

To Feroza and Tariq Bokhari



POSSESSION, DISPOSSESSION, AND EXORCISM IN EARLY
MODERN ENGLAND:
CASTING OUT *DIVELLS* IN THE LIGHT OF JOHN DARRELL'S
CASES

The Graduate School of Economic and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

RIMLIYA TARIQ BOKHARI

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY

May 2018

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.



Asst. Prof. Dr. Paul Latimer

Supervisor

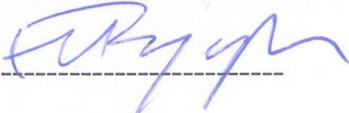
I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.



Asst. Prof. Dr. David E. Thornton

Examining Committee Member

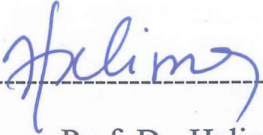
I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.



Asst. Prof. Dr. Elif Boyacıoğlu

Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences



Prof. Dr. Halime Demirkan

Director

ABSTRACT

POSSESSION, DISPOSSESSION, AND EXORCISM IN EARLY MODERN
ENGLAND:
CASTING OUT *DIVELLS* IN THE LIGHT OF JOHN DARRELL'S CASES

Bokhari, Rimliya Tariq

M.A., Department of History

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Paul Latimer

May 2018

This study analyzes the phenomenon of demonic possession and the rite of exorcism in early modern England and traces the debates over the reality of demonic activity such as possession in both Catholic and Protestant circles, particularly through the dispossession cases of the controversial minister, John Darrell. It examines the pamphlets, treatises, and texts which shaped the demonology of the early modern period, and which contributed significantly to the development of the image of the Devil as man's tormentor and corroborated his influence in the physical world. In doing so, it argues that demonic possession was regarded as an actual phenomenon in the early modern English society which cannot be explained only through medical and/or psychological reasons, and that it was a combination of social, economic, religious, and political factors in addition to medical explanations that gave rise to cases of demonic possession and ensuing exorcisms.

Keywords: Demoniac, Demonic Possession, Devil, Dispossession, Exorcism

ÖZET

ERKEN MODERN DÖNEM İNGİLTERE’SİNDE ŞEYTAN ÇIKARMA, SAVMA VE
ŞEYTAN ÇARPMASI:
JOHN DARRELL’İN VAKARALI İŞİĞİNDA ‘İBLİSLERİ’ DEFETME

Bokhari, Rimliya Tariq

Yüksek Lisans, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Paul Latimer

Mayıs 2018

Bu çalışma doğaüstü şeytan çarpması hadiselerini ve erken modern İngiltere’de uygulanan şeytan çıkarma ayinlerini inceler ve Katolik ve Protestan gruplarındaki şeytan çarpması gibi şeytani eylemlerin, özellikle de ihtilafı papaz John Darell’ in özgür bırakmalarına odaklanarak, gerçeklik tartışmalarının izini sürer. Erken modern dönemin iblis bilimini tanımlayan ve şeytanın insanın işkencecisi olarak imgeleşmesinde büyük katkısı olan ve şeytanın fiziksel dünyadaki etkisini teyit eden risaleleri, ahitnameleri ve yazgılı kaynakları inceler. Bu sayede, erken modern dönem İngiltere toplumunda, tıbbi ve/veya psikolojik sebeplerle açıklanamayan, şeytan çarpması ve takiben şeytan çıkarması vakalarına sebep olan tıbbi açıklamalara ek olarak sosyal, ekonomik, dini ve politik etkenlerin birleşimini göz önüne alarak şeytan çarpmasının esaslı bir görüngü olarak kabul görüşünü tartışır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Savma, Şeytan, Şeytan Çarpması, Şeytan Çıkarma, Şeytani

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my life-coach, my father: Thank you for always being in high spirits and teaching me everything I know. To my eternal cheerleader, my mother: Thank you for being an absolute angel and making me the person I am. You two are the nicest and the most fun people I have ever known. I owe it all to you.

I would also like to thank my brother, Ronnie, for buying me my first Ouija board and moving the planchette around using a magnet during our first séance, pretending we had conjured up a demon, and scaring the living daylights out of me.

I am grateful to my husband, Can Telkenaroğlu, for letting me keep the lights on at night after I spook myself excessively and for being the best horror movie companion one can ask for, but also for making me laugh every single day. I am glad that I found you.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Prof. Paul Latimer, for his unwavering support, constant encouragement, and immense knowledge. I am thankful to you for seeing this through.

With special gratitude to Prof. David E. Thornton for his witty remarks, but also for his insightful suggestions which helped polish this work. My heartfelt thanks to Prof. Elif Boyacıoğlu for her invaluable feedback and useful advice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER II. <i>DIVELLS, ANGELS, AND SPIRITES</i> : THE BELIEF IN THE DEVIL AND HIS EFFECTUAL OPERATION.....	25
2.1 The Devil as a Fallen Angel.....	27
2.2 <i>Diabolus Simia Dei</i> : The Devil as the Ape, Arch-enemy, and Agent of God.....	46
CHAPTER III. VEXED BY THE <i>DIVELL</i> : DEMONIC POSSESSION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND.....	55
3.1. Signs and Symptoms of Possession.....	58
3.2. The Preacher and the Demoniac.....	82
CHAPTER IV. MARVELLOUS DELIVERANCE: DISPOSSESSING THE DEVIANT <i>DIVELL</i>	99
4.1. <i>Vade retro Satana</i> : Expelling the Devil in Early Modern England.....	101
4.2. <i>Let the mist of pretended counterfetting be dispelled</i> : The Trial of John Darrell.....	126
CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION.....	134
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	143

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On 27 May 1596, a godly minister named John Darrell paid a visit to Thomas Darling, “a boy of thirteene yeres of age, that was possessed by the Deuill”.¹ Darling had been ill since February when, after a hare-hunting trip in the woods across the Trent with his uncle, Robert Toone, a well-connected and wealthy clothier, they had separated and the young boy had decided to walk home alone. On the way, he encountered Alice Gooderidge, a sixty-year old local woman who had earlier come to their door to beg. As he walked by her, he passed wind which angered her and resulted in her muttering a curse, “Gyp with a mischiefe, and fart with a bell: I wil goe to heauen, and thou shalt goe to hell”.² The aftermath of the event was life-changing for Darling, who had previously aspired to become a preacher and was receiving religious education for that purpose, as he began to see green angels descending from the sky at the window of his house as well as a monstrous green cat with fiery eyes. He started to experience fits during which he displayed extraordinary strength while his body contorted in unnatural ways. Upholding godly skepticism, his relations initially took a medical approach and consulted a physician who could not locate the cause. Shortly thereafter, prayers were being read to him,

¹ John Denison., *The most wonderfull and true storie of a certaine witch named Alse Gooderige of Stapen hill, who was arraigned and conuicted at Darbie at the Assises there as also a true report of the strange torments of Thomas Darling, a boy of thirteene yeres of age, that was possessed by the deuill, with his horrible fittes and apparitions by him vttered at Burton vpon Trent in the countie of Stafford, and of his maruellous deliuerance*. (London: 1597), title page.

² Ibid., 4.

specifically John 1, which was known for its use in counter-magic.³ It was then that John Darrell was contacted by William Walkden, the boy's grandfather and the parson of Clifton Campville in Staffordshire, who attended exercises in Burton where Darrell would also be present.⁴ This was where Walkden had heard about Darrell's reputation as a religious healer who had a decade earlier cured an eighteen-year old girl named Katherine Wright in Derbyshire. Darrell, as it transpired, recognized the boy as a demoniac, encouraged him to fight against the Devil's afflictions and torments, and presented the family with Minister Thomas Rogers's translation of Johann Habermas's prayer book, *The Enimie of Securitie*, which he had also used in his previous dispossession.⁵ Furthermore, he advised the family to resort to prayer and fasting. Not one for glory, he thought better than to attend the dispossession that took place the next day and instead sent a group of nine or ten devout lay people to expel the demons that vexed Thomas Darling. Alice Gooderidge, the woman who had cursed Darling, was committed by the magistrates, Thomas Gresley and Sir Humphrey Ferrers, to prison where she later died.⁶ This case would later come to be called the "deliverance of the *Boy of Burton*". It would also mark the first time a publication about John Darrell's dispossessions would appear, albeit not produced by him, under the title, *The most wonderfull and true storie of a certaine witch named Alse Gooderige of Stapen hill* (1597).

³ Gary K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, European Culture and Society Series (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 181.

⁴ Newton argues that Puritans attended religious exercises called "prophesyings", which included reading the Bible together and attending religious lectures. The Queen and the Archbishop, John Whitgift, did not approve of these exercises and thought of them as a threat to the Religious Settlement of 1559. Diana Newton, *Papists, Protestants and Puritans 1559-1714*, Cambridge Perspectives in History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 8.

⁵ Kathleen R. Sands notes that the word "dispossession" is the Protestant equivalent of the Catholic "exorcism", Kathleen R. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 10.

⁶ Marion Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print: Darrell, Harsnett, Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Exorcism Controversy*, Religious Cultures of the Early Modern World 1 (NY: Routledge, 2016), 37-50.

The case of Thomas Darling was not an isolated one. The Protestant minister John Darrell, of Puritan convictions, cured at least ten demoniacs in his career as an exorcist,⁷ starting in 1586 in which he apparently cured Katherine White from devilish afflictions, presumably at this time he was already in the ministry, up until 1598 when he undertook his last case of demonic possession, William Sommers. Later that year, Darrell was made to stand trial for practicing exorcisms and more specifically, for deliberate fraud in his activities by coaching individuals to act like demoniacs and performing counterfeit “dispossessions”, as he preferred to call them. The trial was officiated over by the conformist Richard Bancroft, Bishop of London, and assisted by his chaplain, Samuel Harsnett, as chief prosecutor. Bancroft was known for his dislike of “radical” Puritans⁸ who, he thought, aimed to disrupt religious discipline in the nation, and considered them to be extremists in their views. Harsnett, on the other hand, was a skeptic who did not believe in the reality of an external devil, and by extension, in demonic possession. John Darrell, however, was convinced of the validity of the symptoms of his demoniacs, and therefore justified his practices as righteous and authentic and maintained his innocence throughout the length of the trial and afterwards.

⁷ Nathan Johnstone claims that Darrell categorically denied that he was an exorcist and argued that he was merely a godly minister with no special power. Nathan Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History, eds. Anthony Fletcher, John Guy, and John Morrill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 103. After some research, however, I have found that the source that he insists is a text penned by Darrell himself is actually a third person account of Darrell’s last and ill-fated case of William Sommers’ dispossession. G. Co., *A breife narration of the possession, dispossession, and, repossession of William Sommers and of some proceedings against Mr Iohn Dorrell preacher, with aunsweres to such obiections as are made to prove the pretended counterfeiting of the said Sommers. Together with certaine depositions taken at Nottingham concerning the said matter* (Amsterdam: n.p. 1598).

⁸ Charles H. George and Katherine George use the term “intensive Protestant[s]” to describe Puritans in *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation 1570-1640* (Princeton: Princeton, 1961), 352. Peter Lake claims that the “label, indeed the insult, ‘puritan’ came to be internalized and appropriated by the godly themselves...” Peter Lake, “Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice”, *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, 13, eds. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), 86.

This study will discuss the phenomenon of demonic possession and the rite of exorcism in early modern England through the exorcism cases of the controversial minister, John Darrell. It will be argued that demonic possession was regarded as an actual phenomenon in the early modern English society which cannot be explained only through medical and/or psychological arguments, and that it was a combination of social, economic, religious, and political factors in addition to medical explanations that gave rise to cases of demonic possession and ensuing exorcisms. It is important to note that this was a time when witchcraft, demonology, and the magic used in “beneficial healing” were all concepts with overlapping definitions and understandings which expanded to include the “study and treatment of mind, body, and soul”.⁹ The purpose of this thesis is not to assess these cases according to our modern rationalities and to disprove or discredit them but instead to analyze them according to the prevailing views of the time. It would be a disservice to the study of the early modern society if we forsook the beliefs of those who were affected by this phenomenon of demonic possession, the energumens; those who offered their services to cast out demons and/or the Devil, the exorcists; and the society in which they existed.¹⁰ This thesis will, therefore, focus on the demonic possession cases undertaken by John Darrell and the pamphlet war that ensued between those, on the one hand, who believed in the Devil’s physical invasion of human bodies and held the notion

⁹ Corinne Holt Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell: Minister and Exorcist*, University of Florida Monographs, Humanities, 9 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962), 4.

¹⁰ This line that I am taking is in opposition to D.P. Walker who urges that “[h]istorians should not ask their readers to accept supernatural phenomena”: D. P. Walker, *Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 15. I would like to present my argument in the words of Jeffrey Burton Russell who states that as “a historian, I have no direct access to the mind of the Lord or to that of the Devil, and I can investigate only the historical development of the concept of the Devil, not the question of his objective existence.” Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), 257.

that the Devil could be cast out, John Darrell and his supporters, and on the other, those that vehemently opposed both demonic possession and the rite of exorcism, ministers John Deacon and John Walker, and the future Archbishop of York, Samuel Harsnett. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that John Darrell performed exorcisms because he genuinely believed in the efficacy of his practice and had immense faith in the word of the gospel, and therefore, neither were his activities fraudulent nor his intentions malicious.

This chapter will analyze the literature that came in the wake of Darrell's exorcisms, penned by Darrell himself, his colleagues, and especially his critics. Then, the idea of the Devil and of his invasion of bodies in the early modern society will be explored. Next, the connection between witchcraft and demonic possession and the factors that contributed to the decline of the witch-craze in the early modern period will be evaluated. This will be followed by a discussion of the making of the rite of exorcism in Catholic demonology.

John Darrell was born in 1562 in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, and educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, where he was a "sizar", a student funded by the college, who worked in the college to sustain himself. He took his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1579 and married Joan (Johane) Gadsbery in 1583/4 with whom he later had five children. He subsequently went to the Inns of Court in London in 1584/5 to study law, but left after only one year as he decided he wanted to serve God. In order to serve the Lord he resolved to save men's souls by deliverance and healing through the gospel and to disprove that only Papists could perform exorcisms and expel evil spirits from men. He had, however,

already been delivering souls from eternal damnation since 1586, when he first healed an eighteen year old girl, Katherine Wright, in Derbyshire.

At least fourteen books were written about John Darrell's exorcisms; by himself, his supporters, and his opponents. The first publication appears to be by a fellow minister, John Denison, entitled, *The most wonderful and true storie, of a certaine witch named Alse Gooderidge of Stapenhill* (1597) about the possession and dispossession of Thomas Darling, the boy whom we met earlier.¹¹ This was followed by an anonymous account of William Sommers' case, aptly titled, *A breife narration of the possession, dispossession, and repossession, of William Sommers, and of some proceedings against. Mr. John Dorrell* (1598).¹² Samuel Harsnett heavily criticizes the belief in demonic possession and Darrell's exorcisms in his *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practises of John Darel* (1599). Darrell himself wrote about Sommers' case and used the services of a secret press to publish all of his books henceforth. In *An apologie, or defence of the possession of William Sommers* (1599), Darrell argues for the authenticity of Sommers' symptoms terming them "demonic" and categorically denies being a fraud. There was another edition of the same book entitled, *A brief apologie prouing the possession of William Sommers. Written by Iohn Dorrell, a faithful Minister of the Gospell: but published without his knowledge* (1599).¹³ At the same time, another publication appeared that

¹¹ Denison, *The most wonderfull and true storie*.

¹² Co., *A breife narration of the possession, dispossession, and, repossession of William Sommers*.

¹³ Samuel Harsnett, *A discouery of the fraudulent practises of Iohn Darrel Bachelor of Artes in his proceedings concerning the pretended possession and dispossession of William Somers at Nottingham: of Thomas Darling, the boy of Burton at Caldwell: and of Katherine Wright at Mansfield, & Whittington: and of his dealings with one Mary Couper at Nottingham, detecting in some sort the deceitfull trade in these latter dayes of casting out deuils* (London: John Windet, 1599). John Darrell, *An apologie, or defence of the possession of William Sommers, a yong man of the towne of Nottingham: wherein this worke of God is cleared from the evil name of counterfaytinge, and therevpon also it is shewed that in these dayes men may be possessed with devils, and that being so, by prayer and fasting the vncleane spirit may be cast out by John Darrell* (Amsterdam: n.p., 1599). John Darrell, *A brief apologie prouing the possession of William Sommers. Written by Iohn Dorrell, a faithful Minister of the Gospell: but published*

provided a comprehensive account of Darrell's trial, *The triall of Maist. Dorrell, or A collection of defences* (1599). This book seems to have been written by one or more of Darrell's sympathizers as it appeals for a fair trial for the accused and heavily criticizes Samuel Harsnett's approach to prosecution. Darrell also wrote a rebuttal of Harsnett's arguments against possession in the form of *A detection of that sinnful, shamful, lying, and ridiculous discours, of Samuel Harshnet* (1600) to defend his practice of dispossession and in it he refutes a large number of arguments made by Harsnett.¹⁴ Darrell then authored another book, *A True Narration of the Strange and Grevous Vexation by the Devil of 7 Persons in Lancashire and William Sommers of Nottingham* (1600), which he divided into two parts. The first part provides an account of the Starkie dispossessions, a famous case that he undertook which involved seven demoniacs of the same household, arguing that they were genuine, while the second deals with the case of Sommers. His fellow minister, George More, who was charged along with Darrell and imprisoned in the Clink at Southwark, penned a complementary narration of the Starkie case in *A True Discourse Concerning the Certaine Possession and Dispossession[n] of 7 Persons in One Familie in Lancashire* (1600), written in defense of Darrell.¹⁵

without his knowledge, with a dedicatorie epistle disclosing some disordered proceedings against the saide Iohn Dorrell (Middleborough: R. Schilders, 1599).

¹⁴A., Ri., *The triall of Maist. Dorrell, or A collection of defences against allegations not yet suffered to receiue convenient answere Tending to cleare him from the imputation of teaching Sommers and others to counterfeit possession of diuells. That the mist of pretended counterfetting being dispelled, the glory of Christ his royall power in casting out diuels (at the prayer and fasting of his people) may evidently appeare* (Middleborough: R. Schilders, 1599). John Darrell, *A detection of that sinnful, shamful, lying, and ridiculous discours, of Samuel Harshnet. entituled: A discouerie of the fravdulent practises of Iohn Darrell : wherein is manifestly and apparantly shewed in the eyes of the world. not only the vnlikelihoode, but the flate impossibilitie of the pretended counterfaying of William Somers, Thomas Darling, Kath. Wright, and Mary Couper, togeather with the other 7. in Lancashire, and the supposed teaching of them by the saide Iohn Darrell* (n.p., 1600).

¹⁵ George More, *A true discourse concerning the certaine possession and dispossession[n] of 7 persons in one familie in Lancashire which also may serve as part of an answere to a fayned and false discouerie which speaketh very much evill, aswell of this, as of the rest of those great and mightie workes of God which be of the like excellent nature. By George More, minister and preacher of the worde of God, and*

Harsnett was not the only person who opposed Darrell's career choice as an exorcist. The other notable characters in Darrell's story are ministers John Deacon and John Walker. The men were of somewhat obscure origins. It is assumed that John Deacon was first the rector of Saxby, Leicestershire, in 1594 and then later became the curate of Scrooby, Nottinghamshire as well as Bawtry, Yorkshire by 1598. John Walker, on the other hand, is even less known, as the commonness of his name makes it almost impossible to identify him reliably. It can be said that this John Walker was born in Staffordshire, but whether he is the same individual who graduated from Merton College, Oxford, in 1584 with a BA and with an MA from Oriel College, Oxford, in 1587 is not certain. John Darrell himself remains a mysterious figure in history as he avoided speaking about his personal life and character in his books and preferred to stick to glorifying the word of God that required him to dedicate himself to the path of the godly. Historians of Early Modern Britain have expressed their frustration at the enigma that is Darrell and have called the silence on Darrell's early life "deafening".¹⁶

John Deacon and John Walker, attacked Darrell's exorcisms in a lengthy book called, *Dialogicall Discourses of spirits and divels, declaring their proper essence* (1601) and censured him for printing his books illegally. The work primarily discusses the concepts of demonic possession and exorcism in great detail, citing references from the scriptures. The same authors are also credited with publishing a second book, *A summarie ansvvere to al the material points in any of Master Darel his books* (1601) in which they term Darrell's activities as blasphemous and liken him to the "papists". They further seem

now (for bearing witnesse vnto this, and for iustifying the rest) a prisoner in the Clinke, where he hath co[n]tinued almost for the space of two yeares (Middleborough: Richard Schilders, 1600).

¹⁶ See Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 19, for an excellent in-depth analysis of the background and history of Deacon, Walker, and Darrell.

to extensively misquote Darrell in their work to serve their purpose. Darrell responded by writing two books of his own, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: written by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels* (1602), and *The replie of Iohn Darrell, to the answer of Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of demoniakes* (1602). In both these publications, he defends his actions by arguing that bodily invasion by spirits and the expelling of demons is proven by the Scripture.¹⁷ Unhindered by Darrell's genuine efforts to defend the practice of dispossession in his written works, Samuel Harsnett published yet another book, which went on to become his most famous work, *A declaration of egregious popish impostures* (1603), which draws parallels between Catholic exorcisms and those performed by John Darrell.¹⁸

The works published by both Darrell and his adversaries demonstrate a sound belief in the Devil and debate his involvement in the material world through physical assault on humans. This belief in the Devil is representative of the psycho-social

¹⁷ John Deacon and John Walker, *Dialogicall discourses of spirits and diuels declaring their proper essence, natures, dispositions, and operations, their possessions and dispossessions: with other the appendantes, peculiarly appertaining to those speciall points: verie conducent, and pertinent to the timely procuring of some Christian conformitie in judgment, for the peacable compounding of the late sprong controuersies concerning all such intricate and difficult doubts* (London: George Bishop, 1601). John Deacon and John Walker, *A summarie ansvvere to al the material points in any of Master Darel his bookes More especiallie to that one booke of his, intituled, the Doctrine of the possession and dispossession of demoniaks out of the word of God. By Iohn Deacon. Iohn Walker. Preachers* (London: George Bishop, 1601). John Darrell, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: vvritten by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels* [electronic resource]: *Wherein is manifested the palpable ignorance and dangerous errors of the discoursers, and what according to proportion of God his truth, every christian is to hold in these poyntes. Published by Iohn Darrell minister of the gospel* (England: 1602). John Darrell, *The replie of Iohn Darrell, to the answer of Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of demoniakes* (n.p., 1602).

¹⁸ Samuelt Harsnett, *A declaration of egregious popish impostures to with-draw the harts of her Maiesties subiects from their allegiance, and from the truth of Christian religion professed in England, vnder the pretence of casting out deuils. Practised by Edmunds, alias Weston a Iesuit, and diuers Romish priestes his wicked associates. Where-vnto are annexed the copies of the confessions, and examinations of the parties themselues, which were pretended to be possessed, and dispossed, taken vpon oath before her Maiesties commissioners, for causes ecclesiasticall.* (London: James Roberts, 1603).

environment of early modern England. Alasdair MacIntyre remarks that to “say that a belief is rational is to talk about how it stands in relation to other beliefs”,¹⁹ hence when we analyze demonic assaults and the role of the Church and religion in the early modern period, it enables us to delve into the psyche and religious faith and morality of both Catholics and Protestants. The belief in demons and their possession of human bodies was validated and confirmed by religious scriptures and the general societal convictions and “truths” of the time. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, there was a widespread acceptance of spiritual explanations seen as just as acceptable and normal as natural ones. Demonic possession, in the early modern period, existed in a much broader context than a purely personal and/or physical phenomenon, as it was influenced by changing cultural and social norms and even by political activity. It would thus be an oversimplification if we argued that these phenomena had a much more realistic (in terms of modern rationality) medical explanation, such as insanity, paralysis or epilepsy. It would be akin to saying that early modern people did not have the intelligence to diagnose accurately medical conditions, which is not only untrue but would also be an assumption that displays our own ignorance.²⁰ It is therefore of immense importance not to rationalize and comprehend the demonic possession of an enchanted early modern England through the lens of our contemporary sensibilities and reasoning.²¹

The world of the early modern faithful was truly spellbinding. Patrick Collinson estimates the timeline of the Reformation by asserting that “[it] was something which

¹⁹ Alasdair MacIntyre, “Rationality and the Explanation of Action”, in id., *Against the Self-Images of the Age* (London, 1971), 250, as quoted in Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), viii.

²⁰ Moshe Sluhovskiy, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism, & Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 3.

²¹ Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, & Religion, 1250-1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

happened in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Before that everything was preparative, embryonic.”²² The Reformation of the sixteenth century had created a theological clash between Protestants and Catholics, or to state it another way, the clashes between the Protestants and Catholics gave birth to the English Reformations,²³ and sometimes even among Protestants, as evident in the case of John Darrell, John Deacon, and John Walker, that had the Devil at the forefront. The early modern belief in the Devil resulted in the internalization of religiosity and piety, an idea which was supported not only by the Protestants but also Ignatius Loyola’s Catholicism, which demanded that each individual Christian now fight off the Devil on his own.²⁴ Before, the Devil could be overpowered by invoking God’s army by praying to saints, but now the authority of the priests performed exorcisms and not the virtues of the saints.²⁵ While in Roman Catholicism the priest was as an essential intermediary between the laity and God, the Protestant minister only served as a guide to aid men find salvation for themselves. The prevalent notion was that an individual’s weak faith could invite the Devil into his life and presumably also into his body because God grants permission to Satan to afflict and torment individuals who forget to pray, to fulfil household duties efficiently, and to educate children in religious rituals, and who neglect to take the name of God before various daily activities,

²² Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of the Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988), ix.

²³ I owe this phrase “English Reformations” to Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 16.

²⁴ Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 29.

²⁵ This is in contrast to the history of the Church which has seen many exorcist-saints, particularly St. Hilarion, a desert father, who once healed 200 demoniacs at one time as well as expelled a demon out of a camel. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, 5. This practice of praying to saints is also evident in the 1563 case of Anne Mylner who during her exorcism cried out “Ah, Lady, Lady!”, referring to the Virgin Mary, but even that did not end her ordeal and John Lane, the exorcizing preacher, continued to spit vinegar in her nostrils until she addressed God, and not any saint or even the Virgin. This case is discussed in detail by Sands in her *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, 13-29. Also see, Stephen Bowd, “John Dee and the Seven in Lancashire: Possession, Exorcism, and Apocalypse in Elizabethan England”, *Northern History* 47, 233-246 (2013), 240-41.

such as saying grace before food, reciting night prayers before bed, etc.²⁶ Early modern Protestants held that it was almost a certainty that the Devil will assault an average individual at least once in his life.²⁷ This belief system gave way to the idea of “paying for one’s sins”, which ranged from drunkenness to carelessness in educating one’s children in the word of gospel, or religious negligence through demonic agency which maintained that the Devil could assault those weak in their faith and conduct. Hence, weakness in faith could be both a cause and an effect of demonic possession. The sixteenth century, therefore, saw a shift of responsibility from the external to the internal and now the Christian was in charge for the protection of his spiritual health and this gave birth to introspective piety, which was a significant component of both Puritanism and Counter-Reformation Catholicism, which were similar in that they were both “missionary, bent on preaching the Gospel and winning souls”.²⁸ Such internalization of spiritual identity was, however, taken to an extreme among the various groups known as spiritualists, the most prominent of which were the followers of David Joris and Hendrik Niclaes, both of whom were Dutch, but the latter’s group, the Family of Love, became very prominent in England.²⁹ It is important to note that due to their willingness and ability to conceal their beliefs, no English Familist was ever prosecuted, sent into exile, or executed.³⁰ The works of other spiritualist writers, such as Sebastian Franck and Caspar Schwenckfeld, were also widely read, but there remains much work to do in estimating their readership. Some of these spiritualists, Joris in particular, took the internalization of the spirit world to the

²⁶ This view is also shared by Charles Zika, “The Devil’s Hoodwink: Seeing and Believing in the World of Sixteenth-Century Witchcraft”, *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology, Vol. 1: Demonology, Religion, and Witchcraft*, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2001), 91.

²⁷ Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism*, 61.

²⁸ J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 177.

²⁹ Christopher W. Marsh, *The Family of Love in English Society, 1550-1630* (Cambridge, 1994).

³⁰ Collinson, *Birthpangs*, 150-51.

extreme by denying the independent existence of demons and angels outside of the individual.³¹

One of the most passionate debates of the Reformation revolved around exorcism. *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* today defines exorcism as “the act of driving out, or warding off demons or evil spirits from persons, places, or things that are, or are believed to be, possessed or infested by them or are liable to become instruments of their malice”.³² Thus, simply put, exorcism in Christianity is a religious rite to expel demons possessing a human body. Walker argues that Catholic exorcisms were designed so that they could defend transubstantiation but also other superstitious practices, like sign of the cross and holy water and other relics, against the Protestant attack, which had reduced the seven sacraments to two, Eucharist and baptism, and even then, neither was essential to salvation.³³ Although Protestants believed in the truth of the miracles in the Gospels they were strongly against medieval and modern Catholic miracles.³⁴ Exorcism was considered a miracle by some Protestants, such as Deacon and Walker, who argued that early modern exorcisms were a sham and strongly objected to the credibility of the Catholic Church’s ability to cast out demons through exorcisms. Another issue to which most Protestants

³¹ Gary K. Waite, ““Man is a Devil to Himself”: David Joris and the Rise of a Sceptical Tradition towards the Devil in the Early Modern Netherlands, 1540-1600,” *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 75 (1995), 1-30.

³² <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4496>.

³³ The seven Catholic sacraments are baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, confession, marriage, holy orders, and anointing of the sick (extreme unction). George and Katherine George, *The Protestant Mind*, 348-49. The 1552 Prayer Book denied transubstantiation and claimed that the wine and bread now only “represented” the blood and body of Christ. Newton, *Papists, Protestants and Puritans*, 7-8. Walker, *Unclean Spirits*, 6.

³⁴ Ibid. One of the most publicized Catholic exorcisms took place at Laon in 1566 of a girl named Nicole Aubery. It was widely declared that the “Miracle of Laon” was a proof that only the one true Catholic Church had the power to expel demons. Many onlookers were said to reconvert to Catholicism after witnessing the public spectacle that was the exorcism. Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*, trans. Randy A. Scot, Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation no. 7 (Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 1995), 162-67.

objected was the view of the medieval Church that possessions could be either divine or demonic.³⁵ This thesis will not concern itself with divine possession, one that involved the dominion over a human body of an angel or God and which evoked visions,³⁶ but will focus on events that involve possession by the Devil.

