted by the Devil in a similar fashion, using Job as an example.[200] In contrast to English news reports, *Hexenzeitungen* displayed no increased interest in witches' marks in the early seventeenth century. The appearance of the concept in the Augsburg report and in Waldschmidt and Otto's sermons suggests that the witches' mark did gain some acceptance in Germany but about fifty years later than England. Compared to England, German print

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[195] ESTC S114525, p. 202; ESTC S115983, p. 14; ESTC S108665, p. 88; ESTC S101683, p. 112.
[196] ESTC R200343, p. 4.
[197] ESTC R207118, pp. 28-9; ESTC R222528, p. 4; ESTC R12040, p. 11; ESTC R40228, p. 6.
[198] VD17 23:675370B, sig. Aiii^{v}.
[199] VD17 12:627125P, p. 72; VD17 14:679199Q, pp.17-18.
[200] VD17 12:205316B, ff. 113-4.

showed less interest in identifying witches through physical appearance. Early woodcut depictions of witches did sometimes depict them as crooked or unkempt, but descriptions of physical appearance within the texts rarely appeared; when they did, they sometimes described the witches as 'handsome' (*ansehnlich*) or 'beautiful' (*schön*).[201] In German print, therefore, suspects' wickedness was not generally revealed through their appearance.

Instead, witches in German print were primarily revealed through their actions and behaviour. According to Zehner, the Devil chose his minions from '*den Kindern des Unglaubens*'.[202] In the King James Version of the Bible, this phrase – which comes from Ephesians 2:2 – is translated as the 'children of disobedience'. A more literal translation of this phrase would be 'children of unbelief', which has stronger associations with apostasy and irreligion. Both translations, in fact, are applicable to the witch figure in German print, who is presented as deviant in both social and religious contexts. Sexual promiscuity is one accusation frequently levelled at the witches in news pamphlets: one of the earliest reports, printed in 1563, accused the witches of 'unchastity'; the association of witches and whores was a recurring feature of reports in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[203] The focus on sexual deviance is linked to the greater emphasis that German print placed on the sexual relationship between the Devil and witches, but also speaks to wider concerns about anti-social behaviour. One of the witches in Lutz's tract had already been banished from the town prior to her first encounter with the Devil, demonstrating that she was already a disruptive element in her community.[204] In the 1650s and 1660s, several reports focused on the witches' misuse of sacraments such as the host.[205] In one case from Munich in 1666, the report claimed the witch had 'allowed [the host] to fall off the altar and left it on the ground' and 'on other occasions had trampled it underfoot.'[206] These individual cases were reflections of the apostasy and heresy that witches were believed to

[201] VD16 W 1260, sig. A^{r}; VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p.1]; VD16 E 3889, sig. B^{v}; VD17 23:293541Q, sig. [Aiiii^{r}].
[202] VD17 23:328851P, p. 4.
[203] VD16 W 535, sig. Aii^{r}; VD16 L 7693, sig. Ai^{v}; VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p. 4].
[204] VD16 L 7693, sig. [Ciiii^{v}].
[205] VD17 12:691618D; *Warhaffte Beschreibung deß Urtheils Augsburg* 1666; *Beschreibung von Hexerey* 1669.
[206] *Warhaffte Beschreibung des Urtheils München* 1666.

commit communally at sabbaths. Both social and religious forms of deviance, therefore, were used in German print to reveal the individual witch's wicked and diabolic nature.

The focus on deviant behaviour was mirrored in English print. Here, too, Gifford emphasised that witches were found among the 'ungodly'.[207] As in Germany, sexual promiscuity or impropriety was commonly highlighted by pamphleteers, with many of the witches labelled as 'lewd'.[208] In a pamphlet on trials in 1589, Joan Cunny was described as 'living very lewdly, and having two lewd daughters.'[209] Similarly, a pamphleteer in 1613 wrote of Mother Sutton, 'it is to be noted, that though she was never married, yet she had three bastards.'[210] Witches were commonly presented as quarrelsome and disruptive within their community. Margaret Harkett, the subject of a report from 1585, had apparently quarrelled with several of her neighbours prior to her arrest; the Flower family, who featured in a report from 1619, are all presented as unruly and vengeful women; and Anne Foster, whose trial and execution was reported in 1674, had ostensibly cursed a man after he refused to sell her produce and acted out of 'malice' to destroy his barn and livestock.[211] Likewise, irreligious conduct was tied to witchcraft and diabolic temptation by pamphleteers. Henry Goodcole, for example, recorded that in his interrogation of Elizabeth Sawyer, she confessed that the Devil first appeared to her when she was cursing and blaspheming.[212] Additionally, Sawyer claimed that the Devil had forbidden her from praying to Jesus and given her a Latin phrase to say instead.[213] The connection between prayer in Latin and the Devil was also made in an earlier pamphlet, printed in 1566:

> they demanded whether in Latin or in English, and she said in Latin, and they demanded why she said it not in English but in Latin, seeing that it was set out by public authority and according to God's word that all men

[207] ESTC S103141, sig. I2^{r}.
[208] ESTC S101821, sig. [C6^{v}]; ESTC S126176; ESTC R200218, sig. [A4^{r}].
[209] ESTC S119280, sig. Aiiii^{r}.
[210] ESTC S120192, sig. B^{r}.
[211] ESTC S92857, sigs. A3^{v}-A6^{v}; ESTC S102363, sigs. C3^{r-v}; ESTC R40425, pp. 4-5.
[212] ESTC S117575, sig. [A4^{v}].
[213] Ibid, sig. [C4^{v}].

> should pray in the English and mother tongue that they best understand, and she said Satan would at no time suffer her to say it in English, but at all times in Latin.[214]

In these cases, pamphleteers made a connection between witchcraft and those who had not fully embraced religious reform. The link between swearing and cursing and witchcraft also appeared in other reports throughout the period.[215] Like their German counterparts, English pamphleteers and preachers contributed to the view that failure to conform to social norms made people a probable candidate for diabolic temptation and witchcraft.

The notion that witches were those who failed to conform to increasingly strict codes of moral conduct has been put forward by several historians.[216] In particular, this theory has been used to explain the gendered nature of prosecutions. Christina Larner, for example, argues that acceptable behaviour for women was more limited and they were, therefore, more likely to contravene social norms.[217] Others question how far witches were truly outsiders in their community. Jonathan Durrant, in his study of the prince-bishopric of Eichstätt, finds that accused witches who were tortured to name further suspects tended to name those with whom they had prior social connection or kinship.[218] Nevertheless, this chapter has demonstrated that in both German and English print, writers were not seeking to reflect reality. Rather, in both countries, pamphleteers and preachers deliberately emphasised divergence, whether in physical appearance or behaviour, as a key facet of the witch identity and a core indication of the witch's wickedness. Witches were not merely different; they were sub-human. In Germany, pamphlets described witches as 'vermin', while one English pamphlet considered them 'weeds' who needed to be uprooted.[219] By portraying witches in this way and placing their connection with the Devil at the centre of their identity, English and German authors constructed the witch as a

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[214] ESTC S2279, sig. Aii^{r}.
[215] ESTC S124945, sig. [Ciiii^{r}]; ESTC R200949, p.3; ESTC R187381.
[216] C. Larner, *Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland* (2nd edn., London, 2000), p. 102; Goodare, *The European Witch Hunt,* pp. 163-5.
[217] Larner, *Enemies of God,* p. 92.
[218] J. B. Durrant, *Witchcraft, Gender and Society in Early Modern Germany (*Leiden, 2007), pp. 250-1.
[219] VD16 W 1261, sig. [A4^{v}]; VD16 E 3889, sig. Ai^{v}; ESTC S119200, sig. A1^{v}.

wholly evil, diabolic other, acting as a foil for the good Christian readers to whom they appealed and sought to influence.

4.4. Conclusion

The witch figure defies simple descriptions and neat categorisations. Today, as in the early modern period, the witch represents different things to different people. This chapter has examined the creation of the witch identity in German and English print. Crucially, it did not seek to reveal truths about the real individuals put on trial for witchcraft; it does not suggest that people who were killed for the crime of witchcraft were, in reality, wicked, weak-minded, or deviants. Rather, the aim of this chapter was to identify patterns in the ways that German and English writers portrayed the witch figure to their audiences. Indeed, this chapter demonstrated that pamphleteers in both countries consciously edited their reports, selectively highlighting the characteristics and traits that best suited their ideal image of the witch. Section one explored the various characteristics that historians have identified as important to the witch stereotype, starting with sex and gender. The exact connection between witches and women was an issue to which preachers in England and Germany returned throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There was a consensus across both countries that, while the witch was much more likely to be a woman, it was perfectly possible for a witch to be a man. Preachers addressed this question most consistently, but they also explored other facets of the witch identity. Chapters Two and Three revealed that English and German preachers offered similar opinions on demonological thought and on the criminalisation of witchcraft respectively; this chapter showed that there were also considerable parallels in their characterisation of the witch. They were united in their use of the witch-priest or even witch-pope as anti-Catholic trope; they also cautioned against unmediated acceptance of other tropes such as the assumption that all witches were old, feeble, or poverty-stricken.

To a greater extent than in previous chapters, this chapter also revealed significant overlap in the characterisation of witches in German and English news reports. Pamphleteers in both countries placed more emphasis on ideas such as the female witch or the old witch than preachers did. They were, nevertheless,

open to including other ideas including the male witch or the child witch in certain circumstances. In many ways, these decisions were driven by the need to create a convincing and enticing narrative. The female witch served to thrill and shock readers in her blatant contravention of expected feminine behaviour. Old witches, discovered after years in service to the Devil, played into fears that witches could be secretly concealed in communities. Comparison of the two countries also revealed shared interests in certain tropes, such as the witch-family, which reflect wider concerns about parenting and moral reform within households. Of course, there were also some differences. The witch-priest and witch-midwife were both more influential in Germany than in England. In the case of the witch-priest, this distinction is explained by the differences in confessional make-up of the two countries. The witch-midwife's absence in England is a reflection of the differences in discussions of the witches' sabbath and flight explored in Chapter Two.

Ultimately, it was in the interests of both pamphleteers and preachers for the witch identity to remain unfixed and malleable. The flexibility of the witch identity came to the forefront during periods of intensive witch-hunting, as pamphleteers sought to tap into the paranoia and heightened anxieties regarding witches at these times. As the religious tracts and sermons demonstrated, however, the potential for diverse witch identities was always present. The ambiguity of the witch figure was essential both to the moral message of these authors and the potential for the witch to inspire fear. The motivations of preachers and pamphleteers to impart a moral message also led them to emphasise wickedness and diabolical connections as quintessential to the witch. They demonstrated this wickedness in different ways. English writers focused more on physical appearance, particularly as the witches' mark became an established component of the identification process in print. In both countries, however, misbehaviour and deviance (whether social or religious) were clear indications that an individual was a likely candidate for witchcraft. Seeking to create a warning for their readers and instruction on correct behaviour, German and English print portrayed the witch as a diabolic other and created an enemy against whom good Christian readers could unite.

Chapter Five: Locating Witchcraft

In one of the earliest historical surveys of English witchcraft, Wallace Notestein stated that 'no case [...] gained such wide fame' as the trial of eleven suspected witches in Lancashire in 1612.[1] According to James Sharpe, this fame continues: he states that 'a clearer memory remains of the Lancashire witches [...] than of any other people who were tried and executed for witchcraft in England.'[2] Undoubtedly, the setting of the case – 'in the lonely forest of Pendle among the wild hills of eastern Lancashire' – plays a significant role in its longstanding renown.[3] Even today, Pendle is intimately connected to the witchcraft tales of the past. The Pendle tourist website contains a section devoted to witchcraft, and visitors can walk the Pendle Witches Walking Trail and see sculptures of witches dotted throughout the woodland.[4] Germany has its own locations that continue to evoke witchcraft and magic in the public imagination. The 'magical and mystical' Harz Mountain range features the *Harzer-Hexen-Stieg*, a witchcraft walking trail, and the *Hexentanzplatz*, a tourist destination that hosts celebrations on Walpurgis Night featuring many visitors dressed as witches or devils.[5] Location is an important component in the collective memory of early modern witchcraft and witch trials. Indeed, the connection between location and the supernatural extends beyond individual locales. Gerhild Scholz Williams notes, for example, that many spaces including 'cemeteries and old buildings' are still popularly considered to be haunted or connected to the supernatural.[6]

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[1] W. Notestein, *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718* (Washington, DC, 1911), p. 121.
[2] J. Sharpe, 'Introduction: The Lancashire Witches in Historical Context', in R. Poole (ed.) *The Lancashire Witches: Histories and Stories* (Manchester, 2009), p. 1.
[3] Notestein, *A History of Witchcraft,* p. 121.
[4] 'Visit Pendle: Witches', <https://www.visitpendle.com/witches> accessed: 10/02/2022.
[5] 'Der Harzer-Hexen-Stieg: der Top Trail des Harzes', <https://www.harzinfo.de/erlebnisse/wandern/harzer-hexen-stieg > accessed: 10/02/2022; 'Hexentanzplatz', <https://www.harztourist.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/thale/hexentanzplatz/4_99_251.html> accessed: 10/02/2022.
[6] G. Scholz Williams, *Ways of Knowing in Early Modern Germany: Johannes Praetorius as a Witness to his Time* (London, 2006), p. 73.

Location is clearly influential in creating and sustaining witchcraft narratives. Indeed, historians are increasingly recognising the importance of space in creating cultural meaning. The 'spatial turn', which developed from the work of Henri Lefebvre in the 1970s, encourages scholars to recognise that 'all human activities, products, and performance, that is, human culture at large, must be understood in relation to the space where they are located or brought about.'[7] Recently, one point of contention in studies of space has been the extent and nature of the Reformation's impact on people's relationship with their surroundings. For some, such as Kristen Poole, it was a decisive turning point: she suggests that Catholics and Protestants conceptualised the environment differently, because for Catholics 'intercession necessitated an environment that could accommodate an ongoing interaction between the material world and the supernatural', while for Protestants the 'unmediated' relationship between God and humanity rendered such interactions redundant.[8] Her argument echoes earlier claims that the advent of Protestantism led to the 'disenchantment of the world' as intellectual and scientific shifts altered ideas about supernatural involvement in the world.[9] Others question this characterisation. Alexandra Walsham highlights the continuities in Protestant thinking about their surroundings, noting that 'like their Catholic predecessors and counterparts, Protestants typically regarded Nature as a secondary source of revelation alongside the Bible'.[10] She and others emphasise that fears about the Devil's physical presence in the world were, if anything, strengthened in the early modern period.[11] In fact, Scholz Williams claims that space was central to demonological thinking. 'Demonologies', she

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[7] A. Classen, 'Introduction: Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: A Significant Domain Ignored For Too Long By Modern Research?' in A. Classen (ed.), *Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: The Spatial Turn in Premodern Studies* (Berlin, 2012), pp. 14-15.
[8] K. Poole, *Supernatural Environments in Shakespeare's England: Spaces of Demonism, Divinity, and Drama* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 16-17.
[9] K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971), pp. 769-70. The idea of the 'disenchantment of the world' was first developed by Max Weber and is discussed in more detail in A. Walsham, 'Reformation and the "Disenchantment of the World" Reassessed', *The Historical Journal,* 51/2 (2011), p. 498.
[10] A. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2011), p. 333.
[11] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, pp. 336-7; C. Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions in Early Modern England* (London, 2017), pp. 33-4; Scholz Williams, *Ways of Knowing*, p. 67.

writes, 'explore the spaces where demons live, describing how demonic presence becomes manifest in human experiences.'[12] Examining space in printed witchcraft narratives, therefore, has wider implications for understanding early modern attitudes to their environment and the supernatural.