The cases of demonic possession and their subsequent exorcisms that marked the early modern period were common enough for ordinary Christians to understand and believe, and at the same time interesting and exciting enough to serve as public attractions. Initially the exorcisms performed by Christ and the Apostles were to establish a new religion and to convert pagans but by the Middle Ages, since there were no more pagans to deal with, exorcisms were used to prove the authenticity and the power of the exorcist, and during and after the Reformation era, they became a means of propaganda by one religious group against another faction of Christianity. In all cases, however, one should not perhaps altogether reject the motive of trying to help the individual possessed, or indeed their family, as we shall see in the cases handled by John Darrell.

Scholars of early modern demonology, or the science of demons,³⁷ agree that official accounts of possession are very hard to find, but “when the possession involves accusations of witchcraft, there may be legal records of the witch’s trial”.³⁸ And because diabolic possession cases do not in themselves tend to be recorded in official documents, they are quite difficult to analyze statistically as compared to the work done in the area of

³⁵ This is also why when Thomas Darling claimed, “I know at the present for a certainty that I have the spirit of God within mee”, it is alleged that he was instructed by Darrell to claim the opposite. Presumably, Darrell himself was not convinced of divine possessions. Harsnett, *A discovery of the fraudulent practises of Iohn Darrel Bachelor*, 290.

³⁶ St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) is an example of one such possession. She claimed herself to be joined in a mystical marriage with Jesus, and had visions of the divine.

³⁷ Bodin, *On the Demon Mania of Witches*, 17.

³⁸ Walker, *Unclean Spirits*, 3.

witchcraft. In order to set clear boundaries and distinguish between a witch and a demoniac, it should be noted that a witch is said to have made a pact with the Devil and performs evil acts by means of that pact intentionally, while on the other hand, demonic possession is involuntary and the demoniac has no control over his actions. In light of this understanding, the possessed were not liable to criminal prosecution for any violent act or heretical utterance that they may have made when under demonic influence. This is evident in the blasphemous utterances by the energumens as well as their aversion to sacred objects: it was as if they had been given a license to rebel. It can also be seen in varying degrees of disobedience demonstrated by children under the influence of the Devil. The responsibility of children toward their parents can be illustrated through *The New Catechism* (1559) of the English cleric Thomas Becon devised to instruct children on obedience, which states that the honor of the parents lie in their children and that the children were responsible of:

...giving [their parents] that reverence and honour outwardly, which by the commandment of God is due from children to their parents; as to bow the knee unto them, to ask them blessing, to put off their cap, to give them place, reverently and meekly to speak unto them, and with all outward gestures to show a reverent honour and honourable reverence toward them, as persons representing the majesty of God.³⁹

Alternatively, the witch invited misfortune upon herself by worshiping the enemy of mankind, the Devil. This was by and large why demoniacs were exorcized while witches were prosecuted. The significance in early modern society of witch beliefs as an attempt to explain the supernatural realm cannot be overlooked, and as seen in the case of the *Boy of Burton* above, there do exist instances in which both demoniac and witch

³⁹ David Cressy and Lori Anne Ferrell, *Religion and Society in Early Modern England: A Sourcebook* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 76.

appear. However, my paper will primarily focus on the former, the unwilling possessed, and will argue that demoniacs were acting their parts in a religious drama frequently staged in early modern England.

Fortunately for early modern witchcraft enthusiasts, there seems to be a general consensus in witchcraft scholarship regarding the factors that gave birth to the witch hysteria of early modern Europe. The socio-economic elements during the period 1550-1650, such as overpopulation, a decline in wages and rising unemployment levels, inflation, high infant mortality, rural-urban migrations, and periodic outbreaks of the plague and famine were among the factors that exacerbated the witch-craze epidemic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴⁰ The phenomenon of witchcraft and the increase in witch beliefs gave rise to priests and clergy arguing the connection between the witch and the Devil and dubbing witchcraft as devil worship and at the same time denouncing other practices that went with it namely; ritual cannibalism, witch's Sabbath and sexual perversion.⁴¹ The onset of the Devil-inspired fear between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, which coincided with the witch hysteria, led people to believe that they were living in the era of the Antichrist. Because the English translation of the Bible was fairly recent in the early modern period, Exodus 22:18 "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live", for example, had a significant role in shaping witch beliefs. It is now understood that the Hebrew translated more accurately as "poisoner" instead of "witch".⁴²

⁴⁰ Brian P. Levack. "The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions", *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, ed. Helen Parish (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 367.

⁴¹ Francis Young, *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity*, Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic (Cambridge, Palgrave Macmillan: 2016), 102-4.

⁴² Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, 130.

The writers of *Malleus Maleficarum*, a book that had a catalytic effect on witch-hunting of the early modern period, the inquisitors Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, were among the staunch opponents of the practice of expelling demons and claimed that exorcisms were not always capable of combating physical harassment by the Devil and that they should only be used for their true purpose, which is infant baptisms.⁴³ They believed demoniacs should also be punished along with witches because they brought their sufferings upon themselves by not adhering to the Christian faith and indulging in sins. These views paved the way for early modern inquisitors to conduct witch trials and prosecutions for heresy under the ruler's authority which is evident in King James VI of Scotland's case who played a major role in initiating the witch hunt in his empire in 1591.⁴⁴

The decline of witchcraft prosecutions in various different parts of Europe, *mutatis mutandis*, was generally due to judicial skepticism and procedural caution, which is not to say that the judges, magistrates, and Grand Jurymen did not believe in witchcraft; they were merely not certain if the person accused was actually guilty of committing the crime

⁴³ Christopher S. Mackay. *The Hammer of the Witches: A Complete Translation of the Malleus Maleficarum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 399.

⁴⁴ Court records indicate an increase in the cases of heresy in the Reformation decades. In York diocese, the number of accused grew from two in 1510-19 to 47 in 1554-8. For a greater discussion, see Robert Whiting, *Local Responses to the English Reformation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), 123. Also, Levack, "The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions", 336-68. Robert I. Moore argues that although in the Middle Ages inquisitors did not have a permanent office and that from 1213 onwards individuals and teams would be assigned the task to identify heresy and conduct investigations by popes, inquisitors became more institutionalized around the sixteenth century. Robert I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe 950-1250* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 176. Different regions had different approaches to witch-hunts and prosecutions. For example, in Hungary the decline of witch-trials could be attributed to the emergence of a new scandal: *buveurs de sang* or how we commonly call them today, vampires which began to appear by 1728 and influenced the empress, Maria Theresa's decision to overturn sentences laid upon those accused for witchcraft. For a detailed discussion, see the aptly titled chapter, "The Decline of Witchcraft and Rise of Vampires", in Gabor Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, trans. Susan Singerman, ed. Karen Margolis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 169-88.

of bewitchment, which further brought into play the doubt whether witchcraft could ever be proved in a court of law. Another important reason that saw the decline of such prosecutions was the unwillingness of state authorities to execute the local officials' judgments, mainly because they did not share their enthusiasm for the administration of torture that usually accompanied such prosecutions in order to elicit confessions and partly not to fan the air of fear and animosity toward such persons in society. In order to be granted permission to inflict torture, there were a few conditions in place, one of which was the existence of a certain percentage of evidence of guilt beforehand and at least one eye-witness, another relating to the type and duration of torture. It has come to be realized that the decline in witch hysteria was "silent" and did not occur due to the discovery of new evidence against it but took shape gradually over a period of over a hundred years when the opinions and views of skeptics became prevalent, especially with regard to England.⁴⁵

England was a pre-industrial society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, population was thin and sporadic; it began to rise in the last quarter of the fifteenth century and continued to increase right up until the second half of the seventeenth century. Most of the population of England and Wales, five million by 1700, lived in villages and hamlets.⁴⁶ Despite the rise in population, the number of clergy decreased by over fifty percent between 1500 and 1600. Alec Ryrie maintains that since Protestantism relied on the Word rather than sacrament, there was a less need of ministers.⁴⁷ However, the

⁴⁵ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth century England* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978), 681.

⁴⁶ Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 3. Robert Ashton, *Reformation and Revolution 1558-1660*, The Paladin History of England, eds. Lord Blake and Cameron Hazlehurst (London: Paladin, 1985), 20.

⁴⁷ Alex Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stuart Realms 1485-1603* (Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Ltd., 2009), 283.

ordained as well as the laity were not going to let the Devil disappear into the abyss without one last flicker. Thus, the instances of demonic possession increased toward the end of the sixteenth century, and by extension, so did exorcisms, so much so that they became considerably more sought-out as spiritual *physic* from 1560 until 1650, and the seventeenth century today is seen as the “Golden Age of the demoniac”.⁴⁸ We should keep in mind that regardless of how strange these events sound to us, they were an inherent and significant part of the attempts made by pockets of society to discover and employ the knowledge of the secrets of nature, especially in a time when religion formed an integral part of society as well as the private life of a pious, God-fearing Christian.

The belief that the Devil was responsible for causing physical and mental afflictions could be attributed to the teachings disseminated by the Catholic and Protestant clergy that assigned the Devil significant power in the physical world, a view that was in line with both Catholic and Protestant theologies. Catholic theology began to include various rites and activities that represented submission to God and a renunciation of Satan. Keith Thomas asserts that the “ritual of exorcism with the sign of breathing (*insufflatio*), holy water, and the command to the Devil to depart in God’s name was further developed by the Catholic Church in its numerous prescribed manuals of exorcism, not only for possessed persons, but also for poltergeists, haunted houses, and animals suffering from supernaturally inflicted torments”.⁴⁹ Protestants, on the other hand, had always insisted

⁴⁸ William Monter, *Witchcraft in France and Switzerland: The Borderlands during the Reformation* (London: Cornell University Press, 1976), 60, as quoted by David Lederer, *Madness Religion, and the State in Early Modern Europe: A Bavarian Beacon*. New Studies in European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 198; Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 390.

⁴⁹ Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 570. Lyndal Roper argues that the Counter-Reformation in Augsburg could be seen to have advanced through the rite of exorcism publically conducted by Jesuits from 1563 onwards, which resulted in the conversions of many elite Protestants, mainly women, to Catholicism, “Magic and the Theology of the Body: Exorcism in the sixteenth-century Augsburg” in

on *sola scriptura* to seek the cure for their spiritual dilemmas which explains how John Darrell, a strict Puritan preacher, found evidence in the scripture for demonic afflictions as suffered by men and chose to conform to the method prescribed in the gospel for dispelling spirits, i.e. prayer and fasting, to conduct his exorcisms to the dismay of his fellow ministers, John Deacon and John Walker.

The early modern period saw the Catholic Church explicitly define what was in line with the sacred texts and clerical practices and what was superstition, the latter of which was forbidden. In 1614, Pope Paul V ordered the *Rituale Romanum* to be compiled under his supervision, which was the penultimate liturgical text in a series of books produced as part of the Tridentine Reform. These included the *Roman Breviary* (1568); the *Roman Missal* (1570); the *Roman Martyrology* (1584); the *Roman Pontifical* (1595); the *Ceremonial of Bishops* (1600); the *Monastic Breviary* (1612); the *Roman Ritual* (1614); and the *Octavarium* (1628).⁵⁰ Out of these, the *Rituale Romanum* contained blessings and sacraments of confession, baptism, matrimony as well as exorcisms.

The underlying study for the *Rituale Romanum* was done by Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santori who published in 1586 a guidebook for priests. Santori restored the spirit of the *Gelasian Sacramentary*, the 785-6 service book prepared by Pope Hadrian I for Charlemagne, in *Rituale Romanum* with the addition of outlining more severe criteria of identifying spiritual presence and activity. According to Santori's guidebook, exorcists were to keep an eye out for the ability to speak or understand an unknown language *pluribus verbis*, the ability to demonstrate the knowledge of unknown things or events

Demonology, Religion and Witchcraft, New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology, ed. Brian P. Levack (London: Routledge, 2001), 305.

⁵⁰ <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2014/06/the-fourth-centenary-of-rituale-romanum.html#.WMAGp2f-vIU>.

(clairvoyance, as we know it today), and the ability to exhibit physical strength beyond one's age or natural capacity, *supra aetatis, seu conditionis naturam* as well as a revulsion to sacred things, scripture, relics, and other blessed objects, which may be termed as the fourth sign of possession.⁵¹ The rite of exorcism of 1614 instructed that if the demon was sent to the possessed person through magic or witchcraft and either swallowed anything that was given to him by this deplorable process, he should vomit it, or if the cursed object was present outside of his body, it should be burnt. This is in line with the belief that there are two ways by which a devil can occupy a human body: either he inhabits it and administers the possession directly with the permission of God, or through the agency of a witch who, by using *maleficia* and by making a pact with Satan, sends a demon into a person, an idea that proliferated after the witch persecutions of the sixteenth century had begun.⁵² This also goes to show, as discussed earlier, that demonic possession could occur with or without the involvement of a witch. The rite of 1614 also required that witnesses be present during the exorcism which may serve as a preventative step to protect female demoniacs from abuse at the hands of the exorcist. Furthermore, in terms of speaking an unknown language, it was essential that the language spoken by the demoniac must be a real language and not incoherent babbling. This view is also supported by contemporary priests and exorcists.⁵³ Also, it was advised that the exorcism take place after mass and the holy water may be blessed before its use in the exorcism, which shows the connection

⁵¹ Young, *History*, 117. Also discussed in Walker's *Unclean Spirits*, 12.

⁵² Brian Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 21. This notion is present, however, in the late medieval text, *Malleus Maleficarum*, which suggests that although it may not have originated during the witch hysteria of the early modern period, it may have gained more recognition.

⁵³ Mike Driscoll, *Demons, Deliverance, and Discernment: Separating Fact from Fiction about the Spirit World* (El Cajon: Catholic Answers Press, 2015), 79. Fr. Gabriele Amorth also subscribes to this view. He furthermore argues that these three major signs of possession always manifest during an exorcism, never before. Gabriele Amorth, *An Exorcist Tells His Story* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 47.

formed between exorcism and Counter-Reformation Catholicism, as the Catholic Church had developed its response to Protestant heretical propositions by means of a liturgical act.⁵⁴

The purpose of these restrictions placed on identifying supernatural phenomenon and conducting exorcisms may have been to make demonic possessions difficult to prove and exorcisms a rare affair, but these measures of caution could not dissuade people from claiming possession, and most certainly could not restrict preachers from performing exorcisms at will. It was also seen as important to curb the number of possession cases being dealt by the laity and the number of exorcisms performed. Religious and healing activities that were not sanctioned by the Church were termed superstition, which the masses were not to indulge in, and were outlawed. Thus, throughout history, there have been efforts by the religiously inclined to draw a distinction between pagan faith healers and Christian ones. The major distinction that most Catholic theologians stressed seems to be that exorcism or “healing of the soul” was a service to be provided free of charge. The Jesuit theologian, Peter Thyraeus, attempted to differentiate between ancient religious healers and Christian exorcists in the following words:

For they were not Christians – who would render this kind of service free and without any contract for payment – but infidels, mountebanks, and peddlers, who went around the towns and made use of superstitions, and, like medical healers tending the body, made a money-spinning racket of it ... But God wished to be called on by possessed persons to heal through his power. For although He is, above all, the healer of souls, and seeks, before all, their salvation, He by no means neglects the welfare of the body, and removes things that are hurtful to it – as are troubles caused by spirits – for the sake of His kindness and benevolence towards the human race; and this aid was all the more to be expected from Him, in that He alone was able to help.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Young, *History*, 118.

⁵⁵ Peter Thyraeus, *Daemoniaci, hoc est: de obsessis a spiritibus daemoniorum hominibus* (Colonia Agrippina, 1598), 107, 113; quoted by Lederer in *Madness*, 13.

Rituals that were not performed exactly as they were supposed to, or in line with prescribed liturgy, were also termed superstitious and heretical. It is evident in cases like the 1620 “Boy in Bilson”⁵⁶ which is one of the most publicized Catholic exorcisms in early modern history and mirrors our earlier Protestant case, the *Boy of Burton*, that even after the *Rituale Romanum* was put in place, the interest in demonic possession and the number of exorcisms did not falter, and the early modern period saw thousands of possessions and their subsequent exorcisms which is certainly greater than at any other time in history.⁵⁷

This thesis will consider a number of important themes pertaining to demonic possession and exorcism in early modern England and is divided into five chapters. The following section, Chapter II, will discuss the substantiality of spirits and devils and their operation in the material world in light of both Catholic and Protestant demonologies and will investigate the changing perceptions of the Devil and his role in early modern European society. Chapter III will examine the signs of demonic possession and the various ideas surrounding the Devil’s invasion of a human body and will include an in-depth analysis of the possession cases handled by John Darrell. Chapter IV will explore the means of casting out the Devil from those corporeally affected by his torments and will address the part exorcism plays in baptism as well as in the Protestant debate surrounding the doctrine of cessation of miracles. Chapter V will conclude this research by reiterating that demonic possession was a perceived reality in early modern England

⁵⁶ R. B. (Richard Baddeley). *The boy of Bilson: or, A true discovery of the late notorious impostures of certaine Romish priests in their pretended exorcisme, or expulsion of the Diuell out of a young boy, named William Perry, sonne of Thomas Perry of Bilson, in the county of Stafford, yeoman Vpon which occasion, hereunto is premitted a briefe theologicall discourse, by way of caution, for the more easie discerning of such Romish spirits; and iudging of their false pretences, both in this and the like practices.* (London: 1622).

⁵⁷ Levack, *The Devil Within*, 3.

and the dispossessions conducted by Darrell arose out of his genuine desire to combat the problem of the physical assault of the Devil, as, he believed, was commanded by the scriptures.



CHAPTER II

DIVELLS, ANGELS, AND SPIRITES: THE BELIEF IN THE DEVIL AND HIS EFFECTUAL OPERATION

Popular belief in early modern England accepted the Devil as an indisputable part of everyday life; the disagreement was over whether the Devil's influence was spiritual or physical, or both. The medieval idea of the Devil spilled over into the early modern period, which is not to say that the early modern demonology blindly accepted medieval notions of the Devil. The clergy and the laity alike sought to comprehend and explain the Devil's role in society. Various works were produced in order to define the essence of the Devil and his role as God's hang-man in the physical world. Some of these works also included in their discussions comparisons of the Devil's soldiers, demons, with other spiritual beings such as angels. The consensus seems to have been that angels and demons were essentially spirits, and demons were categorized as a type of angel. This distinction formed the basis of many discourses regarding occurrences of demonic possession and, by extension, exorcisms. Therefore, the terminology and definitions of the concepts of demons, angels, and spirits, and how they came to mean what they did in the early modern period and whether these beings were inherently good or bad are integral to our discussion of the phenomenon of possession in early modern England. This investigation of notions is significant because the writers of the period considered it so and therefore based their entire understanding of spiritual afflictions on them. Thus, in order to understand the

societal perception of demonic possession, we need to analyze the texts written at the time.

Many books dedicated to the subject of demonism were written in this period which shaped the demonology of early modern Europe. Some of these works in turn went on to have a profound impact on English demonology. Below is a brief description of the nature of some of the most popular demonology books of the early modern period which will be analyzed in this chapter.

In *De arte cabbalistica* (1517), the German humanist Johannes Reuchlin gave a description of the physical features of evil spirits, while the Italian philosopher Girolamo Cardano in *De rerum varietate* and *Metoposcopia*, written in 1557 and 1558 respectively, offered his theory of mind which explained how bad angels can invade human minds and create demonic visions, and in *De praestigiis daemonum* (1563), the Dutch demonologist Johann Weyer classified different types of demons and narrates personal accounts of possession. The English Member of Parliament Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), which went on to become the most popular witchcraft treatise of the early modern period, argued against bodily possession and questions the authenticity of witch trials. The Spanish scholar Gregorius de Valentia's *Commentariorum theologicorum* (1591-97) discussed the Devil's desire to imitate God, and the French philosopher Jean Bodin's *Colloquium Heptaplomeres de abditis rerum sublimium arcanis* (1596) claimed that the world was overrun with demons. James VI and I's *Daemonologie* (1597) is one of the most comprehensive works to be produced on the topic of the Devil and his role in witchcraft and explores the idea of spiritual affliction of men by demons. The German theologian Peter Thyraes discussed good and evil spirits in *Loca Infesta*

(1598), and the Jesuit theologian Martino Del Rio argued that the Devil and his army of demons are responsible for the destruction of mankind in *Disquisitiones Magicae* (1599-1600). The English ministers John Deacon and John Walker wrote one of the most intricate studies about spiritual beings and their invasion of human bodies in the form of *Dialogicall Discourses of spirites and divels* (1601) as a response to John Darrell's dispossession cases. Martin Luther and John Calvin also examined the existence of evil and the Devil's assaults on mankind in their various works.

Not only do the works identified above feature heavily in the discussion of the essence and the role of the Devil and of demons in the material world, but these texts also serve as the basis of the arguments for and against demonic possession in the early modern pamphlet war between John Darrell and his opponents.

2.1 The Devil as a Fallen Angel

Medieval Christianity did not make efforts to define categorically the terms “*divells*”, “*angels*”, and “*spirites*”, and this continued into the early modern era where the differences between the three were not profound and people began to use these names interchangeably to refer to the same beings, i.e. spirits. The early modern period did not see a clear demarcation between the Devil and his minions. This was further confused when the Devil and demons were classified alongside other supernatural beings, angels and spirits. The biblical Devil was theologically a “fallen angel” and angels were inherently spirits, so it did not occur or perhaps seem important to the writers of the late medieval and early modern periods to separate the three and/or give them stand-alone definitions.

Medieval Christianity allowed for the belief that some spirits were souls of the dead that had been granted leave to return to the world and also identified five distinct states for the souls of the dead: besides heaven and hell, there was purgatory for those whose souls were too good for hell and too bad for heaven where they would be purged of their sins by punishment; a limbo for unbaptized infants; and another limbo for virtuous saints and prophets who came before the Incarnation of Christ. Souls from hell, and arguably from either limbo, were not generally supposed to return, although popular belief had some doubts about the unbaptized infants. Theology concerning purgatory continued to develop after the Second Council of Lyons in 1274, which incorporated the view that spirits could return to the world to warn the living to repent. Protestant reformers, including Lutherans,¹ however, claimed that purgatory and limbos were unscriptural, and firmly maintained that heaven and hell were the only two places that spirits were to go in the hereafter and rejected any eschatological middle ground. *The reformation of the dead*, as Craig Koslofsky has termed it,² included the belief that those that went to hell would not be allowed to return to the world and the ones that went to heaven would not wish to. Due to this Protestant position that discarded the need for purgatory and limbos, any spirit that appeared to any person was immediately termed a demon.

In essence, demons were considered “*Spirits by nature: and Angels by office*”.³ In the tracts that are available to us, especially the ones that were produced as a result of

¹ See Martin Luther, *The Ninety-Five Theses or Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum* (Basel: n.p., 1517), especially thesis 14-29.

² Craig Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, c. 1450-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

³ John Deacon and John Walker, *Dialogicall discourses of spirits and divels declaring their proper essence, natures, dispositions, and operations, their possessions and dispossessions: with other the appendantes, peculiarly appertaining to those speciall points, verie conducent, and pertinent to the timely procuring of some Christian conformitie in iudgement, for the peaceable compounding of the*

theological conflicts regarding the existence of demons and their possession of human bodies that marked the last decade of the sixteenth century and spilled over into the first decade of the seventeenth between the controversial exorcist, John Darrell, and his godly brothers, John Deacon and John Walker, these terminologies mainly indicated the same entities, and in their writings, demons and angels are repeatedly referred to as spirits. Another question that this absence of explicit definitions of identities raised was how to tell the good spirits from the bad, as even the Devil could delude men by disguising himself as the Angel of Light.⁴ The onus of making a distinction then, it seems, rested primarily on the one who perceived the spirit, and, as we shall see in chapter three, the word proclaimed by the demoniac was not to be disputed.

In Medieval Latin, the word *daimon* or *daemon* is borrowed from the Greek *δαίμων* meaning “protective spirit” or “guide”, which derives from the verb *daiomai*, “to divide” or “distribute”⁵; while *diabolus* (or *diabolus*) is from the Greek *διάβολος* which translates as “slanderer” or “accuser”. A *daemon*, before the advent of Christianity, was typically half spiritual and half corporeal, that is to say that it was neither completely divine nor entirely human, neither a god nor a man, and it could be both good and evil. This was especially true for the Greeks who considered *daemons* to be intermediaries between mortals and gods and sometimes even blurred that difference. Homer used *daimones* to mean *theos* or “gods”. The *daemon* of Socrates which is discussed in Plato’s

late sprong controuersies concerning all such intricate and difficult doubts (London: George Bishop, 1601), 51.

⁴ Michael Hunter, “Alchemy, Magic, and Moralism in the Thought of Robert Boyle,” *The British Journal for the History of Science* 4, no. 23 (Dec., 1990), 397.

⁵ Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), 34 no. 26. Also see, Ken Frieden, “The Language of Demonic Possession: A Key-Word Analysis,” in *The Daemonic Imagination: Biblical Text and Secular Story*, ed. Robert Detweiler and William G. Doty (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 42-50.

Apology, as it comes to mind, served as his guide, mentor, and “internal oracle”, and forbade him against any mistake or evil. It is said that because this divine faculty did not warn Socrates against his trial that consequently led to his death, he considered death good as opposed to evil, and embraced it.

In the first three centuries, the Church fathers appeared to make some sort of distinction between the Devil and his demons. Justinian entitles the Devil “the prince of evil demons” which could point toward there being good demons, although he does not specify any as such.⁶ It was not until the Middle Ages when Christianity strengthened its position in the world that the word “demon” came to have exclusively negative connotations. This was mainly due to the fact that the demon belonged to the pagan world and with the spread of Christianity, it now seemed appropriate to disaffect and alienate pagan beliefs in supernatural and metaphysical entities, especially demons. Christianity now had little use for spiritual beings which had been considered gods by the pre-Christian society. As a result, they were deemed evil and a real threat. This could also explain why the Devil in the West came to be seen as a caricature of the ancient god, Pan, and had horns,⁷ the torso of a man, and the feet of a goat. Perhaps he was an extension of the pagan gods and this depiction an effort to antagonize the foreign or “the other”, as anything pagan could not be neutral. This may also answer the question of why the Devil or demons in Christianity are often represented in reptilian form while the Egyptians and Aztecs deified reptiles.⁸ Messadié claims that Clement was “the first to anathematize the gods of

⁶ Gerald Messadié, *A History of the Devil*, trans. Mare Romano (New York: Kodansha International, 1996), 259.

⁷ Russell argues that horns, which came to be commonly associated with the Devil in Christianity, originally had a positive meaning in that they were a symbol of fertility. Russell, *The Devil*, 68. Cernunnos was an antler-horned Celtic god. Same is the case with fertility rites which were seen as satanic by Christians.

⁸ Messadié, *A History of the Devil*, 6-7.

other religions”, and while speaking of the Sibylline oracles asserted, “the verdict of the prophets is that the gods of all the nations are images of demons.”⁹

Both *daemon* and *diabolus* could each refer to a demon or to the Devil and it was perhaps because of the lack of articles in Latin that blurred the difference between the two.¹⁰ It is argued that this distinction became more pronounced when demonology texts began to be translated and published in vernacular languages, English being one of them, which necessitated the need to supply an article for and compelled the capitalization of the proper noun, “the Devil”, as opposed to the common, demon or devil.¹¹ It is, however, important to note that consistency in capitalization is not common in early modern times, and this development was not swift enough to be reflected in the literature of the early modern period that dealt with cases of possession. Furthermore, the demon was the Devil’s malevolent foot soldier and did his dirty work; the Devil himself was the archenemy of the Creator and his creation, mankind. The New Testament refers to him by many names; “the Devil”, “Satan”,¹² “Beelzebub”, “Belial”, “the prince of demons”, are only among the most common ones.

The character and image of the Devil was made and remade over the centuries according to the demands of the times and in line with the intellectual and political conditions of society as and when it interacted with the bible and interpreted it. Therefore, the changing comprehension of the scripture transformed the image of the Devil so as to make it fulfil a particular cultural role, and in view of that, the Church never took any

⁹ Ibid., 262.

¹⁰ Sophie Lunn-Rockliffe, “Visualizing the Demonic: The Gadarene Exorcism in Early Christian Art and Literature,” *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, eds. Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2012), 441.

¹¹ Richard Raiswell, introduction to *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, 24.

¹² From the Greek, *ha-Shatan*.

measures to establish a single definition of the Devil, because it was only concerned with the Devil in so far as it hindered or propagated, sometimes both at the same time, its mission. This resulted in the Devil not having any coherent identity. That is not to say that efforts were not made to define and explain his existence. Many early modern theologians were concerned with the essence and substance of devils, angels, and spirits, and depicted them in their writings as well as in illustrations.

Early in his life and at the beginning of his reign of Scotland, James VI was a firm believer in *diuelish artes*, such as witchcraft and magic. He was also responsible for the persecution of a group of witches in New Berwick who allegedly conjured up a storm in order to kill him and his wife while they were on their way back from Denmark. This incident and the skeptical views surrounding witchcraft provoked him to write *Daemonologie* (1597), while still James VI of Scotland, in which he not only argues for the existence of witchcraft but also gives a guide as to how to persecute witches. The entire treatise essentially presents a dialogue between a skeptic, Philomanthes, and a believer, Epistemon, much like *Dialogicall Discourses*. The text is divided into three books. The first book discusses witchcraft as distinct from “necromancie” and “magie”. He asserts that necromancers are the masters of the Devil and can command him while witches are the Devil’s servants and worship him. The second book examines sorcery and witchcraft and in it James posits that the Devil teaches witches to perform harmful magic on other people, sometimes by way of wax and clay pictures with the name of the individual on whom they want to cast a spell. The third book describes the different types

of spirits that can afflict men.¹³ According to James I in his *Daemonologie*, “[s]pirits of greater power and authority assume shapes that are more refined and complex, whereas spirits of lesser power take on the shapes of a simpler and lower forms of life”.¹⁴ This view could demonstrate why the occultist Francis Barrett remarks in *The Magus* (1801) on the different types of spirits of Saturday and their familiar forms that appear in the *Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy* (1655), a book attributed to Cornelius Agrippa although its authorship remains disputed. These include an elderly bearded king mounted on a dragon, an old woman propped up with a cane, a hog, and a juniper tree. Barrett’s understanding is that the power and authority of those spirits that manifest as king is greater than those that present as human which in turn are higher in position than those that appear as animals which are consequently above those that take the form of trees, in that order.¹⁵ The illustration of the bearded king in this particular example can be interpreted as it being the Devil. Deacon and Walker also seem to be of the opinion that the Devil is the “God of this world”, a view that is in line with the scriptures, and therefore attribute to him great power to influence men and place doubts in their hearts.¹⁶

James divides spirits into the elements and claims that “at the fall of Lucifer, some Spirites fell in the aire, some in the fire, some in the water, some in the lande: In which

¹³ Elizabeth Mack, “The Malleus Maleficarum and King James: Defining Witchcraft”, *Voces Novae*, *Chapman University Historical Review* 1, no. 1 (2009).
<https://journals.chapman.edu/ojs/index.php/VocesNovae/article/view/12/90>.