At a practical level, location has also played a central role in witchcraft historiography. Regional studies of trials have long been popular among historians of witchcraft because of the distinct variations in the trial intensity and the survival of sources. The importance of local context, moreover, extends beyond analysis of trial records. Demonological texts, for example, need to be 'set in the context [...] of the particular situations they were related to'.[13] So argues Wolfgang Behringer, countering Stuart Clark's claim that demonologists were all 'engaging in the same discourse', and contending instead that 'basic categories meant different things to different authors, even of the same generation'.[14] Rita Voltmer and Liv Helene Willumsen similarly note that most contributors to their volume on demonology and witch-hunting placed the demonological texts into their regional context to understand how specific social and political circumstances influenced demonological thought.[15] An emphasis on local context does, however, pose problems for other printed sources such as news pamphlets. Often printed anonymously and at a significant distance from the location of the events they reported, news pamphlets cannot easily be connected to a specific context.

There are, therefore, multiple intersections between location and printed witchcraft narratives that warrant closer attention. This chapter examines three facets of location and space. The first section explores the practical implications of distance and location on the contents of witchcraft news reports. It argues that, while initially location does not appear to have been a significant influence on the demonological content of witchcraft news reports, it was something to which pamphleteers paid attention and has implications for how historians understand

[12] Scholz Williams, *Ways of Knowing*, p. 72.
[13] W. Behringer, 'Demonology: 1500-1660', in R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity: vol. 6, Reform and Expansion 1500-1660* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 424.
[14] Ibid, p. 423.
[15] R. Voltmer and L. Helene Willumsen, 'Introduction: Demonology and Witch Trials in Dialogue', in R. Voltmer, L. Helene Willumsen, and J. Goodare (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), p. 4.

and interpret these sources. Additionally, although removal from a specific local context poses certain challenges for understanding witchcraft news pamphlets, it also provides the opportunity to explore how demonological ideas spread, particularly across national borders. Section two highlights news reports that transcended national borders and examines how this transnational transfer of information shaped the content of the news reports. These reports are both literally and figuratively distanced from the events that they described, as reports moved from one cultural context to another. This figurative distance is illustrated in the decisions that pamphleteers made to alter or exclude certain ideas for different audiences. Nevertheless, this section also shows that in exceptional cases unfamiliar demonological ideas could reach new audiences through foreign news. Finally, this chapter examines location within the German and English witchcraft print and looks at the settings of supernatural encounters in both countries. Overall, this chapter demonstrates that location, in all its guises, is key to understanding German and English witchcraft print.

5.1. Print and Place

The distribution of printing centres in Germany and England was decidedly different. Andrew Pettegree and Matthew Hall's study of the *Index Aureliensis* – a project initiated in the 1960s which attempted a global survey of sixteenth-century printed books – highlights just how stark these differences were. There were ninety-two cities in Germany operating a printing press in the sixteenth century, compared to six in England; of these, they identify twenty-two significant centres of printing in Germany, and just one (London) in England.[16] Indeed, their analysis indicates that ninety-seven percent of books printed in England were printed in London, while the largest print centre in Germany (Cologne) accounted for only thirteen percent of Germany's printed books.[17] Although this data relates to book printing, witchcraft news pamphlets and religious tracts tell a similar story. Of the German witch news reports with imprints, there were at least twenty-four different print locations (see Figure 8).

[16] A. Pettegree and M. Hall, 'The Reformation and the Book: A Reconsideration', *The Historical Journal*, 47/4 (2004), pp. 793-4.
[17] Ibid., p. 794.

FIGURE 8 Map showing print locations of the *Hexenzeitungen*



Map of HRE (c. 1547) adapted from:
https://www.bpb.de/geschichte/deutschegeschichte/reformation/241326/karten

Sermon collections were similarly printed in numerous cities, including Leipzig, Frankfurt, Berlin, and Magdeburg.[18] In England, on the other hand, all extant witchcraft news pamphlets were printed in London, as were the majority of religious tracts. Only the works of Henry Holland and William Perkins were printed elsewhere, in Cambridge, where they both lived and worked.[19] Comparing print in these two countries, therefore, offers a valuable opportunity to examine how the structure of their respective print industries shaped the transmission of news and its content.

[18] VD17 12:205316B; VD17 12:627125P; VD17 14:679199Q; VD17 23:258775K.
[19] ESTC S104153; ESTC S114525.

An additional consideration in Germany is confessional difference. Print was employed as a propaganda tool by both Protestant and Catholic polemicists, although – particularly in the early decades of the Reformation – the Protestant message dominated printed media.[20] This domination was reflected in the division of Protestant and Catholic printing centres. The majority of printing presses which emerged in the early decades of the Reformation were Protestant; Cologne was a notable outlier and became a centre for Catholic printing.[21] In Joy Wiltenburg's study of German and English street literature, 180 of her German sources were printed in Protestant areas compared to thirty in Catholic ones.[22] This pattern is the same for the witchcraft news reports. With a few exceptions including Cologne and Bamberg, where the print location is known, the vast majority were printed in Protestant cities and towns. This disparity raises the same problem for studying witchcraft news pamphlets that Wiltenburg identified for her study of street literature; namely, there is insufficient data to draw meaningful conclusions about the different attitudes or approaches of Catholic or Protestant printers.[23] Despite being printed in predominantly Protestant areas, however, the witchcraft pamphlets – especially those printed in the 1620s – often reported trials in Catholic territories. Alison Rowlands suggests that printing of anti-Catholic witch pamphlets in Protestant territories aided the spread of ideas from Catholic demonology, such as the notion of the witch-cleric.[24] Yet, in other cases, this influence is less clear. Chapter Two argues that, despite historians' claims that belief in the witches' sabbath was stronger among Catholics, there is little observable confessional difference in the descriptions of the sabbath in witchcraft news. This uniformity may be due in part to the Protestant print locations of the pamphlets, although with few Catholic examples it is hard to state with confidence. Nevertheless, overall, there is little evidence that the confessional

[20] M. U. Edwards Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (London, 1994), pp. 26-9.
[21] A. F. Creasman, *Censorship and Civic Order in Reformation Germany, 1517-1648: 'Printed Poison and Evil Talk'* (Farnham, 2012), pp. 35-6.
[22] J. Wiltenburg, *Disorderly Women and Female Power in the Street Literature of Early Modern England and Germany (*London, 1992), p. 38.
[23] Ibid.
[24] A. Rowlands, The Witch-Cleric Stereotype in a Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Context', *German History*, 38/1 (2019), pp. 4-5.

allegiance of printers played a significant role in shaping witchcraft reporting in Germany.

The same argument could be made about the impact of print location in shaping witchcraft narratives. The widespread dispersal of German printing centres, in contrast to the concentration of English print predominantly in one location, may lead to the assumption that German reports were more varied and contained diverse perspectives on witchcraft and witch trials. After all, regional studies of Germany have highlighted the complex and wide-ranging approaches to witchcraft across the Empire. Yet, as demonstrated in Chapters Two and Three, this theory is not borne out when comparing German and English reports. The English reports were, in fact, more varied than their German counterparts which relied more on news report conventions rather than the minutiae of witchcraft theory. In this respect, there is little connection between print location and the formation of witchcraft narratives.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that place had no influence on witchcraft reports. In some German reports, pamphleteers clearly adapted their reports to suit the location of printing. This technique is illustrated by two reports printed in 1583. One was an account, printed in Strasbourg, of the burning of 134 witches in the county of Montbéliard and surrounding territories.[25] The other report, printed in Wesel, described the destruction caused by sorcery in several locations in Westphalia and the execution of 180 witches as a result.[26] Initially, these two reports appear to be accounts of entirely separate events. On closer inspection, some details in the reports are strikingly similar. Both described the execution of ten witches and the arrest of a young boy and girl. Both pamphlets stated that the girl was thirteen years old. Both also claimed that these two individuals confessed to hundreds of charges, although here there is a slight difference in the accounts: the Wesel pamphlet reported that they confessed to 'over 300' charges, while the Strasbourg pamphlet more precisely put the figure at 331.[27] Nevertheless, there are enough parallels to argue that these two accounts

[25] VD16 W 560.
[26] VD16 ZV 11599.
[27] VD16 ZV 11599, sig A2^{r}; VD16 W 560, sig. Aiii^{r}.

were describing the same event. Yet, the Strasbourg pamphlet stated that these individuals were arrested in Darmstadt, while the Wesel pamphlet claimed that it was in Ascheberg.[28]

Similar parallels can be found elsewhere in the reports. Both described a witches' gathering on a mountain. Significantly, some details and phrases are the same in both accounts. Both, for example, mentioned the discovery of a 'pot' (*Hafen*) containing 'strange things' (*seltzame Sachen*).[29] They also both described a feast featuring 'three tables' filled with food 'but no salt or bread'.[30] The duplication of exact phrases once again indicates that this is the same account, but the Strasbourg pamphlet located it in Montbéliard, whereas the Wesel report located it in Münster.[31] Both pamphlets began with descriptions of storms in May, and while the Strasbourg pamphlet stated that the witch executions took place in October, the Wesel pamphlet is less specific about dates. Abaigéal Warfield suggests that the Wesel pamphlet copied the Strasbourg one.[32] She notes that the first half of the Wesel pamphlet is copied from another weather report; notably, the pamphleteer also changed the locations in that section.[33] The decision to alter the locations to places closer to the place of publication, rather than simply copying other reports verbatim, is significant. The pamphleteer clearly hoped to lend authority to his account and to obscure the fact that this report was a copy. That the main detail he altered was the location shows that the pamphleteer recognised place as an important tool to strengthen the perceived veracity of the report and to provide local readers with an account that was more relevant and closer to them.

There are, moreover, other examples of this practice in German news reports. These news reports often referenced witches gathering on mountains. The most famous witch mountain is Blocksberg, part of the Harz Mountain range in Saxony-Anhalt and the highest peak in northern Germany. This mountain

[28] Darmstadt is in southwest Germany, near Frankfurt am Main. Ascheberg is approximately 140 miles further north, in western Germany, near Münster.
[29] VD16 W 560, sig. Aiii^{r}; VD16 ZV 11599, sigs. A2^{r-v}.
[30] VD16 W 560, sig. Aiii^{v}; VD16 ZV 11599, sig. A2^{v}.
[31] VD16 W 560, sig. Aiii^{r}; VD16 ZV 11599, sig. A2^{r}.
[32] A. Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany: An Investigation of Non-Periodical Newssheets and Pamphlets, 1533-1669' (PhD. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2013), p. 267.
[33] Ibid., p. 268.

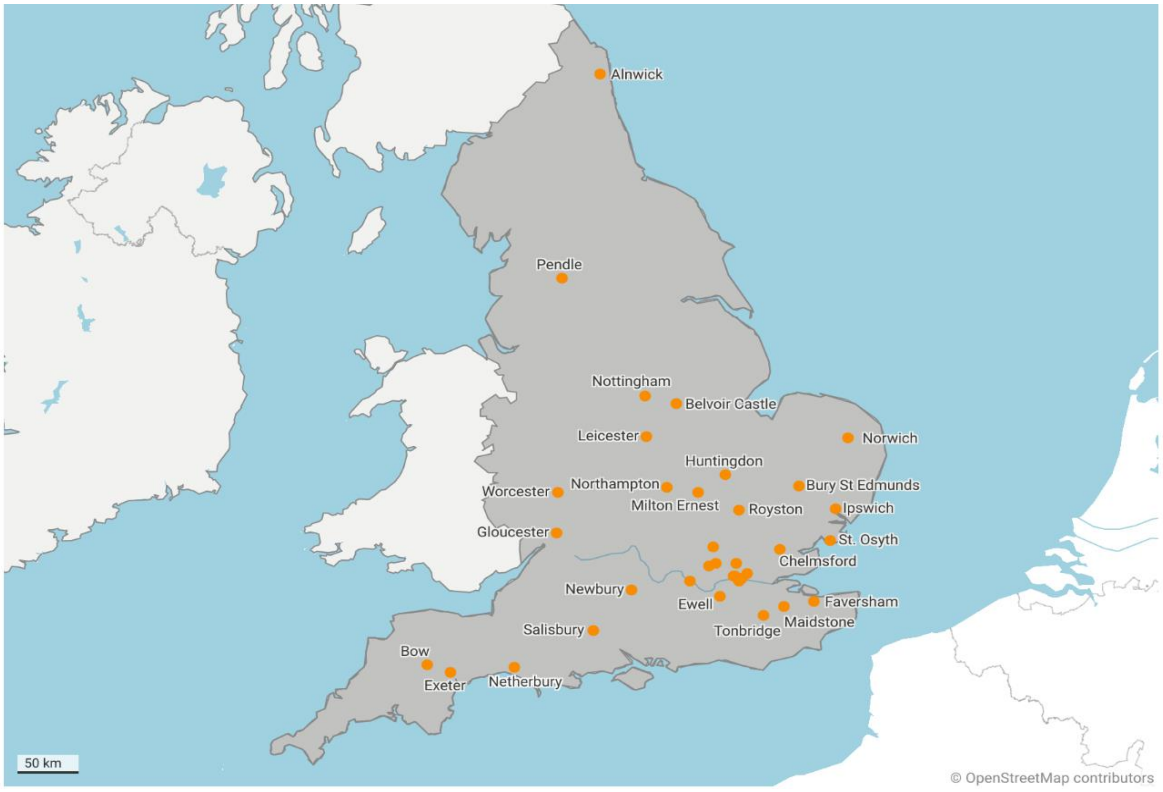
featured in numerous news pamphlets.[34] Yet, although this mountain was clearly a popular setting for witches' meetings, Warfield demonstrates that it was not exclusively used by pamphleteers. Instead, she highlights that some pamphleteers chose mountains that were closer to the location of the trials or events reported: the Spessart mountains were chosen for a report on trials in the Archbishopric of Mainz, for instance, and the Heuberg mountain chosen for trials in Baden-Württemberg.[35] Once again, these decisions highlight the importance of location as a tool for pamphleteers to lend legitimacy, authority, and relevance to their reports. Locating these nocturnal gatherings in close proximity to their readers also contributes to the sensational nature of the reports, making witchcraft a pressing and immediate concern.