¹⁴ Donald Tyson, *The Demonology of King James I: Includes the Original Text of Daemonologie and News from Scotland* (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2011), 92-3. Stuart Clark terms James VI and I’s *Daemonologie* a “very Protestant work” because it demonizes Catholicism and calls Catholic Christianity itself a type of witchcraft. Stuart Clark, “Protestant Demonologies: Sin, Superstition, and Society (1520-1630)”, *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 52-3.

¹⁵ Francis Barrett noted that there were different angels and spirits with differing natures for each day of the week. Tyson, *Demonology*, 92-3.

¹⁶ 2 Cor. 4:4: “Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.”

Elementes they still remaine.”¹⁷ In addition, he categorizes spirits into four kinds: those that haunt houses¹⁸ or uninhabited places, the ones that follow and trouble men, the ones that enter men’s bodies and possess them, and those whom he call fairies.

The first type of spirits could appear in various forms, including *lemures*, *spectra*, and *umbrae mortuorum*.¹⁹ These spirits haunt abandoned places so as to sway the faith of people who visit these locations alone because people would not be frightened by the antics of the Devil if they visited in a group. These are also the ones that pretend to be revenants, but are not, which is a sound Protestant point. Certainly, James is attempting to show the feeble nature of the Devil, who he believes does not have the capability to influence and to appear formidable to more than one individual at a time.

After declaring that demons can haunt a house, James asserts, in the same breath, that “a spirite can occupie no quantitie”²⁰. It appears to me that it can be implied that he regards air as a quantity and that he subscribes to the view that spirits can still vex and torment by affecting one’s minds and thoughts and creating illusions of their physical presence. Perhaps we can link this type of spirits to the argument made by Deacon and Walker in *Dialogicall Discourses* (1601), who emphasize the spiritual essence of the Devil and demons in order to demonstrate that they cannot possess a corporeal body. They

¹⁷ Tyson. *Demonology*, 238.

¹⁸ For an interesting case regarding demonic infestation and house haunting, read the tale of the “Drummer of Tedworth” about a series of events in 1662-3 in Tedworth (now Tidworth) that including the sighting of strange lights and drops of blood randomly appearing, the smell of sulphur, children of the household levitating, and the moving/disturbance of furniture among others that pointed toward poltergeist activity, in Andrew Pickering’s *The Witches of Selwood Forest: Witchcraft and Demonism in the West of England, 1625-1700* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), especially 19-21. For Joseph Addison’s comic drama, “The Drummer”, based on the same case, see Euan Camron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, & Religion, 1250-1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 301-3.

¹⁹ Tyson defines *lemures* as “ghosts of the dead”, *spectra* as an “apparition”, and *umbrae mortuorum* as “shades of the dead” in *Demonology*, 150.

²⁰ Ibid., 151. Also see 266.

argue that the Devil has no actual power of possession but certainly has the power of obsession, which he carries out “either in an outward assaulting and vexing: or in an inward suggesting and tempting at least”,²¹ and here, it seems that James’s third kind of spirit torments from the outside. This outward assaulting and vexing is accomplished by making promises and promising profits as well as carnal pleasures.²² The evil spirits may also invoke a repulsion of life in men and lead them to suicide. Deacon and Walker explain that the purpose of inward temptation, on the other hand, is to lead men astray from the path of God and to fill their hearts with desire and sin and iniquity. They show that this is also evident in the biblical example of the Devil tempting Christ in the wilderness as well as mentioned in other places in the scriptures.²³

A discussion of the fourth type, “fairies”, described by James as spirits that could either be conjured by witches or occur naturally on their own, however, is not pertinent to this discourse and merits a paper of its own.

Italian physician and philosopher, Girolamo Cardano,²⁴ who is cited by Deacon and Walker in *Diaologicall Discourses*, took a more psychological approach to

²¹ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 226. This is in contrast to some of the early Catholic views, including that of Jerome’s, which held that demons had the ability to transform themselves into “grotesque” physical entities at will to be able to be seen and felt by humans. For examples on demons taking bodily forms, see Norman Cohn, *Europe’s Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 24. Johnstone argues that Protestants, just like their Catholic counterparts, although believed that the Devil could take a human form, they maintained that his internal vexation was far more prevalent and more threatening to humans. Nathan Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History, ed. Anthony Fletcher, John Guy, and John Morrill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 7.

²² Matt. 4:8: “Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.”

²³ Rom. 7:23: “But I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.” John 13:2: “The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.” James 1:14-15: “But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

²⁴ Cardano was a well-known name in England and Scotland and had friends in high places, one of which, John Hamilton, the archbishop of Edinburgh, assisted in his release after he was arrested for heresy.

demonology and argued that demons are ethereal beings that reside in the mind. He further contends that bad angels invade our mind and body because of our own negative thoughts and actions and therefore, the onus is on us. Cardano notes that four types of wisdom can be acquired by humans: divine, human, natural, and demonic, the last of which can be obtained through visions and dreams.²⁵ Demonic wisdom can be further divided into four types of activity that involve incest, arts of divination, sacrifices to idols, and alchemy, among other acts that demonic wisdom leads us to perform. It also makes us commit crimes as well as achieve positive outcomes through evil means.²⁶ This could be illustrated through an example of a couple who are madly in love with each other but their parents would not approve of their union. If then, the boy conjures up demons to put a spell on the parents to manipulate their minds and they agree to the marriage, this would demonstrate how a morally right thing could be accomplished through evil.

Cardano's theory of mind distinguishes between four types of *visum* (vision): the first is when our mind sees something that is not being witnessed by our sight; the second is when our inner and outer sight match and perceive the same thing, it is called *spectrum*; the third is when our outer sight notices something while our mind is empty, this is *genius*; and the fourth and the highest level of vision occurs in meditation and in "total

Cardano had dared to cast the horoscope of Jesus Christ in one of his books, *Duodecim Geneturarum*, and was consequently forced to retract his opinions and burn his unpublished manuscripts. He also cast a horoscope of King Edward VI in a private audience, a few months after which the king died. William Shakespeare also appears to be inspired by Cardano as he took the now famous phrase "to be or not to be" that introduces his soliloquy from an English translation of Cardano's *De Consolatione* (1576) titled, *Comforte*. See Angelo Paratico, "Was Girolamo Cardano an inspiration for Shakespeare's character of Prospero?" (2013) <https://beyondthirtynine.com/girolamo-cardano-is-william-shakespeares-prospiero-the-main-character-of-the-tempest/>

²⁵ Johannes Nider in *Formicarius* feared that all visions, both divine and demonic, were from the Devil and therefore, should be taken with a measure of caution. For an excellent analysis, see Michael D. Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 111-19.

²⁶ Armando Maggi, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 181-204.

wakefulness” when we encounter a transmission or a clear message, which he terms *daemonium*. It can be implied that he means to reason that a *daemonium* or demon is a creation of the mind and is a form of self-reflection/expression that comes from within. The greatest vision takes place when we are involved in an activity but not imagining anything and suddenly we see an image. This perception of a *daemonium* is categorized into two: *invocatio daemonum*, the invocation of demons, and *visio daemonis*, the vision of a demon.²⁷ Although it could be argued that *visio daemonis* could be a result of *invocatio daemonum*, it is safe to presume that Cardano attempted to distinguish between the two, with the former being voluntary and the latter involuntary.

Not only do Deacon and Walker concur with Cardano, but they also put forth a similar argument that “Minde, is that reasonable facultie or power of the soule; whereby the naturall man perceiveth, knoweth, and discerneth all intelligible things.”²⁸ Will is different from the Mind in that as the Mind discerns objects, the Will makes a free choice whether to pursue or eschew from it. *Phantasie*, on the other hand, has the power to deceive the mind by interpreting known things in a deceitful manner. This idea is further illustrated through the example of faith in angels, or devils. The mind attempts to comprehend these entities through fantasy, which either has “no impression at all of any of the aforesaide *supernaturall*, *spirituall*, and *heavenly matters*” or attempts to analyze it through its ideas of only natural and corporeal objects. Here the clergymen come close to saying that the Devil does not exist and is an imaginary being and so they equate it to Termagant.²⁹ They conclude that:

²⁷ Ibid., 19.

²⁸ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 13-14.

²⁹ An imaginary, wandering, violent deity that Christians believed Muslims worshiped in medieval Europe.

mind in a meere *naturall man* (receiuing but bare *phantasticall notions* of *sensible* things in *conceit*) is too corrupted in iudgment: and therefore, hath *naturally*, no power in it selfe, to *perceiue*, to *know* and *discerne* aright of any *supernaturall*, *spirituall*, or *heavenly matters*.³⁰

In short, one cannot discern spiritual matters on the basis of natural knowledge and cannot perceive devils as possessors of bodies due to the inability to understand the metaphysical world, and also because it is impossible to perceive spiritual entities through natural senses.

The ministers go on to show that scriptures talk metaphorically and not literally regarding these “visible bodies” of spirits and devils, and that these spiritual bodies do not actually have eyes, ears, hands, feet, bodies and wings, except spiritually. They posit that the “proper nature of *spirites* and *diuels*, is not (in the sacred *scriptures*) so exactly & so plainely set downe.”³¹ They further assert that “silly old *monkes* in elder times... [fell]... fearefully into the palpable error of the *Anthropomorphites*” and erred by attributing human characteristics and behavior to God.³² They categorically discuss God’s spiritual essence by referring to Tertullian who remarked “onely that God is a bodie: he saith not there, that God hath a bodie”.³³ This would mean that if God does not have a physical existence, neither do angels, spirits, or demons. John Darrell in his *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses* (1602) counters this by saying that Hebrews 1:7 state, “*The Lord hath made his spirits his messengers, & his ministers a flame of fyer*. From hence you must conclude thus, They which be as fyre haue no bodies: which is true if fyre it

³⁰ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 13-15.

³¹ Ibid., 69.

³² Ibid., 17.

³³ Ibid., 87. Luke 24:39: “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

selfe haue no body: you see then how wisely you reason”.³⁴ He asserts that devils, spirits, and angels do indeed have bodies, but they are not physical substances, and in no way similar to those of men as one would imagine. At another point, he explicitly states that “it is true that there are diuells: that Diuells are no bare motions or of actions but natures spirituall, substantiall, and of personall beinge: which be called Angels”.³⁵ We can imply that Deacon and Walker and Darrell are in consensus regarding the essence of demons and agree that demons have spiritual existence but not physical bodies.

With regard to angels and spirits, Deacon and Walker in *Dialogicall Discourses* argue that they were “created of God” as part of the “celestiall creatures” and heavenly firmament on the second day.³⁶ The preachers also maintain that “[a]ngels they are eiter created or vncreated: but not vncreated: therfore created”.³⁷ They argue that since the scriptures have specified that angels were created by God on the second day, they are a created being and therefore cannot be an uncreated being. For them to be uncreated would also mean that their power is infinite which it is not, again relying on the revelation. Angels are in essence semi-finite creatures with a beginning but no end and with limited power. They are not eternal because they were created and it is only God that has no beginning or end. If spirits and devils are not substantial beings then the scriptures would not speak of so many instances in which they are present, but since the scriptures record

³⁴ John Darrel, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: written by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of possession and dispossession of diuells. Wherein is manifested the palpable ignorance and dangerous errors of the discourers, and what according to proportion of God his truth, every christian is to hold in these poyntes* (England: 1602), 21.

³⁵ Darrell, *A suruey of certaine dialogicall discourses*, 1.

³⁶ Gen 1:7-8: “Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.” In support of their argument, Deacon and Walker refer to Gen. 1:1-2, Psal. 148: 2-3, Heb. 1:7, Revel. 4:11, Psal. 33:6, Revel. 10:6, Gen. 2:1-2.

³⁷ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 23.

their actions as God's servants and those that execute his judgments, they must be real. They are not just signs of God's power as God has demonstrated their use in execution of His will.³⁸ This could perhaps be taken as *propter hoc* as the authors attempt to prove their existence primarily through scripture. Deacon and Walker, moreover, contend that demons and spirits are living creatures with will and reason. In this text, the speakers have treat angels and *divells* as spirits, as we have seen was customary at the time. Angels and devils both fall under the category of spiritual beings, while devils can be further classified as angels, albeit the fallen kind. We can see that our authors have taken their inspiration from Augustine who believed in the existence of spirits and in his *Ennarrationes in Psalmos* (103.15, *Sermo* 1) enunciates that the term "angel" is an *officii nomen* and that it refers to the work performed, not the essence of spirits. He further argues that angels are spirits who act as God's messengers in this world; demons on the other hand, strictly speaking, are fallen angels who also perform work but not in the capacity of God's servants. He claims that the term "demon" inherently has a negative connotation but when coupled with the word "good", as in "good demon", it can refer to a good entity.³⁹ Augustine affirms that the Devil and his demons are doomed to exist in the air and his fallen angels drift in *hoc mari magno et spatioso*. This builds on his view that angels are ethereal beings and demons have aerial bodies. Augustine asserts that their aerial bodies give them extraordinary speed and "extraordinary powers of perception".⁴⁰

³⁸ 2. King. 19:35: "That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp."

³⁹ G.R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 101.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini, Hipponensis Episcopi, Opera Omnia, Multis Sermonibus Ineditis Aucta Et Locupletata; Extracta E Collectione Ss. Ecclesiae Patrum*, eds. D.A.B. Caillau and D.M.N.S. Guillon, vol. XI (Paris: Parent-Desbarres, 1837), 172. Pseudo-Dionysius in *The Celestial Hierarchy* argues that angels are spirits in essence, organized in a hierarchy, as are demons. Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, 24. Augustine, *De divinatione daemonum*, cap. iii, 7, Pat. Lat., vol. 40, cols 584-5; *Ibid.*, 22.

Deacon and Walker categorize substances into three different types; invisible, which are angels; visible, which includes the heavens; and partly invisible and partly visible, which comprise of men because they have a soul and a body. Interestingly, they also call “demons” or Devil’s minions, as “his Angels” in their books, further blurring the line between the forces of good and evil. They put forth the argument that angels can “be called *Satan*, that is an *adversarie*, also *Divels*, that is *accusors* also, *strong armed men*, also the God of this *world*, the *princes* and *powers* of the ayre, the *gouvernours* of this *world*, *murderers*, roring *lions*, the *dragon*, the old *serpent*, & so forth.”⁴¹ This reiterates that Deacon and Walker do not take angels to be inherently good and demons to be essentially bad, as was evident in their writing, and instead believe that they are the executors of God’s will.

Deacon and Walker also seem to have been familiar with the work of German theologian, Petrus Thyraeus, who on page 16 of his book, *Loca Infesta* (1598), argues that there are good and bad spirits and God is the source of spirits, while the humanist Johannes Reuchlin in Book 3 of *De arte cabbalistica* (1517) believes in the substantiality of evil spirits as he describes their physical attributes and effects in the following way:

utterly loathsome evil spirits, covered in scales and dirt, which are enemies of the human race and are known as “antithetical forms of strength”. It is thought they are either fiery beings who roam the upper region of hell; or that they hover near us in the air; or that, as beings of earth, they strike fear into things which live on the earth; or that they inhabit lakes and rivers and often shake the sea itself; or that they attack those who are underground, excavate wells and metals, provoke the earth to gape, stir up flame-spewing winds, weaken foundations and, unable to fix their gaze on any light or brilliance [perhaps the light of God], run away and conceal themselves deep in darkness, harassing not only the human race but also the brute beasts by loosing upon them speeches without any sound.⁴²

⁴¹ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 26.

⁴² P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *The Occult in Early Modern Europe: A Documentary History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 39-40.

Reginald Scot, a member of the parliament and skeptic, authored *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* in 1584, which went down in history as one of the most popular and controversial treatises on witchcraft, meant it to serve as an exposé of witchcraft trials and prosecutions. In this book, he rejected the notion that demons could occupy a human body by contending that, in his experience, accounts of possession or witchcraft were either faked or were the result of mental imbalance on the part of the “afflicted”. Scot was inspired by Johann Weyer, who was the most famous demonologist of the sixteenth century, widely read by many scholars and responsible for shaping their demonology, although Scot used Weyer’s work to argue against the existence of demons. Deacon and Walker appear to subscribe to Scot’s view on demonic possession as well as use his sources to further strengthen their case against John Darrell, one of which is Weyer. It would not be incorrect to assume that perhaps the biggest influence on our ministers was Johann Weyer.⁴³ Darrell also seems to be familiar with Weyer’s work as he mentions it in *A true narration of the strange and greuous vexation by the Devil* (1600), one of the accounts of demonic possession narrated by Weyer in *De praestigiis daemonum* (1563), which involved seventy girls that became demoniacs in one night in 1555.⁴⁴ Weyer, when speaking of evil spirits, terms those that haunt homes and terrorize their inhabitants as “larvae”. Traditionally, a Latin term which referred to malevolent spirits, post-Augustine, it also came to incorporate the meaning of “masks”. The word “larvae” makes numerous

⁴³ Gary K. Waite, “Knowing the Spirit(s) in the Dutch Radical Reformation: From Physical Perception to Rational Doubt, 1536-1690,” forthcoming in *Knowing Demons, Knowing Spirits in the Early Modern Period (ca. 1400- 1750)*, eds Michelle D. Brock, Richard Raiswell, and David R. Winter (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2018). I am grateful to Dr. Waite for allowing me to see a part of his text in advance of publication.

⁴⁴ John Darrell, *A true narration of the strange and greuous vexation by the Devil, of 7. persons in Lancashire, and VVilliam Somers of Nottingham Wherein the doctrine of possession and dispossession of demoniakes out of the word of God is particularly applyed vnto Somers, and the rest of the persons controuerted: together with the vse we are to make of these workes of God* (England: 1600), 28.

appearances in Luther's work as well. Besides "larvae", Weyer explains, the spirits that possess humans are called evil genii and *manes*, and which, he notes, the Greek knew as "heroes". He calls demonic spirits "assessors" and *Ternistratores* (thrice laying low) because they hurl attack on souls "by word, by thought, and by deed".⁴⁵ In *De praestigiis daemonum*, Weyer quotes Augustine's views on the Devil's role in spreading evil in heaven and the world from his *Common Sermons* and, although the description below relates to the Devil, it can be argued that the Devil cannot function without his army of helpers:

What could be more perverse, what more malign, what more vile, than our adversary? ... who established war in heaven, deceit in paradise, and hatred between the first brothers, and sowed tares in every work of ours. In eating he established gluttony, in procreation wantonness, in work indolence, in conversation envy, in governing greed, in correction anger, and in directing and ruling arrogance. In the heart he placed evil thoughts, in the mouth false words, and in the members of the body wicked actions. In men's waking hours he moves them to base deeds, and in sleep to shameful dreams. He moves the joyful to dissoluteness and the sad to despair. In short, all the evils of the world are brought about by his perversity.⁴⁶

Weyer also points out that the Latin Church father, Tertullian, explores the characteristics of spirits in this way:

Every spirit is winged: angels are winged, demons are winged. Therefore, they are everywhere in an instant. The whole world is a single place for them, it is as easy for them to know what is happening anywhere as it is for them to announce this knowledge, after all long ago the name "daemon" signified "knowing".⁴⁷ Their swiftness is thought to be divinity, because their substance is not known... they emulate divinity by stealing [the] art of divination.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Johann Weyer, *On Witchcraft: An Abridged Translation of Johann Weyer's De Praestigiis Daemonum*, eds. Benjamin G. Kohl and H. C. Erik Midelfort, trans. John Shea (Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1998), 30.

⁴⁶ Weyer, *On Witchcraft*, 13.

⁴⁷ Heinrich Bullinger, *A hundred sermons upon the Apocalips of Jesu Christe*, trans. John Daws (London, 1561), 226, as cited in Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 162.

⁴⁸ Weyer, *On Witchcraft*, 14.

Interestingly, no work in England was undertaken in an attempt to explore the demonical hierarchy to parallel Weyer's. Scot addressed this issue of hierarchy in demonic orders in his *Discoverie* but only to reject it.⁴⁹ It is interesting to see that, although Tertullian does not express his views on the essence of spirits, he has instead asserted that the Devil and his demons were responsible for causing physical sickness of humans. How they achieve that, however, is not clear. He also believes in demonic possession of human bodies and asserts that exorcisms represent the truth of Christianity over pagan deities.⁵⁰ While Weyer held to an orthodox demonology with a firm belief in the Devil and demons, he resolutely opposed witch-hunting. The French philosopher, Jean Bodin, in contrast, was a strong proponent of witchcraft prosecutions, but with a similar view as Weyer's about the spirituality of demons. He maintained that the world was infested with demons and evil spirits which had a significant role in controlling it. In Book 2 of *Colloquium Heptaplomeres de abditis rerum sublimium arcanis* (1596) he asserts:

If evil spirits disturb the air we breathe, the seas, the lands and the fires; if they terrify people with lightnings, thunders, storms, whirlwinds, gapings and tremblings of the earth, and by unexpected meetings with monsters and prodigies; if they obey the wishes of God and even commands of men; in a word, if they govern and overturn empires, cities, towns and families; and finally, if each person were to have one of them to protect or defend him; think of how many angels and evil spirits there must be on high, below, and in every place of the world, if you could assign a place to each of them.⁵¹

The Spanish Jesuit, Martino Del Rio in *Disquisitiones Magicae* (1599-1600) likens evil spirits to soldiers who, once the war is over, become robbers. Similarly, demonic spirits after heresies are destroyed seek dwellings in new people, and, in order to cast them out, a new abode has to be offered to them, as is evident in the case when

⁴⁹ Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism*, note no. 15, 31.

⁵⁰ Tertullian, *Apologeticum*, cap. xxii as found in Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, 22.

⁵¹ Maxwell-Stuart, *The Occult*, 41.

Christ cast Legion out of the possessed man and into a herd of swine.⁵² This would suggest that those that challenge the commandments of God and seek dissent and schism are possessed by evil spirits who provoke such individuals to behave in blasphemous ways, one of which is believed to be necromancy.

Thus, a survey of the views concerning spirits, angels, and demons demonstrates that most early modern theologians and demonologists, Catholic and Protestant, were in consensus regarding the spirituality of demons and based their beliefs predominantly on the evidence provided by the scriptures. These works also suggest the overlap of various theories and hypotheses and implies that authors were well versed in the demonic literature, local and foreign, of the period.

The history and definition of the Devil himself would be impossible to argue since we cannot know the Devil himself as he transcends the method of history of concepts, but we can explore the history of the human perception of the Devil, as we undertook above in the eyes of the men who appear to know him best or not at all.⁵³ The history of the concept of the Devil can hence be categorized in four ways: an idea separate from God; an aspect of God; a creation of God; and a representation of human evil.⁵⁴ Early modern scholars perceived the Devil as a synthesis of all four types: the Devil, a fallen angel, was the Antithesis of God, but also an Agent of God who executed His decisions to lead men astray in order to test their faith and administer punishment for their religious neglect.

⁵² Ibid., 166.

⁵³ For a detailed discussion of the history of concepts, see Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 44.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 23.

2.2 *Diabolus Simia Dei*: The Devil as the Ape, Arch-enemy, and Agent of God

Doubtleslie who denyeth the power of the Deuill, woulde likewise denie the power of God, if they could for shame. For since the Devill is the verie contrarie opposite to God, there can be no better way to know God, then by the contrarie; as by the ones power (through [or though] a creature) to admire the power of the great Creator: by the falsehood of the one to consider the trueth of the other, by the injustice of the one, to consider the Justice of the other: And by the cruelty of the one, to consider the mercifulness of the other: And so foorth in all the rest of the essence of God, and the qualities of the Devill.⁵⁵

In their *Dialogicall Discourses*, Deacon and Walker posit that a spirit was created in the image of God, but “hath truelie that image, keepeth and looseth it not; so farre foorth, and so long, anie such thing may not truely be saide to be *evill*.” It can be inferred that Satan has lost his true form and has become evil after his fall. In essence, we are all born in God’s likeness but what is important is the retention of that goodness. Similarly, they assert that atheists and ungodly men were also created with that same goodness, but now that they are fallen, “they do resemble the *image* of the *Divell*”.⁵⁶ The ministers, here, seem to drawing a parallel between the Devil and the nonconformists who are apparently as evil as the Devil. They are also of the view that devils exercise their power over men, over their bodies and souls, “*by the iust iudgment of God*”,⁵⁷ and this belief they stress throughout the book. The Devil operates on God’s commands; he is God’s agent. They commend the agility of spirits and note that devils are swifter and faster than us but God is All-powerful and it is Him alone that works in the minds of men and has the capability to “bend” it according to His will. Spirits and devils are merely His helpers who may influence men through external stimuli; they cannot compel the will through compulsion but can persuade and allure. Thus, Deacon and Walker believe that the Devil’s power is

⁵⁵ James VI and I in his *Daemonologie* as found in Tyson, *Demonology*, 262-63.

⁵⁶ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 28-9.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

merely superhuman, marked by swiftness and agility which he employs to influence men's thoughts, and not supernatural, and therefore he could not break the laws of nature.⁵⁸ After establishing his hold on the individual, the Devil performs the function for which he is created: he is God's "hang-man", who executes the task required of him by the grace and authority of God.⁵⁹

The Catholic view on the issue was enunciated by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 which acknowledged demons as created beings that were inherently good but which became evil through their own doing and free will. This suggests that demons are similar to men in terms of them both being granted free will. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) further established demons as enemies of mankind because the ultimate goal of the Devil is to strive to lead men astray and away from the path of God. Prayer, it was reiterated, was the only protection from them.⁶⁰ Thus, the notion that the Devil is God's agent and the notion that he is the enemy of man are not mutually exclusive, in both Protestant and Catholic theologies.

The idea that the Devil fulfils his role as God's agent is not new, and can be seen through the eyes of Bede who narrated the story of a Mercian layman who would not repent and was shown by evil spirits a book that listed all his evil deeds, and even though the Mercian still did not repent, Bede believed that this vision was to serve as a lesson for men to teach them the importance of repentance.⁶¹ This demonstrates that the Devil

⁵⁸ D. P. Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, ed. Helen Parish (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 377.

⁵⁹ For an in-depth analysis of the Devil's role as God's hang-man, see Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism*, 70-6.

⁶⁰ Mike Driscoll, *Demons, Deliverance, and Discernment: Separating Fact from Fiction about the Spirit World* (El Cajon: Catholic Answers Press, 2015), 41-2.

⁶¹ Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica, or the Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 13, eds. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969) as found in Raiswell and Dendle, *The Devil in Society*, 540.

carried out God's work by serving as a means to bring men closer to God through enlightening them about the significance of repentance. In the sixth century, Pope Gregory I argued that the Devil could not operate without the will of God, and even the demons that occupied the Gadarene demoniacs sought Christ for permission to enter into a herd of swine that ran down a hill and drowned itself in a lake.⁶² That said, it is important to observe that the concept of the demonic possession of men existed even before Christ, originating in the societies of ancient Babylon and Assyria, where people attributed natural disasters like failed crops and medical issues such as stillbirths, among numerous other misfortunes, to the forces of evil, and was common to arguably all civilizations throughout history in one form or the other. This belief in evil was later incorporated into Judaism and then consequently into Christianity. As discussed above, in Christianity, all kinds of social and political phenomena that challenged the status quo were perceived as "evil". This further gave birth to moral dualism and dualistic cosmology and the eternal battle between good and evil. The Devil began to act as *a*, perhaps *the*, tormentor of mankind, which was God's greatest creation, in order to defy God. This necessitated the need to establish a curb on the Devil's power and operations which came through Christ's ability to banish him from human bodies. It demonstrated Christ's absolute reign over God's kingdom of earth which was further consolidated with the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of Rome in the fourth century.⁶³

The Dominican friar Thomas Aquinas differentiated between the supernatural, that which comes from God through his direct power; the natural, that which takes place

⁶² Raiswell and Dendle quote from Gregory I's *Moralia* (PL 75.0563C-D), *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶³ Kathleen R. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 2-3. For a discussion on the Devil's ability to cause physical disasters and epidemics among men, see Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, 22.

always or most of the time; and the praeternatural, that which occurs rarely and through created beings.⁶⁴ Praeternatural, by the sixteenth century, began to be associated mostly with demonic activities and sorcery. Praeternatural phenomena like demonic possession essentially stemmed from the moral and theological dualism with which medieval Christianity was preoccupied.⁶⁵ It would not be incorrect to say that early modern thought was infused with the dual classification of good and evil, positive and negative, and the problem of theodicy. This further extends into the territory of “contrariety” that requires that every thesis have an antithesis.⁶⁶ As the theologian Paul Carus notes, “This world of ours is a world of opposites”.⁶⁷ This could give us an answer as to why religious opponents were always vilified. Unfortunately, this treatment was not only restricted to rivals, as having complementary beliefs or practices with the adversary could invite severe admonition and reprimand. We can draw a parallel between the need to create the “other” and the treatment of John Darrell at the hands of his fellow ministers, who despite being one of them was labeled the “Antichrist” due to the similarities in his practices to those who they called the “papists”.

In order to understand the role of the Devil in God’s game, one can contain him in four quadrants: as God’s Agent in which he furthers God’s message and establishes God’s omnipotence and providence; as God’s Rival in which he has the same power as that of God’s Agent but has a different will from that of the Almighty, which is essentially to make the faith of the spiritually inclined waiver; as God’s Frustrated Opponent where

⁶⁴ Lorraine Daston, “Marvelous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe,” *Superstition and Magic*, 110-11.

⁶⁵ Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 35.

⁶⁶ “...whatsoever is not of faith is sin”: Romans 14:23. For a insightful reading, see Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 43-68.