Because the print industry in England was nearly monopolised by London, there was no need or opportunity for English pamphleteers to adopt the same technique. Print location in England is still important, however, because it shapes historians' understandings of witchcraft in England as a whole. Joad Raymond emphasises that news was not only printed in London, but also shaped by London's economy and political culture, with interests in locally centred news and perspectives only developing in the late eighteenth century.[36] News pamphlets were also rarely commissioned; rather, they were printed when a 'suitable text, manuscript or foreign-language pamphlet became available to a bookseller'.[37] It is, therefore, logical that reports from trials in London or in close proximity would be more likely to reach the printing press than reports of trials further afield. Mapping the locations in English witch pamphlet headlines shows that they were indeed concentrated around the Home Counties and London, especially in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (see Figures 9 and 10). There are, of course, some notable exceptions, including Thomas Potts' report on trials in Lancaster in 1612 which is an extremely detailed report from a location

[34] See, for example: VD16 N 624, sig. [Aiiii^{r}]; VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p.1]; *Brockersberg* 1596, sig. A^{v}.
[35] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 241.
[36] J. Raymond, 'News', in J. Raymond (ed.), *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, Vol 1: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 391, 397.
[37] Ibid., p. 392.

significantly removed from London.[38] This case is, however, atypical; Marion Gibson suggests that it was officially commissioned and 'carefully planned' owing to the witches' plot to blow up Lancaster Castle, a political act reminiscent of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605.[39] Reports from more distant locations, including Devon, Worcester, and Northumberland became more common in the later seventeenth century, perhaps reflecting improved news networks across the country.[40] Overall, however, reports from southern and eastern England dominated. In the same way that English witchcraft historiography has been shaped by the superior survival rates of the assize records in the Home Counties, scholars should be mindful of the influence that the London-centric print industry had on which cases made it to print.[41]

FIGURE 9 Locations mentioned in English witchcraft pamphlet titles.



Map created with datawrapper.de. For the precise locations around London, see Figure 10.

[38] ESTC S114979.
[39] M. Gibson, *Early Modern Witches: Witchcraft Cases in Contemporary Writing* (London, 2000), p. 173.
[40] ESTC R228715; ESTC R40228; ESTC R206348.
[41] J. Sharpe, 'Witchcraft and Women in Seventeenth-Century England: Some Northern Evidence', *Continuity and Change*, 6/2 (1998), p. 184. For more discussion of the survival of assize records and English witchcraft historiography, see Introduction.

FIGURE 10 Locations mentioned in English witchcraft pamphlet titles (London).



Map created with datawrapper.de.

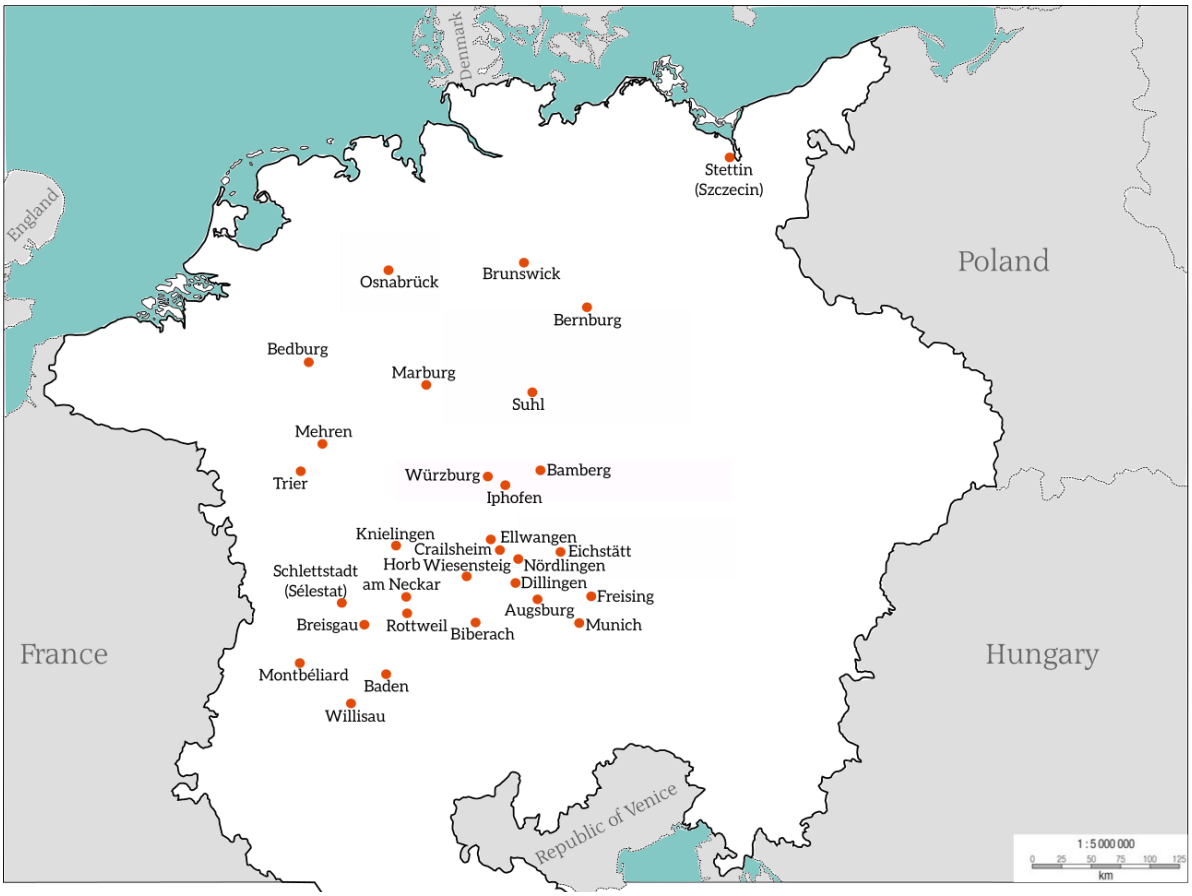
The use of court records as the basis of several witchcraft reports in England is also important to consider. While this practice gave the impression of factual reporting and reliability, it also contributed to a physical separation of the report from the communities where the witches and accusers actually lived. Locations mentioned in the titles of the pamphlets often refer to where the assizes were held, rather than where the alleged witchcraft happened. A report printed in 1579, for example, described the trial of four women in Chelmsford, Essex, one of whom escaped execution; while all four women did live in the county of Essex, they were from four different areas (Hatfield Peverel, Maldon, Wimbish, and Lambourne).[42] Grouping the women into one report creates the somewhat misleading impression that there was a network of witches in Essex, but in reality, these are four separate individuals who do not appear to have known or interacted with each other. Ten years later another report, also from assizes at Chelmsford, did the same thing, grouping three women from Stisted, Dagenham, and Sible Hedingham together in one news story.[43] These examples serve as a reminder to pay close attention to all locations discussed in the pamphlets and not merely those listed in the headlines.

[42] ESTC S118977, sigs. Aiiii^{r}, Av^{v}, Avi^{v}, Bi^{v}.
[43] ESTC S92857, sigs. Aiii^{r}, Aiiii^{v}, B^{r}.

The removal from the sites where the witchcraft accusations developed adds a layer of difficulty for those seeking to use such reports to understand witch-hunting dynamics in individual communities.

Distance and removal from trial locations also undoubtedly played a role in shaping German reports. Determining a precise publication location is sometimes challenging. Although imperial edicts ordered that all publications should include the printers' name and location, in practice the enforcement of these rules was patchy; many news reports feature no publication location or a false imprint to avoid censorship.[44] Yet, even relying on incomplete data available in extant pamphlets shows that witchcraft pamphlet print locations were distributed across Germany (see Figure 8). The trials that said pamphlets reported, meanwhile, were clustered in the southern territories, as may be expected from the concentration of large trials in this region (see Figure 11).

FIGURE 11 Locations mentioned in *Hexenzeitungen*



Map of HRE (c. 1547) adapted from:
https://www.bpb.de/geschichte/deutschegeschichte/reformation/241326/karten

[44] Creasman, *Censorship and Civic Order*, pp. 43, 51-5.

These distributions reflect the widespread public interest in witchcraft, but they also indicate that news travelled significant distances. Filippo de Vivo explores the transmission of news in a microhistorical study on reporting of a maritime battle in 1617. He cautions against the notion – common among media historians – that the printing press marked the 'demise of distance' because fixed messages could circulate widely. Rather, he suggests information was altered and adapted as it travelled.[45]

While de Vivo's research examines military news, his conclusions about the 'transformative' influence of distance on news are equally relevant to witchcraft news.[46] The considerable distances that information travelled before being printed as news is possibly a significant contributing factor to the form and style that German witch reports often took. Their brief length, focus on several locations, and reliance on formulaic ideas, including nocturnal witch gatherings, may all be accounted for by the significant geographical gap between the trial location and the publication location which limited access to detailed information relating to specific cases. Distance may also have enabled or even encouraged the inclusion of more fantastical elements. Hans Kuntz's report about a Jesuit and a witch printed in 1579, for instance, concluded with the witch being rescued at the last moment from the flames by the Devil in the form of a raven.[47] This report was located in Dillingen, Swabia, but printed in Basel over 150 miles away. The detail of the witch's implausible rescue is undoubtedly a thrilling read but may have been both unnecessary, if more detailed information could be gleaned about the trial, and implausible, if those reading the report could possibly have been eyewitnesses to the execution. Similarly, distance may have contributed to the survival of inaccurate or falsified reports, such as the accounts of the 133 witches burned at Osnabrück.[48] The reprinting of this account in Jena, Erfurt, and Regensburg demonstrates that it was a popular narrative, despite the fact that there is no archival evidence that an execution on this scale ever occurred in Osnabrück.[49]

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[45] F. de Vivo, 'Microhistories of Long-Distance Information: Space, Movement and Agency in the Early Modern News', *Past & Present*, 242/14 (2019), p. 190.
[46] Ibid.
[47] VD16 ZV 21532, sig. [Aiv^{v}].
[48] VD16 W 337; VD16 V 2668; VD16 W 338; VD16 ZV 4639.
[49] See Chapter One.

The distance from the apparent location of the trial and between each publication location no doubt helped to sustain the fiction.

Place was clearly an important factor in German and English witchcraft print, although due to the contrasting distributions of their respective printing industries, its influence manifested in different ways. In both countries, pamphleteers could use place to alter the tone and message of their reports. In Germany, adapting the locations in reports assisted the credibility and relevance of their accounts for their readers, making the threat of witchcraft more immediate and pressing. In England, the grouping of individuals from disparate locations under one report on an assize session created the impression of collaboration and conspiracy among people who were, in reality, isolated cases. Distance also shaped witchcraft reporting in both countries. London's monopoly over the print trade in England restricted access to cases from further afield in the country something that has a lasting impact on our historical knowledge of the scale and spread of English witchcraft cases. The transfer of information over significant distances in Germany meant that detail was often lacking, and fantastical or falsified elements could enter the record. And, while the distance covered by these German reports was substantial, some reports travelled even further, traversing not only physical distance but also cultural difference.

5.2. Transnational News

In the 1670s, a wave of witch trials in Sweden – known as the Blåkulla trials – captured the attention of the international media. The trials (1669-1676) were particularly notable for the number of children among the accused. They featured in both German and English press. In Germany, at least two accounts were published in 1670 and 1677.[50] From these German accounts, an English translation appeared in 1683, with an additional preface by its translator, Anthony Horneck (the report features as an appendix in Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus triumphatus*).[51] The influence of these reports was wide-ranging. The English account was used by Cotton Mather in New England and contributed to

[50] VD17 23:234689S; *Außfürlicher Bericht Schweden* 1677.
[51] ESTC R3644.

the Salem trials in 1692.[52] Alison Rowlands considers these reports to be decisive in consolidating the witch-cleric stereotype in Protestant areas of Germany such as Rothenburg ob der Tauber.[53]

This case strikingly demonstrates the value of examining international news pamphlets. International news was attractive to printers, offering a way to bypass bans on domestic news reporting and to find new salacious stories to satisfy a growing readership.[54] According to Sara Barker, in England in 1589 'news-related publishing made up about 40 percent of all printed translations.'[55] It was, therefore, a significant subsection of the market. More importantly, the Blåkulla reports reveal the potential that news held to disseminate or consolidate new ideas beyond national borders. As this section will demonstrate, international news was not simply repeated but also adapted. In fact, despite the claims that many of these sources made to be 'translations' or 'copies', they did not simply change the text from one language to another. For early modern translators, 'adding to texts, exploiting ambiguities and fashioning a translation that spoke more to a recipient culture than to an exporting one was part and parcel of translation practice.'[56] These sources may be better understood, therefore, as adaptations or appropriations of the original texts. This section examines several examples of 'translations' in German and English news. It considers why these particular cases were chosen, how they were adapted, and how far demonological ideas transferred between countries in this medium.

The first example is a unique case of a German-language report on an English witch trial, published circa 1591 as part of a news pamphlet containing two stories.[57] The pamphlet as a whole is devoted to the dark arts, as the first

[52] R. Blix Hagen, 'Witchcraft Criminality and Witchcraft Research in the Nordic Countries', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford, 2013), p. 379.
[53] Rowlands, 'The Witch-Cleric Stereotype', p. 5.
[54] S. K. Barker, 'International News Pamphlets', in A Kesson and E. Smith (eds.), *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England* (London, 2016), pp. 147-8.
[55] Ibid., p. 148.
[56] S. K. Barker and B. M. Hosington, 'Introduction' in S. K. Barker and B. M. Hosington (eds.), *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads: Translation, Print, and Culture in Britain, 1473 – 1640* (Leiden, 2013), p. xx.
[57] *Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus* 1591.

report concerned an abbess in Lisbon who claimed to perform miracles but was found to be a fraud who employed sorcery. This report occupied the majority of the text. The second report contained the confession of two witches in Chelmsford, Essex. The provenance of this pamphlet is unclear, as there is no publication information provided on the title page. At the end of the pamphlet, there is a note stating that the reports were 'first printed in Antwerp by Gheleyn Jansents'.[58] This printer is likely to be Guislain Janssens, who worked in Antwerp from 1587 to 1619. Records on the Short Title Catalogue Flanders (STCV) and WorldCat libraries indicate that Janssens was a prolific publisher and bookseller, who produced a range of texts including song books, histories, and bible commentaries in Dutch, Latin, French, and Spanish. There does not, however, appear to be a record of an extant publication that could plausibly be a precedent or intermediary for the German-language report. While there is no publication date provided either, the report appears to have been printed in 1591 as the title for the Chelmsford case stated that it happened in 'this year 1591'.[59]

In fact, this date is the first sign that the report is somewhat inaccurate. On reading the report, it is clear that it describes a trial in 1589, for which there is also an extant English report.[60] This inaccuracy mirrors the technique seen in other German reports (such as the Osnabrück witch trial pamphlets mentioned above) with an altered date serving to make the report appear more contemporary and relevant. The German account also claimed that 'two women were brought before the authorities in England in the aforementioned county [Essex] accused of sorcery.'[61] This statement is not technically incorrect, but the English report demonstrates that there were at least three women tried and executed.[62] Joan Prentice, the third witch in the English report, is absent from the German version. It is possible that the German account gathered information from a source that did not mention Joan Prentice. It is also plausible that Prentice's account was removed simply to keep the report short, in keeping with the style of most German-

[58] Ibid., sig. A4^{r}.
[59] Ibid., sig. A^{r}.
[60] ESTC S119280.
[61] *Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus* 1591, sig. A3^{v}.
[62] ESTC S119280, sig. A^{r}.

language news reports. The confessions of Joan Cunny and Joan Upney were both abridged in the German version, indicating that brevity is, at least, a partial explanation.