⁶⁷ Paul Carus, *The History of the Devil and the Idea of Evil from the Earliest times to the Present Day* (Chicago: The Open Courts Publishing Company, 1900), 1.

he is impotent but still hell-bent against God's will, as illustrated in Dante's *Inferno*; and as God's Dupe where he does not possess great power but still acts as God's Agent and punishes damned souls in hell, furthering God's mission.⁶⁸ English cleric, Thomas Becon, notes that "wheresoever God buildeth his church, there the Devil also buildeth his chapel", which implies that the Devil is the ape of God.⁶⁹ This belief is also shared by the Jesuit theologian, Gregorius de Valentia who states:

The devil aims most of all to resemble God, even in this; that just as God works various effects of grace principally by means of outward sacraments and sacramentals, not through the sufficiency of suitable natural causes but through the efficacy of the signs, so too the devil happily bring about some effects by employing means that, to men, are, in the truth of the matter, insufficient, using them in the same way as certain signs of the effect that he wishes to produce.⁷⁰

The devout in the early modern period held a combination of these beliefs. They maintained that the Devil was God's arch-enemy in that he endeavored to mislead the righteous and he had the power to do so, and in doing so he was acting as God's agent. The Catholics seemed determined to demonstrate that although possession by the Devil took place by God's permission, the aim was to see that the greater good came out of it, that is, to be saved from evil and suffering, namely, the redemption. Therefore, if in fact the Devil is acting according to God's wishes, the belief that the Devil furthers Catholicism's agenda is shocking but compatible.⁷¹ This complex relationship is explained by Augustine in this way:

For [demons] can only act within the limits allowed them; and they are given liberty of action by the profound and just judgment of God most high, in accordance with the desserts of men, some of whom rightly endure affliction, but

⁶⁸ For a detailed discussion, see Raiswell and Dendle's *The Devil in Society*, 537-50.

⁶⁹ Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism*, 58

⁷⁰ Valentia, *Commentariorum theologicorum*, iii. col. 1986, as cited in Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 481.

⁷¹ D. P. Walker presents a brilliant analysis in *Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).

no more, at the hands of those demons, while others are, with justice, deluded by them, and brought under their sway.⁷²

This notion was also shared by Protestants, who held that the Devil indeed tormented souls and punished the religiously careless on Earth according to the Lord's will, some of whom saw this torment and punishment through physical possession and/or spiritual control. This is glaringly obvious in Darrell's conduct as a religious healer who not only strove to expel the Devil from the body but also sought to cleanse the soul of evil.

A staunch proponent of predestination and a disbeliever of free will, Martin Luther asserts that free will conflicted with the omnipotence of God, and therefore, everything happened as and when God willed it to happen.⁷³ God is goodness and responsible for all the good but He is also the Creator of the Devil who does evil as per God's will and is His tool. Luther was of the view that "[a]ll evil comes from both the Devil and God, but the Devil wills the evil in them and God wills the good that comes out of them".⁷⁴ This quote could be analyzed appropriately by assuming that by "evil" Luther is signifying any action that could be perceived as morally incorrect. This brings us back to our example of the boy who uses magic to bewitch his lover's parents so they would concede to their marriage. Clearly, in this case, resorting to magic is wrong because it is intended to affect one's capacity for self-determination, but the end result would be the couple's marriage which would usually be considered a good outcome, which is to say that the end justifies

⁷² Augustine, *City of God*, 7.35 as quoted by Hans Peter Broedel in *The Malleus Maleficarum and the construction of witchcraft: Theology and popular belief* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 43.

⁷³ Also see, Peter A. Morton, "Lutheran Naturalism, Popular Magic, and the Devil," *The Devil in Society*, 409-32.

⁷⁴ Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 38.

the means. Luther contends that as one advances on the path of God, the Devil attacks more ferociously, and that he knows this by his personal experience. Luther was of the belief that he was being deterred by the Devil in his works and that the Devil had also manifested himself in front of him in different ways and at various instances. It is said that in 1545 Luther attempted to exorcize a possessed girl in a church at Wittenberg, but was frightened away and locked in the sacristy by the Devil inside the demoniac.⁷⁵ The Devil, thus, was as real to him as Christ. In his writings, he contends that the Devil and demons, his minions and agents, can appear to humans in whatever form they wish, even that of Christ, and that “all human sinners are servants of the Devil”, and so are Catholics, Turks, monks, heretics, pagans, and radical Protestants.⁷⁶ He is also credited with coining the word “poltergeist” to refer to a “rumbling spirit”.⁷⁷ Luther maintains that in the end, when God does not have any more need for the Devil, He will destroy him and his servants, and only the chosen ones will enter the Kingdom of God.

With regard to devilish torments, in 1552 in a letter to Edward VI, John Calvin urged the king to stay strong in face of adversity as the Devil’s job was to obstruct the path of those committed to the work of God. Calvin also claimed that “diabolic activity was a central experience of Reformation”.⁷⁸ Moreover, he believed that the Devil operated according to God’s will but went on further to posit that the Devil cannot perform any action unless God explicitly assigns it to him and therefore, he is only the executor of

⁷⁵ Walker, “The Cessation of Miracles,” 381.

⁷⁶ Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 40. Also see, Carus, *The History of the Devil*, 342-45.

⁷⁷ Fatima Regina Machado, “A New Look at Haunting and Poltergeist Phenomena: Analyzing Experiences from a Semiotic Perspective”, *Hauntings and Poltergeists: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, eds. James Houran and Rense Lange (Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland & Company Inc., Publishers, 2001), 228.

⁷⁸ Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism*, 35.

God's decisions.⁷⁹ Men have the free will to rebel against God, he argued, and therefore, if good is from God, evil has to be from the inverter and perverter of God's creation, Satan, and that not all evil is demonic but can also be a result of human will. This line of reasoning lessens the role of the Devil in the sins committed by men and attributes a part of responsibility to men themselves. This view was also shared by Johann Weyer who agrees that the Devil's will is evil because it comes from within him, but his power is just because that comes from God.⁸⁰ He confirms that God confines the Devil within the limits God has allotted to him and does not allow him to subdue men unless God wishes to test them on their piety or chastise them for their sins, in order to tell the believers apart from the unbelievers.

The Devil was, therefore, a key player in this battle of good and evil in the early modern period, and his possession of men could be perceived as his attempt to test their faith and religious convictions, for which he had been granted permission by God. The religiously-inclined, both Catholic and Protestant, who had an unwavering faith in the Devil and his power to cause havoc in the material world, sought ways to restrain his incessant evil efforts to torment men which took the form of both physical and spiritual afflictions. Those that believed in the supernatural resorted to the scriptures for guidance in the event of a demonic possession, among whom John Darrell was a well-known, albeit controversial, figure. Darrell's dispossessions that garnered wide public interest in the last decade of the sixteenth century are testimony to the fact that the Devil was largely an undeniable part of ordinary lives, as even if one was not himself influenced by the Devil,

⁷⁹ Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 48.

⁸⁰ This is from Book I Chapter XXIV, *That the Devil Cannot Do All Things, and Can Do Nothing without God's Consent; and Why, within Set Limits, God Permits Him to Do Many Things* in which Weyer discusses the agency of Devil; Weyer, *On Witchcraft*, 38.

he certainly knew someone who was. Thus, the Devil and his assault on men remained a vexing problem in early modern England.



CHAPTER III

VEXED BY THE *DIVELL*: DEMONIC POSSESSION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

To ask whether the possessed were actually tormented and violated by spirits and demons is a *question mal posée*. Demonic possession was sometimes a manifestation of a mental, physiological, and/or psychological imbalance, which could involve, for instance, medical conditions, such as epilepsy, melancholy, hysteria, or a personality disorder. It could also reflect the desire of the “possessed” to escape their circumstances, as in the case of Katherine Wright and William Sommers. A typical case of possession would normally involve a youth (or a maiden) displaying signs of epilepsy, hysteria, or a combination of both,¹ who, when he notices that his condition is attracting a lot of attention, keeps at it, and strives to earn more, and, in the process, plays the part of an energumen. This may be suggested to him or could be the creation of his own imagination in order to get his own way or to get his wishes fulfilled, as demonstrated by the Starkie

¹ Hysteria is derived from the Greek word *hystera* meaning uterus and was first used by the English physician, Edward Jorden, in 1602 who after hearing about the symptoms including but not limited to loss of appetite, fainting, deafness, speechlessness, extreme fits of laughter or weeping sought to differentiate between the illness and demonic possession, Kathleen R. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 112. Jorden discusses it in *A Brieffe Discourse of a Disease called the Suffocation of the Mother Written vpon occasion which hath beene of late taken thereby, to suspect possession of an euill spirit, or some such like supernaturall power. Wherin is declared that diuers strange actions and passions of the body of man, which in the common opinion, are imputed to the diuell, haue their true naturall causes, and do accompanie this disease* (London: John Windet, 1603). For a discussion on the overlap between both the conditions, see E. E. Krapf, “On the Pathogenesis of Epileptic and Hysterical Seizures”, *Bulletin of World Health Organization* 16, no. 4 (1957), 749-62. Krapf argues that “there is sometimes an interrelation ... between psychological situations and somatic predispositions which makes it possible for them to strengthen or to determine each other to a considerable extent”, 750.

children, or to seem worthy among family and sometimes also in society, and/or to rebel against authority, like the actions and aspirations of Thomas Darling.² Occasionally, this display of unorthodox behavior is involuntary, which is the hardest to explain.³

It may be interpreted from the description above that demonic possession was a phenomenon that affected both men and women equally. Not only is this argument flawed but also one that does not take into account the role of gender in the early modern society. It further suggests that women were not considered to have the propensity to become spiritually vexed. Recent discourses have begun to explore extensively the impact and role of gender in the cases of possession, and we may be now able to see why women were more vulnerable to devilish assaults.⁴ The dispossessions of John Darrell, the person of interest in this study, however, were not gendered, as he seemed to heal both men and women, perhaps men more than women.

Darrell's dispossessions garnered widespread attention, thereby becoming too public to go unnoticed. Ministers John Deacon and John Walker were two such people whose feathers Darrell seems to have ruffled with his activities. They rebuked Darrell and his "popish" practices in their book, *Dialogicall Discourses*. The book also included a comprehensive discussion of the physicality (or lack thereof) of spirits and demons.

² One of the most famous possession cases that came out of France involved the youth, Marthe Brossier of Romorantin in 1598. After being examined by both physicians and theologians, it was discovered that Marthe was faking her symptoms. The report prepared by her physician stated: *nihil a Spiritu, multa ficta, pauca a morbo* (nothing from the Spirit, many things simulated, a few things from disease). This case along with that of the Loudon nuns went down in history as one of the most high-profile cases of demonic possession, albeit, fraudulent. A copy of an account of Marthe Brossier's case was translated and published in England which was then used as evidence and a literary weapon against John Darrell in his trial. For a discussion of Marthe Brossier's case, see http://demonology.enacademic.com/129/Brossier%2C_Marthe.

³ See the account of Sommers' case in section II.

⁴ Erike Gasser examines the role of gender in cases of possession in England and New England in *Vexed with Devils: Manhood and Witchcraft in Old and New England* (New York: New York University Press, 2017).

Dialogicall Discourses is historically significant because it was the first work that systematically explored the intricacies of the phenomenon of possession. The authors use their knowledge of natural sciences and theology to dismiss and supersede the notion of demonic possession. In considering the laws of nature, Deacon and Walker clarify that it is not possible for Satan and the human soul to both be present in the same body simultaneously, because that would mean the two are hypostatically joined and that is only suitable for Christ, that is, only Christ can have two natures in one person.

In humans, this hypostatic union could be represented by divine, that is, angelic possession. Many of such divine possessions were denounced by the Church to the dismay of those “touched by the Holy Spirit”. In almost all cases of possession, the spirit possessing the subject was supposed to be evil, because signs of a good angel or spirit’s control of a body might have been seen as a challenge to the Church’s authority. That said, the importance of divine possessions that did occur and were recognized by society and resulted in the possessed being venerated cannot be negated, even though there was an inherent risk that a divinely possessed individual might acquire a following.⁵ There was no such threat in a demonic possession, however, as they could be decried as evil instantly as per Catholic doctrine.⁶

⁵ D.P. Walker, “Demonic Possession Used as Propaganda”, *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology: A Twelve Volume Anthology of Scholarly Articles*, ed. Brian P. Levack, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 292. Walker appears to have studied Jaques Auguste De Thou, *Historiarum sui temporis*, T.V (Genevae, 1620).

⁶ “407... By our first parents' sin, the devil has acquired a certain domination over man, even though man remains free. Original sin entails "captivity under the power of him who thenceforth had the power of death, that is, the devil". Ignorance of the fact that man has a wounded nature inclined to evil gives rise to serious errors in the areas of education, politics, social action and morals.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c1p7.htm.

3.1. Signs and Symptoms of Possession

Medieval theologians in their discourses attempted to specify the criteria by which a medical condition and a demonic possession could be measured and the way they could be differentiated from one another. Medieval exorcists were entrusted with more than just expelling the demon and their purpose was far more holistic, in that they sought to improve the sufferer's spiritual and psychological wellbeing. Not all individuals with seemingly mental problems were labeled possessed and mental illness as a natural cause was explored in the Middle Ages.

Some early modern physicians claimed that most of the physical or mental signs exhibited by the afflicted citing alleged possession had medical answers, for instance, lunacy, melancholy, mania, epilepsy, convulsions, or suffocation of “the mother” (womb) said to be caused by an humoral imbalance as it was believed that the womb rose up and caused women to choke. These individuals who were affected by medical ailments had convinced themselves that their troubles had a supernatural cause and that they were being disturbed by devils. Deacon and Walker note that among those that are afflicted by diseases are maidens and widows who demonstrate symptoms of such illnesses when they are suddenly married off after having delayed their marriage too long.⁷ Perhaps it can be presumed that, according to Deacon and Walker, late marriages could be one of the causes of mental illness, as unanticipated marital responsibilities could induce improper or unladylike conduct.

One of the basic features of Renaissance demonology appears to be melancholy. Although every melancholic person in the early modern period could not be called

⁷ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall discourses*, 207.

possessed, every *maleficiatus* or possessed individual showed signs of melancholia and desolation, and considering that every feeling of sadness and despair cannot be linked to demonic activity and/or oppression, there should be a clear distinction between demonic presence and despondence. This is easier said than done, however, as the treatises on demonic possession, unfortunately, do not advise any approach on how to accomplish this.⁸ Weyer suggests that there may be a relationship between mental disease, such as epilepsy, melancholy, and hysteria (“the mother”), and possession, as the Devil may prefer his target to be vulnerable and may also sometimes use these symptoms to hide his own presence. Weyer also observes that there have been cases that indicate that symptoms of melancholy have been mistaken as possession and vice versa. He further notes that it is a usual occurrence that all people disturbed by the demonic show indications of melancholy due to the torments suffered by them, that is to say that possession usually coincides with negative energy and depression and melancholia.⁹

Moreover, considering that the symptoms of epilepsy and possession could also sometimes be the same, including fits of violent convulsions, many drew a parallel between the two, which included physicians like Levinus Lemnius, who in his *Occulta naturae miracula* (1559) took a more naturalistic view of demonic possession by arguing that epilepsy was not a supernatural condition, and Jean Fernel who sought to establish the veracity of possession and rejected epilepsy in his *De abditis rerum causis* (1548).¹⁰

⁸ Armando Maggi, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 12.

⁹ Johann Weyer, *On Witchcraft: An Abridged Translation of Johann Weyer's De Praestigiis Daemonum*, eds. Benjamin G. Kohl and H. C. Erik Midelfort, trans John Shea (Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1998), 186.

¹⁰ D. P. Walker, *Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 11-12.

Physicians had recognized epilepsy since Aristotle's time as a disease and made efforts to explicitly differentiate it from symptoms of demonic possession, Kathleen R. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 18.

The English clergyman, Montague Summers, with regard to the relationship between medical causes and instances of possession, maintains:

Of these [cases] a great number are, no doubt, to be attributed to disease; very many to a commixture of hysteria and semi-conscious, or more frequently unconscious, fraud; some few to more chousing [trickery or deceit]; and if human evidence is worth anything at all, many actually to diabolic influence.¹¹

As discussed above, demonic possession encompassed the spiritual realm instead of being merely physical, and therefore any individual could be termed as possessed if he were demonstrating signs of psychological imbalance not evident in his body. It was common to see that when doctors could not locate the cause of the disease, they claimed it was from the supernatural. Once it was established that a disease was not from natural sources, an exorcism could be performed to ease the spiritual pains of such an individual. The spiritual challenges could include a variety of things from the temptation to blaspheme and aversion of sacred objects to disobedience of parents and others and behaving rowdily. The early modern period also saw attempts to define the symptoms of possession, as we briefly saw above, and it can be said that the afflicted families were more open to exploring medical causes of the energumen's condition and calling on physicians prior to producing a diagnosis of diabolic possession. Many demonologists and even medical practitioners in the sixteenth century were of the view that the Devil caused spiritual and physiological afflictions, such as epilepsy, melancholy, etc., as we saw the French physician Jean Fernel claim above. This was also furthered by the Jesuit theologians, Peter Thyraeus and Martin Del Rio, and the Italian Franciscan friar and

¹¹ Montague Summers, *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology*, trans. R. T. Clark, *The History of Civilization*, ed. C.K. Ogden (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 224.

exorcist, Girolamo Menghi,¹² who seemed to take a rather extreme position and declared that mental diseases were caused by demons and that priests and clergy had the spiritual power to heal these diseases, and therefore, they were far more important in society than medical practitioners.¹³

In the late middle ages, it was widely believed that the body's four humors corresponded to the cosmic elements -- blood to air, phlegm to water, black bile to fire, and yellow bile to earth – and that they also shared the qualities of their corresponding element: blood meant hot and moist, phlegm represented cold and moist, black bile signified hot and dry, and yellow bile denoted cold and dry.¹⁴ A person stayed healthy by keeping a balance among all the humors and treating them accordingly. This gave birth to the humoral theory of the early modern period which was used by demonologists to explain how Satan afflicted the demoniacs; it was to produce an imbalance between these humors of the body, and “[b]y overloading a man with blood, Satan could naturally induce that man to fits of violent rage. By overloading a woman with black bile, Satan could naturally induce that woman to commit suicide.”¹⁵ John Darrell does not relate the humoral theory with possession in any of his works but insists that those who

¹² For a detailed biography on Menghi, see Rosemary Ellen Guiley, *The Encyclopedia of Demons and Demonology*, s.v. “Girolamo Menghi.” (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 170-71. http://demonology.enacademic.com/391/Menghi%2C_Girolamo. For Menghi's view on demonology and exorcism, see, Menghi, Girolamo. *The Devil's Scourge: Exorcism during the Italian Renaissance*, trans. Gaetano Paxia (Boston: Weiser Books, 2002).

¹³ David Lederer, *Madness Religion, and the State in Early Modern Europe: A Bavarian Beacon*. New Studies in European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7-13. This view is also shared by Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger who believe that the Devil, by God's permission, can cause all kinds of bodily ailments, including leprosy and epilepsy in Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum* (NY: Dover, 1971), 134.

¹⁴ Gary K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, European Culture and Society Series (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 13. Also discussed by Lederer in *Madness*, p.25, who calls the four humors, “naturals”, and Donald Tyson, *The Demonology of King James I: Includes the Original Text of Daemonologie and News from Scotland* (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2011), 109-10.

¹⁵ Sands, *Elizabethan England*, 12.

are vexed by the Devil are diseased and the symptoms of their condition have been laid down in the Bible, and thus, they need to be treated through God's word.¹⁶

But how do these individuals get "diseased" to begin with? James VI and I offers his opinion on the type and nature of the people who bring about demonic affliction upon themselves. He elucidates that there are two kinds of people who are troubled by evil spirits in two different ways: either by outward vexing or by inward possession. These are either men who partake in "grievous offences" or those that are righteous and God is testing them for their patience. Essentially, this troubling by demons is either a punishment or a trial.¹⁷ Modern historian Andrea Nicolotti puts forth a similar view. He argues that there can be different types of demonic possession: *circumsessio* is surrounding a person with a feeling of discomfort and unfavorable action until it seems like he is besieged; *infestatio* is to invade the individual's private space, that is, his body and/or belongings, with constant annoyance. Although *obsessio* and *possessio* have been used so extensively and almost synonymously in clerical and other literature over the years, separating their meanings from each other is a laborious task, and Nicolotti therefore introduces a new term, *insessio* to mean that an evil spirit or demon has occupied the body of an individual.¹⁸ We can draw a parallel between Nicolotti's *circumsessio* with James's "outward vexing of the spirit", and his *obsessio* with Deacon and Walker's "obsession", which represents the belief it is obsession rather than possession that the

¹⁶ John Darrell, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: vvritten by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels* (England: 1602), 38. Also see Ibid., 64.

¹⁷ Related by Tyson, *Demonology*, 160-61.

¹⁸ Francis Young discusses the various types of possession observed by Andrea Nicolotti, *Esorcismo Cristiano e Possessione Diabolica tra II e III Secolo* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 31 in *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity*, Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic (Cambridge, Palgrave Macmillan: 2016), 19-20.

Devil employs to fool vulnerable souls. The Devil, they ministers believe, has been granted an “effectuall working power” to vex, torment and afflict men by God’s permission, but not the ability to inhabit the mind, soul and/or body of a man. It can thus be inferred that many symptoms and classes of demonic possession have been similar in the late antiquity and the early modern period.

James also identifies three symptoms that arise from demonic possession. The first is incredible physical strength, which would seem inhuman, as the possessed in this case will not be subdued by the strength of “six of the wightest and wodest of any other men that are not so troubled”.¹⁹ It can be presumed that James believed that even the strongest men could not restrain those under the influence of the Devil. The second sign is the rise and bend of the body, specifically “breast and belly”, so unnaturally high and extreme that it seems like an impossible feat for any man to perform. The third is obvious enough, the knowledge and power to speak in tongues.²⁰ James, in the same text, also details the effects spirits can have on humans. They can induce love or hatred between men and women, put sickness on humans, take the life of individuals, make folks crazy (he used the words “phrenticque” or “Maniacque” here), trouble and possess individuals to the extent that they become demoniacs, and also affect natural phenomena by causing storms on lands and seas.²¹

It is noteworthy that later on in his life, James began to express skeptical views with regard to witchcraft and demonic possession. The case that may have been

¹⁹ Tyson, *Demonology*, 274.

²⁰ It is important to note that most of these ideas regarding demonic possession come from James’s personal experience, especially his presence at the interrogation of John Fian on Christmas Eve 1590. He demonstrated immense strength and performed strange contortions of the body that compelled those present in the room to believe that a demon had entered him. *Ibid.*, 172.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 132.

responsible for completely changing James' stance on possession was that of the twenty-year old Anne Gunter. James took special interest in the case of this young woman who, in the summer of 1604, began to display severe fits and started vomiting pins and needles. She was deemed possessed after her failure to respond to medical treatments, and soon after, she accused three local women of bewitchment. Eventually, after being diagnosed as hysterical by the renowned physician, Edward Jorden, Anne confessed to the Star Chamber, a court of law, that she had feigned her symptoms and had falsely incriminated the women. This occurred as a result of an investigation ordered by James, who had, from the very beginning, suspected that Anne's possession was fraudulent and agreed with Jorden that she suffered from "the mother" (sickness of the womb). James assigned responsibility to Richard Bancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, to dig deeper into the case, and Bancroft in turn entrusted his chaplain, Samuel Harsnett with further interrogation.²² Both Bancroft and Harsnett were prominent figures in the case of John Darrell, as we shall later see.

In general, there were four main signs of possession: the ability to speak in tongues and/or the knowledge of foreign languages without having studied them before; clandestine knowledge; inhuman strength; and an aversion to sacred objects. Vomiting pins and needles, as performed by Anne Gunter, albeit fraudulently, was considered another major symptom of possession during the early modern period. Johann Weyer also recognizes it as such and notes that one of the signs of possession is that various large objects are ejected from the mouth, such as bones enormous in size, pieces of woolen cloth and things that are bigger in size than of the esophagus, as well as iron nails, needles,

²² For a full account of the case and the role of James, Bancroft and his group, see James Sharpe, *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter* (London: Profile, 1999), 175-96.

and pins. He argues that these things are thrown into the mouth of the man by an airy body that is too swift and crafty for the normal human eye to see.²³ Weyer also remarks that people afflicted by the Devil were instantly cured once a prescribed blessing was recited. It went like this: “I bless you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; I bless you in your possessions, your blood, and your cattle.”²⁴ It can be argued that the last phrase is not required to be read in cases in which the energumen does not own any livestock. James also holds a similar view in *Daemonologie* (1597) in which he narrates some specific cases of the possession of women, as well as of children, known personally to him and to other people of credit in his work. In it he argues that the Devil uses sleight of hand and illusions to put alien objects into the victim’s mouth. Note that he later recanted his opinion in 1603 and claimed that in the case of Anne Gunter her father had staged the possession episodes and encouraged her to swallow pins. This illustrates his increasing skepticism about the Devil’s influence on physical bodies.

The Italian theologian Sylvester Mazzolini de Prierio was a strong supporter of the notion that the Devil could physically possess human beings. Armando Maggi explores Prierio’s demonology who in his book asserts that the Devil tricks his subject into seeing, believing, and feeling things that are not there; he has the ability to alter a mental image or *phantasmata*. Prierio argues that the Devil, playing the role of the Master, never manifests himself fully in front of the possessed, the disciple, and appears to him as if he was behind him if the possessed was looking at himself in a mirror. Whether this is a mental image, a feeling of being surrounded by evil, or an actual apparition, he does

²³ Weyer, *On Witchcraft*, 147-48.

²⁴ *Benedico tibi in nomine Patris & Filij & Spiritus Sancti, in tuis bonis, sanguine & armento*, as found in *Joannis Vvieri De Praestigiis Daemonvm, et Incantationibus acueficrjs Librif(s)ex, aucti & recogniti*, Liber quartus, Cap IIII, 362; *Ibid.*, 155.

not say. Additionally, Prierio claims that when a demon or fallen angel enters and occupies a human body, it does so in a material manner, so it possesses it in form. Perhaps he means to indicate that a spiritual substance, such as a demon, can not only give *phantasmata* but also penetrate a human body. This argument is in direct contradiction to that made by Deacon and Walker throughout their book, *Dialogicall Discourses* who reject the possibility of a bodily possession.²⁵ The French magistrate and demonologist, Nicolas Remy puts another spin on this and contends that devils can never completely assume the form of or mimic the voice of a human (perhaps even after their invasion of a human body), and that there will always be something that gives them away. This is why, Prierio says, they sing instead of speaking.²⁶ It could be so because if they spoke they would be unable to keep up their facade of being a human, assuming that they do not want to be discovered. This is pure supposition as rarely has there been a case recorded in history in which the possessing spirit did not want to be identified.

The French friar of the Order of Minims, Claude Pithoys, in *La descouverte des faux possedez* (1621), also furthers the notion that demons can occupy human bodies. Besides discussing the form and incorporeality of spirits, he claims that they possess tremendous knowledge of all creation and have the strength to move and shake the largest objects.²⁷ This would explain why, when a person is possessed, he suffers uncontrollable fits in which his limbs keep shaking, as the spirit is doing the shaking of the possessed

²⁵ John Deacon and John Walker, *Dialogicall discourses of spirits and divels declaring their proper essence, natures, dispositions, and operations, their possessions and dispossessions: with other the appendantes, peculiarly appertaining to those speciall points: verie conducent, and pertinent to the timely procuring of some Christian conformitie in judgment, for the peacable compounding of the late sprong controuersies concerning all such intricate and difficult doubts* (London: George Bishop, 1601).

²⁶ Maggi quotes from Prierio, *Commentii in Genesim in tres libros distribute* (PL 50) in *Satan's Rhetoric*, 25-35.

²⁷ P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *The Occult in Early Modern Europe: A Documentary History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 154-55.

body. This shaking of limbs is characteristic of most cases of demonic possession in early modern England. It would also come to be known as a distinctive feature of the religious movement of the seventeenth century, the “Religious Society of Friends”, or as they are more commonly known, the Quakers.

In the early modern period, especially during the wave of the Counter-Reformation, there was a significant increase in reports of demonic possession, which shed light on the theological conflict between Protestants and Catholics, the latter accused of using possession and its treatment as a propaganda tool. The invention of the moveable type printing press and the sensational journalism that was evident in the publication of dozens of propaganda pamphlets were further able to attract more public attention. These propaganda pamphlets first appeared in Italy and then later in France and Germany and served a clear didactic function: to describe in dramatic fashion and excruciating detail “miraculous” cases of demonic possession and subsequent exorcism. In Germany alone, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, a new genre of *Teufelsbücher* or “devil books” were introduced by Lutheran pastors of which first and second editions and reprints totaled up to 200,000 copies, which primarily moralized about vices, such as gluttony, lust, drunkenness, as well as inviting trouble into the household, a point directed toward women.²⁸ These books were prohibited in the Catholic areas of Germany where Catholic literature dealing with the same issues was proliferated instead.²⁹

²⁸ Charles Zika, “The Devil’s Hoodwink: Seeing and Believing in the World of Sixteenth-Century Witchcraft”, *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology, Vol. 1: Demonology, Religion, and Witchcraft*, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2001), 101. Cornelia Niekus Moore, “The Quest for Consoling and Amusement: Reading Habits of German Women in the Seventeenth Century”, *The Graph of Sex and the German Text: Gendered Culture in Early Modern Germany 1500-1700*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 252.

²⁹ Eva Marta Baillie, *Facing the Fiend: Satan as a Literary Character* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2014), 66-7.

The discourse of demonology was also largely gendered. Although in the early fifteenth-century most of the victims were men, by the time the *Malleus Maleficarum* was published in 1487, the blame had shifted to women as both perpetrators and victims.³⁰ This was because women were considered physically and intellectually weaker, perhaps also religiously, and as they possessed cooler humors they were argued by some to be more susceptible to assault by demons,³¹ as “[a]ccording to casuists of moral theology, immoral behavior unbalanced the humors thereby affecting the intellective faculty and leading to spiritual afflictions.”³² Therefore, it appeared that those who behaved more immorally were more susceptible to spiritual assault, and considering that women made up a large number of demoniacs and were considered the weaker sex, they were more likely to fall prey to demonic traps and indulge in “immoral behaviors”. The Spanish Franciscan friar, Martin de Castanega’s *Tratado de las supersticiones y hechicerias* (1529), which was the first treatise on witchcraft to appear in a European vernacular (all previous witchcraft treatises had been translated from Latin), discusses the view that more women than men are possessed by the Devil because this is Satan’s way of mocking Catholic rituals: as only men can conduct the Sacraments, so he targets women. Castanega considers women to be more vulnerable to demonic attacks because they are more inclined toward acting on sexual desires and are physically weaker than men. Castanega argues that women may fall into the trap of evil because of their own doings and temptations and may also fake being possessed. Although Castanega does not explain why women might fake being under the Devil’s attack, Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santori,

³⁰ Scholars agree that Johannes Nider’s entire fifth book of *Formicarius* was included in many versions of *Malleus Maleficarum*, which demonstrates its significance.