Even so, the question remains as to why Prentice's confession was overlooked rather than Cunny's or Upney's. The answer may lie in Prentice's confession. The account printed in the English pamphlet focused almost entirely on Prentice's strained relationship with a familiar in the form of a ferret, with little attention paid to her crimes.[63] While Chapter Two of this thesis argues that the concept of the witch's familiar had more parallels in German print than has previously been recognised, the omission of Prentice's confession from the German-language report suggests that there were some elements of the relationship between witch and familiar that did not translate well for German audiences. A notable feature of Prentice's account is the ambiguous power dynamics between her and her familiar: she was initially able to resist it; the familiar subsequently disobeyed a direct order and killed a child; and ultimately Prentice's rebuke of the familiar caused it to disappear entirely.[64] The ill-defined status of the witch and familiar respectively may explain why this confession was not present in the German report.

Prentice's encounter with her familiar may have been difficult to sell to German audiences, but the familiar was not excluded by the German pamphleteer entirely. Joan Cunny's confession, which makes up the bulk of the report, includes a passage where she recounted how she learned to perform witchcraft:

> [she] confessed that she was taught sorcery by old Mother Humfrie of Mapelsted, who told her she should kneel, make a circle on the ground, and speak certain words in the form of a prayer to the chief of all spirits [Satan] to conjure up spirits [...] she followed all these instructions and made a circle in a field [...] after she had drawn the circle and spoken the words, two spirits appeared in front of her in the form of black frogs.[65]

[63] Ibid., sigs. B^{r}-Bii^{v}.
[64] Ibid.
[65] *Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus* 1591, sig. A3^{v}.

This description includes many details that mirror the opening passage of the English report, including Mother Humphrie, the use of circle magic, and the appearance of two spirits in the form of frogs.[66] Other components are also found in both reports, including the fact that she named her frogs Jack and Jill, that she fed them milk and hid them in a box, and testimony from her grandson that she had ordered the frogs to torment another boy who had stolen wood from him.[67] The German version of Joan Cunny's confession is not a verbatim translation of the English report; while the English report listed several individuals who suffered at the hand of Cunny, the German version simply reported that 'she had employed [her spirits] for twenty years and harmed many people and livestock with them'.[68] Similarly, Joan Upney's confession in the German version briefly stated that she used her familiar (a mole) to harm those against whom she harboured grudges.[69] It was, therefore, clearly adapted to fit the format and style of other German witchcraft reports, focusing on harm on a broader scale than the English reports did. Nevertheless, the inclusion of information about Cunny and Upney's familiars in spite of the editing to fit German witchcraft report conventions demonstrates the transfer of ideas commonly associated with English witchcraft to a German context, further strengthening the argument made in Chapter Two of this thesis that the familiar was not a uniquely English concept.

English readers were also exposed to the occasional shocking report of German witchcraft. In 1590, news of a werewolf-sorcerer, Peter Stumpf, swept across Europe: there are four surviving reports on the case from Germany, as well as extant reports in English, Dutch, and Danish.[70] The English report claimed to be a translation of an account printed in Cologne but does not match any surviving

[66] ESTC S119280, sig. Aiii^{r}.
[67] *Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus* 1591, sigs. A3^{v}-A4^{r}; ESTC S119280, sigs. Aiii^{r}-[Aiiii^{v}].
[68] *Zweyer fürnemen Zauberinnen bekandtnus* 1591, sig. A3^{v}.
[69] Ibid., sig. A4^{r}.
[70] *Ein Zauberer Stump Peter genant* 1589; *Newe Zeitung von einem Bawren* Augsburg 1589; *Newe Zeitung von einem pauren* Nuremberg 1589; VD16 W 516; ESTC S101735; J. van Gehlen, *Warachtighe ende verschrickelijcke beschryvinge van vele toovenaers, hoe ende waerom men die verbrandt heeft in 1589* (Antwerp, 1589); *En forskreckelig oc sand bescriffuelse om mange troldfolck som ere forbrends for deris misgierninger skyld fra det aar 1589* (Copenhagen, 1591).

German report.[71] The copy has perhaps not survived, or alternatively the English pamphleteer falsely labelled the pamphlet as a translation to make it appear more credible, a common tactic when reporting foreign news.[72] The pamphleteer also asserted that the person who delivered the account was an eyewitness to the events. Similarly, a list of eyewitnesses was provided at the end of the account.[73] As discussed in Chapter Three, the use of eyewitness accounts was far more common in English news reporting than German. This additional claim to authority, then, also indicates that this report has been adapted to fit English reporting conventions.

Certainly, as Warfield observes, the English version of this tale is far more detailed than any of the surviving German accounts.[74] Three of the German accounts are broadsheets, written in verse and dominated by woodcuts illustrating Stumpf's capture, brutal torture, and gruesome execution.[75] The final copy is a pamphlet, eight pages long, with Stumpf's case occupying just two of those pages.[76] The English report is nineteen pages long and devoted solely to discussing Stumpf. Some of the details remain consistent throughout the reports: Stumpf was a sorcerer who had been in league with the Devil for twenty-five years; the Devil gave Stumpf a girdle that allowed him to transform into a fearsome wolf; Stumpf killed thirteen children; he killed his own son and ate his brain; he committed incest with his daughter; and he slept with the Devil in the form of a beautiful woman (a *Buhlteuflin*).[77] The English account supplements these core facts with additional details. It focuses more on Stumpf's character and backstory. According to this version, Stumpf was 'from his youth greatly inclined to evil' and had been practising 'wicked arts' since the age of twelve.[78] Throughout the narrative, Stumpf is driven by insatiable greed, lust, and desire for revenge. The English report also provides an insight into Stumpf's place within the community and his

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[71] A. Warfield, 'Witchcraft and the Early Modern Media', in J. Dillinger (ed.), *The Routledge History of Witchcraft* (London, 2020), p. 215.
[72] Barker, 'International News Pamphlets', pp. 152-4.
[73] ESTC S101735, p. 19.
[74] Warfield, 'Witchcraft and the Early Modern Media', p. 215.
[75] *Ein Zauberer Stump Peter genant* 1589; *Newe Zeitung von einem Bawren* Augsburg 1589; *Newe Zeitung von einem pauren* Nuremberg 1589.
[76] VD16 W 516, sigs. A^{v}-Aii^{r}.
[77] VD16 W 516, sigs. A^{v}-Aii^{r}; ESTC S101735, pp. 4, 7-10.
[78] ESTC S101735, p. 3.

deception of his neighbours, noting that he 'would go through the streets [...] in comely habit, and very civilly as one well known to all the inhabitants thereabout'.[79] An additional detail in the English account is the tale of a child who escaped Stumpf's attack; this story is reportedly from an eyewitness who had lived in Cologne and knew the child in question.[80] The English report clearly embellished the tale in several ways, creating a stronger narrative arc and a greater focus on the individual witch. Barker argues that this focus on a central character was a common technique when reporting foreign news, creating a sense of familiarity and ability to pass judgement on the individual.[81] It is also in keeping with English witchcraft reporting, which commonly concentrated on individuals or small groups. The opportunity that this case provided to explore a particularly sensational person most likely contributed to its appeal to English pamphleteers.

Another factor that made the Stumpf case an enticing subject was the graphic violence of both Stumpf's actions and his punishment. The German and English accounts all depicted or described Stumpf's execution:

> Stubbe Peter as the principal malefactor, was judged first to have his body laid on a wheel, and with red hot burning pincers in ten several places to have the flesh pulled off from the bones, after that his legs and arms to be broken with a wooden axe or hatchet, afterward to have his head struck from his body, then to have his carcass burned to ashes.[82]

The severity and brutality of this punishment contrasts with the standard English punishment for felons (including witches) which was hanging; it may particularly have appealed to those who felt that the English treatment of such crimes was unduly lenient (see Chapter Three). Just over a decade later, another English report concerning German witches emerged. It included a similarly gruesome description of the punishment:

> The woman (being placed between her two sons) had both her breasts cut off: with the which breasts, the executioner stroke her three times about the

[79] Ibid., p. 5.
[80] Ibid., pp. 13-14.
[81] Barker, 'International News Pamphlets', p. 150.
[82] ESTC S101735, pp. 17-18.

face: and in like manner her two sons [...] were likewise beaten about the face with their mothers breasts three times apiece. This being done in the presence of many people, the woman had six stripes given her with a whip of twisted wire: and after, had both her arms broken with a wheel.[83]

This sensational and brutal description of violent punishment of 'most notorious and wicked witches' undoubtedly explains why this particular report was deemed worthy of translation and publication in England.

The report in question, printed in 1601 in London, claimed to be a translation of a copy printed in Nuremberg. This copy is no longer extant. There were, nevertheless, at least two other German accounts of the trial printed. The case involved the Pappenheimer family: Paul and Anna Gamperle (alias Pappenheimer), their sons Simon and Jacob, and two other men described as Paul and Anna's sons-in-law (*Tochtermänner*) in one German account.[84] The extant German pamphlet (originally printed in Basel) and the English report follow a broadly similar approach. Both outline the crimes of each witch, although the German report lists their punishment alongside their crimes, while the English pamphlet provides a summary of their execution at the end. The two accounts are more similar than the German and English versions of the Stumpf case, although a comparison of the crimes attributed to each witch (see Figure 12) shows that they were not identical:

FIGURE 12 Comparison of the crimes attributed to each witch in German and English reports of the Pappenheimer family

Witch	VD16 ZV 21490	ESTC S115808
Paul Gamperle	Killed 100 children and 10 elderly people with sorcery Cellar break-ins (11) Church robberies (10) Arson (8)	Killed 100 children with sorcery Made 10 people lame because they would not forgive debts Cellar break-ins (24)

[83] ESTC S115808, sig. B^{v}.
[84] VD16 ZV 21490, sig. Aiiii^{r}.

	Manslaughter (44) Robbery (14) Street theft (5)	Church robberies (10) Arson (8 attacks killing 16 people) Used sorcery against two of his uncles to steal their goods
Anna Gamperle	Killed 100 children with sorcery Killed or harmed elderly people (19) Manslaughter (1) Arson (2) Conjured storms (4) Poisoned crops (countless times)	Killed 100 children with sorcery Killed or harmed elderly people (19) Caused two individuals to commit suicide Arson (2) Poisoned countless cattle
Simon Gamperle	Killed 30 children and 6 elderly people with sorcery Church robberies (9) Street theft (5) Robbery (5) Pillage (6) Cellar break-ins to poison wine (12) Manslaughter (24) Arson (9) Conjured storms (7) Poisoned crops (often)	Killed 30 children and 6 elderly people with sorcery Church robberies (9) Street theft (4) Robbery (12) Pillage (6) Spoiled cattle and crops with hail and tempests (often) Robbed and murdered (6)
Jacob Gamperle	Killed 65 children and elderly people with sorcery Church robberies (5)	Killed 65 children with sorcery and 5 elderly people Church robberies (5)

	Robbery (4) Street theft (2) Arson (5) Pillage at night (5) Conjured storms (10) Cellar break-ins to poison wine (10) Manslaughter (22) Poisoned crops (26)	Robbery (10) Street theft (5) Arson (5) Pillage at night (12) Conjured storms (2)
Veit Scheltzbawer/Ulrich Scheltibaum	Killed 70 children and 30 elderly people with sorcery Cellar break-ins to poison wine (7) murder (3) poisoned crops (40)	Killed 70 children and 30 elderly people with sorcery Church robberies, theft, murder, poisoning (unspecified number of times)
Georg Schmeltzer/ George Smaltes	Killed 36 children and 15 elderly people with sorcery Cellar break-ins to poison wine (6) Church robberies (4) Manslaughter (2) Arson (2) Conjured storms (unspecified) Poisoned crops (3)	Killed 36 children and 15 elderly people with sorcery Murder, church robberies, theft (unspecified)

One notable difference between the two reports is this section of Anna's confession in the English account:

> She confessed that by witchcraft she had caused an innkeeper's wife to run into a hot burning oven, where she burned herself to death: and likewise caused the same woman's husband to be so miserably vexed, that he thrust his head into a swilling tub full of swine's meat, and there smothered himself.[85]

This accusation is not in the German report and is a charge that Warfield claims does not appear in any other German witchcraft report.[86] The charge of a witch driving their victims to attempt suicide does, however, appear in other English reports. One example from 1595 bears a striking resemblance to the account above:

> Daulbie was so miserably vexed, that he sought to kill himself, thrust his head into a swilling tub full of swine's meat, where he had smothered himself if help had not prevented it. Then he would have run into a hot oven to the burning fire brands with his teeth that he burned his mouth and lips very sore.[87]

While the circumstances in these two examples are not identical – this case features only one victim who survived – the key details are the same. The similarities in language and phrasing cannot be denied. This second example comes from a compilation of several crimes including witchcraft; Gibson has traced the origins of its information about Mother Arnold, the accused witch, to an earlier pamphlet printed in 1574 which has not survived.[88] It is difficult to draw a direct link between the pamphlet in 1595 and the report from Munich. They were produced by different printers, but in shops in close proximity (the first was produced on Gracechurch Street, while the other was produced near the Royal Exchange). Nevertheless, the similarities, and the fact that this section is not present in the extant German report, indicate that this charge has been lifted from

[85] ESTC S115808, sig. Aiiii^{r}.
[86] Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft', p. 132.
[87] ESTC S126714, sig. E3^{r}. Many thanks to Imogen Knox (PhD student, University of Warwick) for highlighting this example.
[88] M. Gibson, 'Mother Arnold: A Lost Witchcraft Pamphlet Rediscovered', *Notes and Queries*, 45/3 (1998), p. 298.

a previous English report. Why exactly this detail was added to what was already a very sensational report is, however, unclear.

Both the Pappenheimer and Stumpf cases were atypical German witchcraft reports. For one, the limited scale of these trials was unusual. The Stumpf case focused on just one individual, while the Pappenheimer case focused on a single family of witches. The witches' sabbath, a recurrent feature of German reports, does not feature in either case. Both cases are also unusual because the majority of the witches are male. Additionally, in both cases the charges are not limited to witchcraft but include a litany of other crimes, including incest, rape, cannibalism, church robbery, and arson. It seems probable that these particular cases were translated *because* they were atypical. The lack of features like the witches' sabbath, which was not a pervasive idea in English reporting, meant that there was no need to include additional explanation. The exceptional nature of the cases, namely the perpetrators and the extent of their crimes, made them prime material for pamphleteers seeking sensational stories.