³¹ Waite, *Heresy*, 50.

³² Lederer, *Madness*, 97.

who compiled *Rituale sacramentorum Romanum Gregorii XIII Pont Max iussu*, in Rome in the 1580s, suggested that they might do it in order to escape punishment, or out of lust, hatred or desperation.³³ Catholic exorcists were also encouraged not to trust possessions and testimonies of women. Johann Weyer has a mixed approach toward this matter. He writes an entire chapter titled, *Concerning the credulity and frailty of the female sex*, in Book Three of his *De praestigiis daemonum*. On one hand, he claims that women are physically, mentally, and spiritually deficient, while on the other, posits that women sin less than men and should be treated more gently when convicted of a crime, such as witchcraft, and be forgiven more often due to the weakness of their mind, body, and soul.³⁴

Possession was not always a negative term and was seen favorably by some when the act of possession was carried out by angelic spirits or the divine. The frequency and banality of the events of demonic possession are illustrated by the fact that in the late Middle Ages possession encompassed both physiological and psychological disorders with either no clear cause or that could not be cured through standard medical procedures as well as spiritual afflictions, as discussed above. The most evident of these disturbances were claims of possession by the demonic or the divine, more the former than the latter, as the clergy tended to deem most possessions as diabolic rather than divine, a belief that survived well into the early modern period.³⁵ Duffy argues that the Reformation created a divide within people when it introduced notions such as the rejection of prayers for the dead, of belief in the intercessory power of saints, and of the concept of purgatory. This,

³³ Moshe Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism, & Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 188.

³⁴ Weyer, *On Witchcraft*, 290.

³⁵ Sluhovsky, *Believe Not*, 14.

he asserts, “reduced Christianity to the mere company of the living”.³⁶ The possibility of interactions with the divine was denied by some and vehemently questioned by others, and at times divine possession was termed diabolic possession. Although a minority, those who claimed to be possessed or attacked by the Devil sometimes came to be honored and venerated and some even came to be canonized as saints, all due to their apparent righteousness and religious piety.

This reverence could be due to the belief that the religiously inclined or the devout were more likely to get attacked by the Devil while they were advancing on their spiritual path so he could lead them into temptation and disrupt their progress. It could be said that the worse the attack was and the more obscene or sexual the resulting possession and its symptoms were, the more righteous the person was considered to be. Therefore, an important element of demonic attacks was to indicate one’s worth. Perhaps this explains why the Spanish mystic Teresa reported being disturbed by the visitations of the Devil in her chamber and claimed that she would make the sign of the cross and sprinkle holy water on him to keep him at bay.³⁷ She also argued that mysticism was divine contemplation and apparently heavenly phenomena such as visions, levitation, and stigmata could be used as a tool by Satan to fool the gullible and to make them vain about their spiritual achievements and rewards. Due to this danger, she warned, one should not indulge in sanctimoniousness and complacency. John of the Cross also warned against self-righteousness as he believed that it was the Devil’s illusion to keep men away from prayer. Both St. Teresa and St. Ignatius, respected Catholic saints, were also firm believers

³⁶ Eamon Duffy, *Saint, Sacrilege and Sedition: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 33.

³⁷ Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 52-3.

in the possibility of the Devil inflicting physical assault on humans. The likelihood especially increased if they were engaged in spreading the message of Christ. The Protestants thought in a similar fashion and believed that the righteous godly were among Satan's "special targets" whom he wanted to tempt so that they would go astray; their faith, prayer, and fasting were their only shields against the Devil's assaults.³⁸

The Protestant ministers John Deacon and Walker, though they admit the importance of prayer, argue in *Dialogicall Discourses* that the word "possession" and its meaning has been changed in translation to English, and that no word in Hebrew or Greek intended actual demonic possession. They demonstrate that by stating that in Hebrew, the word *achuzzah* refers to apprehension, detention and possession of, specifically, land. In Greek, the words *scheo* and *ischanao* mean "hold", and do not refer to demonic possession of men's bodies. The other Hebrew word is *iereshah* which refers to the possession of lands and territories but also of men, in terms of service and employment. The authors argue that the Greek words *ορίζω* and *ορίζομαι* originated from *iarash* in the Septuagint but these terms refer to defining boundaries. However, it can be argued that *ορίζω* or *orizo* which is the root for the English word "horizon" could be seen as a boundary, that is, the "horizon is where light separates from darkness".³⁹ This, perhaps, could refer to the spiritual affliction by the Devil as wherever he goes he brings about darkness which can only be overpowered by the light of the gospel. The New Testament Greek also does not seem to use any variation of a word that could be explicitly translated as "possessed" and

³⁸ Nathan Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, eds. Anthony Fletcher, John Guy, and John Morrill, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3.

³⁹ Jeff Claiborne, *The Young Person's Guide to Wisdom: A biblical guide to the wisdom of God revealed in the Scripture* (USA: Xulon Press, 2010), 49.

terms “demoniacs” as *δαμονιζομένων* or *daemonizomenon* or *daimonistheis*, meaning one who is “demon-possessed”. Similarly, the Latin Vulgate seems to use “*dæmonium habentem*” meaning “having demons”.⁴⁰ Deacon and Walker further enunciate that the word *daemonizoménoi* refers to “men Diuillished”, which does not essentially mean that the Devil inherently lives in them. They state that Satan has been appointed by God to torment souls, and therefore he need not physically occupy a body to cause spiritual affliction.⁴¹

In support of this argument, the ministers claim that there is no evidence found in the scriptures that points toward a demonic possession. In the Gospel of Matthew, the author when referring to the mother of the Canaan’s demoniac did not say “*have mercy on me, for my daughter is pitifully possessed*: but, my daughter is miserably *vexed* with a *Divel*.”⁴² Furthermore, they state that the Devil did not enter into the mind of Judas but merely put treason into his heart. The argument is that these events denote spiritual affliction rather than physical torment. The human mind as well as the Devil have been created for special purposes and this “possession” does not benefit God in any way; nothing has the power to penetrate the soul of men except for God and the belief in possession diverts from the purpose of the Holy Spirit which is to “*inhabite and dwell in our harts for euer*.” Here it seems difficult to see any distinction between mind, soul, and indeed heart, so it would be safe to assume that Deacon and Walker make little or no distinction between the three. If evil angels (or devils) have the power to penetrate our

⁴⁰ Ken Frieden, “The Language of Demonic Possession: A Key-Word Analysis” in *The Daemonic Imagination: Biblical Text and Secular Story*, ed. Robert Detweiler and William G. Doty (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 43-4. Matt. 9:32. “While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus.” *Egressis autem illis, ecce obtulerunt ei hominem mutum, dæmonium habentem.*

⁴¹ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 37-8.

⁴² Ibid., 40 quoting Matthew 15:22

spirits, then by extension so do the good angels, but they do not enter man's mind, so the former must also be false, they assert. It is true that the Lord is said to live in the hearts of the believers as faith but it does not mean that He actually, physically lives there, and neither does the Devil. If the Devil actually had the power to enter into the minds and souls of men, what difference would there be between the Devil and the Holy Spirit, they ask. Essentially, their argument is that only God has the power to enter the hearts of men, not the Devil. Also, they quip, when a person is drunk, he is said to be filled with wine, but the "verie *substance* of the *wine* doth not *substantially enter* into the verie *substance* it selfe of the *drunken mans minde*".⁴³ The ministers claim that the biblical verses that refer to possession are in fact referring to spiritual wrestling and are to be taken metaphorically.

John Darrell, mocking their claim that demonic possession in the bible is not to be taken literally, suggests that this would cast doubt on the whole scripture and states in *The replie of Iohn Darrell, to the answer of Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of demoniakes* (1602), "nay then let us conclude, because these texts of Scripture be metaphorical, therefore all the Scripture is metaphorical."⁴⁴ Darrell has no doubt that "many thing[s] spoken of spirits are to be vnderstood according to the very letter,"⁴⁵ and this includes their physical inhabitation of men. He also rejects the ministers' example of Judas and claims that Judas was not a demoniac, and therefore cannot be used to illustrate demonic possession. Moreover, he

⁴³ Ibid., 46-50.

⁴⁴ John Darrell, *The replie of John Darrell, to the answer of John Deacon and John Walker* (n.p., 1602), 8-10, as cited by Thomas Freeman in "Demons, Deviance and Defiance: John Darrell and the Politics of Exorcism in late Elizabethan England", *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, eds. Peter Lake and Michael Questier (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), 55. I am thankful to Professor Darren Oldridge for recommending this article.

⁴⁵ Darrell, *The Replie*, 14.

reminds them that John Calvin said “[w]hen *Demoniacks* doe speake the diuels speake in them, & by them. Againe it foloweth that the diuel hath an habitation in men, because he is thence driven out of the sonne of God.” To counter the ministers’ claim that the Devil only affects the mind and not the body, Darrell asserts, “[f]or my part, I knowe the body may most violently be tormented by Sathan, when the minde the mean while vphelden by the grace of God, doth not yealde vnto him.”⁴⁶ This means that he was of the opinion that it was possible for the body to suffer from the Devil’s torments and be affected physically while the mind resists the attacks. Perhaps, Darrell wishes to say that the mind is a more powerful faculty due to God’s grace and therefore has the ability to withstand devilish invasion in a far stronger manner than the body. Additionally, he attacks their argument that the Devil has been created for a special purpose and argues that this does not mean that he could not and would not be employed in achieving inferior and wicked schemes. And ergo, these wicked schemes could most definitely involve launching physical assaults on men.

Dialogicall Discourses describes a total of twenty-three characteristics and symptoms of the demoniac, a young apprentice-musician William Sommers from Nottingham whom John Darrell treated. This was the case that resulted in his downfall as an exorcist and marked the end of his career. Sommers during his possession, they state, demonstrated symptoms that included a lump moving across his body and face which was very heavy and immovable otherwise; extraordinary and untiring physical strength which would make it difficult for even six or more men to overpower him, movements under his bedspread hinting at something as it were “kitlings” (possibly meaning, “kittens”) being

⁴⁶ Ibid., 3.

in there; baring teeth and foaming at the mouth like an animal; facial distortions and head turned backwards; elongation of his body to achieve a very tall stature; clairvoyance; chanting; and being able to speak with the mouth wide open without moving his lips or jaws; among other things. Deacon and Walker also report the blasphemous utterances of Sommers who once while in the state of being possessed allegedly claimed, “*Ego sum rex, ego sum Deus*”.⁴⁷

Deacon and Walker argue that the feats that the young man at Nottingham, Sommers, is credited to have committed under the influence of the Devil are not just too absurd for a man to perform but also impossible for the Devil to execute, as he is a finite being with limited power, which cannot be extended to or exerted on a human being. They assert that it is unbelievable that Sommers could perform supernatural actions, appear taller than he is, or not be burned by fire, considering that he is a natural body himself. The authors believe the concept of demonic possession to be contrary to “*Diuinitie, to Philosophie, to Physicke, to Nature, to Lawe, and to Conscience*.”⁴⁸ This statement follows a numbered list of supposed explanations of why demonic possession is impossible due to various different aspects of this world and the divine.

The first of these explanations concerns the cessation of miracles. Deacon and Walker subscribed to the doctrine of cessation that was a significant feature of the post-Reformation English theological thought, that maintained that miracles had ceased to exist since the time of Christ and his apostles, and that no one in this day and age of the gospel could perform any miraculous feats. According to them, demonic possession and its subsequent exorcism would be a miracle if it did occur. They furthermore rejected the

⁴⁷ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 4-5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 343.

power of the Devil and his demons to perform miracles, in the past or currently, as executing tasks that are beyond the laws of nature are outside Satan's power and control. Even if he does trick an individual into believing that he has accomplished a praeternatural stunt,⁴⁹ one should remember that he is the father of lies and only puts on an act, and therefore, whatever he performs is all merely a pretense.

Another significant part of this argument is with regard to Sommers and his credibility. The writers seek to discredit his authority by stating that he should not be believed, whether he was mentally sound or not, because if he was mentally stable, he did not have a conscience, which is why he brought up something so contrary to nature and divine will as demonic possession; and if he was not in his right mind, he certainly could not be trusted because it would be foolish to trust the testimony of an insane person.

Deacon and Walker offer examples of nature's wonders in an attempt to illustrate that the signs of demonic possession apparent in Darrell's Nottingham case were none other than nature's marvels, and therefore, nothing praeternatural, although signs, wonders and nature's marvels all involve varying levels of superstition. It seems that they consider marvels to be events that occur or skills that can be displayed that are outside the bounds of ordinary, normal, and common, but possible to be performed by a human being. They illustrate this by mentioning the rocking stone at Harpasa, described by Pliny, which would move with one finger but would not move even with the entire human body weight.

⁴⁹ Medieval theologians such as Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Contra Gentiles* distinguished between three kinds of physical occurrences: natural, praeternatural, and supernatural. Natural means everything belonging to the material world. Praeternatural is the action of an angelic or a demonic being, which goes beyond the physics and scientific laws of the world. Supernatural is anything that goes beyond any created nature, including angels and demons. This type of power only belongs to God. Philip C. Almond, *England's First Demonologist: Reginald Scot & the 'Discoverie of Witchcraft'* (NY: I.B. Taurus, 2011), 132. However, one should keep in mind that the term "supernatural" now does not correspond to the precise definition mentioned above and has expanded to include anything above and beyond the natural laws of physics.

Similarly, they maintain that men also can perform amazing feats naturally without being affected by the demonic or without the Devil lending a hand. For instance, Augustine speaks of men who can move their ears, together and/or separately without moving their head. Also, they argue, people can cry and produce tears at their pleasure.⁵⁰ Citing these examples and more, the clergymen wish to demonstrate that accounts that narrated signs of demonic possession indicate nothing more than natural incidents with no relation to the praeternatural.

Dialogicall Discourses also cleverly explains that it is not necessary for the Devil to enter into a human to influence his behavior because, just like the sun and its heat, the Devil can be felt both outwardly and inwardly without him having to set up shop inside the individual. Spirits and devils are spiritual, intangible and incorporeal creatures and therefore cannot enter into the physical, tangible, and corporeal bodies of men. The Devil cannot alter the substance of humans; after all God's creation cannot be destroyed or transformed by an act of a creature. This transformation of spirits and devils into physical matter is not possible because an essence is a singular matter and cannot be partitioned. If one considers the matter from the perspective of the transformation of the body, then it is foolish to think that the body becomes both the body of the man and Devil, and when this occurs, the soul will be forced to vacate the body, which would result in the death of the individual, "because *death*, is nothing else but the *dissolution of soule and bodie*".⁵¹ Here, the authors could be seen as attempting to put forth the view that both man and

⁵⁰ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 203-6.

⁵¹ Ibid., 84. Also see 129-33. To expand on this view, Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger believed that "the soul is thought to reside in the center of the heart in which it communicates with all the members by an outpouring of life", just like a spider: Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum* (NY: Dover, 1971), 125.

demon cannot coexist in the same body, especially because of the fact that the Devil is made up of a different essence altogether and cannot mix with human essence, as discussed before. Darrell answers by asking the authors:

...whether you two breath and draw aire, whether also you receiue any sustenance. For if you breath, or receiue sustenance into your bodies, then seeing aer, meat, drinke, be not an humane soule, but other substances: either you two haue no humane soules, or your two bodies be capable of other substances besides your soules.⁵²

In the quote above, he challenges the authors by using their own theory as basis and claims that since it is possible for them to breathe in air and since as per their admission, air and the human body both are made up of different substances and ergo should not be able to mix, their hypothesis must be incorrect. It is interesting to see that the scholars before Deacon and Walker were not concerned with the mechanics of possession: the “discoursers”, as Darrell refers to them, introduced this element of physical law into the mix, and stated that the entering of a devil into the body of a human would be seen as breaking the laws of nature.

Considering that, the Devil, as discussed earlier, can directly afflict the mind so as to render it completely mad and senseless, as happens when an individual gets possessed, a corporeal possession would make the body neglect organic functions, and God would not allow that. Although physical possessions could take place during the time of Christ as miracles, the clergymen say, this practice does not continue any longer, as miracles were no longer necessary. Therefore, demonic possession and the ministry of exorcism was temporary. The apostles and prophets had extraordinary powers. Christ and his disciples possessed the “extraordinarie power of casting out diuels”, but this clearly ended

⁵² John Darrell, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: written by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels* (England: 1602), 19.

long ago, according to Deacon and Walker. Consequently no similar power was still enjoyed by any pastor or doctor. Since the disciples had been tasked with the Herculean and daunting responsibility of preaching the infallible truth of the gospel, it made sense to equip them with supernatural powers in order for them to fulfil their duties on earth. However, since then there had been no extraordinary power of exorcizing spirits, and therefore there could not have been any demonic possession to deal with.⁵³ Darrell refutes this by stating that in the Gospel “the diuell is said to (a) *enter into men*: to be (b) *in them*, to (c) *dwell in them* ... to (d) *come or go out of them*, to be (e) *cast or throwne out*...” Darrell contends that it is absurd to think that the Devil can be thrown out without “inherency” and asks how can a man *enter* a house without coming near it and how can he *dwell* and be *in* it without being under its roof and then be thrown out if he was never in it? He further retorts:

if one shoulde charge you *M. Deacon* that you were throwne out of Ireland, how would you defend your selfe: were it not sufficient to *shew* that you were never in *Ireland*? So if the diuell truly affirme he was neuer in any mans bodie, he would thinke he had no small advantage against the Gospell, that proues him so oft to be *throwne out*.”⁵⁴

His position is that the Devil cannot be thrown or cast out, as claimed by the scriptures, if he is never inside to begin with, and therefore, he must have the capacity to dwell into a human body if he is to then be cast out. John Deacon and John Walker agree that demonic possession was possible in biblical times but needed miraculous power to deal with it. Now since the age of miracle has passed and since they consider casting

⁵³ Matt. 10:7-8: “And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. Mark 16:20: And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 166-70.

⁵⁴ Darrell, *Suruey*,. 7-8.

demons out to be a miracle, both possession and exorcism cannot be possible. Darrell refutes this by claiming that if instances of possession had once existed and their cure, that is, exorcism, had once been possible, both phenomena could still continue to exist. Darrell, however, clarifies that Christ is the only exorcist in the history of man and that his practice of dispossession is merely an act of healing and not something that would require any special powers. Thus, Darrell, absolved himself of the blame that he possessed the ability to perform miracles, that is, the miracle of expelling the Devil.

John Deacon and John Walker, in their denial of demonic possession, refuse to believe that God, Who has ensured perfection in the numbers, weights and sizes of His creation, would allow for such mingling and “confusion of substances, [or] endure such shamefull disorder among anie his creatures in heauen or in earth.” They were of the opinion that spirits have an effectual power on men and that they:

*circumuent them with wiles: they make men vnckleane: they possesse them by deafnes, they strike them with blindenes: they subdue them through dumbnes: they ouercome them by lamenesse: yea, and euen binde them as it were with diseases, a long time together. Brieflie, the diuel hauing power ouer death, by the efficacie of that power, he doth vex and torment men within, and without...*⁵⁵

It seems that they are referring to diseases and disabilities such as deafness and lameness and claiming that they can be from the Devil.

This raises questions regarding the extent of demonic or supernatural interference in human life and therefore devalues their original argument that the Devil cannot affect the senses. It is evident that they accept the possibility of demonic influence on some aspects of human life but not on others. The authors deem it utterly impossible for Satan to enter his invisible, impalpable self into the tangible body of the human without killing

⁵⁵ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 61.

or severely hurting him.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the argument that then it must be a dead man's body that the Devil enters is countered by the reasoning that after death the body deteriorates and decays, therefore it is highly unlikely that the Devil can house himself in it without it falling apart.⁵⁷ Deacon and Walker, it appears, considers a demon controlling a dead body as raising the dead, which brings about the issue of resurrection, as only God can perform miracles and raise the dead and no one else, not even the Devil.

To reiterate the argument surrounding the being of the Devil, Deacon and Walker believe that although the Devil does exist and does torment men mentally, he is unable to enter their bodies because his substance is incompatible with that of a human. John Darrell, on the other hand, seeks to prove that demons do not need to have material bodies to enter men and that they have been possessing humans and consequently have been getting cast out since the beginning of time, citing the cases of the first exorcist, Christ. This view is taken one step further by the author of *The Triall* who declares, "[i]f neither possession nor witchcraft (contrary to that hath bene so longe generally and confidently affirmed) why should we thinke that there are Divells? If no Divells, no God" (*Sine diabolo nullus Deus*).⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ibid., 101. Kramer and Sprenger call it "illusory transmutation", and explain that the Devil does not physically enter the body but only creates the deception that he has. Kramer and Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, 124.

⁵⁷ 1 Cor. 6:13: "You say, 'Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.' The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."

⁵⁸ A Ri., *The triall of Maist. Dorrell, or A collection of defences against allegations not yet suffered to receiue convenient answers Tending to cleare him from the imputation of teaching Sommers and others to counterfeit possession of divells. That the mist of pretended counterfetting being dispelled, the glory of Christ his royall power in casting out diuels (at the prayer and fasting of his people) may evidently appeare* (Middleborough: R. Schilders, 1599), 7-8. A similar argument was made by the religious writer from Hertfordshire, Roger Hutchinson: "If there be a God, as we most stedfastly must beleue, verely ther is a deuill also, & if ther be a deuill, there is no surer argument, no stronger profe, no playner euidence, that ther is a God.", in *The image of God, or laie mans boke in which the right knowledge of God is disclosed, and diuerse doubtbes besides the principal matter, made by Roger Hutchinson. 1550* (London: John Day, 1560), n.p.

Darrell's dispossession cases became remarkable public events at the end of the sixteenth century and continued to garner interest by various different sections of society for many decades after. In one play, *The Divell is an Asse*, by the playwright Ben Jonson, which was performed in 1616 by the King's players, the main character, Fitz-Dottrel, is being persuaded through a fake possession that was presumably learnt from a real-life exorcist, John Darrell:

It is the easiest thing, sir, to be done,
As plain as fizzling: roll but wi' your eyes,
And foam at th'mouth. A little castle-soap
Will do't, to rub your lips: and then a nutshell,
With tow and touchwood in it to spit fire.
Did you ne're read, Sir, little *Darrells* tricks,
With the boy o' Burton, and the 7. in *Lancashire*,
Sommers at Nottingham? All these do teach it.⁵⁹

As the verses mention above, the preacher was involved in healing Thomas Darling or *the boy o' Burton*, whom we met in the introduction, the Starkie household or *the 7 in Lancashire*, apprentice-musician William *Sommers at Nottingham*, as well as his very first case, the eighteen-year-old Katherine Wright, whom we shall see in the next section.

3.2. The Preacher and the Demoniatic

One of the earliest publicized incidents of demonic possession and exorcism in early modern England took place in 1584, in which the Jesuit priest William Weston (Western), along with eleven other Catholic priests exorcised six demoniacs in Denham, Buckinghamshire. This exorcism allegedly resulted in the reconversion of hundreds of

⁵⁹ Walker, *Unclean Spirits*, 83. This is also mentioned by Levack in *The Devil Within*, 144; Marion Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print: Darrell, Harsnett, Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Exorcism Controversy*, *Religious Cultures of the Early Modern World* 1 (NY: Routledge, 2016), 167; and Marcus K. Harnes in *Bishops and Power in Early Modern England* (London and NY: Bloomsbury, 2013), 49.

Protestants to Catholicism. The arrival of William Weston in England from Spain in 1584 was at a time when Catholic clergy were being severely persecuted. In England, the persecution of Catholics and radical Protestants was far greater than anywhere else during this period.⁶⁰ Weston explains:

Every road, cross-way and port was watched day and night, and sealed off so effectively that no person could pass without the most rigorous examination. Lodging houses, private homes, rooms were searched and examined with minute thoroughness; neither friend nor acquaintance could escape without being forced to give an account of himself. In this way, many priests were captured, and Catholics filled the prisons throughout the country.⁶¹

The practice of exorcism resulted in the imprisonment of many Jesuits, including Weston, who underwent a trial in 1586 and then was later exiled to Seville in 1603 to spend his days in the English seminaries; as well as executions, such as that of priest Richard (Robert) Dibdale, who was beatified recently in 1987. McClain puts the number of executions at 112 in the first two decades after the beginning of the English mission in 1580.⁶² The Act of 1585 against Jesuits and seminarists made it a capital offence to be a Catholic priest in England and Wales, and people who harbored them were to be fined, imprisoned for a felony, and even punishable by death.⁶³ The political situation also led

⁶⁰ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longmans, 2000), 21-46 and also 102-9. Coffey explains in detail how the desire for religious uniformity led to persecutions of Catholics and Dissenters.

⁶¹ Lisa McClain quotes from William Weston, *William Weston, The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, trans. Philip Caraman (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1955), 93, in Lisa McClain, *Lest We Be Damned: Practical Innovation and Lived Experience among Catholics in Protestant England, 1559-1642*, Religion in History, Society, and Culture, eds. Frank Reynolds and Winnifred Fallers Sullivan (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 38.

⁶² The executions continued well into the seventeenth century, as almost seventy priests were killed in the next eighty years, until 1680, which shows a drastic decrease. This could be owed to the realization by the state that the executed priests were in fact hailed as saints and becoming immortalized upon death: McClain, *Lest We Be Damned*, 72.

⁶³ Walker, *Unclean Spirits*, 44. "It shall not be lawful for any Jesuit, seminary priest or other ... ecclesiastical person ... ordained ... by any authority derived ... from the See of Rome ... to come into or remain in any part of this realm ... and every person which ... shall wittingly and willingly ... aid or maintain any such Jesuit (etc.) ... shall ... for such offence be adjudged a felon, without benefit of clergy, and suffer death and forfeit as in case of one attained of felony." Statutes of the realm, vol. IV. i, p. 706, as found in Diana Newton, *Papists, Protestants and Puritans 1559-1714*, Cambridge Perspectives in

to many priests turning on each other. Anthony Tyrell, one such priest and clergyman, became an informant after being arrested, and incriminated Richard Dibdale, among others, for conjuring spirits. The invocation of spirits, by this time, had already become punishable by death as per the Witchcraft Act of 1563. This may have also contributed to Dibdale's execution. The Catholics, believing the Denham exorcisms to be extraordinarily effective, continued to perform exorcisms in secret, while the skeptics, such as, Samuel Harsnett strongly criticized their practice, naming Weston in particular. This also paved the way for many courageous priests and pastors, who were not Catholic but were too invested in matters demonic or in battling the Devil, or both, to be deterred from their mission by the fear of persecution. English minister and soon-to-be renowned exorcist, John Darrell was one such person. It is known that at the time of his trial in 1598, he was a minister of the Church of England and pastor of St. Mary's in Nottingham.⁶⁴ The bishop of London at the time was Richard Bancroft, who later became the archbishop of Canterbury in 1605.

Richard Bancroft was a seasoned polemicist who was devoted to maintaining the authority of the established Church. He took it upon himself to detect and remove threats to the episcopacy. He was known for his immense dislike of nonconformist groups which was evident in his passionate sermons against Protestant nonconformists, i.e. Puritans, at St. Paul's Cross in 1588 and in his books, *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, Published and Practiced in this Land of Brytaine* and *A Survey of the Pretended Holy*

History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 15. Margaret Clitheroe of York (later beatified and canonized as saint), among many others, was arrested and charged with harboring Catholic priests in 1586. She had also been previously fined for not attending Church services. She was executed later that year. McClain, *Lest We Be Damned*, 1.

⁶⁴ Corinne Holt Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell: Minister and Exorcist*, University of Florida Monographs, Humanities, 9 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962), 1.

Discipline, which he authored in 1593. Bancroft was also responsible for leading an investigation into the *Marprelate Letters* controversy, one of the most severe attacks on the Anglican Church in history, which involved the illegal circulation of tracts throughout England and Wales in 1588 and 1589 written under the pseudonym, Martin Marprelate, and which openly challenged episcopal authority and demanded reforms. Bancroft carried out the proceedings which eventually led to the execution of John Penry, who was believed to be the author, and three of his co-conspirators in 1593.⁶⁵

When Bancroft assigned his chaplain, Samuel Harsnett, the future archbishop of York, the task to take apart Darrell's dispossessions bit by bit in his *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practises of John Darel* (1599), it was therefore clear that he saw Darrell as a threat to the establishment and wanted to destroy his career as an exorcist entirely.⁶⁶ Bancroft entrusted Harsnett with a variety of duties ranging from providing as well as revoking publishing licenses to books, launching probes into cases of possession, and rebuking preachers and exorcists through his writing. Harsnett, born in a Calvinist household, was known for his skeptical beliefs which made him dismiss the notion that witches could send demons into other people's bodies. This was a borderline atheistic view in the seventeenth century as there was a risk that he would be perceived as someone who did not believe in the existence of demons, and by extension, spirits, like Reginald

⁶⁵ Bradley J. Mollmann, "Seeking the Supernatural: The Exorcisms of John Darrell and the Formation of an Orthodox Identity in Early Modern England" (Miami University, 2008), 24. Scarisbrick claims that Bancroft was one of "Puritans' enemies": J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 185.

⁶⁶ Freeman, "Demons, Deviance and Defiance." 51. Samuel Harsnett, *A discovery of the fraudulent practises of Iohn Darrel Bachelor of Artes in his proceedings concerning the pretended possession and dispossession of William Somers at Nottingham: of Thomas Darling, the boy of Burton at Caldwell: and of Katherine Wright at Mansfield, & Whittington: and of his dealings with one Mary Couper at Nottingham, detecting in some sort the deceitfull trade in these latter dayes of casting out deuils* (London: John Windet, 1599).

Scot before him,⁶⁷ who, due to his unwavering beliefs, was accused of belonging to the Family of Love which denied the existence of spirits.⁶⁸ Harsnett argued that because possession cases were so hard to come by, exorcists have found many ways to keep themselves in the business. He may be pointing toward their being involved in shams and fraudulent practices like teaching gullible individuals to fake demonic assault. Furthermore, he likened Darrell and Catholic priests to wanderers and vagrants and stated, “*Exorcists* of both kinds, for want of worke are driuen to their shifts: and like Tinkers walke vp and downe from place to place, seeking to be imployed”.⁶⁹ He did this in order to attack Darrell’s personality and trade so as to depict him as a lowly vagabond and to induce a feeling of disrespect and contempt in the readers for Darrell. Darrell, however, laughed his jab off because he had a considerable inheritance and was not in dire need of money. This set him apart from other phonies who may be outwardly casting out spirits for fame and money, and neither of those things appealed to the preacher as he had repeated various times in his books.

Darrell wrote a rebuttal to Harsnett’s *Discovery* which was called *A detection of that sinful, shamful, lying, and ridiculous discours, of Samuel Harshnet* (1600) in which he vehemently denied the accusation that the possessions of William Sommers, Thomas Darling, Katherine Wright, and the seven Starkie children in Lancashire were counterfeit, and also that he coached them to fake the symptoms.⁷⁰ We shall soon see these cases in greater detail.

⁶⁷ James after becoming the king ordered all the copies of Reginald Scot’s *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) collected and burned. Tyson, *Demonology*, 47-8.

⁶⁸ Francis Young, *Catholic Exorcism in Early Modern England, Polemic, Propaganda and Folklore, Recusant History*, 29 (October 2009), 487-507, 488.

⁶⁹ Samuel Harsnett’s, *Discouery*, 61.

⁷⁰ John Darrell, *A detection of that sinful, shamful, lying, and ridiculous discours, of Samuel Harshnet. entituled: A discouerie of the fravvdulent practises of Iohn Darrell : wherein is manifestly and apparantly*

Darrell's next book *A True Narration of the Strange and Grevous Vexation by the Devil of 7 Persons in Lancashire and William Sommers of Nottingham* (1600) was an attempt to vindicate himself and was circulated after his trial at Lambeth and presumably printed clandestinely by unknown printers, soon followed by his fellow minister, George More's, *A True Discourse Concerning the Certaine Possession and Dispossession of 7 Persons in One Familie in Lancashire* (1600) also detailing the same cases and written in defense of John Darrell.⁷¹

Although there is no damning evidence that places John Deacon and John Walker in the middle of the Harsnett and Darrell dispute, that is, the political war between the establishment and the nonconforming elements, or suggests an association with the authorities, their work *Dialogicall Discourses* addressed theological questions which dealt with the nature of possession and attempted to "correct the wise with a nodde: and, the vnwise with a club" and to put an end to Darrell's "preposterous practises".⁷² Deacon and Walker maintained that although they had written their book three years earlier, they did not publish it so as to not fan any conflicts within the Church. However, eventually they were compelled to make it public lest they be seen as:

too irreligious towards the Lord; disloyall to her Maiesties Princely prerogatiue: ouer-much carelesse of publike peace: exceeding remisse concerning the positieue Lawes of [their] land: most derogatorious to the definitiue sentence of iustice:

shewed in the eyes of the world. not only the vnlikelihoode, but the flate impossibilitie of the pretended counterfayting of William Somers, Thomas Darling, Kath. Wright, and Mary Couper, together with the other 7. in Lancashire, and the supposed teaching of them by the saide Iohn Darrell (n.p., 1600).

⁷¹ Tom Webster, "(Re)possession of Dispossession: John Darrell and Diabolic Discourse", *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions: History, Culture, Religion, Ideas, eds. John Newton and Jo Bath (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 91-112, 102. George More, *A true discourse concerning the certaine possession and dispossession of 7 persons in one familie in Lancashire which also may serve as part of an answere to a fayned and false discourie which speaketh very much evill, aswell of this, as of the rest of those great and mightie workes of God which be of the like excellent nature. By George More, minister and preacher of the worde of God, and now (for bearing witnesse vnto this, and for iustifying the rest) a prisoner in the Clinke, where he hath co[n]tinued almost for the space of two yeares* (Middleborough: Richard Schilders, 1600).

⁷² Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 8-10.

monstrous inhumane towards the persons of men: yea, altogether carelesse of [their] honest reputations...⁷³

It can only be speculated why they chose to publish at this particular time, that is, two years after Darrell's trial. It seems as if they did not wish to influence the court's proceedings and were waiting for Darrell to get sentenced. The extent of the impact that this work might have possibly made on Darrell's hearing, however, is mere conjecture at this point. The cases that Darrell undertook got him into the religious and political predicament that ended his public career as an exorcist.

John Darrell, in his works, recounts that he saw ten demoniacs in his lifetime, and Katherine Wright in 1586 was his first, when he was only twenty-four years old.⁷⁴ Wright had a strained relationship with her stepfather, John Mekin, who would beat her. In January 1586, Wright began to suffer light-headedness, sleep loss and swelling in her body. Later one day she reported seeing a child with no feet when she was going to the well. Her stepfather, upon hearing this, stopped the beatings and began treating her kindly. Fearing that the violence would start again if her condition improved, Wright began to fake fits and even attempted to cut her own throat. She was moved next-door into her neighbor Edward Beresford's house because her own house "was no fitte place to give entertainment to any that should come to helpe her", according to Samuel Harsnett who wrote about the case in his *Discovery*. She stayed there for a month and was later sent to Mansfield to see John Darrell.⁷⁵ A neighbor of Wright's who had heard of Darrell's reputation as a "man of hope for the relieving of those that were distressed in that sort"

⁷³ Ibid., 3.

⁷⁴ Kathleen R. Sands believes that he was twenty-four and married and that his wife also came along to see Wright: Sands, *Elizabethan England*, 114.

⁷⁵ Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 24-5.

had recommended him.⁷⁶ It is unclear as to how he got that name if Wright was his first official case. It is likely that Darrell had previously preached about demonic possession in his sermons and had demonstrated an understanding of demon expulsion and the consequent cleansing of the soul. Darrell asked Wright about how her fits began. She claimed that they started soon after she refused to give charity to a poor, local woman, Margaret Roper. Darrell concluded that Roper was a witch and therefore began the process of dispossession. Wright arrived in Mansfield on a Thursday and was cured by Saturday. Darrell in his method used nothing from the Book of Common Prayer and instead employed Thomas Rogers's translation of Johann Habermas's prayer book, *The Enimie of Securitie*, along with other prayers that he had come up with himself. The dispossession took place in the presence of nine people.⁷⁷ It is important to note that *The Enimie of Securitie* was not the only text that used by Protestant ministers to serve as a mediator between the laity and the divine. Other books, such as, Thomas Becon's undated *The Christen Knight* and *The Governance of Virtue* (1543), John Bradford's *Godlie meditations* (1562), William Perkins' *Foure Godly Treatises* (1587), and Lewis Bayly's *The Practice of Pietie*, also undated, were some of the works that were penned to address the issue of devilish assaults and how one could overcome them.⁷⁸

John Darrell came to be known as the preacher who used no rituals and sacramentals such as holy water or the sign of the cross in exorcism, but relied only on prayer and fasting. Yet strangely he did not fast in his very first dispossession of Katherine

⁷⁶ Harsnett, *Discouery*, 1 and 299 as cited by Freeman in his essay, "Demons, Deviance and Defiance", 35.

⁷⁷ Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 26.

⁷⁸ Nathan Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History, ed. Anthony Fletcher, John Guy, and John Morrill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 96-8.

Wright. It was only much later that he realized that prayer and fasting were prescribed by the gospel to employ in the practice of exorcism, and from then onwards became one of the biggest proponents of the method. The first English Protestant to use fasting to exorcize a demoniac, however, had been Bishop John Parkhurst, who in 1574 held a public exorcism for the son of an alderman in Norwich and ordered a day of prayer and fasting in the city.⁷⁹

As fate would have it, Katherine Wright later became repossessed, with eight devils this time, one of which was named “Middlecub”, who claimed to have been sent by Margaret Roper, the woman identified by Wright earlier during her first dispossession. The attendants, who had been a handful at her first dispossession, turned into a crowd of four to five hundred people at the next about two months later, as Wright had turned somewhat into a local celebrity. At some point it seems that Darrell called for a constable to escort himself and Margaret Roper to Justice Godfrey Foljambe so he could lodge a formal complaint against Roper for practicing witchcraft. As it transpired, Roper refused to confess, which gave no cause to Foljambe to detain her. When Darrell insisted that the Devil would not let Roper make a confession, Foljambe threatened him with imprisonment if he continued to accuse Roper of witchcraft. It is also believed that Justice Godfrey Foljambe was afraid that these affairs were starting to become public spectacles. No account of the case was published in print, and this was the only one of Darrell’s known exorcisms without a proper, detailed narrative produced by him or his godly colleagues.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Freeman, “Demons, Deviance and Defiance”, 39.

⁸⁰ Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 27-30. Corinne H. Rickert believes that there was indeed an account of Katherine Wright’s case but it has since been lost: Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 67.

Darrell's next case was that of thirteen-year-old Thomas Darling in 1596 in Burton upon Trent who either had strong aspirations of being a divine or was pressurized into receiving religious education by his family. We can only assume whether this contributed to his condition. This is the same boy who accused a local woman, Alice Gooderidge, of bewitching him when he was walking through the woods one day, the story with which this study began. Darrell was approached by the boy's grandfather who had heard of Darrell's success in his previous case a decade ago. However, Thomas Darling was different from Katherine Wright, in that he was religiously inclined and wished himself to become a preacher. This could perhaps explain why he claimed that he was possessed by the divine. Darling also claimed to have visions of angels descending from the heavens and stopping in front of his window, perhaps gesturing toward him and calling on him to join them. In one of his fits, he is known to have exclaimed, "I know at the present for a certainty that I have the spirit of God within mee", but Darrell may have convinced him to claim demonic influence because the boy never uttered those words again.⁸¹ It also appears so because Darrell personally believed that Satan was attempting to trick Darling, his family and himself by hiding behind the mask of divinity.

Thomas Darling was dispossessed on 28 May 1596 by a group of nine or ten lay people in the absence of Darrell. Perhaps he did not wish to be prosecuted, as Justice Foljambe had threatened him after his last dispossession, or it may be that he did not wish to receive any personal credit for the healing. It is highly likely that it was a combination of the two that made Darrell avoid the event, as he was not known to be vain. His method of dispossession, however, remained constant, as he used the same text for prayer that he

⁸¹ Harsnett, *Discouery*, 290; *Unclean Spirits*, 55.

had used a decade earlier at the dispossession of Wright, namely, *The Enimie of Securitie*, and even advised Darling and his family to read from it as well. Inauspiciously, Darling, too, would later be repossessed and dispossessed again and would also confess to faking his possession to glorify the word of God, as with the casting out of the demon the name of God is exalted. He then retracted his original statement and pledged loyalty to John Darrell, casting doubt not only on his but also Darrell's reputation, making the preacher's opponents certain of their condemnation of his controversial healing practice.⁸² This case resulted in the first publication on Darrell's dispossessions, *The most wonderfull and true storie*, falsely attributed to John Darrell due to the original author's initials, J.D.⁸³

Darrell then went on to dispossess the seven possessed individuals at Lancashire⁸⁴ in 1595-97. Since February 1595, the two children of Nicholas Starkie of Cleworth, Ann and John, aged ten and twelve, had been having convulsions and fits. Nicholas Starkie tried everything in his power to free them from their afflictions and even spent the enormous amount of £200 on a physician, but to no avail. Out of desperation, he reached out to a Roman Catholic priest who refused to help, perhaps due to the fear of persecution, as this was a dangerous time to be a Catholic priest in England. Starkie then called on a cunning man, Edmund Hartley, hoping that he would succeed in relieving them of their misery. Hartley, despite getting paid and receiving board and lodging at the Starkie house,

⁸² C. L'Estrange Ewen details this case in *Witchcraft and Demonianism* (Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), 176-81. Waite, *Heresy*, 181-85.

⁸³ John Denison, *The most wonderfull and true storie of a certaine witch named Alse Gooderige of Stapen hill, who was arraigned and conuicted at Darbie at the Assises there as also a true report of the strange torments of Thomas Darling, a boy of thirteene yeres of age, that was possessed by the deuill, with his horrible fittes and apparitions by him vttered at Burton vpon Trent in the countie of Stafford, and of his maruellous deliuerance*. (London: 1597).

⁸⁴ The county with more witches and believers of witches than any other county of England, and also the most Catholic county in all of England in the Elizabethan period. Sands, *Elizabethan England*, 145. Coincidence? I think not, since there is a definite overlap between the two.

demanded an exorbitant sum of money to continue treating the demoniacs. The children soon after accused him of being a witch and bewitching not only them but also another three children, Ellen Holland, and Margaret and Elinor Hardman, who were a part of the Starkie household, as well as the maid Jane Ashton, who Hartley had cast a spell on by kissing on the mouth and another female relative, Margaret Byrom. Seeing that now seven members of his household were having uncontrollable fits and behaving strangely, Nicholas Starkie began suspecting Edmund Hartley of witchcraft and requested the services of the occultist, Dr. John Dee, to attend to the matter. Hartley underwent a legal trial and, although the widespread belief was that he had bewitched the Starkie children, it was not reason enough for him to be sentenced to be hanged as no one had died as a result of his witchcraft. It was at this moment that Nicholas Starkie recalled an incident in the woods where he had seen Hartley draw a circle with crosses and partitions on the ground. This counted as conjuration which was punishable by death. Thus, the court ordered him to be hanged. When the rope broke, Hartley saw that as a sign from God and confessed, hoping that if he did so he would not have to suffer the fate of those found guilty of conjuration before him. However, his confession reinstituted the court's faith in his guilt and he was hanged again, this time successfully.⁸⁵ Surprisingly, even after the cunning man who had bewitched the family was dead, the demonic assaults on the Starkie household persisted. It was when John Dee's butler told Nicholas Starkie about his cousin, Thomas Darling, who had been dispossessed just last year at the hands of a minister called

⁸⁵ Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 42-3

John Darrell, that Starkie decided to invite him as a last resort. Both Starkie and Dee wrote to Darrell requesting his services.⁸⁶

In March 1597, after Hartley was hanged, Darrell, along with George More of Calke, went to examine the seven demoniacs who immediately began convulsing and uttering blasphemies.⁸⁷ As was typical in such cases, the demoniacs played their role well and behaved the way that was expected of them by using foul language toward the exorcist and cursing Christ and the Virgin Mary, as well as identifying themselves as demons sent by the Protestants who were the allies of Beelzebub⁸⁸ and the Devil.⁸⁹ The children began to play practical jokes and if one would start barking like a dog, the others would join in. It is reported that they would be pleasant while playing but if they were assigned to do any religious task or activity, they would get fits. In the dispossessions that took place on 17 and 18 March 1597, Darrell, More, along with other puritan ministers and a group of thirty people spent the entire day fasting and in prayer. The Devil had now been expelled from the Starkie household, never to return.⁹⁰ Samuel Harsnett believed that the Starkie youth feigned possession as a means to escape from a strict “religious regime” and to evade “parental disapproval” while John Darrell, on the other hand, simply had an axe to grind.⁹¹ Consequently, Darrell wrote about the case in his book, *A True Narration of the*

⁸⁶ Stephen Bowd, “John Dee and the Seven in Lancashire: Possession, Exorcism, and Apocalypse in Elizabethan England”, *Northern History* 47, 233-246 (2013), 235.

⁸⁷ Walker quotes from George More’s *A true discourse concerning the certaine possession and dispossession of 7 persons in one familie in Lancashire*, 21, in *Unclean Spirits*, 59.

⁸⁸ Sands notes that Beelzebub was originally a Philistine god of Ekron, whose name translates as the “Lord of the Flies” that had the power to drive away demons that transformed into flies: Sands, *Elizabethan England*, 3. Also see, Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*, trans. Randy A. Scot, Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation no. 7, (Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 1995), 37.

⁸⁹ Waite, *Heresy*, 180.

⁹⁰ Freeman, “Demons, Deviance and Defiance”, 39.

⁹¹ Webster, “(Re)possession of Dispossession: John Darrell and Diabolic Discourse,” 91-112, 98-9.

Strange and Grevous Vexation by the Devil of 7 Persons in Lancashire and William Sommers of Nottingham (1600).

John Darrell's last case concerned a twenty-year old aspiring musician, William Sommers, a case that would eventually bring Darrell's career as an exorcist to an end. Sommers was apprenticed by his stepfather to Thomas Porter, a weaver, who indulged in music on the side, but had run away from Porter several times claiming that his master did not have any skill in music. Sommers himself did not have a musical bone in his body and begged his stepfather to relieve him of his obligation. His poor stepfather attempted to free him but Porter was adamant not to discharge Sommers. According to Sommers' account, on 20 May 1596 he was sent by Porter to Mary Milwood, Porter's wife's sister, in Walton, and on the way back to Nottingham, he came across a woman who asked him for money. Upon his refusal, she forced him to eat some bread and butter, which was apparently cursed, as when he returned he began to have fits. Dubiously, he later changed his story to say that a spirit had been sent into him by a woman from Worcestershire after he did not give her his hatband.⁹² The possession of William Sommers was high-profile from the beginning, as the mayor of Nottingham personally called on Darrell for this case. Although Darrell was reported to be of a respectable moral character, a fact which was also admitted by his adversaries, the last decade of the sixteenth century was a particularly difficult time for the Puritans. The aristocratic patron of the Puritan movement, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester had died, and the anti-Puritan, John Whitgift, sought conformity within the Church of England and aimed to destroy the Presbyterian movement, which shifted authority from the bishops to the local assemblies composed of elected

⁹² Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism, and Print*, 85-6.

individuals.⁹³ His consecration as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1583 and his Articles of the same year were an attempt to remove Puritan ministers with Presbyterian inclinations from the Church. Moreover, it is believed that between Catholics and Puritans, Elizabeth regarded the latter as “worse of the two evils”.⁹⁴ Whitgift’s tenure, thus, marked the beginning of the persecution of Puritans.⁹⁵ Whitgift’s chief lieutenant, who later succeeded him, was Richard Bancroft, Bishop of London, whose budding hatred of the Puritans was not so secret either. This duo was behind the trial of the famous leader of Presbyterianism, Thomas Cartwright in 1590.⁹⁶ Whitgift himself was part of a pamphlet war with Cartwright in the 1570s, which was a part of the Admonition Controversy, and defended the Church of England against the written attacks of Cartwright.⁹⁷ Whitgift and Bancroft were also responsible for the trial of John Darrell, which followed the exorcisms of William Sommers. Samuel Harsnett, who himself was very vocal in his rejection of witchcraft prosecutions and his dismissal of cases of demonic possession as fraud, later sat on the commission as chief prosecutor in March 1598 that prosecuted Darrell for his dispossessions.

⁹³ Diana Newton, *Papists, Protestants and Puritans 1559-1714*, Cambridge Perspectives in History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 8.

⁹⁴ Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 6.

⁹⁵ Gerald Bray, “Archbishop Whitgift’s Articles, 1583”, *Documents of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co Ltd, 1994), 398-9. In 1583, Whitgift also suspended seventeen Kentish ministers who refused to subscribe to his Three Articles that demanded allegiance to the Queen as well as absolute approval of and utter submission to the *Book of Common Prayer* (1559) and the *Thirty-Nine Articles* (1562). These ministers included Dudley Fenner of Puritan convictions and an adherent of Thomas Cartwright. Whitgift, in one of his writings, rebuked the nonconforming ministers, and to Fenner he said, “..Mr Fenner, youe are as bad as the worst ... Can you tell mee, I was a preacher before some of you weare borne.” Patrick Collinson, “What’s in a Name? Dudley Fenner and the Peculiarities of Puritan Nomenclature”, *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, 13, eds. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), 121.

⁹⁶ Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, Oxford History of the Christian Church, eds. Henry and Owen Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 420.

⁹⁷ “Admonition Controversy,” in *Encyclopedia of Tudor England*, vol. 1, eds. John A. Wagner and Susan Walters Schmid (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 3-4.

Sommers' diagnosis occurred when after arriving at Nottingham on 5th November 1597, Darrell immediately went to see him the next day and confirmed that he was a demoniac. Sommers was dispossessed in front of 150 people, a feat Darrell achieved through fasting and prayer. Thereafter, Darrell was assigned the pastoral responsibility at St. Mary's, Nottingham, where his sermons mostly revolved around diabolic possessions. Sommers later went on to be repossessed and dispossessed a number of times. Darrell would warn the demoniacs after dispossessing them of an expected repossession of unclean spirits who were likely to attack them with a greater force the second time, and advised them to continue to be pious and regular in their prayer and fasting. This practice of prayer and fasting was believed to be a rejuvenating religious experience and formed a bridge between the clergy and lay individuals.⁹⁸ But not everyone wished to be rid of the Devil. Not only did Sommers keep his demons alive, he had also now started naming people who he thought were witches, a total of thirteen, whom Darrell promptly got arrested after accusing them of witchcraft. All but two were released, one of which was Alice Freeman. Freeman was a local woman whom Sommers's sister, Mary Cooper, had accused of having bewitched her baby who later died. The alleged witch went to trial but was released due to lack of evidence. As one of her relatives was an influential alderman with a standing in the community, the Freemans, in turn, accused Sommers of bewitching another to death. Sommers, terrified of being prosecuted, confessed to feigning the possessions and demonstrated his acting skills in front of a jury. He convulsed and began having a fit on command. This convinced the court that he had faked his demonic symptoms and that his exorcism was a sham. Sommers would later go on to retract his

⁹⁸ Freeman, "Demons, Deviance and Defiance".

statement of fraud and claim to be a real demoniac and then go back and forth, and so on. A modern writer on witchcraft, C. L'Estrange Ewen suggests that Sommers was not intentionally pretending to be sick but was instead hyper-sensitive or “hysteroepleptic”, which meant that he had unconsciously picked up the idea of possession from someone and began to show symptoms soon thereafter, and once he began his fits, he could not stop them.⁹⁹ This would suggest that he could not control his fits and could therefore, not be seen as a deliberate fraud. This was an important case, because thirteen pamphlets and books were printed about it.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Ewen, *Witchcraft and Demonism*, 185.

¹⁰⁰ For a tentative list of the pamphlets printed about the case of William Sommers, see Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 64-7.

CHAPTER IV

MARVELLOUS DELIVERANCE: DISPOSSESSING THE DEVIANT *DIVELL*

Superstition and belief in the Devil was not brushed under the rug in late medieval England: it was discussed, analyzed, and criticized in preachers' handbooks, religious treatises and pamphlets published for the public. This trend continued on until the late eighteenth century as evidenced by the various tracts that assess the phenomena of demonic possession and exorcism discussed in this study.¹ The rite of exorcism more than any other Catholic practice, established as well as consolidated the power of the Church. It also categorically instituted the Devil as the opponent of the Holy Church. Like all Catholic practices, exorcism transformed over the centuries; it resurfaced during a period of crisis faced by the Church as seen during the time of the Reformation and established itself as a means to lay the foundation for the authority and credibility of the institution.²

The Catholic Catechism defines exorcism as below:

1673 When the Church asks publicly and authoritatively in the name of Jesus Christ that a person or object be protected against the power of the Evil One and withdrawn from his dominion, it is called exorcism. Jesus performed exorcisms and from him the Church has received the power and office of exorcizing. In a simple form, exorcism is performed at the celebration of Baptism. The solemn exorcism, called "a major exorcism," can be performed only by a priest and with the permission of the bishop. The priest must proceed with prudence, strictly observing the rules established by the Church. Exorcism is directed at the expulsion of demons or to the liberation from demonic possession through the

¹ K. Kamerick, "Shaping Superstition in Late Medieval England", *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, ed. Helen Parish (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 15.

² Francis Young, *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity*, Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic (Cambridge, Palgrave Macmillan: 2016), 2.

spiritual authority which Jesus entrusted to his Church. Illness, especially psychological illness, is a very different matter; treating this is the concern of medical science. Therefore, before an exorcism is performed, it is important to ascertain that one is dealing with the presence of the Evil One, and not an illness.³

Protestant priest John Darrell, through his dispossessions, rejected the notion that only Catholics could cast out devils and sought to prove that he too could cure demoniacs. At the same time, he wished to make a distinction between the papist exorcisms, which he believed focused on theatrics and physicality of the ritual by using herbs, holy water, salt, oil, and physical gestures,⁴ and his dispossessions that relied on faith, prayer, and fasting. It is important to reiterate that Protestants believed that the power of God could not be locked into substances such as oil and water, objects such as amulets, or even gestures like crossing oneself, and therefore all these additions were idolatry and from Satan. This belief explains the controversy over the sacrament of baptism and the inclusion (or lack thereof) of the rite of exorcism in it.

While baptism was accepted by both Catholic and Protestant circles, physical ritualization for instance, giving of the salt, gradually came to be rejected by the Reformers. Theological conflicts between the Catholics and Protestants resulted in the authorities deciding to completely do away with the rite of exorcism in infant baptisms in the Edwardian Prayer Book of 1552, terming it superstition and blaming it for “obscuring the glory of God”. While Catholics believed that God delegated authority and power to the “holy Church, to holy people, into holy things”, Protestants invested their faith in an

³ Catechism of the Catholic Church, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c4a1.htm.

⁴ Armando Maggi, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 121.

Almighty God with absolute power Who executed His will directly and needed no intermediary.⁵

In order to discern the nature of events that transpired during and in the aftermath of John Darrell's trial, it is important to observe that "during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Puritanism [did not only grow] in opposition to the bishops of the English Church; it also grew in spite of the bishops".⁶ Richard Bancroft, the bishop of London, who when he learned about Darrell's controversial practices, which included attending religious exercises, indoctrinating the masses into fearing the Devil and his possession of bodies, and conducting unlicensed dispossessions, became determined not to allow Darrell to continue to disrupt religious order. To accomplish this, he entrusted his long-term friend and chaplain, Samuel Harsnett to conduct serious investigations into the possession cases handled by Darrell in order to disprove their validity. Regardless of how unfair his means were, Harsnett, as expected, succeeded in getting Darrell imprisoned on the grounds of fraud. Darrell denied the charges and maintained his innocence even until after the trial was long over.

4.1. *Vade retro Satana*: Expelling the Devil in Early Modern England

The term "exorcism" is derived from the Latin word, *exorcizo* which comes from the Greek *horkos* meaning, "oath" and was originally used as a legal term. In time it became interchangeable with *conjuro* meaning "to take an oath together" and *adjuro*, a term which would later be used to compel the possessing demon to submit to the exorcist's order

⁵ Euan Cameron, "For Reasoned Faith or Embattled Creed? Religion for the People in Early Modern Europe," *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, ed. Helen Parish (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 39-40.

⁶ Marcus K. Harnes, *Bishops and Power in Early Modern England* (London and NY: Bloomsbury, 2013), 24.

when he invoked a higher authority, God.⁷ The legal connotations of *horkos* disappeared over time and it came to have mainly religious and magical implications. The Old English word for exorcism was *halsung* meaning “diviner”, which came from the Proto-Germanic and Old Nordic, *hæl*, meaning “omen”. Therefore, the origin of the word, *halsung*, is pagan and the word was borrowed by Christianity.⁸ Along with the terminology that the Anglo-Saxon church borrowed from pre-Christian traditions, the rite of exorcism itself was also heavily influenced by past religions. Although the introduction of a sexual element to demonic possession, that the demon, or *incubus*, copulates with the demoniac, and that the touch of the Devil caused physical diseases, was an English addition,⁹ Augustine had first mentioned the incubi and the succubi in relation to the forest deities worshipped by pagans. Thus, the notions of these could arguably be said to have been derived from the Hellenic Pan and his Dryads.¹⁰ Similarly, the practice of exorcizing demons was not invented by Christians, as Jews and pagans had also been conducting exorcisms in late antiquity, but the rite of exorcism, a practice that was developed by the Gnostics of the Eastern Church, had become an integral part of Christian baptisms by the third century. Upon conversion, now it was mandatory for a Christian not only to embrace

⁷ Also discussed in D. P. Walker, *Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), p. 5. Kieckhefer believes *coniuro*, *adiuro*, and *exorcizo* are all interchangeable and come to mean “I command”: Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rights: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (Philadelphia: Penn State Press, 2006), 127.

⁸ Young, *A History of Exorcism*, 85.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 77-81.

¹⁰ Gerald Messadié, *A History of the Devil*, trans. Mare Romano (New York: Kodansha International, 1996), 275. This belief is also expressed by Cohn who claims that the Church Fathers, such as Paul, held that demons inhabited pagan deities. Perhaps, this means that the gods of the ancient world were themselves demons: Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 22.

Christ but also to renounce the Devil.¹¹ However, these baptismal exorcisms were not only applicable to adults.

In the late medieval and early modern period, it was acceptable for lay people such as midwives to conduct emergency baptisms of infants in order to expel the Devil from them if they saw that the newborns would not survive and that their death was imminent. This need to baptize could be understood when one reads Augustine who states that infants are delivered from the power of darkness when they are baptized. He admits that infants have committed no sin of their own but there still remains the need for deliverance due to the “original sin”, and if they are not baptized, there persists the threat that they could be controlled by the Devil.¹² With regard to baptism the Catholic Catechism says:

1237 Since Baptism signifies liberation from sin and from its instigator the devil, one or more exorcisms are pronounced over the candidate. The celebrant then anoints him with the oil of catechumens, or lays his hands on him, and he explicitly renounces Satan. Thus prepared, he is able to confess the faith of the Church, to which he will be “entrusted” by Baptism.¹³

The exorcism performed at baptism is called a “minor exorcism” and is reserved for a catechumen not possessed by evil spirits and demonstrates a renunciation of the Devil, as demonstrated above.

Modern historian, P.M. Kitson argues that in England, the debate surrounding baptism stressed upon the importance of performing it in front of congregation as well as

¹¹Sophie Lunn-Rockliffe, “Visualizing the Demonic: The Gadarene Exorcism in Early Christian Art and Literature,” *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, eds. Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 439-48. Also see Henry Ansgard Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism: Ritual, Theology, and Drama* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 100-5.

¹² St. Augustine of Hippo, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, trans. Holmes (London: Aeterna Press, 2014), 85. Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, The Oxford History of the English Church (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 452.

¹³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P3J.HTM.

stripping it of external ritualistic elements such as the making of the sign of the cross.¹⁴ One particular Reformer dealt with the substances involved in the sacrament as well as the rite of exorcism that forms an important part of it. Luther's reform of baptismal liturgy was represented by the *Taufbüchlein*, his baptismal booklets of 1523 and 1526, in which he retained the rite of exorcism. Although many ceremonies were removed from the revised version of 1526, it still contained two exorcisms, a long version: "I adjure thee, thou unclean spirit, by the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou come out of and depart from this servant of Jesus Christ", as well as a short one, "Depart thou unclean spirit, and give room to the Holy Spirit". The Devil was a real threat to Luther which is evident in that both his baptismal orders kept the feature of exorcism. However, he later removed from the rite the salt, oil, and candles – physical elements that he deemed unnecessary. In his second *Taufbüchlein*, Luther omitted ceremonies which he saw as mere embellishments to the rite of baptism, including the giving of salt, the placing of the baptismal candle in the child's hand, the anointing on chest and back, and exsufflation.¹⁵ "Exsufflation" was a ritual by which a priest "blew" the Devil out of the catechumen and prepared him for the entry of Christ. Augustine explains it in this way:

...little ones undergo exsufflation in the rite of exorcism before they are baptized... in exsufflation the devil is blown out who holds the little one guilty by the infection of sin so that, when he is driven out, the little one is transferred to Christ.¹⁶

¹⁴ P. M. Kitson, P. M., "Religious Change and the Timing of Baptism in England, 1538-1750," *The Historical Journal* 52, no. 2 (2009): 269-94.