The same can be said of other mainland European witchcraft cases which made it into English print. The case of Lewis Gaufredy, a witch-priest from Marseille, France, was printed in an English pamphlet in 1612.[89] The report shares characteristics with the Stumpf case. Like Stumpf, Gaufredy was a lone male sorcerer driven by lust, greed, and avarice to give his soul to the Devil.[90] Both were well-respected in their community prior to their unmasking.[91] Gaufredy's crimes were also particularly extreme: in his confession he claimed he had bewitched 'about a thousand maids' to sleep with him and had given a nun to the Devil himself.[92] The account of a corrupt, immoral, and diabolic Catholic priest was an easy win for anti-Catholic pamphleteers in England, and it is not difficult to see why this particular case was translated. Indeed, Thibaut Maus de Rolley notes that the Stationers' Register recorded a ballad written about this trial (now

[89] ESTC S102950.
[90] Ibid., sigs. A2^{v}-A3^{r}.
[91] Ibid., sig. A4^{r}.
[92] Ibid., sig. B3^{r}.

lost) and that it was also discussed in another translated work printed in 1613.[93] Maus de Rolley, who studies these 'afterlives' of the French case, observes several notable features. The first is that the English pamphlet included a *vita* of Gaufredy not present in French trial documents.[94] The inclusion of a framing narrative mirrors the additional detail included in the Stumpf case and reflects the ways that mainland European texts were adapted for English audiences. Second, Maus de Rolley observes that the French printed account of Gaufredy's confession includes a description of his involvement in a witches' sabbath.[95] This detail is not present in the English version. As with the German cases discussed above, then, the English pamphleteer both *included* and *excluded* details from the original French account to alter the narrative in a way that made it more comprehensible and appealing to an English audience.

Another English news report appears to fit this pattern: *Newes from Scotland*, printed in late 1591 or early 1592, during the North Berwick witch trials. This report was the first solely about Scottish witchcraft printed in either England or Scotland.[96] It claims to be from a 'Scottish copy', but exactly what this means is disputed.[97] There is no extant version printed in Scotland, and Christina Larner suggests that this report was written specifically for an English audience.[98] Like the Pappenheimer case, this report contained several descriptions of the violent torture that the suspected witches suffered.[99] The title page also shares common features with other international reports of witch trials. It stated that the report is 'declaring the damnable life of Doctor Fian a notable sorcerer' and indicates that the majority of the report will explore this man's actions.[100] This phrasing is almost identical to the title used in the Stumpf report ('declaring the damnable life and death of one Stubbe Peter, a most wicked sorcerer') and is

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[93] T. Maus de Rolley, 'The English Afterlife of a French Magician: The Life and Death of Lewis Gaufredy (1612)', in J. Glomski and I. Moreau (eds.), *Seventeenth-Century Fiction: Text and Transmission* (Oxford, 2016), p. 37.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid., p. 45.
[96] L. Normand and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in early modern Scotland: James VI's Demonology and the North Berwick witches* (Exeter, 2000), p. 290.
[97] ESTC S105575, sig. A^{r}; Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in early modern Scotland*, p. 294.
[98] C. Larner, *Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland* (2nd edn., London, 2000), p. 31.
[99] ESTC S105575, sigs. [A5^{r}], B^{r}, B3^{v}.
[100] Ibid., sig. A^{r}.

similar to the Gaufredy case ('the life and death of Lewis Gaufredy [...] who committed many most abominable sorceries').[101] It suggests that, like the Stumpf and Gaufredy examples, this report offered a criminal biography of a particularly wicked individual. Notably, it once again focuses on a male witch.

Yet, on reading the whole pamphlet, it becomes clear that the title is misleading. While Doctor Fian (alias John Cunningham) did feature, two other witches also featured heavily: Gellis Duncan and Agnes Sampson.[102] Sampson's confession in particular warrants closer examination. She described a nocturnal gathering on All Hallows' Eve during which she and 'a great many other witches to the number of two hundred' travelled to North Berwick.[103] They danced and sang, and then gathered in a church where they met the Devil in the guise of a man and kissed his buttocks.[104] This gathering is clearly a witches' sabbath. As seen above, this concept is one with which English pamphleteers were generally reluctant to engage. Why, then, was it included in this account? The answer is the political significance of Sampson's testimony. As part of the meeting with the Devil described by Sampson, the Devil claimed that King James VI of Scotland was 'the greatest enemy he hath in the world' and encouraged the witches to take action against him.[105] Sampson's confession also includes the claim that the witches had created a storm intended to drown James and his bride as they travelled between Denmark and Scotland.[106] The treasonous nature of the witches' plot, and James' direct involvement in the trial, mark this case as exceptional and of particular public interest. The same can also be said for Thomas Potts' *Wonderfull Discoverie.* The witches' plot to blow up Lancaster Castle also cast this trial in a political light; it is one of the rare English pamphlets that does allude to witches' conspiring and meeting together.[107] *Newes from Scotland* demonstrates that new or unfamiliar demonological ideas could reach English audiences if the circumstances surrounding the trial were of political significance.

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[101] ESTC S101735, sig. Ar; ESTC S102950, sig. A^{r}.
[102] ESTC S105575, sigs. A3^{v}-B3^{v}.
[103] Ibid., sig. B^{v}.
[104] Ibid., sig. B2^{r}.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid., sigs. B3^{r-v}.
[107] ESTC S114979, sig. C3^{r}.

Overall, transnational news offers an important lens into the transmission of demonological ideas across national borders. Pamphleteers clearly sought out particularly sensational stories; they also chose those that had some relevance to their own audience, whether this was encouraging anti-Catholic sentiment, connected to political events, or cases that mirrored trials in the domestic context. Close comparison, where possible, of reports in both countries demonstrates that pamphleteers did adapt their reports for different audiences, adding embellishments and removing details that did not tally well with the form and content of other witchcraft reports. There is also, nevertheless, clear evidence that new or unfamiliar demonological ideas could remain in reports in some circumstances. The exchange of news between countries is a fruitful avenue of research, and while it is beyond the scope of this thesis, there is certainly potential to explore translations, adaptations, and appropriations of witchcraft narratives on a broader European scale.

5.3. Supernatural Spaces

This chapter has examined location as a factor in the production of witchcraft news pamphlets, whether they were domestic or international. Yet, location also served an important purpose within German and English print itself. As noted in the introduction, there is some scholarly disagreement about the precise impact of the Reformation on understandings of space and the environment. It is generally agreed, however, that the early modern period was a time when several conceptions of space co-existed and competed. The arrival of what Poole terms the 'geometric turn' led to a new 'mathematic space': at the same time, fears about the Devil's physical presence only increased.[108] In fact, Poole suggests that these seemingly distinct phenomena were connected: 'the gradual geometricization of space corresponds with a flourishing interest in how that space [...] can be violated by the demonic.'[109] Poole's research focuses on early modern drama, but other scholars, particularly Maus de Rolley and Scholz Williams, have explored how individual authors (Pierre de Lancre and Johannes Praetorius) used space in their

[108] Poole, *Supernatural Environments,* p. 16.
[109] Ibid.

demonological writing.[110] This section examines how supernatural spaces were conceived within German and English print. It considers where witches and Devils could and could not dwell, and what this reflects about people's relationship with their surroundings in the early modern period.

The ubiquity of mountains in German print as the site of nocturnal witch gatherings has been discussed above. Blocksberg was particularly notorious. Rolf Schulte observes that people in the Duchy of Holstein with little understanding of learned demonology still associated witchcraft with hills and specifically with Blocksberg: 'a peasant was told in strife to "go to the Wartenberg [a local hill] and dance with the witches", a woman was called a "Blocksberger" and told, "May the Devil fetch you".'[111] By the later seventeenth century, Blocksberg was commonly referred to in tracts and literary descriptions of witchcraft. In 1668, Johannes Praetorius wrote a tract about witches' sabbaths and the 'famous Blocksberg mountain'.[112] Eberhard Werner Happel recorded in his collection of the greatest curiosities of the world (printed between 1683 and 1691) that it was widely rumoured that witches gathered at Blocksberg on Walpurgis Night. [113] Such rumours were present in earlier sermon collections, such as Daniel Schaller's, who wrote that 'most witches in our time in Germany confess that they meet in the Black Forest, while several say they meet on Blocksberg.'[114] Others, such as David Meder, were vague about specific locations, but still noted that witches travelled 'by night to remote locations on mountains, in forests, or in other places'.[115] Schaller and Meder's descriptions highlight that mountains were not the only location where German witches were believed to gather. Other remote locations, such as forests, sufficed. Two reports from 1576 described witches dancing 'in a forest on a green plain'.[116] Another from 1580 claimed that 300 witches had

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[110] T. Maus de Rolley, 'Of Oysters, Witches, Birds, and Anchors: Conception of Space and Travel in Pierre de Lancre', *Renaissance Studies*, 32/4 (2017), pp. 530-46; Scholz Williams, *Ways of Knowing*.
[111] R. Schulte, *Man as Witch: Male Witches in Central Europe,* trans. L. Froome-Döring (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 168.
[112] VD17 3:015601X.
[113] L. Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London, 2004), p. 109.
[114] VD17 23:258775K, sig. Liiᵛ.
[115] VD17 12:205316B, f. 27ᵛ.
[116] VD16 ZV 29944, [unpaginated: p. 4]; VD16 ZV 29945, [unpaginated: p.4].

gathered in the Black Forest.[117] The primary features required for a suitable witches' sabbath location were, as Scholz Williams observes, those 'described as desolate and isolated from human dwelling.'[118]

Why did such locations become so intimately associated with witchcraft? One explanation is that there was already a connection between these spaces and diabolic worship for many. Lyndal Roper notes that many of the motifs associated with witches' sabbaths were borrowed from ideas about other groups perceived to be religious deviants.[119] One borrowed motif was the spaces where they gathered. By the early fifteenth century, many Waldensians had taken refuge in mountainous areas such as the French and Swiss Alps.[120] In the latter half of the sixteenth century, reports circulated of an army of Jews hiding in the mountains.[121] In Carlo Ginzburg's study of the *Benandanti* in the Friuli, individuals on trial for heresy also testified that their gatherings took place on mountains.[122] These settings, therefore, had precedents as a site of misrule and conspiracy. The association of witchcraft with spaces isolated from human dwellings, moreover, identifies witches as 'other', incompatible with Christian society and consigned to marginal spaces. The desolation amplifies the sense that witchcraft was simultaneously antithetical to nature and civilisation. The fact that some locations, including Blocksberg and the Black Forest, became infamous for their connection with witchcraft also shows how supernatural spaces were tied into popular legend. Indeed, Albrecht Classen and Rosa A. Perez both note the significance of the forest as a setting in European medieval literature and in fairy tales wherein magical and fearsome creatures lurked.[123] One such creature is the werewolf, and cases of werewolf prosecutions in Germany were concentrated in

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[117] VD16 W 1260, sig. Aii^{r}.
[118] Scholz Williams, *Ways of Knowing*, p. 73.
[119] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 121.
[120] N. Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt* (London, 1975), p. 202.
[121] H. Ettinghausen, *How the Press Began: The Pre-Periodical Printed News in Early Modern Europe* (A Coruña, 2015), p. 142.
[122] C. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. J. Tedeschi and A. Tedeschi (London, 1983), p. 57.
[123] Classen, Introduction: Rural Space', p. 58; R. A. Perez, 'The Forest as Locus of Transition and Transformation in the Epic Romance Berte as grans piés', in A. Classen (ed.), *Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: The Spatial Turn in Premodern Studies* (Berlin, 2013), pp. 434-5.

areas with dense forests and woodlands.[124] Finally, on a practical level, the purported scale of witches' sabbaths necessitated vast, isolated spaces. Locating witches' sabbaths high on mountains or in the depths of forests helped pamphleteers justify the existence of nocturnal gatherings with thousands of attendees and not a single eyewitness.

As demonstrated by its continued popular association with witchcraft, one forest in England was also the setting for witchcraft and diabolic encounters: Pendle Forest. In Potts' account of the Lancashire witches, printed in 1613, the forest was the focal point for the dramatic events. The report discussed two sets of witches and distinguished by labelling the first group 'the Grand Witches of Pendle Forest'.[125] In the information about Elizabeth Demdike, the pamphleteer wrote that 'she dwelt in the Forrest of Pendle, a vast place, fit for her profession: what she committed in her time, no man knows.'[126] The forest is presented as an immense space, perfect for concealing witchcraft and sorcery. This point is reinforced later in the report, during the arraignment of Elizabeth Device. She is described as a 'barbarous and inhumane monster'; the forest, where she and her family lived, is described as 'a place fit for people of such condition'.[127] The implication in these passages is that the wild and shadowy nature of the forest mirrors the dispositions of the witches that dwelt within it. Additionally, the forest was the setting for several encounters with the Devil in the form of animal familiars or in the form of a man, reflecting a connection between demonic forces and this rural, isolated environment.[128]

This strong connection between woodland and witchcraft is, however, an anomaly in the wider body of English witchcraft print. The overall absence of witches' sabbaths in English print eliminated any need to find suitable locations for such gatherings to take place. Even in cases where English preachers did acknowledge the existence of the sabbath, they often omitted any clarification of where these large gatherings could take place. Henry Holland, for example,

[124] Schulte, *Man as Witch*, p. 33.
[125] ESTC S114979, sig. K3^{r}.
[126] Ibid., sig. B^{v}.
[127] Ibid., sig. F2^{v}.
[128] Ibid., sigs. B2^{v}, C2^{r}, D3^{r}.

mentioned that witches travelled 'in the night season [...] to places far distant.'[129] His explanation retains the sense that witches' meetings were remote from their normal life, but lacks any further detail about suitable spaces that witches could congregate in. Likewise, Richard Bernard claimed that witches were transported 'from their home to certain places of their meeting.'[130] This explanation does not even explicitly state that these gatherings had to be in remote or distance places.

Nevertheless, in other respects, isolation from urban and domestic spaces was a recurring theme in both German and English print. In early German reports – when focus on individual witches' confessions was still a feature – there are several instances of witches claiming they first encountered the Devil outside. In a report from Bernburg in 1580, one witch claimed that she was first approached by the Devil while she was searching for a lost item and wandering in a field.[131] In this same report, another witch stated that she met the Devil on the road while travelling.[132] Travel and isolation in rural space also appeared in other contemporaneous reports. One witch in Reinhard Lutz's report claimed she had met the Devil in a woodland and later on a 'new path'; another also confessed that she had been banished from the city and met the Devil in a field.[133] Similarly, the witch whose confession featured in Abraham Saur's tract stated she had met her demon 'one evening as she was walking'.[134] Johannes Dillinger notes that in confessions in Swabian Austria, meetings with the Devil often took the form of a chance encounter with a stranger 'in a meadow, garden, or grove' and suggests that this concept is from folkloric ideas about the Devil.[135] These meetings were, therefore, based on popular ideas about the Devil. The recurrence of travel and meetings on the road could, additionally, be read as a symbol of the witch's journey from Christian subject to Devil's servant. The Devil's association with rural spaces and roads also evokes the idea that he dwells in marginal and liminal spaces.

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[129] ESTC S104153, sig. E3^{r}.
[130] ESTC S101683, p. 221.
[131] VD16 N 624, sig. Aiiii^{r}.
[132] Ibid., sig. Aiiii^{v}.
[133] VD16 L 7693, sig. Ciii^{v}, Ciiii^{v}.
[134] VD16 S 1915, sig. Aii^{r}.
[135] J. Dillinger, *'Evil People': A Comparative Study of Witch Hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier*, trans. by L. Stokes (Charlottesville, VA, 2009), p. 45.

Encounters with the Devil in similar circumstances also exist in English print. A pamphlet printed in 1645 described how a man and his son met the Devil in the form of a man on the road 'above half a mile's distance from the town'.[136] The encounter with the Devil happens in the narrative at a point where the father and son are in conflict with one another, and the boy's future is uncertain. The removal from the town once again reflects that the boy is, at this point, spiritually lost, and it is this removal that offers access for the Devil. Notably, this pamphlet also reported that the Devil appeared as someone who was 'often observed to frequent the road'.[137] This description associates the Devil with itinerant traders, reflecting anxiety and suspicion about those with no fixed abode. Liminality was also a significant feature elsewhere. A report from Deptford, Kent, printed in 1685, discussed a woman who was harassed by the Devil, although she eventually resisted him. The pamphlet places particular emphasis on her lifestyle, noting that she often travelled for work and lived in a 'halfway house' between Rederiffe and Deptford.[138] The implication in this pamphlet is that the woman's lifestyle and lack of fixed space put her at risk of attack from the Devil.

Some victims' encounters with witches also occurred in these liminal spaces. In a report from 1613, for example, the transport of grain between Milton and Bedford was disrupted by witchcraft. The cart carrying the corn was attacked by a black sow, which followed the cart, spooked the horses, and caused the cart to derail.[139] Once within the town, the sow left the victims alone, but when they returned to the road, she attacked once again.[140] The road in this narrative is a site that appears particularly susceptible to supernatural forces. In 1643, a report detailed how some soldiers employed by the earl of Essex had encountered a witch while journeying to Newbury. One of the defining features of a witch was, according to the pamphleteer, that they frequented 'desolate and desert places.'[141] The soldiers' encounter with the witch while they were travelling once again reflects the idea that witches and Devils were especially powerful in marginal

[136] ESTC R200458, p. 2.
[137] Ibid.
[138] ESTC R219139, p. 2.
[139] ESTC S120192, sigs. B^{v}-B2^{v}.
[140] Ibid.
[141] ESTC R4848, p. 4.

spaces. Both of these examples can also be read as a reflection of the dangers posed by travel, and most likely linked to wider concerns about highwaymen and robbery.[142] Fundamentally, they reflect the belief that unfamiliar surroundings left people especially vulnerable to supernatural powers.

Yet, in other cases, the threat posed by witchcraft was much closer to home. A major theme in witchcraft print, particularly in England, was the ways that witchcraft invaded the home and figuratively transgressed household boundaries. Maintaining the household and managing the household boundaries was seen as intrinsically connected to women's honour and chastity: as Diane Purkiss states, 'the physical boundaries of property become identified with the social boundaries of propriety.'[143] These boundaries were, however, often difficult to maintain, and witchcraft could serve as an explanation for discontent or disorder within the household. Indeed, pamphleteers drew explicit connections between physical disorder and witches. An English account from 1666, for example, described how a man had hired a maidservant but disliked her and dismissed her after four days. Following her dismissal, the house suffered several strange occurrences, including flying stones, broken mirrors, and the removal of plugs from beer casks.[144] Sometimes the witch did not even need to cross the threshold physically to wreak havoc. A report printed in 1681 stated that the witch, Joan Buts, had visited a neighbour's house asking for gloves. She was turned away but was nevertheless able to enact revenge; this pamphlet similarly included the claim that objects flew around the house.[145] An earlier report, printed in 1645, contained a similar message. The witch was turned away from the house by a maid, but this did not prevent her from killing several pigs and spoiling all the beer in the cellar.[146] Parallels to this attack on animal stalls and cellars existed in Germany. Using interrogatories and trial records in Eichstätt, Jonathan Durrant notes that cellars and animal stalls were two locations that authorities considered prime targets for

[142] L. Liapi, *Roguery in Print: Crime and Culture in Early Modern London* (Woodbridge, 2019), pp. 102-3.
[143] D. Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London, 1996).
[144] ESTC R25623, pp. 4-5.
[145] ESTC R33659, pp. 2-3.
[146] ESTC R232297, p. 3.

witches.[147] Several German news reports included the charge that witches had broken into wine cellars and either stolen or spoilt the supply.[148] Disruption of these locations was especially bad because it represented an attack on the industry of the household; they also represent concerns about witches' ability to corrupt food and drink supplies. More broadly, the physical disorder caused by these witches within the household can be viewed as a microcosm of their disruptive influence in the wider world. Their ability to invade spaces without physically entering them is a vivid illustration of how pervasive and threatening witchcraft was perceived to be.

Alongside animal stalls and cellars, Durrant identifies another location that was particularly susceptible to witchcraft in the Eichstätt evidence: the bedchamber.[149] This location is the site of several supernatural encounters in both English and German print. In his account printed in 1579, Richard Galis of Windsor reported that:

> suddenly about twelve o'clock in the night a shadow of a huge and mighty black cat appeared in my chamber, which the more as she approached near my bedside so much the more began my hair to stand upright, my heart to faint, and my pains more and more to increase.[150]

In this description, proximity to the witch and her violation of Galis's private and personal space transforms into physical pain. This experience is echoed elsewhere. A report from Bedfordshire in 1613 included the claim that a witch came in through the window and sat at the foot of a man's bed, 'sometimes working, and knitting with her needles, sometimes gazing and staring him in the face, as his grief was thereby redoubled and increased.'[151] In both of these cases, the witch did not actively attack the victim. Yet, their mere presence in the bedchamber was an evident source of discomfort and unrest for the victim's mental and physical health. The bedchamber was a site where witches could torment those already

[147] J. B. Durrant, *Witchcraft, Gender, and Society in Early Modern Germany* (Leiden, 2007), p. 140.
[148] See, for example: VD16 W 337, [unpaginated: p. 2]; VD16 ZV 21490, sigs. Aiii^{r}-Aiiii^{r}; VD17 23:626143G, [unpaginated: p. 1].
[149] Durrant, *Witchcraft, Gender, and Society,* p. 140.
[150] ESTC S124945, sig. [Aiiii^{r}].
[151] ESTC S120192, sig. B3^{v}.

weak and unwell. A German report from 1627 reported that the victim, having fallen ill, retired to her bed, but 'at midnight two women appeared by her bed and gave her an apple full of worms and maggots to eat.'[152] The woman's ill-health and isolation in her bedchamber provided the perfect opportunity for witches to strike. As well as being associated with sickness and weakness generally, the bedchamber was connected to rites and rituals that carried substantial risk, such as childbirth. Scholars of German witchcraft and English witchcraft both note that anxieties regarding childbirth and concerns about nefarious presences during or shortly after the birth manifested in witchcraft accusations.[153] These anxieties are reflected in an account from Leicestershire in 1619, where one of the witches, Ellen Greene, reported that she had touched 'John Patchett's wife in her bed, and the child in the Grace-wife's arms, and then sent her spirits to bewitch them to death.'[154] Overall, the bedchamber was evidently widely considered a space that witches targeted and disrupted.

As a site of weakness and vulnerability, the bedchamber was also a location associated with diabolic temptation. In some cases, the witch's actions prompted the appearance of the Devil. In Lutz's report, one witch reported that her husband had beaten her while she was in childbed; in her desperation she invoked the Devil against him and caused the Devil to appear.[155] Walpurga Hausmännin, whose confession was printed in 1587 and 1588, confessed that she was waiting for a lover in her bedchamber, thinking 'wicked carnal thoughts', when the Devil first appeared to her.[156] In other cases, however, the Devil appeared unprompted. Joan Prentice, one of the witches executed in Chelmsford in 1589, claimed that the Devil in the form of a ferret first appeared to her as she was 'preparing herself to bedward' and that his subsequent visits were 'always at the time when she was going to bed'.[157] Elizabeth Clark, one of the accused witches questioned by Matthew Hopkins, claimed in a report printed in 1645 that the Devil 'would appear

[152] VD17 16:722288M, sig. Aii^{r}.
[153] Roper, *Witch Craze*, p. 10; Purkiss, *The Witch in History*, pp. 101-2.
[154] ESTC S102363, sig. F2^{v}.
[155] VD16 L 7693, sig. C^{v}.
[156] *Urgicht und Verzaichnuß* 1588, sig. A2^{r}.
[157] ESTC S92857, sigs. B^{v}-Bii^{r}.

three or four times in a week at her bedside and go to bed with her'.[158] In another report printed in the same year, Joan Cariden, one of the witches in Faversham, Kent, stated that the Devil visited her at night and came to her bed.[159] The bedchamber's association with sexual relations unsurprisingly made it a natural location in both German and English print for diabolic influences.

One space that defies categorisation in its relationship with witchcraft is the church, which appeared in multiple contexts. In Martin Marckwart's report about a witch in Szczecin, printed in 1580, the witch was a disruptive element in the church, much like the disordered households discussed above. The witch's refusal to attend church was the first outward sign of her – otherwise concealed – evil nature; no one suspected her of any wrongdoing 'except that she did not like going to church'.[160] Her refusal to attend was also the source of significant tension in her marriage. Once her husband entered the church, he and the other parishioners were tormented by storm winds within the church and could neither hear nor see the sermon being preached.[161] The disorder within the sacred space of the church symbolises the cosmic struggle between witches and the faithful, between the Devil and God. The centrality of the church and the implication that witches were both unable to enter it and seek to disrupt the preaching of the word is a reflection of the wider message that Marckwart's pamphlet sought to impart. His pamphlet is, after all, largely devoted to chastising 'superstitious' people who rely on aid from witchcraft or other irreligious means.[162] The notion that witches were opposed to attending church supports his conviction that witchcraft was utterly opposed to Christianity and cast suspicion on people who failed to attend or abide by Christian norms.

A broadsheet printed in Hohenems in 1647 also addressed the connection between witches and the church. In this case, however, the witch did enter the church space and participated in church rituals including confession and communion. While the witch did not disrupt the order of the church while inside,

[158] ESTC R200218, p. 2.
[159] ESTC R200303, pp. 2-3.
[160] VD16 M 947, sig. [Aiiii^{v}].
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid., sigs. Aii^{r}-[Aiiii^{r}].

she did conceal the host in her mouth and removed it from the church. She then used it to perform sorcery.[163] The removal of an object from a sacred space, therefore, inverted its intended use and defiled it. This broadsheet still placed the church and witchcraft in opposition but suggested that witches were able to enter the church physically undetected. One English preacher, Thomas Cooper, went further. He suggested not only that witches could enter church spaces undetected but that the Devil specifically chose churches to host his gatherings.[164] The Devil's purpose in choosing this location was, according to Cooper, to present himself as a deity and an equal of God, to trick the witches into believing the 'lawfulness of the business (as being done in so holy a place)', and to corrupt and damn his witches further.[165] Cooper's interpretation of the church as the site for the witches' sabbath shows that witchcraft could subvert and invert the sanctity of certain spaces. It also perhaps reflects a shifting attitude to the building of the church itself, suggesting that it was not inherently holy enough to repel demonic forces. Notably, the church as a site where witches gathered to worship the Devil was also present in *Newes from Scotland*.[166]

Alternatively, one report presented a more positive relationship between the witch and the church. John Davenport's report, printed in 1646, of several witches tried in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, included the examination of Elizabeth Weed. She confessed that she had signed a pact with the Devil, promising her soul to him after twenty-one years.[167] She appeared, however, to regret this decision, calling it an 'unhappy burden'. To relieve the burden, she frequently attended church to hear sermons and visited the minster's house, a claim that the minister confirmed in the report.[168] Not only was the witch able to attend the church, but she also found solace and relief from this attendance. News reports in both Germany and England commonly encouraged their readers to pray and seek guidance from God to avoid the sin of witchcraft. The witch's testimony in this example shows that pamphleteers believed attending church could be a

[163] VD17 12:691618D.
[164] ESTC S108665, pp. 92-3.
[165] Ibid.
[166] ESTC S105575, sig. B2^{r}.
[167] ESTC R200949, pp. 1-2.
[168] Ibid, p. 2.

form of solace and a way to regain the souls of those who had given themselves to the Devil.

Just as historians argue that competing conceptions of space existed in the early modern period, this section has demonstrated that the notion of supernatural space was also full of contradictions. On the one hand, the supernatural was associated with the remote, the unfamiliar, and the 'other'. On the other hand, witchcraft and the threat it posed could not have been more immediate, invading the household and threatening intimate and private spaces. The Devil primarily occupied interstitial spaces, threatening the boundaries between known, safe spaces and the unknown. Witchcraft remained a pervasive, omnipresent, and real threat for many throughout the early modern period. Supernatural spaces are, moreover, a useful lens to examine people's relationship with their surroundings more broadly. It highlights the spaces that were considered especially valuable and those particularly vulnerable to external threats. It also demonstrates that for some spaces, such as the church, this period was a time when interpretations of its power, importance, and influence were in flux.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has interrogated the role that location played in German and English witchcraft narratives. Divided into three sections, the first examined the influence of print location in domestic news reports. It highlighted the distinctions in the organisation of the German and English printing industries. While these differences may lead to the conclusion that German witchcraft reports would be more diverse than their English counterparts, this chapter argued that in reality the opposite was true. Place was, nevertheless, an important factor in other ways in both countries. In Germany, place was utilised by pamphleteers to lend credibility to their reports. In England, there were often several degrees of separation between the location where the pamphlet was printed – namely, London – and the communities where the accused and accusers lived. Indeed, paying close attention to place reveals the way it shaped news reports and our historical understanding of witchcraft. The concentration of England's printing

industry in London meant that reports from London and surrounding counties dominated the press, and this in turn skews historians' knowledge of witchcraft trials in England as a whole. In Germany, the significant distances that news travelled contributed to the formulaic and fantastical elements that they contained.

The second section of this chapter explored transnational news reports. Using international news reports in both German and English, it questioned how or whether witchcraft news changed as it moved into different national contexts. A focus on transnational news reinforces arguments put forward elsewhere in this thesis concerning the differences in style of German and English reporting. In the process of translating news from English to German, the content was abbreviated to fit the brief length of domestic *Hexenzeitungen*. The English adaptations had a greater focus on the individual than their German counterparts and often included embellished criminal backstories. This analysis also provides a new angle to examine the exchange of demonological ideas. In both German and English translations, some ideas – such as ambiguous relationships with familiars or attendance at witches' sabbaths – were modified or removed entirely. English printers were seemingly drawn to stories from other European contexts that did not stray too far from England's own notions of witchcraft. They focused primarily, for example, on individuals or small groups of witches, despite the majority of German reports describing much larger groups of witches. Yet, the report from Scotland in the early 1590s demonstrates that it was not impossible for new demonological ideas like the witches' sabbath to appear in English print. This chapter contends that pamphleteers would engage with new demonological ideas when the case was of political or national importance.