¹⁵ Bodo Nischan, "The Exorcism Controversy and Baptism in the Late Reformation," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18, no. 1 (1987): 31-52, 32.

¹⁶ Augustine, *Contra Julianum*. 3. 199, trans. Roland Teske, Works of St. Augustine 1/25 (Hyde Park: New York City Press, 1999), 379, as found in Robin Jensen, *Living Water: Images, Symbols, and Settings of Early Christian Baptism*, *Vigilae Christianae, Supplements: Texts and Studies of Early Christian Life and Language*, eds. Douwe (David) Runia and Gerard Rouwhorst (Danvers: Brill, 2011), 113. Also see, Linarnds Jansons, "Baptismal exorcism: an exercise in liturgical theology", *Lutheran Theological Journal* 45, no. 3, (2011), 183-97, especially 190.

The Reformed groups which did not believe in infant baptism, such as the Anabaptists, were considered particularly diabolic because the refusal to exorcize catechumens was seen as the same as sacrificing them to the Devil, as witches do in the name of Satan.¹⁷ Anabaptists held that the exorcism in baptism could be omitted because it implied that infants were corrupt, a belief which diminished Christ's free gift of grace bestowed upon believing Christians and their newborns.¹⁸

The Baptism Service of the 1549 Book of Common Prayer saw the imposition of liturgical consistency throughout England for the first time in English history. The Book of Common Prayer of 1549, written in English and prepared by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury and one of the early predecessors of Richard Bancroft, sought to return England to primitive Christianity and rid Christianity of medieval corruptions that had plagued the Church. These took the form of the Great Schism (later resulting in the application of the principle, *cuius regio, eius religio*) including both East-West Schism between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church of 1054 as well as the Papal Schism between 1378 and 1417; the immorality of the clergy which ran rife as sexual scandals arose despite the clerical vows of celibacy; and the system of indulgences through which one could "buy" salvation by giving tithes and religious donations. Cranmer's aim to unite the country behind a common practice of worship was, however, short-lived, as in 1552, a Second Prayer Book was published which was a more Protestant version of the First Book. In it, the rite of exorcism was omitted from infant baptisms in

¹⁷ Gary K. Waite, "Demonizing Rhetoric, Reformation Heretics and the Witch Sabbaths: Anabaptists and Witches in Elite Discourse," *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, eds. Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 202. He quotes from German Catholic theologian Johann Fabri's *Christenliche Undterweisung an die Widertauffer von dem Tauff der jungen Kindlein. Und von der Gaistlichen unnd weltlichen Oberkait/an die Widertauffer*. Bii v-Biiir (Ingolstadt, 1550).

¹⁸ Nischan, "The Exorcism Controversy", 48.

order to dismiss the prevailing assumption that unbaptized infants were possessed by Satan, or worse, the Devil's spawns.¹⁹ The preface to the Book of Common Prayer 1552 has to it annexed a separate section titled, "Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained" which provides the reasoning of this omission:

Of such ceremonies as be used in the church and have had their beginning by the institution of man, some at the first were of godly intent and purpose devised, and yet at length turned to vanity and superstition; some entered the church by indiscreet devotion, and such a zeal as was without knowledge, and for because they were winked at in the beginning, they grew daily to more and more abuses, which not only for their unprofitableness but also because they have much blinded the people and obscured the glory of God, are worthy to be cut away and clean rejected...²⁰

Anointment, the chrism, and triple immersion were also removed from the baptism service because they were seen as controversial practices.

Lutheran theologian Jakob Andreae demonstrates why the sacrament of the chrism was contentious by drawing a parallel between the rite of chrism and conjuration of spirits. He argued that both practices were similar in that they both made use of substances in a ritual of invocation. Above all, he complained that it was almost heretical to summon God in such a way:

The chrism... is made by magical, enchanter's blessings, and when one seeks to learn the reason for these, it is no more than devil's work, that so often as the bishop consecrates the chrism, so he blows three times crosswise over the phial in which the oil is, and speaks the following words: "I conjure you, creature of oil, by God the Father Almighty, who made heaven, earth, and sea, and all that therein is, that all power of Satan, and of all the host of the devils, all assaults and all fantasies of Satan, and their roots may be by you be torn up and driven out"... Who will not think, when he hears these words of the Bishop, that he is hearing an enchanter or conjurer of devils? that he is conjuring the poor created thing of oil, no differently than if it were possessed with a thousand devils?...he breathes

¹⁹ Brian Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 81. Montague Summers ascribes this omission to Martin Bucer's authority. Montague Summers, *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology*, trans. R. T. Clark, The History of Civilization, ed. C.K. Ogden (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 231.

²⁰ Gerald Bray, *Documents of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1994), 272-76.

like an enchanter over the vessel in which the oil is kept; like an enchanter he makes two crosses; he conjures the devil, yea many devils, like an enchanter...he has also just as little authority to use the name of God and the cross for this purpose, and to conjure the devil out of the oil, as any other enchanter or soothsayer, when they conjure the devil, and will tell to their neighbours where they may find their lost money or goods.²¹

The introduction of the notion of spirit invocation seems pertinent here. The Portuguese inquisitor Manuel do Valle de Moura' in his *De Incantationibus seu ensalmis* (1620) explains that "*ensalmi* are either benedictions or evil invocations (imprecations) composed of a certain formula of words, primarily holy ones, and sometimes also of some material things, like wine and a cloth".²² *Ensalmi* are derived from the Psalms and are performed by *ensalmistae* or *ensalmadores*. There are two different types of *ensalmi*; the *benedictio invocativa* (invocative benediction), a request or a private invocation of God or the Devil, and the *benedictio constitutiva* (constitutive benediction) which aims to elicit effects through the imitation of Catholic rituals. This gives weight to the prevalent belief that the psalms themselves were involved in magical practices and rituals. These *benedictio invocativa* as well as *benedictio constitutiva* were seen as heretical in the early modern period and were punishable by law. Protestants, on the other hand, rejected anything that had to do with magic and considered all kinds of spirit invocation heretical. They maintained that when a Catholic priest addressed a demon, as required by the rite of exorcism, he was essentially invoking it. This was one of the reasons why Catholic

²¹ Cameron, "For Reasoned Faith or Embattled Creed?," 38-9. He finds this in Johann Georg Godelmann's *Tractatus de Magis* (Bassaeus, 1601), 58-9, and notes that the original edition of Andreae's sermon has not been traced. John Dee, the English occultist and exorcist, was also termed a "caller" and an "invocator" of demons, and unlike Darrell, he was not able to clear his name until his death in 1609, and he went down in history as an alchemist and a conjurer. Stephen Bowd, "John Dee and the Seven in Lancashire: Possession, Exorcism, and Apocalypse in Elizabethan England", *Northern History* 47, (2013), 233-46, 245.

²² Armando Maggi, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 55-63.

exorcisms were seen as blasphemous by the Protestants. Indeed, in Catholicism the priest is to demand the possessing demon to give him its name so he could call him by his name and consequently exorcize it. The priest that performs the rite of exorcism, the exorcist, seeks to cast out or expel demons from the human body. This exorcism also involves the recitation of the beginning of St. John's Gospel though why this particular text is used is not known.²³ Perhaps by the recitation of John I the exorcists attempt to intimidate and invoke the spirit inhabiting the body of the demoniac in order to communicate with it. In comparison, the necromancer or sorcerer conjures spirits through what we may term an "experimental exorcism", instead of expelling them.²⁴ Therefore, the similarities between necromancy and exorcism cannot be ignored.

Any practitioner of necromancy or of any other type of magic, and/or the user of *grimoires* (handbooks of magic) was considered a heretic as these rituals and practices were outside the boundaries set by the Church.²⁵ Ironically, exorcism and sorcery were believed to be similar and "one and the same" by the opponents of the Church-sanctioned practice. This was due to the fact that both these practices included invoking a higher power by performing rituals, Jesus in the case of exorcisms which made the use of holy water, and Satan in the case of magic or soothsaying which usually involved the consumption of various kinds of substances and herbs.²⁶ Therefore, holy water was

²³ "In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum..."

²⁴ Walter Stephens, "Strategies of Interspecies Communication, 1100-2000," *Conversations with Angels: Essays toward a History of Spiritual Communication 1100-1700*, ed. Joad Raymond (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 30.

²⁵ Moura's analysis on incantations and charms is also discussed in Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, & Religion, 1250-1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 226-28.

²⁶ Rickert states that the "distinctions we observe today were not recognized then: witchcraft, demonology, conjuration [sorcery] ...not only overlapped each other but overlapped the study and treatment of mind, body, and soul." Corinne Holt Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell: Minister and Exorcist*, University of Florida Monographs, Humanities, 9 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962), 4.

regarded as the papist's "substance". Not only did the use of oil and holy water in Catholic rituals seem magical, it also attracted the interest of theologians and demonologists of the time. Johann Weyer identified various materials that were employed by the Roman Church in order to avert witchcraft and demonic assault. Sulfur was one such element, the fumes of which were used in purification rituals conducted by priests. The use of sulfur can also be seen in history dating back to antiquity as Medea's habits were retold by Ovid in this manner: "Thrice she purifies the old man with flame, thrice with water, thrice with sulphur."²⁷ Moreover, in the period of late antiquity, other objects such as water, oil (holy oil was also used in extreme unction), and salt further began to be seen as important features of the rite. These components continued to facilitate exorcisms in the medieval and the early modern period. As we saw earlier, Catholic exorcisms faced severe criticism by the Reformers, Luther being most vocal one of them, especially over the use of these three elements. Weyer also expressed his displeasure at the use of sacred scriptures by Catholics to cure ailments and called it a detestable misuse. He provided an example of one such remedy of fever that bewildered him:

Take three hosts. Upon one write, "As is the Father, so is life"; upon the second, "As is the Son, so is the saint"; upon the third, "As is the Spirit, so is the remedy." These three hosts, thus inscribed, must be given to the person suffering from fever, to be consumed on three successive evenings, but with the condition that he take no food or drink on the day on which they are consumed. He is also ordered to recite the Lord's Prayer fifteen times each evening and to say an equal number of Hail Mary's for the glory and praise of the holy and indivisible Trinity.²⁸

The Catholic rite of exorcism, therefore, seemed like a method of invocation as used by sorcerers. Conjurers and sorcerers were believed to rely on the agility of the Devil

²⁷ Johann Weyer, *On Witchcraft: An Abridged Translation of Johann Weyer's De Praestigiis Daemonum*, eds. Benjamin G. Kohl and H. C. Erik Midelfort, trans John Shea (Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1998), 221. He refers to Metamorphoses 7.261 in Book V, Chapter XXI.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 200.

to bring them any news from any corner of the world with tremendous speed, and thought that the Devil had the ability to foretell any event ahead of its time. James VI also considered this power of the Devil to be true but argued that the news Satan could bring could not be entirely accurate and instead “parte true, parte false. For if all were false, he would tyne credite at all hands”.²⁹ It was held that the Devil, by taking advantage of his skills and the power dispensed to him, fooled sorcerers and those that called on him instead of placing their trust in God. This explains why necromancers in early modern Europe commonly claimed to possess the ability to employ spirits for the quest of esoteric and clandestine knowledge, for magical travel to various astral planes, to obtain love, and in some cases, to raise the dead, both for themselves and for their clients.³⁰

That said, there did exist theologians who endorsed the use of substances in religious rituals. It made sense for Johannes Nider, who was a Dominican Friar, to defend holy water and the sign of the cross in *Formicarius* (1435). He argued that not only could (and should) priests use substances and holy elements, lay people could also incorporate the use of sacred objects in their activities to shield themselves from evil. In his book he advises readers to protect themselves from demonic assault in a manner which reminds one of the rite of exorcism:

Every Sunday holy water ought to be sprinkled in the homes of the faithful, and exorcised salt ought then to be taken faithfully every morning by both men and women, and every one of the faithful should frequently be marked with the sign

²⁹ Donald Tyson, *The Demonology of King James I: Includes the Original Text of Daemonologie and News from Scotland* (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2011), 239.

³⁰ Gary K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke and New York: European Culture and Society Series, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 20. Also see, Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 30-1. Necromancers were those who used conjuring spells to call upon spirits as entertainment or for actual interest in attainment of knowledge.

of the cross to keep them safe from grave sin, and they should often call upon their particular angel for protection with divine aid.”³¹

This mainly demonstrates that it was acceptable for lay people to perform exorcisms, chant blessings, and conduct cleansings of their persons, their houses, and their possessions by themselves without clerical assistance. In rare cases, women were also seen performing lay exorcisms in and around their neighborhoods. One noteworthy case is that of a local woman from Füssen, Germany, who was well respected in her community for spiritual healing, applied for a license to exorcize in 1665. Although this was refused because the Ecclesiastical Council deemed her far too inexperienced to conduct exorcisms, it illustrates that women were not essentially barred from pursuing the career of an exorcist and conducting spiritual healing and also that lay people could technically perform exorcisms and healing officially.³² The German Inquisitor, Heinrich Kramer, who along with Jacob Sprenger wrote *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487), may not have been a huge proponent of lay exorcisms, but he also did not think that lay people could not perform them. He instead held that there were certain prayers that only priests were allowed to perform, and therefore priests should be contacted to do a thorough job.³³ James VI also appeared to conform to the belief of the ancient Church that the exorcist should essentially be at least a deacon. He reiterated that an office such as that of an

³¹ Johannes Nider, *Formicarius*, 5.4, 356, as quoted in Michael D. Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 125-6.

³² David Lederer, *Madness Religion, and the State in Early Modern Europe: A Bavarian Beacon*. New Studies in European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 221.

³³ Moshe Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism, & Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 69-71. This is also emphasized by Father Gabriele Amorth, an Italian Roman Catholic priest and an exorcist of the Diocese of Rome, in *An Exorcist Tells His Story*, trans. Nicoletta V. MacKenzie (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 43.

exorcist should require true piety and righteousness and the term “exorcist” should not be waved around by just anyone.

As evident in the rituals and prayers discussed above, exorcism in the early modern era became a hermeneutic practice as and when diabolic possession transformed from physical affliction to include the spirit. This provided the Catholic Church with the opportunity to introduce a new line of experts who specialized in curing souls (or “caring” for souls, from the Latin *cura*), which also came to include healing the soul from devilish torment, in addition to treating sick bodies, which was what their position entailed before. Exorcism was not *ex opere operantis* and divine grace had to be invoked in order for it to work. The rite always demonstrated an “exercise of power”, which is why, throughout history, it has mainly been performed on the weak: women, children, social outcasts as well as those considered to have mental deficiencies. It was also observed that the exorcisms of women involved a lot of physical contact and touching all over the body.³⁴ A feature of Catholic exorcisms, priests also sometimes urged the demoniacs, usually a woman, to drink a potion made of oil, sack, and rue, which was so abhorrent in nature that the afflicted would refuse to drink it or act up after consuming it. The unruly behavior would then be seen as a sign of demonic possession. The case of Sarah Williams of Denham illustrates this perfectly.

In 1585 a fifteen-year old girl from Denham, Buckinghamshire, underwent a series of “secret” exorcisms by Father Richard Dibdale and other young, inexperienced priests who had been hiding at the Peckham residence for eight months. This was a time when priests were being severely persecuted. Although owing to the rituals of Father Dibdale

³⁴ Young, *A History of Exorcism*, 149.

and his assistants Williams was cured of her afflictions, the psychological trauma from the event must have lingered on. From the account available to us about her case we can safely deduce that she suffered intense mistreatment at the hands of the priests whose care she was under. Not only would she be routinely made to drink a “hallowed drink”, the ingredients of which were reportedly similar to the ones listed above, she would also be touched in private areas for hours on stretch with a crucifix, all the while bound to a chair, so the demon that occupied her body would show itself. Fearing for their lives, the exorcists took Williams along with them to continue performing exorcisms on her while they moved from one safe house to another in London. In the aftermath of her possession and a “successful” exorcism, she was imprisoned for five months for missing Church services during the time she was forced to remain in hiding by the priests. One after the other, her exorcists were all apprehended, some even executed for treason. Father Dibdale who was a central character in William’s exorcisms suffered a similar fate and was executed.³⁵

Exorcism in the early modern period was seen by the public as a healing ritual that would cure the afflicted and could be performed by many groups of people in a variety of different ways: by a wise man with the knowledge of the unknown and who would use a mix of Christian and non-Christian spells, by a priest who was trained in the art of exorcism, and by ordinary folk themselves who would invoke saints and asking for their protection against evil. The primary purpose of exorcism, thus, was to rid living people of torment by evil spirits or forces. It was also believed that houses got infested because

³⁵ Kathleen R. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 106-7.

living people while inhabiting the space performed evil in it.³⁶ Moreover, it points to the importance Catholics placed on saints, calling on them for help in their prayers.

Girolamo Menghi, in his book, *Compendio dell'arte essorcistica* or “Compendium of the Exorcist’s Art” (1576), forms a connection between witchcraft and exorcism and argues that only exorcists could battle witchcraft because they are trained to discern spirits, and once they expose them, they know exactly how to expel them. Menghi detailed instructions for exorcism in *Flagellum daemonum* (1576) as well as *Fustis daemonum* (1584) and *Remedia probatissima in malignos spiritus expellendos* (1579) and his use of holy water and the questioning of the possessing demons was criticized by John Darrell in *A True Narration* (1600) as “vnspeakable follye and vanitie”.³⁷ Darrell aimed to distance himself from Catholic methods of expelling demons by condemning Menghi’s practice of exorcisms. This was also Darrell’s way of demonstrating that the only true way to cast out a spirit was through prayer and fasting, a practice in which he firmly believed. This was in contrast to the Catholic rite of exorcism which employed the use of holy water, bells, and candles. The incorporation of these items only represented theatrics and were not effective, the Protestants claimed, as the Devil

³⁶ Nider, in his *Formicarius*, recounts the story of a demon tormenting a priest’s house in Nuremburg, “...with hissings, whistlings, and blows, not very distinct, but audible; for sometimes he would beat on the walls of the house, and sometimes the joker would blow, as it seemed, on the various pipes of actors, and he would indulge in a lot of unrestrained behavior doing these sorts of things, that nonetheless do no harm.” Original: “stepitibus et sibulis [*sic*] ac pulsibus, non multum excellentibus sed manifestis; aliquando enim ad parietes percutiebat; aliquando vero ioculator varias mimorum fistulas ut videbatur flabat, et talia non nociua multum gestiebat”, Johannes Nider, *Formicarius* (1480, Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1971), 5.2, 200, as found in Hans Peter Broedel, *The Malleus Maleficarum and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief*, Studies in Early Modern European History (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 47.

³⁷ John Darrell, *A true narration of the strange and greuous vexation by the Devil, of 7. persons in Lancashire, and VWilliam Somers of Nottingham Wherein the doctrine of possession and dispossession of demoniakes out of the word of God is particularly applyed vnto Somers, and the rest of the persons controuerted: together with the vse we are to make of these workes of God. By Iohn Darrell, minister of the word of God* (England: 1600), 77-8.

could not be expelled through objects; the Devil needed to be defeated by the internal power of faith, which can only be strengthened through the aid of prayer and fasting. Menghi further suggests the use of herbs, along with ecclesiastical consecrations, to produce concoctions and medicines for healing, both physical and spiritual. With regard to demonic possession and exorcism, in *Flagellum daemonum*,³⁸ or “The Devil’s Scourge” (1576) which contains seven detailed exorcism prayers and formulae, he advises the exorcist to draw a picture of the possessing demon and to write its name which was to then be thrown into fire along with various other herbs.³⁹ By doing so, Menghi believes, the exorcist nullifies the control of the demon over the possessed and by asking for its name the exorcist gains command over the demon, and thence, forces it to communicate. Once the name is obtained, it could then be used to address the demon and to banish him.

This view is also shared by Valerio Polidori who, along with Menghi, produced the *Thesaurus exorcismorum* (1608). If *Malleus Maleficarum* created modern demonology, *Thesaurus exorcismorum* should be credited with devising the Catholic rite of exorcism. The reason for this is that not only was the official Catholic rite of exorcism, *Rituale Romanum* (1614), published a few years after the *Thesaurus*,⁴⁰ The *Thesaurus exorcismorum* was also one of the first collections to be published in book form that dealt with the subject of exorcism. In the book the authors advise that in order to expel the demon out of the afflicted body, the exorcist, through his actions and gestures, needs to

³⁸ Girolamo Menghi, *Flagellum daemonum, exorcismos terribilis, potentissimos, & efficacies: Remedique probatissima, ac doctrinam singularem in malignos spiritus expellendos, facturasque et maleficia fuganda de obsessis corporibus complectens* (Venice: 1576).

³⁹ Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, and Religion, 1250-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 60-1.

⁴⁰ Armando Maggi, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 103.

remind it that it has already been defeated long ago.⁴¹ Theologian Sylvester Mazzolini de Prierio asserts that this could be achieved by throwing three grains of salt in a fire in the name of the Holy Trinity. The purpose of this is two-fold: it represents how the bad angels fell into hell, and the hail, symbolized by the grain of salt, illustrates their destructive falling on earth. Granted that the exorcist could not affect the forms of matter or obtain an actual result by making the demon relive the event, it would at least recreate the suffering, which is the primary purpose of the exercise. Prierio reiterates that “an exorcism is an attempt to construct (recreate) a remembrance for the Divinity”.⁴² He further lays down guidelines for exorcists and advises that the exorcist take special consideration to ensure that the language of the exorcism is not ambiguous in any way; otherwise the exorcism would be doomed to fail. The exorcist is not to fall into the trap of conversing with the demon or asking it unnecessary questions as it would give it power over him. Another crucial aspect of the ritual dictates that the exorcist not become too self-confident or narcissistic in his ability to command the Devil; he should remember that the power that his words have is due to the power of the Word. Therefore, it is imperative that exorcists avoid the pitfall of vanity and haughtiness and explicitly cast out demons in the name of God and of the Church. Catholic exorcism demanded that no appeasement of, or negotiation with, the occupying demon take place and since the spirits occupying the demoniac were considered evil, the exorcist was required to expel them forcefully with the name and authority of Christ.

The role of the priest in exorcisms is an illustration of how deep-seated the faith in clergy was in Catholicism. Therefore, it only made sense that the Reformation in

⁴¹ Ibid., 230.

⁴² Ibid., 49.

England involve numerous efforts involving anticlericalism.⁴³ The Protestants did not attach any significance to any person, regardless if it were a saint or the Virgin herself, or to any sacrament, regardless of its religious merit. It attributed all such superstitious views to paganism. The Forty-two Articles of Religion, devised by Archbishop Cranmer and promulgated in 1553 and then revised in 1563 and 1571 all very clearly state:

Scholasticorum doctrina (Romanensium) de purgatorio, de indulgentiis, de veneratione et adoratione tum imaginum tum reliquiarum, nec non de invocatione sanctorum, res est futilis, inaniter conficta, et nullis Scripturarum testimoniis innititur, imo Verbo Dei perniciose contradicit.⁴⁴

Catholicism desired to have a monopoly over the practice of exorcism. In both Protestant Netherlands and England, it disparaged the fact that Protestantism could not produce miracles such as exorcism. Many Protestant groups also held the belief that the age of miracles had ceased, which gave Catholics, especially Jesuits such as William Weston, an opportunity to assert their religiosity and hold public exorcisms of demoniacs.⁴⁵ This cessationist doctrine did not, however, prevent John Darrell from feeling that he had an equal right to the rite of exorcism, as it was acknowledged in the gospel. That said, he did not use any of the rituals that were a part of a typical Catholic exorcism, such as holy water, etc., but he did claim that he could cast out demons, just like his Catholic counterparts. Darrell and his followers attempted to dissociate demonic possession and exorcism from miracles to stick to an anti-Papist narrative, and contended

⁴³ For an opposing yet interesting view, see Christopher Haigh, "Anticlericalism and the English Reformation", *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 56-74. Haigh calls anticlericalism "fiction" and argues that various clerical issues, such as their education as well as the number of reports of priestly misconduct with women are exaggerated.

⁴⁴ "The (Romish) doctrine of School-authors concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant(y) of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God." Gerald Bray, *Documents of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1994), 297.

⁴⁵ Waite, *Heresy*, 76-9.

that exorcisms through fasting and prayers were not miraculous cures and differed greatly from those performed by Christ. This was the point of contention between Darrell and his colleagues and Deacon, Walker, and Harsnett; and this is where they differed from the latter, categorizing all forms of divine as well as demonic supernatural events as miracles. Deacon and Walker in *Dialogicall Discourses* explicitly state that they consider diabolic possession and dispossession as miraculous occurrences and therefore extinct. They remark that Darrell's belief that supports the notion of continuation of miracles implied that their religion is weak enough to still need the support of miracles. Moreover, if in fact he could perform miracles, they demand that Darrell give "an experimentall demonstration" by drinking poison.⁴⁶ Darrell responds by arguing that the practice of expelling demons was not miraculous but rather marvelous, and that "[e]uery Miraculous thing is marueylous, but not euery Marueylous thing miraculous".⁴⁷ While Catholics claimed the expelling of demons to be a specialty of their ministry of exorcism, Protestants refused the notion that the papists could perform such a miraculous feat. As seen before, preachers such as Deacon and Walker argued that miracles had ceased after the apostolic era and that apparent miracles performed at the time, such as exorcisms and dispossessions, were the sign of the Antichrist. In *Dialogicall Discourses*, they state plainly, "if you taught not the truth, we would take you for Antichrist", and also:

⁴⁶ John Deacon and John Walker, *Dialogicall discourses of spirits and diuels declaring their proper essence, natures, dispositions, and operations, their possessions and dispossessions: with other the appendantes, peculiarly appertaining to those speciall points: verie conducent, and pertinent to the timely procuring of some Christian conformitie in judgment, for the peacable compounding of the late sprong controuersies concerning all such intricate and difficult doubts* (London: George Bishop, 1601), 169.

⁴⁷ John Darrell, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: vvritten by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels [electronic resource]: VVherein is manifested the palpable ignorance and dangerous errors of the discourers, and what according to proportion of God his truth, every christian is to hold in these poyntes. Published by Iohn Darrell minister of the gospel* (England: 1602), 72.

As for the Protestant Ministers, they neuer durst, nor now dare professe themselues to be miracle mongers. Both, because the doctrine they teach, it hath beene sufficiently and finallie confirmed before by the approoued miracles of Christ and his holie Apostles: and for that also, if there be yet still a continuance of any power in men for the working of miracles: that power (they confesse) it belongeth to Antichrist, and his Antichristian ministers, of whom they are precisely warned by Christ to beware.⁴⁸

Darrell, too, severely criticized the Catholic exorcisms and termed them the “infallible marke of the aduersarie to Christ, whom wee call Antichrist” and asserted that the Catholics “affirme and teach the contrarye” to what is found in Scripture regarding exorcism.⁴⁹ This belief system also sheds light on the importance of eschatology in religion in the early modern period, as heretical groups, or those sections of society that did not conform to the traditional aspects of religion or attempted to bring reforms in matters of faith, or just happened to follow a doctrine which was against a certain group’s beliefs were considered the followers and worshippers of the Devil and frequently called the Antichrist by their opponents. This was also evident in the instance when Deacon and Walker call Darrell antichrist.

Moreover, Deacon and Walker contend that if someone claims to have the power to cleanse the human body of spirits, then he must also prove to have the same qualifications as the disciples; i.e., he must be able to preach the gospel while previously being unlettered,⁵⁰ but since this is not possible one must fulfil the duties entrusted to him

⁴⁸ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 328.

⁴⁹ John Darrell, *The replie of Iohn Darrell, to the answer of Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of demoniakes* (n.p., 1602), 74-5.

⁵⁰ 1 Tim. 3:1-13: “Qualifications for Overseers and Deacons: Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap. In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest

by his office and not attempt to perform tasks suited to the apostles.⁵¹ They argue that Christ exclaimed that after his death and resurrection Satan's power of actual possession would end and that Christ had destroyed the Devil. But this does not refer to the destruction or annihilation of the Devil's essence, they clarify, as the Devil shall live forever, or to his "power of obsession, which is not yet vtterly destroyed: for thereby, he assaulteth, circumuenteth, and tempteth men still to the end of the world."⁵² As demonstrated before, Deacon and Walker's lack of belief in the Devil's ability to possess physically and a firm belief in his power to tempt outwardly is explicitly stated innumerable times in *Dialogicall Discourses*.

Deacon and Walker assert that among the power and responsibility that the *ecclesia* has is "the timely expelling of spirits and diuels from out of newly borne infants, before their admission to baptisme", and exorcists are appointed for the same purpose. Besides infant baptisms, they contest, there is no other office of exorcism set up to address any other matter that may have anything to do with demonic possession. They also categorize exorcisms as *archicall*, *apostolicall*, *ecclesiasticall*, or *infanticall* (exorcism at baptism). Moreover, they predict that until the end of the world there would be individuals who would pretend to possess the power to control and subdue the Devil but these would be none other than false apostles, about whom the scriptures have already cautioned

gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus."

⁵¹ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 172-73. 1 Tim. 4:13-16: "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

⁵² Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 185.

mankind.⁵³ For the ministers, the very fact that the ritual of exorcism borrows heavily from other cultures and religions, elements that they believe to have been introduced by Satan, should be the very reason for people to abstain from it. They held the belief that a “created”, “natural” agent, like man, could not perform an “uncreated” supernatural’ action, like exorcism, as it deals with spiritual substances, over which man has no control.⁵⁴

To the ministers Deacon and Walker, Catholic exorcisms appear magical due to their use of relics and sacramentals, which enables them to liken Catholics to heathens who use herbs, feathers, and stones to exorcize spirits. They assert that Catholic or “papisticall” exorcisms are composed of practices from “Gentilism” and Judaism, and involve all kinds of magical sorceries by Satan, and borrowed elements like the usage of holy water and salt from “*Ethnickes*”.⁵⁵ Priests who make use of salt, wax, water, and herbs are, therefore, put under the category of enchanter and conjurers according to Deacon and Walker as well as other prominent figures of the time.⁵⁶

⁵³ 2 Cor. 11:13-15: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” Matt. 7:22: “Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’” Act. 19:13: “Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the LORD Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.”