The final section of this chapter turned its attention to supernatural spaces. At first glance, witchcraft and the supernatural were primarily associated with remote and marginal spaces. This association is particularly clear in German print, where the scale of witches' gatherings necessitated distance from human dwellings. It is also seen in both German and English print in individual encounters with the Devil or with witches. Assigning the Devil and his minions to these spaces associates them with the unfamiliar and the unknown; by placing

them outside society, pamphleteers designated witches and demons as 'other'. The recurrence of witches in domestic spaces, however, reveals the perceived strength and threat of diabolic power in the world. That witches were so frequently able to attack the household demonstrates the belief that they were pervasive in Christian society. Examining domestic supernatural spaces not only offers a window into witchcraft beliefs, but also sheds light on popular beliefs about spaces – such as cellars, animal stalls, and bedchambers – considered particularly valuable or vulnerable. Exploring supernatural spaces also reveals that some spaces, such as the church, remained contested. The church in German and English witchcraft pamphlets was invaded, subverted, and used as a source of solace. Ultimately, this chapter argues that examining location both enriches and expands understanding of German and English witchcraft print and is not only beneficial but essential to the study of witchcraft.

Conclusion

Men of learning have observed that all witches through Europe are of like carriage and behaviour in their examinations and convictions: they use the same answers, refuges, defences, protestations. In a word, look what be the practices and courses of the witches in England, in any of these particulars, the same be the practices of the witches in Spain, France, Italy, [and] Germany.[1]

This thesis began with the above quote from William Perkins; it seems fitting to conclude with it too. Perkins' claim (echoed by other English and German contemporaries) that witchcraft was 'universal' and that witches across Europe were fundamentally the same is at odds with modern historians' interpretations of the early modern European witch-hunts. Scholars today observe the significant variations in witchcraft beliefs and prosecutions across Europe. Of course, the geographical and temporal differences were considerable and cannot be minimized or downplayed. This thesis does not undermine or contradict the extensive research which has illuminated and explored these differences, nor does it seek to overstate the parallels between Germany and England. Rather, it argues that, just as contemporaries recognised that their discussions of witchcraft were situated in a broader international and historical context, so too should historians endeavour to move beyond regional and national borders in witchcraft research.

The primary aim of this thesis was to analyse the commonalities and differences in German and English printed witchcraft discourses. It did so through five thematic chapters. Chapter One, *Printing Witchcraft*, investigated the methodological challenges that printed sources pose for witchcraft research and for the study of early modern popular culture. Witchcraft featured in a variety of printed sources in Germany and England; there was some significant overlap in the types of sources in which it appeared, but they were not identical. There are, for example, extant German printed sermons devoted to the topic of witchcraft, while in England sources in an analogous format do not exist (or, at least, have

[1] ESTC S114525, pp. 191-2.

not survived). Similarly, both countries printed news pamphlets, but the precise definition of a pamphlet was broad across the two. In connection to this point, this chapter interrogated the notion of 'popular print'. It advocated an approach that places printed sources on a spectrum of popularity rather than one that strictly categorises sources as 'popular' or 'elite'. This chapter also considered the motivations and aims of the authors and printers who incorporated witchcraft into their works. It is often difficult to be determine individual motivations, particularly in the case of news pamphlets and ballads which were mostly anonymous. Nevertheless, this analysis found that moral instruction was a recurring theme across German and English news reports, sermons, and religious tracts. This shared motivation provided a useful foundation for comparing these sources and exploring their attitudes to witches and witchcraft.

Chapter Two, *Defining Witchcraft*, examined four concepts: the role of the Devil and diabolic pact in witchcraft; witches' relationships with demonic creatures (witches' familiars and *Buhlteufel*); the witches' sabbath; and witches' flight. These ideas are central components of the 'cumulative concept' and 'elaborated concept' of witchcraft, both of which were created by historians of German witchcraft.[2] Early historiography of English witchcraft suggested that these ideas were absent there, distinguishing English witchcraft from its 'continental' counterpart.[3] This interpretation has been substantially revised, particularly in the works of James Sharpe and Charlotte-Rose Millar.[4] Previously, however, scholars have not conducted sustained comparisons of these concepts in England and Germany to see how similar the two were.

This chapter addressed this oversight and offered detailed exploration of each concept in the two countries. It revealed significant overlap in the ideas expressed in the works of German and English preachers. The involvement of the Devil and the diabolic pact were, in their view, fundamental to witchcraft.

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[2] J. Hansen, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozeß im Mittelalter und die Entstehung der grossen Hexenverfolgung* (Munich, 1900), pp. 448-52; W. Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 13.

[3] A. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London, 1970), p. 6.

[4] J. Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in England, 1550-1750* (London, 1996), p. 136; C. Millar, *Witchcraft, the Devil, and Emotions in Early Modern England* (London, 2017), p. 12.

Preachers in both countries also acknowledged the reality of the witches' sabbath and the witches' flight. Although some preachers claimed they were directly involved in local witch trials, their sermons and tracts were, on the whole, focused on theoretical notions. They relied primarily on scriptural evidence, but also consulted other demonological writings. This shared foundation for their arguments explains why English and German preachers largely agreed about the theoretical parameters of witchcraft. German and English news reports were also similar to some degree. The Devil's involvement was a recurrent feature. One striking parallel uncovered is the shared characteristics of the witches' familiar and the *Buhlteufel*. In this case, comparison proved particularly fruitful in challenging scholarly assumptions. Some historians have suggested that the familiar was unique to England and absent in German demonology.[5] This chapter questioned this assertion and demonstrated that – while not identical – the familiar and the *Buhlteufel* performed similar functions in witchcraft narratives; both tempted the witch to join the Devil, both served as a physical embodiment of the diabolic pact for the reader, and both appeared in animal or human form. The similarities found here indicate that there is potential for further research into the role of attendant demons in other European countries. News reports were not, however, the same in every respect. A key divergence was the approach to the witches' sabbath. It was not discussed in detail in either country but was regularly mentioned in *Hexenzeitungen* and hardly ever featured in English reports. It is logical that there were more variations in news reports than in sermons and tracts. News reports, at least nominally, discussed real trials rather than theoretical concepts; they were led, therefore, by the events that they reported. The smaller and often individual scale of English witchcraft trials, in contrast to some of the larger witch-hunts in Germany, explains why the concept of witchcraft as a collective act was less dominant in English reports than it was in German ones. Overall, this chapter emphasised the considerable similarities in German and

[5] J. Sharpe, 'Familiars' in R. M. Golden (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2006), p. 347; L. Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London, 2004), p. 92.

English definitions of witchcraft as they appeared in print, particularly the centrality of the Devil.

Chapter Three, *Criminalising Witchcraft*, analysed approaches to the crime of witchcraft in German and English print. It explored the legal systems and laws used to deal with witchcraft in each country, demonstrated that in both countries the official legal approach to witchcraft remained vague and contested. The decentralised nature of Germany's political and legal administration resulted in competing jurisdictions with numerous approaches to prosecuting witchcraft. In England, the prosecutions were, overall, more centralised, but the statutes regarding witchcraft were imprecise in their definitions of the crime. Preachers and pamphleteers in both countries used this ambiguity to their advantage. Witchcraft was, in the eyes of German and English preachers, fundamentally a form of heresy. Because the English witchcraft statutes did not define witchcraft in this way, English preachers have been viewed as advocates for harsher measures.[6] In Germany, on the other hand, historians have emphasised preachers' calls for caution and restraint in witchcraft prosecutions.[7] Yet, in comparing the two, this chapter found considerable agreement in their arguments. Both expressed reservations about overzealous witch-hunting and rejected the validity of confessions extracted with torture. Their belief that witchcraft was heresy and stemmed from a diabolic pact, however, also meant that they defined witchcraft more broadly than official statutes and called for harsher measures against those who consulted witches or used beneficial magic. Pamphleteers were, on the other hand, primarily concerned with harmful magic; descriptions of large-scale devastation and first-hand testimony from victims contributed to the sensational and commercial appeal of the reports.

This chapter also found that, while extant *Hexenzeitungen* were uniformly supportive of the trials and, indeed, encouraged further prosecutions, there was a greater variety of opinions expressed in England. Some criticised apparent leniency and inaction on the part of authorities, while others questioned the

[6] A. Mendez, 'To Accommodate the Earthly Kingdom to Divine Will: Official and Nonconformist Definitions of Witchcraft in England (ca. 1542-1630)', *Preternature,* 6/2 (2017), p. 283.
[7] L. Kounine, *Imagining the Witch: Emotions, Gender and Selfhood in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 127-8.

legitimacy of trials. English pamphlets also reported cases where the accused was acquitted, while the *Hexenzeitungen* all resulted in execution. This chapter suggested that these differences were due, in part, to the printing industries in the two countries. In England, reports were often contributed by people who were present at the trials (or at least claimed to be), or by individuals directly involved in the trial in some form. German reports rarely had access to trial documentation, and consequently did not cover the minutiae of the trials in detail. The conventions of crime reporting more broadly also provide an explanation. The final section of this chapter compared the rhetoric and style of witchcraft news with other crime reports in the two countries. It argued that witchcraft news followed the conventions of the crime reporting genre, and that this context is essential to interpret the sources correctly.

Chapter Four, *Identifying Witchcraft*, explored the facets of the witch identity in print. Questions about the typical witch, and why certain demographics were particularly vulnerable to prosecution, have long interested witchcraft historians. Much of this discussion has focused primarily on gender. Indeed, wider public discourses about the European witch-hunts today often portray it as the targeted persecution of women. The reality was, naturally, more nuanced, and historians have devoted significant attention to understanding the social dynamics that underpinned a witchcraft accusation. In particular, scholars have emphasised the need to understand the witch identity as a whole, and to consider other characteristics including age, financial status, and employment.[8] Another point of contention on this topic is how far the witch identity changed over time; in both Germany and England, historians have suggested that dominant stereotypes 'broke down' during times of intense witch-hunting and crisis.[9]

This chapter concluded that the witch identity cannot be narrowly defined; it has always been malleable and flexible. There was broad consensus in German sermons and English tracts. Witches were most commonly women, but the existence of male witches was also possible. Indeed, preachers warned against

[8] Kounine, *Imagining the Witch*, p. 90.
[9] H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562-1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, CA, 1972), pp. 178-85; Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England,* p. 162.

indiscriminate acceptance of tropes, such as claims that all witches were feeble, old, and poor. Because they were all Protestant, they also repeated anti-Catholic rhetoric and suggested that Catholic priests and the popes were especially likely to be involved in witchcraft and sorcery. There were also remarkable similarities in the portrayal of witches in English and German pamphlets. They were more generally more open to tropes such as the female witch or the old witch, and, in fact, sometimes edited or excluded details in their reports to emphasise particular traits and minimise others. There were, however, exceptions. Ultimately, pamphleteers' decisions were shaped by a desire to entice and titillate their readers, and the witch identity was reshaped and reformed over time to respond to societal concerns. There were also some differences. The witch-midwife was a recurrent feature of *Hexenzeitungen* but absent from English reports. It was in the interest of preachers and pamphleteers to avoid restricting the witch identity to one demographic. The flexibility of the witch identity is key to its ability to inspire fear, and also fed into the idea that anyone could fall prey to the Devil if they did not apply themselves to Christian learning and reform. In German and English print, the fundamental characteristic of the witch was wickedness. This wickedness manifested itself in different ways in the two countries. In England, the acceptance of the witches' mark as proof of guilt meant that wickedness was often depicted through deformity and physical appearance. This association received only limited acceptance in German print. In both countries, however, immoral and deviant behaviour was portrayed as the main indication that a person was a witch.

Chapter Five, *Locating Witchcraft,* explored place and space. Place has played a defining role in witchcraft historiography; prosecutions varied significantly geographically, and most analysis has adopted a regional approach. Historians have also emphasised the importance of place and local context when examining printed works such as demonologies.[10] Place poses a problem for news reports, however, because they were often printed anonymously and at a significant distance from the events they described. Some even transcended

[10] W. Behringer, 'Demonology: 1500-1660', in R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity: vol. 6, Reform and Expansion 1500-1660* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 424.

national borders. Location was also important within witchcraft narratives. The spatial turn encourages scholars to consider how spaces create cultural meaning. It is relatively new in witchcraft research, but, as this chapter demonstrated, offers valuable insights into people's relationship with their surroundings and the environment. Historians disagree about the impact that the Reformation had on people's perceptions of their surroundings, with some suggesting it led to a 'disenchantment' of the environment, and others arguing that it is increased concerns about supernatural forces in the world.[11]

The first section of this chapter explored how print location shaped domestic news reports. The German and English printing industries were organised very differently; print in England was almost entirely concentrated in London, while in Germany it was spread over multiple cities. Germany was also divided along confessional lines, which meant that some print centres were Catholic while others were Protestant. Although it may be expected that German reports would present more varied opinions because of these factors, in reality the opposite was true. Print location is, nevertheless, important in both countries. Pamphleteers changed locations in *Hexenzeitungen* to make them more relatable and threatening to local readership. English news reports often discussed the location of the trials, rather than the locations where the accused lived. The concentration of print in London also means that more reports were printed about trials in the south and east of England. Section two of this chapter investigated transnational news. Using examples of a report printed in German about an English trials, and reports printed in English and trials in Germany, France, and Scotland, it showed that news reports claiming to be translations were, in fact, adapted and edited for domestic audiences. Yet, in instances of political significance, such as the North Berwick trials, pamphleteers would retain concepts – such as witches' conspiratorial meetings – which were uncommon in domestic cases. Finally, the chapter examined supernatural spaces in witchcraft narratives. In both Germany

[11] K. Poole, *Supernatural Environments in Shakespeare's England: Spaces of Demonism, Divinity, and Drama* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 16-17; A. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2011), p. 333; G. Scholz Williams, *Ways of Knowing in Early Modern Germany: Johannes Praetorius as a Witness to his Time* (London, 2006), p. 67.

and England, the Devil was associated with remote and wild spaces. Fears about the disruptive power of the Devil and his witches were vividly portrayed through the way that they transgressed physical boundaries of the household and threatened people's private and intimate spaces, such as the bedchamber. This analysis also revealed that the meaning of some spaces, namely church buildings, was contested; for some, they were vulnerable to invasion from diabolic and malefic forces, while for others they served as a refuge and a source of comfort. This chapter proved that location, in all its forms, is a vital concept to which historians of witchcraft must pay close attention.

Several wider conclusions emerge from this research. First, there was significant overlap in the arguments and ideas expressed by preachers in Germany and England. These parallels were particularly clear in Chapters Two, Three, and Four. The fact that all of the preachers consulted in this thesis were Protestant is, naturally, a major reason for the similarities identified. They were regularly using the same scriptural passages when explaining their logic and rationale. The evidence in this thesis supports Robert Rowland's claim that there was a 'supra-national level of religious integration' in demonological understandings of the witches' sabbath, and goes further by showing that this description holds true for broader understandings of demonological thought, the correct legal approach, and the identity of the witch.[12] Although several preachers claimed that they were involved in trials or that their desire to write about the topic was sparked by local trials, their arguments and evidence were not limited to local contexts or personal experience. Rather, they cited authors and examples from across Europe. This thesis demonstrated that some English preachers were directly inspired by German thinkers. This influence is particularly clear in the writing of Alexander Roberts. A preacher in King's Lynn, Norfolk, Roberts cited Johann Georg Gödelmann, a jurist from Saxony, in his discussion of the diabolic pact, and referred to the *Carolina Code* in his recommendations for legal proceedings against witchcraft.[13] Preachers were primarily writing about witchcraft at a

[12] R. Rowland, '"Fantasticall and Devilish Persons": European Witch-beliefs in Comparative Perspective', in B. Ankarloo & G. Henningsen (eds.), *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1990), p. 176.
[13] ESTC S115983, pp. 75, 81-2.

theoretical level. Yet, because many of these sources were originally sermons that were preached to their congregations, their works also had practical implications for the wider populace's understanding of witchcraft. It is this wider influence of these sources that distinguishes them from other demonological works and makes the similarities found between English and German sermons and tracts particularly noteworthy. These sources certainly suggest that people who heard these preachers' sermons most likely received very similar information and explanations, whether they were in Germany or England.

Comparison also reveals that German and English preachers' attitudes have been viewed differently by historians, despite the fact that the arguments the preachers put forward were largely similar. Chapter Three provided an example of this phenomenon; while English preachers have often been characterised as overzealous in calls for further prosecutions, the German preachers studied in this thesis have been viewed as moderate and cautious. By comparing the two, it is clear that their arguments were essentially the same, but have been viewed differently because of the wider legal contexts in which they were writing. This finding demonstrates that comparison can be a useful methodological tool to challenge or reassess prevailing assumptions.

In some respects, this thesis also identified considerable similarities in German and English news reports. While some pamphleteers did contribute to wider theoretical debates about witchcraft, the news reports were primarily concerned with reporting the events of trials, providing a sensational story and a moral message for their readers. They focused primarily on the harmful effects of witchcraft, rather than defining it as heresy, and were more willing to accept the reality of demonological concepts including the witches' sabbath and witches' flight. There were clear parallels in the ways that they shaped witches' identities in their reports, and there was also overlap in the spaces that they portrayed as vulnerable to supernatural forces. Where similarities have been identified, they are often linked to the fact that pamphleteers in both countries were seeking to shock and entice readers. The comparative methodology has also been particularly beneficial when examining ideas that have previously been considered unique or limited to one national context, such as the witch's familiar. It seems probable that

the witch's familiar had folkloric origins but became an accepted demonological concept in the seventeenth century. Changes to translations in the King James Version meant that mentions of 'familiar spirits' appeared far more frequently. Although it is not clear that the familiar spirits in the Bible were the same as the familiars that featured in the trials, the two ideas were certainly conflated by pamphleteers. The scriptural evidence for familiar spirits was not present in German biblical translations, but on close inspection of the sources, it is clear that the *Buhlteufel* played a similar function in German print. Analysis of the transnational news also shows that a case involving familiars was translated for German audiences, although some elements were adapted. This example further supports the idea that the familiar, or a similar attendant demon, was not unique to England and may be a component of wider demonological thought. The resemblances revealed between the familiar and the *Buhlteufel* could not have been uncovered without the sustained comparison that this thesis undertook.

Hexenzeitungen and English witch news reports were, however, not identical. The wider context of the trials offers some explanation for the differences. German witch trials were often much larger than their English counterparts. There was a greater need to explain how the witches were able to plot and gather together in large numbers in Germany and, as a consequence, the witches' sabbath appeared more frequently in German news reports. Differences in the scale of the trials, and especially the relatively limited acceptance of the witches' sabbath in English print, had an influence in other respects too. This thesis suggests that the witch-midwife was a stronger trope in Germany because the witches' salves that they created were used to fly to the sabbath; since English witches did not travel to these gatherings, there was no requirement to explain how they travelled. The association between remote and desolate spaces and witches was also less strong (although certainly present) in English print because they were not seeking to explain witches' sabbaths. Another factor is confessional divides. Overall, this thesis argues that confessional difference did not have a major impact on the contents of *Hexenzeitungen*. An exception to this general conclusion is the witch-priest trope. The trope was found in both countries but was more common in German print. Confessional divisions in Germany meant that

pamphleteers could create plausible examples from Catholic Germany. England, meanwhile, relied on international examples.

Additionally, this thesis has stressed that the different approaches to witchcraft in German and English print are explained by the organisation of their respective printing industries and wider print conventions. The importance of print conventions was emphasised throughout but was particularly clear in the discussion of witchcraft as an exceptional crime in Chapter Three. Many of the differences in German and English approaches to witchcraft, including their use of first-person testimony, documentary evidence, length, and critique of criminal proceedings, were, in fact, reflective of broader trends in their crime reports. As this chapter argued, this finding does not mean that witchcraft was considered to be an unexceptional crime. It does, however, force historians to consider the possibility that the differences found reflect literary conventions rather than demonstrating divergent attitudes to witchcraft itself. This conclusion demonstrates the importance of contextualising sources carefully, something that is particularly challenging when dealing with two source bases. It is, nevertheless, crucial to do so to avoid overstating or misinterpreting similarities and differences. The significance of the printing industries in shaping the contents of the German and English witchcraft reports also has wider implications for the study of print and print culture in early modern Europe. Andrew Pettegree and Matthew Hall's study of the book and the Reformation, which also used a comparative framework, revealed that the relationship between the two varied considerably in different European countries; it challenged the assumption that the situation in Germany was mirrored elsewhere.[14] Similarly, this research shows that the organisation of the printing industries had a sizeable influence on the structure and content of witchcraft news reports. The methodology could be applied to other themes in popular print, and will provide new perspectives on print cultures, communication, and dissemination.

Witchcraft historiography is currently at a critical juncture. Regional analysis – the dominant approach to witchcraft research in both Germany and

[14] A. Pettegree and M. Hall, 'The Reformation and the Book: A Reconsideration', *The Historical Journal*, 47/4 (2004), pp. 785, 807-8.

England – is responsible for major advances in scholarly understanding of the complex dynamics and circumstances that underpinned witchcraft accusations and trials. Yet, while there is no doubt that this approach has greatly enriched historical knowledge of witchcraft, historians are now questioning whether it has run its course. A major methodological problem facing witchcraft historians is how to build a composite picture of witchcraft in early modern Europe while also acknowledging the local and regional variations. This thesis proves that a balanced comparative approach is not only a viable approach, but one that actively contributes to historians' understanding of witchcraft in both countries. It is also an approach with great potential to be expanded and developed in future research. The expansion of bibliographic projects such as the Universal Short Title Catalogue will undoubtedly make the systematic study of printed discourses about witchcraft across Europe a more realistic prospect.[15] One way to develop the findings of this research would be to add an additional country into the comparison or, alternatively, to examine two entirely different countries. It would be particularly beneficial to undertake a comparison which incorporates a Catholic country into the equation. This thesis has recognised confessional differences in the German sources where possible, but, overall, it undoubtedly provides a clearer picture of Protestant ideas. Comparing England, Germany, or both countries with, for example, Spain, France, or Italy, would give a clearer understanding of the differences (if any) between Protestant and Catholic printed witchcraft discourses.

Witchcraft and early modern witch-hunts remain enticing for historians at all stages in their careers. Why? One explanation is that everyone can find something in the study of witchcraft to provoke interest. Far from being a sidenote in early modern history, the witch-hunts are intrinsically connected to developments in religion, politics, legal systems, individual and communal identity, and literature. The thematic structure of this thesis enabled the exploration of several of these issues and ideas. Many of the themes examined are central to early modern history. Crime and criminality, for example, is a major field of research; this thesis adds to the body of scholarship which addresses the ways in which crime was represented to the wider populace. It also illuminates

[15] 'Universal Short Title Catalogue', <https://www.ustc.ac.uk/> accessed: 16.08.2022.

the commonalities and divergences in approaches to crime in Germany and England. Similarly, the exploration of the witch identity in Chapter Four is useful for analysing themes of deviance, social order, and gender. It reveals the traits that were considered undesirable or threatening, offering insights into social values and anxieties for contemporaries. The witch-family trope, for instance, is indicative of broader concerns about household order and moral reform; as this thesis demonstrated, these concerns were shared by authors in Germany and England. Likewise, the investigation of supernatural spaces in Chapter Five is beneficial to the study of the cultural meaning of spaces and to debates regarding the impact of the Reformation on people's perceptions of their surroundings and sacred spaces. As well as providing a solution to the methodological problem facing witchcraft historians, therefore, this thesis also offers several contributions to the study of early modern European history more broadly.

There are, moreover, several ways that this research can be expanded, developed, and adapted in future studies. In addition to the obvious route of expanding the comparative framework to incorporate other countries, another area that would benefit from further exploration is the exchange of ideas through translations and adaptations of news. This theme was explored in Chapter Five, where close analysis of individual reports revealed the ways in which news writers selected and adapted news reports from abroad to appeal to domestic readers. Studies of demonologies have already emphasised the importance of translation in disseminating witchcraft ideas in new contexts.[16] A study which examines the translation and adaptation of witchcraft news reports across Europe could expand our understanding of the transnational communication and dissemination of witchcraft ideas. In this regard, the Renaissance Cultural Crossroads (RCC) project may prove useful.[17] The project catalogues six thousand translations printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland between 1473 and 1640. It is, therefore,

[16] R. Voltmer, and L. Helene Willumsen, 'Introduction: Demonology and Witch-trials in Dialogue', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer, and L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), p. 6; M. Gibson, 'French Demonology in an English Village: the St Osyth Experiment of 1582', in J. Goodare, R. Voltmer & L. Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2020), p. 110.
[17] 'Centre for the Study of the Renaissance: Renaissance Cultural Crossroads', <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/rcc/> accessed: 09.08.2022.

a particularly beneficial starting point for examining how ideas about witchcraft entered printed discourses in the British Isles. Projects like the RCC show that there is a growing desire among historians to learn about how ideas and concepts were translated, transmitted, and transformed; an extensive study of witchcraft and translation would be a valuable contribution to this endeavour.

It was beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the periodical press, but such sources offer another intriguing prospect for future research. In 2009, Wolfgang Behringer posed several questions about the periodical press and its relationship with witchcraft.[18] He notes that witchcraft trials in the 1660s failed to garner as much attention in occasional news reports as did previous trials in the early decades of the seventeenth century, and hypothesises that they may instead have appeared in periodicals.[19] He also rejects the suggestion that periodicals 'sponsored rationality' and ended reporting of crime and the supernatural; rather, he observes that witchcraft did feature in periodicals printed in Berlin and Munich during the 1610s.[20] This thesis has noted that at least one English witchcraft trial – the trial of Joan Peterson in 1652/3 – was also reported in periodical news.[21] Examining the extent of witchcraft reporting in periodicals may also contribute to scholarly debates about the decline of witchcraft prosecutions and beliefs. Indeed, scholars such as Owen Davies, Thomas Waters, Andrew Sneddon, and John Fulton, have used discussions of witchcraft in newspapers during the nineteenth century to reconceptualise historians' perspective on the so-called 'decline' in witchcraft and magic.[22] A comprehensive study of early periodicals and how far witchcraft featured would be a beneficial addition this field of scholarship.

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[18] W. Behringer, 'Witchcraft and the Media', in M. E. Plummer & R. B. Barnes (eds.), *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H. C. Erik Midelfort* (Farnham, 2009), pp. 228-32.
[19] Ibid., p. 228.
[20] Ibid., p. 231.
[21] ESTC P1269, pp. 508-9.
[22] O. Davies, 'Newspapers and Popular Belief in Witchcraft and Magic in the Modern Period', *The Journal of British Studies,* 37/2 (1998), pp. 139-65; T. Waters, 'Belief in Witchcraft in Oxfordshire and Warwickshire, c. 1860-1900: The Evidence of the Newspaper Archive', *Midland History*, 34/1 (2009), pp. 98-116; A. Sneddon and J. Fulton, 'Witchcraft, the Press, and Crime in Ireland, 1822-1922', *The Historical Journal*, 62/3 (2019), pp. 741-64.

One alternative direction to explore is a more comprehensive study of sermons and preaching. This thesis has noted the importance of preaching in disseminating ideas about witchcraft and incorporated printed sermons to consider the ideas that preachers may have imparted on their parishioners. Other scholars, including Laura Kounine and Rita Voltmer, have also used printed sermons in their research.[23] Despite the oft-repeated assertion that preaching played an active role in disseminating witchcraft ideas, and may even have directly contributed to certain trials, there is still limited scholarship on the topic. This is particularly true in the English context. While conducting this research, it became clear that it is challenging to find printed sermons in England devoted specifically to the topic of witchcraft, which is why this thesis incorporated tracts written by English preachers. Moving away from print, however, and turning instead to manuscript sermons, may offer another angle and enable a broader study of preaching and sermons relating to witchcraft. The Gateway to Early Modern Manuscript Sermons (GEMMS) is a bibliographic project that collates examples of sermons, sermon notes, and sermon reports from the British Isles and North America between 1530 and 1715.[24] The project has already been used to examine sermons and the Salem Trials (1692-3), demonstrating its potential to contribute new findings to the study of witchcraft discourses and preaching.[25]

One point is particularly clear: the crucial role that digitisation and bibliographic projects play in broadening the horizons of early modern research. Due to the geographic dispersal of the physical copies of sources used in this thesis, the research would have taken considerably longer without the following bibliographic and digitisation initiatives: *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts* (VD16), *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts* (VD17), the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC), the English Short Title Catalogue

[23]Kounine, *Imagining the Witch,* pp. 127-8; R. Voltmer, 'Debating the Devil's Clergy: Demonology and the Media in Dialogue with Trials (14th to 17th Century)', *Religions*, 10 (2019), p. 664.
[24]'The Gateway to Early Modern Manuscript Sermons (GEMMS): About the Project', <https://gemmsorig.usask.ca/about.php> accessed: 09.08.2022.
[25] C. Evans, '"Evil Angels among us": Sermons and the Salem Witch Trials', <http://gemmsproject.blogspot.com/2020/08/evil-angels-among-us-sermons-and-salem.html> accessed: 16.08.2022.

(ESTC), and Early English Books Online (EEBO). The restrictions on travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic mean it would most likely have been impossible to complete this thesis without these projects. There are, of course, many benefits to using physical versions of primary material. It is also true that these digitisation projects are not perfect and do not offer comprehensive coverage of all printed materials. Nevertheless, they undoubtedly open up avenues for new and exciting research and may make historical research a more accessible undertaking for students and scholars unable to travel. In particular, they make sustained comparative research across different countries possible and feasible. This thesis has demonstrated the value of such comparative approaches for witchcraft historiography. Comparison of discourses about witchcraft in German and English print has revealed unexpected commonalities and offered explanations for the differences. Ultimately, this thesis argues that comparative methodology enhances our understanding of early modern European witchcraft and should be used more in future research.

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For all primary material, please see *Abbreviations* (pp. vii-xxix).

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