⁵⁴ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 259.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 236-39. In 1559 the abbot of Westminster lamented that the early Elizabethans did not show much approval of rites and sacraments as he noted the “most blasphemous treading of sacraments under their feet”. For a detailed analysis of the English society’s reaction to the Reformation, see Robert Whiting, *Local Responses to the English Reformation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), 63-70.

⁵⁶ Cameron, “For Reasoned Faith or Embattled Creed?”, 38. Francis Coxe accuses priests of making pacts with spirits as well as equates ‘conjurers’ with ‘exorcists’ and contests, ‘For whē the spirite is once come before the circle, he forthe with demaundeth the exorciste a sacrifice, whiche moste commenlye is a pece of waxe cōsecrated, or hallowed after their owne order (For they haue certayn bokes, called bokes of consecration) or els it is a chickē, a lapwing, or some liuinge creatur, whiche when he hath receyued: then doeth he fulfill the mynd of the exorcist, for oneles he hath it, he will neither doe, neither speake any thinge’ in *A short treatise declaringe the detestable wickednesse, of magicall sciences as necromancie. coniurations of spirites, curiouse astrologie and such lyke*, (London: Ihon Alde, 1561), n.p. Richard Kieckhefer makes an important distinction between an exorcist and conjurer by asserting that an exorcist

Considering John Darrell was a proponent of dispossession through his prescribed way of prayer and fasting, Deacon and Walker stressed the strength of one's faith in order to battle the Devil and protect oneself from his attacks, and not prayer and fasting. They also maintained that exorcists could not exorcize unclean spirits out of men through prayer and fasting if they had not first sent them in, thus equating exorcists with witches and sorcerers.⁵⁷ The explanation for this could be two-fold: since as per their belief, spirits could not occupy a man's body, it was impossible to expel them; and if one did have the power to exorcize spirits, it would mean that one conjured them up and sent them to torment the afflicted. It can be presumed that the authors considered this assault to be merely psychological. If one subscribes strictly to the biblical tradition of Christ being the first exorcist, it should be noted that it was not his created body or his humanity that was able to cast out devils but his Divinity and inherent power.⁵⁸ Also, it was only Christ who was able to perform miracles,⁵⁹ although they admitted that other men have also worked miracles by the grace of God.⁶⁰ Christ said, "I command you to come out", while the others used his power and authority to expel devils. The text further emphasizes that the time of miracles is over because there is no need for them anymore. Christ solved the temporary problem of actual possession either immediately, himself, or mediately,

dispels spirits while a conjurer summons them and this is why conjurers were seen as heretics. Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rights*, 14.

⁵⁷ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 267.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 277.

⁵⁹ Psal. 136:4: "to him who alone does great wonders, His love endures forever."

⁶⁰ Act. 19:11-12: "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." Act. 4:30: "Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." Act. 3:12: "When Peter saw this, he said to them: 'Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?'"

through special persons, his disciples, for specific situations. “Againe, the miraculous expelling of spirits and diuels, was but a temporarie and personall priuiledge...”⁶¹

Catholic exorcisms also involved the ritual of cleansing, or purification of tools that were to be used in the service and the place where the exorcism would be conducted. It was preferable to perform exorcisms on consecrated land, such as, church grounds. Menghi states his rule of place in his book by saying, “Sed debet exorcizare in Ecclesia, vel in alio loco Deo dicato vel alicui sancto”.⁶² Caesarius of Heisterbach in his medieval text, *Dialogus miraculorum*, narrated the incident of a heretic who had been convicted through the ordeal of hot iron and who, while awaiting execution, was confessing his sins to a priest when, during his confession, his hand began to heal miraculously and, by the end of the confession, it had recovered completely with not a sign of a single burn. He was later set free.⁶³ This ritual to make God’s justice usually involved the purification of the location and the tools by which the confession was to be acquired. Thus, the hot iron that led to his confession was a blessed object as an exorcism of water or the element set to be employed during the trial was conducted in order to purify the element and to protect it from diabolic interference along with a cleansing of the location, as mentioned earlier.

⁶¹ Deacon and Walker, *Dialogicall Discourses*, 332-36.

⁶² Frank Walsh Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett, and the Devils of Denham* (London and Toronto: Associated Presses, 1993), 209. Brownlow states that the Denham exorcists used Menghi’s manual, *Flagellum daemonum* (Venice, 1576), of which Samuel Harsnett also owned a copy.

⁶³ Caesarius, *Dialogus miraculorum*, 3.16, 132, 2 vols. (Coloniae: Sumptibus J. M. Heberle, 1851) as narrated in Jolanta N. Komornicka, “The Devil on Trial: The Changing Role of the Devil in the Trial by Ordeal”, *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, eds. Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 231. In chapter 26 of the same work, Caesarius also tells the story of a demon who went to confession for his sins committed over a thousand years; that is how old he was, he claimed, and stated that he was an angel that had fallen with Satan. Caesarius asserts that the demon had appeared in human form to the father confessor. Norman Cohn, *Europe’s Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 25.

Prayer and fasting could also be performed by the exorcist days in advance of the ceremony to strengthen faith and get closer to God.

Historians contend that the advent of Christianity could not be credited with inventing and perpetuating the practice of religious fasting that was seen in Western Europe during the early modern period and that it may have been originated in ancient Greece where the Pythagoreans held that the body was the prison of the soul and that in order to liberate the soul one had to abstain from elements that strengthened its physical fortress, that is, food. Lent in early modern Europe required that Christians abstain from meat and sex during the forty-day fast.⁶⁴ This, however, changed when early Protestants began to eat publicly during Lent in an attempt to move farther away from Catholicism. Yet, when Elizabeth I ordered observance of Lent annually, Puritan clergyman Richard Greenham advised his parishioners at Dry Drayton in Cambridgeshire that the main purpose of Lent was not abstinence but a means to keep a clean conscience, and therefore, they should observe it as a way to keep the Devil at bay.⁶⁵ Saint Thomas Aquinas believed that foregoing food during fasting compensated for Adam's greed for the forbidden fruit. Another theory maintained that fasting terrified Satan because demons loved blood and increased blood production was linked to high food consumption.⁶⁶ Fasting, in Christianity, thus, was seen as a means to cleanse oneself of sins, distance oneself from worldly pleasures, get closer to the divine, and to make oneself more receptive to God's assistance essential for expelling the Devil.

⁶⁴ Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 96.

⁶⁵ Norman Jones, *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 174.

⁶⁶ Kathleen R. Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 15-16.

James VI also acknowledges the power of prayer and fasting and argues that even Catholic priests are able to expel demons but this is not an ability that comes from within them but from the power of prayer and fasting as prescribed by the gospel.⁶⁷ That said, he warns against believing in the efficacy of Catholic exorcisms. He argues that one should take the reports of successful papist exorcisms with a grain of salt as Catholics are not true followers of the religion of Christ and also because the clergy performs fake rituals in an effort to strengthen their “rotten religion”. He notes:

it is easie then to be vnderstand that the casting out of Deuilles, is by the vertue of fasting and prayer, and in-calling of the name of God, suppose manie imperfectiones be in the person that is the instrumente, as CHRIST him selfe teacheth vs of the power that false Prophets sall haue to caste out Devils.⁶⁸

James claims that it is possible that the Devil may exit the body of the demoniac for a short period of time so as to haunt the soul perpetually. How James believes that happened is unclear. Perhaps he means to say that by putting up a show of leaving the body once an exorcism is performed by a Catholic priest, the Devil makes the spectators believe in the phony practices of the clergy, thereby, dragging more people into eternal damnation with him. James is also of the opinion that the Devil can never be cast out once he entered a body, and even if that does happen, the exorcism is temporary. He declares that the only way to end a curse or sickness is to pursue the witch that caused it. James argues that the power of Satan is recognized and even expected to be on display during an exorcism.⁶⁹ During an exorcism, Satan appears to shout dramatically and degrade the power of Christ and the Church and acts adamant to not leave the body of the demoniac.

⁶⁷ Donald Tyson, *The Demonology of King James I: Includes the Original Text of Daemonologie and News from Scotland* (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2011), 132.

⁶⁸ Appendix A, 276. James refers to Matthew 7 here that warns against false prophets and disciples: Tyson, *Demonology*, 171.

⁶⁹ Francis Young, *English Catholics and the Supernatural 1553-1829, Catholic Christendom, 1300-1700* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), 190.

It is therefore a challenging feat to expel the Devil and only the power of the word of God can cast him out.

How does one know that the Devil has departed from the body of the demoniac? According to early modern demonologists, when the energumen stops displaying the four signs of possession, speaking in tongues, awareness of the unknown, tremendous physical strength, and hatred of anything blessed and holy, for an extended period of time, the Devil has been cast out. These signs however, are not easy for a lay person to notice and only an experienced practitioner of the rite can discern whether the Devil is indeed gone. The exorcist may also command the Devil to give a sign before leaving such as blowing out a candle. The priest may also observe changes in air and may feel that a heaviness is lifted as the Devil departs.

4.2. *Let the mist of pretended counterfetting be dispelled:*⁷⁰ The Trial of John Darrell

The seventy-second canon of the Catholic Church dictates: “ministers were forbidden to attempt upon any pretense whatsoever, either of possession or obsession, by fasting and prayer to cast out any devil or devils, under pain of the imputation of imposture, or cozenage, and deposition from the ministry,” and therefore, it became an offense to perform fasting and prayer for the sole purpose of expelling demons, and offenders were threatened with temporary suspension from office on the first strike, permanent deposition on the second, and excommunication from the church for the third offense.⁷¹ It is believed

⁷⁰ A., Ri., *The triall of Maist. Dorrell, or A collection of defences against allegations not yet suffered to receiue convenient answere Tending to cleare him from the imputation of teaching Sommers and others to counterfeit possession of divells. That the mist of pretended counterfetting being dispelled, the glory of Christ his royall power in casting out divels (at the prayer and fasting of his people) may evidently appeare.* (Middleborough: R. Schilders, 1599).

⁷¹ Sands, *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*, 117. See also, Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth century England* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978), 579.

that this legislation was passed as a direct consequence of John Darrell's trial. The exact nature of Darrell's charges is unknown; however, it can be deduced that the trial of Darrell was based on the charges of deliberate fraud. As there was no law explicitly banning ministers from performing exorcisms at the time of his trial, Darrell could not be charged for conducting dispossessions without an episcopal license. He along with George More was found guilty of fraud, stripped of their ministries, and ordered to be held in confinement, Darrell in the Gate House in Westminster, and More in the Clink at Southwark.⁷²

On 26 May 1599, the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, called John Darrell to Lambeth to be examined by the Commission of Ecclesiastical Causes. The High Court summoned three demoniacs, Katherine Wright, Thomas Darling, and William Sommers, who Darrell had previously dispossessed, and who all claimed that they had feigned their possessions. Wright and Sommers went on further to accuse Darrell of instructing them how to behave under the supposed influence of the Devil. Conveniently, the court failed to invite the other demoniacs that Darrell had cured to testify, for instance, the Starkie household, who all seemed to be in eternal debt to the preacher for saving their souls. Also, there was no evidence that Darrell was in Ashby before Sommers' symptoms began to appear to teach him to counterfeit.⁷³ Nevertheless, on the basis of the testimonies, Darrell and More were both imprisoned, although not sentenced. There are reports that suggest that Darrell went into hiding two years after his trial, putting the time period of his imprisonment somewhere around eighteen months.

⁷² Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 1.

⁷³ Marion Gibson makes an excellent case of Darrell's unjust trial in *Possession, Puritanism and Print: Darrell, Harsnett, Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Exorcism Controversy*, *Religious Cultures of the Early Modern World* 1 (NY: Routledge, 2016), 33-5.

Scholars of early modern English demonology argue that the trial of Darrell was unfair, primarily because there was no evidence that Darrell had coached any of the alleged demoniacs to perform their antics. It was also strange that the court decided to take the word of an obviously mentally deranged youth, Sommers, who had previously displayed signs of mental imbalance, over that of a preacher's, especially of one with an impeccable character. Another unfortunate aspect of the case was that no medical experts were consulted during Darrell's trial to gauge the witnesses' mental condition, and evidence of the demoniac's fraudulence had been attained through coerced confessions.⁷⁴ There were talks of abusive treatments suffered by the demoniacs at the hands of Samuel Harsnett and the authorities. Darling and Sommers were put together in the Bishop of London's house where they were pressured to confess. Harsnett threatened to burn Wright's legs if she did not admit to counterfeiting. Bancroft also allegedly fabricated letters from Darrell to Darling to coerce him to confess to being a sham, and falsified and added to his written statement, as well as made him witness a public execution in order to intimidate him. Darling was forced to watch the dead swaying body all day and told that the same would happen to him if he did not confess. Seeing that he immediately retracted his confession after he was released from the prison, it can be presumed that Darling may have given his statement under duress. Darling would later shout that the Bishop of London was a papist at a sermon after which he was sentenced to be whipped and to lose his ear. It appears that Darling felt the need to denounce publicly the Bishop due to his ill-treatment at the Darrell trial.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Alan Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London: Routledge, 1999), see pp. 77-9, 183, and 301.

⁷⁵ Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 17.

At Darrell's hearing, Bancroft sought to publicize the exorcist's unconventional methods for demon expulsion and cited the case of Katherine Wright during whose dispossession Darrell lay on top of her in order to exorcize her demon(s), a point that was highly controversial and which questioned Darrell's methodology.⁷⁶ Darrell attested to the Church commission that he did indeed stretch on top of the demoniac but only because he had read accounts of Elias and Saint Paul in the scriptures doing the same. He added that his wife was also present during the session and so was another attendant whose duty was to keep Wright from moving. Darrell and More had also brought along written statements from witnesses at Nottingham but they were not taken into the record because the court was not under any compulsion to hear testimonies about Darrell's character, although it could malign him. The request by Joan, Darrell's wife, for a copy of the evidence collected in his trial was also refused.

There were various controversial aspects to the case which the Church brought against John Darrell. Firstly, Darrell was not allowed to hear the witness testimonies as they were given privately in the presence of court officials, attorneys, and a scribe, and hence, there was no witness cross-examination. Furthermore, another point which was highly provocative was that none of the members of the wealthy Starkie household were called to testify. This was either because the Church did not wish to be involve the influential family as all other witnesses, Katherine Wright, Thomas Darling, and William Sommers, belonged to working-class backgrounds, or because John Whitgift, Richard Bancroft, and Samuel Harsnett felt that the Starkie case was one of genuine possession

⁷⁶ Rickert notes that Lambeth Palace was also the residence of the Bishop of London, Richard Bancroft, *The Case of John Darrell*, 35. Also see, Marcus K. Harmes, *Bishops and Power in Early Modern England* (London and NY: Bloomsbury, 2013), 53.

and dispossession.⁷⁷ Moreover, Darrell noted that Mary Cooper, the sister of William Sommers, must be as much of a fraud as Sommers was accused of being, but she was never called a counterfeit and was treated as a witness of merit instead. The court also depended on hearsay where individuals were encouraged to provide sensational and embellished accounts of Darrell's activities which were given more credit than sometimes even eyewitness testimonies. Name-calling and slander were also accepted as evidence.⁷⁸ Most importantly, Darrell was not provided with legal counsel and was never made aware of the charges against him and only found out a few select details regarding the evidence through Samuel Harsnett's *Discovery*. Also, as noted above, witnesses in Darrell's trial were tortured and coerced into giving testimonies against the preacher. Therefore, one may note that all in all, Darrell was not given a fair trial. It is evident that Whitgift, Bancroft, and Harsnett had clearly already made up their minds and had set out to prove him guilty from the very beginning.⁷⁹ Harsnett expressed his dislike of the Puritans in his works various times and drew parallels between their and Catholic practices of exorcisms in an attempt to illustrate that the Puritans were as grave a danger to authority as the Papists. And a grave danger they were, not only to authority but also to Samuel Harsnett who while going to his manor in Nottinghamshire one day in 1630/31 supposedly fell ill and suddenly died, allegedly as a result of solemn fasting and prayer, an exercise conducted by a group of ministers who did not approve of Harsnett's religious beliefs and

⁷⁷ Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 36-7.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 40.

⁷⁹ Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 129-31.

political actions.⁸⁰ Unfortunately, the very superstitious beliefs that Harsnett fought during his lifetime surrounded his death.

As illustrated earlier, this trial was fueled by religious and political motives and was dubbed a smear campaign by Darrell's followers undertaken by Bishop Bancroft and Harsnett. This view is also supported in *The Triall of Maist Dorrell* (1599), which was published during Darrell's trial at the High Commission in which the hatred against Darrell of the two aforementioned highly influential individuals, Bancroft and Harsnett is discussed. This account was not written by Darrell but by one of his supporters who was also present at his hearing and witnessed how Darrell was not given a fair chance to defend himself. In *The Triall*, the author implores:

I require you in the name of Jesus (our King and Savior) patiently and judicially to read these Collections, and ... to be an honorable means that M. Dorrell may have time and place convenient, to prove and plead for himself, and then if he cannot justify his cause, let him be made a public example of severity against such ungodly counterfeiting. But if he can manifest undoubted dispossession, let the name of Jesus magnified in his Church to the conversion or confutation of Papists and Atheists.⁸¹

The first historian to analyze the life and the trial of John Darrell, Corinne H. Rickert, argues that this trial was unparalleled in early modern society as there has been no other civil or criminal proceeding that so gravely violated the laws of justice and, in a sense, operated outside the realm of law. She explains that this was due to the fact that the ecclesiastical court responsible for Darrell's trial reported directly to the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, and as seen earlier, they seem to have had

⁸⁰ I have not been able to verify this through any other text except the article, Thomas Freeman, "Demons, Deviance and Defiance: John Darrell and the Politics of Exorcism in late Elizabethan England," *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, eds. Peter Lake and Michael Questier (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), 43. It remains a mystery whether such an exercise was actually conducted.

⁸¹ Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 54.

vested interests in this case. This trial also demonstrates the authority that the Church had over its ministers; besides his sermons and ministerial duties, the bishop could question a minister about his character, marriage, and private life.⁸²

After the public condemnation of Darrell and More, ministers became wary of conducting exorcisms in early seventeenth-century England. The article *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiasticall, Treated upon by the Bishop of London, President of the Convocation for the Province of Canterbury* (1604) deemed it forbidden to hold fasts or to pray in order to expel demons without an explicit permission from the bishop. That may have reduced public display of exorcisms but failed to completely eradicate and lessen lay interest in the rite of exorcism in the early modern English society, as demonstrated by the famous cases of Anne Gunter in 1604, William Perry or the boy of Bilson in 1620, and Margaret Muschamp in 1648.⁸³

In order to understand the religious and psychological afflictions suffered by the demoniacs, it is imperative for historians to treat the alleged demonic and supernatural experiences of individuals as a real occurrence of the period in which they existed and not belittle or dismiss them as inaccurate or untrue. Despite the Church going to great lengths

⁸² Ibid., 40-1.

⁸³ James Sharpe, *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter* (London: Profile, 1999). Richard Baddeley, *The boy of Bilson: or, A true discovery of the late notorious impostures of certaine Romish priests in their pretended exorcisme, or expulsion of the Diuell out of a young boy, named William Perry, sonne of Thomas Perry of Bilson, in the county of Stafford, yeoman Vpon which occasion, hereunto is premitted a briefe theologicall discourse, by way of caution, for the more easie discerning of such Romish spirits; and iudging of their false pretences, both in this and the like practices* (London: Felix Kingston, 1622). Mary More, *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, late of the county of Northumberland, by witch-craft: and how miraculously it pleased God to strengthen them, and to deliver them: as also the prosecution of the sayd witches, as by oaths, and their own confessions will appear, and by the indictment found by the jury against one of them, at the sessions of the peace held at Alnwick, the 24. day of April, 1650* (London: T.H., 1650). For a detailed discussion of these cases, see Philip C. Almond, *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern England: Contemporary Texts and their Cultural Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

to curb the growing phenomenon of exorcism by taking the practitioners to court, as seen in the case of John Darrell, it could not control it, perhaps because it did not wish to completely uproot the historical practice. Demonic possessions and dispossessions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had become exceedingly normalized in individual religious and social life as everyone held a strong belief in the Devil and a majority of them maintained that he could control the physical and mental faculties of men. Therefore, in order to rid the spiritually afflicted of the Devil, there existed individuals who had mastered the art of the expulsion of the Devil, such as John Darrell. There were, however, skeptics who, although they believed in the reality of the Devil, rejected that he could invade human bodies, as is evident in the case of Samuel Harsnett who sought to expose the energumens who were affected by the Devil and the exorcists who claimed to expel demons as counterfeits and fraudulent, while others like ministers John Deacon and John Walker held the notion that exorcizing spirits would be miraculous, the practice of which had ceased since the time of Christ. By analyzing the literature related to John Darrell and his dispossessions and published by his colleagues as well as opponents, it can be deduced that Darrell was not one for vanity and had little doubt about the righteousness of his cause:

To the truth I owe myself: For it will I contend and strive: For it can I (by the grace of God) do anything. For it I have a tongue to speak, and a hand to write: For it I have a foot to walk, though it be to bonds and imprisonment: For it I have some other members, and a body to give to the execution of any torture, and for the same I have a life to lay down and lose. But against the truth can I do nothing.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ John Darrell, *An apologie or defence of the possession of William Sommers*, as found in Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 8-9.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Scholars of early modern history tend to simplify and explain the phenomenon of demon possession in early modern England as, and through, medical causes and the illnesses of hysteria, paranoia, mania, postpartum depression, schizophrenia, dyslexia, among others, but what that line of reasoning neglects is the fact that possession and dispossession of the Devil was a religious phenomenon that occurred in a religious environment and affected individuals with some sort of religious training and education, who sought out preachers with a religious power either in the form of their virtue or piety or in respect of their office. Demonic possession was always a relative concept, as in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there were always factions in society that were skeptical about the phenomenon while others wholeheartedly believed in it.

Historians have explained (away) the societal phenomenon of demonic possession through medical causes and have also at times completely disregarded it by terming it a sham or pretense. However, interpretations that cite medical and psychological causes as a stimulus to perceived supernatural events completely nullify and disregard the beliefs and experiences of those that underwent allegedly the terrifying ordeal of diabolic possession. In order to understand the reality of the demoniac, his family, the exorcist, and the wider society, it is apt to follow their thought processes and analyze them within their social, psychological, and cultural contexts. Early modern demonic possession

cannot be comprehended through our modern sensibilities and therefore it is imperative that it be treated as a valid religious experience undergone by those who believed in the Devil. Each party in the event of a demonic assault played its role in a religious drama which was promoted sometimes by word of mouth and at others in print, and in some instances even encouraged by the ordained clergy to attract audience in the hope of acquiring converts, and achieving the personal aspirations of the demoniac. Not necessarily out of any malicious intent but sometimes involuntarily out of societal expectations to fit into the religious narrative coupled with a personal longing for attention. This view takes seriously the religious beliefs of the demoniacs and their families, the exorcists that attempted to cure them as well as the society in which they operated. The Devil was discussed in written texts far more in the early modern society than the earlier ones due to the proliferation of printed material amidst heightened tensions between groups with clashing religio-political views determined to prove the validity of their religion. This resulted in the production of a multitude of treatises and pamphlets dealing with accounts of possession and the subjects of witchcraft and exorcism. This study was primarily concerned with an analysis of the Catholic and Protestant religious cultures that shaped demonic possession, a social construct based on the widely shared belief that demons could inhabit humans, and investigated how the rite of Catholic exorcism and the Protestant dispossession in early modern England developed to become powerful weapons in what was essentially a war of ideologies.

In mainstream circles, Catholic and Protestant, the notion of the Devil, however, primarily stayed medieval and did not change drastically until the Enlightenment when he began to meddle less in individual affairs due to the onset of skepticism and secularism

that began to govern individual and societal values and beliefs. The early modern period saw the emergence of this new philosophy of secularism that encouraged the introduction of material ideas with a lesser emphasis on the literal interpretation of the scriptures, and that which believed in the mechanical motion of the earth and the laws of nature. The proponents of which included names like Thomas Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza, and Rene Descartes, who were all in consensus regarding the inability of spirits to exert influence over the material world.¹ Yet, as Waite has shown, for the century before these philosophers, skepticism toward the Devil had been a feature of spiritualist groups and was debated and condemned by orthodox churchmen, both Catholic and Protestant, something that Waite argues helped disseminate such views.² For instance, the controversy over the skeptical work of the Reformed minister Balthasar Bekker *Bewitched World* of 1690/91 led some of his opponents to argue that Bekker was merely replicating the unorthodox ideas of David Joris; one polemicist even argued that Bekker was influenced by “David Joris, Hobbes and Spinoza,” suggesting that even a century and a half after Joris there were writers blaming him for the more recent skepticism. Waite has also suggested that the Familists of England had a similar, if less obvious, skepticism toward the Devil, and that this might have informed the opinion of more famous skeptics such as Reginald Scot.³ This skepticism, however, was found at all levels of society, that

¹ Hobbes also proposed that the biblical accounts of possession should be interpreted metaphorically. Brian Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 44-5. Spinoza denied the existence of the Devil. Descartes emphasized on logical thinking and reasoning.

² Gary K. Waite, “Knowing the Spirit(s) in the Dutch Radical Reformation: From Physical Perception to Rational Doubt, 1536-1690,” forthcoming in *Knowing Demons, Knowing Spirits in the Early Modern Period (ca. 1400- 1750)*, eds. Michelle D. Brock, Richard Raiswell, and David R. Winter (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2018).

³ Waite, “Knowing the Spirit(s).” For the debate over Scot and the Familists, see David Wootton, “Reginald Scot / Abraham Fleming / The Family of Love,” in *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Stuart Clark (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2001),

is to say that the individuals belonging to the lower class were equally likely to disbelieve in the power of the Devil in the physical world as the elites, and their view of Satan was based on personalized internal convictions.⁴ Historians argue that one of the consequences of the Reformation was the “disenchantment” of Europe and on a broader level, the world, as medieval Christianity transformed into a more intellectual form of religion that began to exist in a society progressing toward modern rationalism with fading superstitious beliefs in magic and the power of the Devil.⁵ The supernatural began to take a back seat in which the causes and effects of events were not being fully explored and the focus began to be on the mechanical forces, predictable and natural, that influenced the operation of the world. Natural disasters and catastrophes were gradually now attributed to the laws of nature, instead of the Devil’s work. The skepticism encouraged by humanism and natural science during this period was answered by *nullus diabolus nullus redemptor*, as the proponents of this line of thought believed that the dismissal of the idea of the Devil would soon follow the rejection of God and that was vexing and inadmissible to Christianity. This led to efforts by clergy and lay religious people to intensify their religious efforts and revamp religion, prove to the world the truth of the word of God, and win the battle against the heretics. However, these religious struggles were already well underway in the early modern period. This view, albeit an oversimplification of the

119-38; Philip C. Almond, *England’s First Demonologist: Reginald Scot & The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2011), 187-92; and now Peter Elmer, *Witchcraft, Witch-Hunting, and Politics in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2016), 18-32.

⁴ Nathan Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History, ed. Anthony Fletcher, John Guy, and John Morrill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 26.

⁵ Helen Parish discusses Max Weber’s “The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism” in *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, ed. Helen Parish (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 9. Euan Cameron argues that at its very core, Protestantism was a process of “demystification”, which some may argue, did not essentially translate at the popular level. Camron, *Enchanted Europe*, 158. Also see Robert W. Scribner, *The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the “Disenchantment of the World”*, 475-94, especially 492-94.

situation, does indeed give us an insight and an avenue to explore the influence of Reformation on the medieval Christian society.

The resurgence of demonic possession and exorcism and the wide public interest it garners today is evident in the fact that in the early twentieth century the Church of England concentrated its attention on exorcism again, the only difference was that rather than “exorcism”, the rite was now called a “ministry of healing”. A modern exorcist, Christopher Neil-Smith performed over 2200 exorcisms between 1970 and 1974, including one live on television in 1970, on a standing license from the Bishop of London, who authorized Neil-Smith to perform exorcisms according to his own judgment as and when he saw fit.⁶ Although the office is the same the difference between the Bishop of London today and Richard Bancroft, who was the Bishop of London four hundred years ago, is glaringly obvious. The modern bishop sanctioned over two thousand exorcisms within four years for Neil-Smith while the early modern bishop imprisoned Darrell due to suspicion over the authenticity of one.

In early modern England those Protestants who believed in the reality of possession claimed that the word of God was enough to cure demoniacs: prayer and fasting were the only two tools that could defeat the Devil. Catholicism, on the other hand, propagated a rather elaborate series of rituals that included everything from blessed objects and making the sign of the cross to conversing with the Devil and commanding it to depart. As seen earlier, skeptics dismissed both groups as fraudulent. Bancroft, although he was initially successful in tightening his control over nonconforming elements and suppressing the practice of exorcism at least in the first decade of the

⁶ Christopher Neil-Smith, *The Exorcist and the Possessed* (St. Ives, James Pike Ltd., 1974).

seventeenth century, was mistaken in assuming that all dissenting groups could be silenced and that a ubiquitous religious unity could be enforced upon England.

The pamphlet war that occurred between 1599 and 1603 saw John Darrell, Samuel Harsnett, John Deacon, and John Walker each striving to appear more godly, pious, and masculine than the other in order to establish the credibility of the religion they represented. Harsnett's *A discoverie of the fraudulent practises of Iohn Darrel* is littered with attacks on Darrell's character as well as his manhood. Harsnett also criticizes Darrell's adherents of being blind and irrational simpleminded folk who he implied were mostly women or fools. To skeptics the belief in the physical vexation of the Devil was one that only suited morally and religiously weak individuals. The religious and political climate commanded that "for Harsnett the devil [be] an adversary found in scripture and in the fevered imaginations of evangelizing Catholics and Puritans, while Darrell's devil was a powerful enemy allowed by God to torment individuals as a warning to the rest of humanity."⁷

To comprehend fully the arguments and ideas of John Deacon, John Walker, and John Darrell is indeed a rather laborious task. Most historians, and there are not many, who have studied these figures have resorted to taking at face value the oftentimes chaotic and contradictory views that these characters convey in their books. This study has attempted to explore and analyze their belief in the Devil and his ability to possess humans as well as the fairly controversial practice of exorcism in order to better understand the prevailing notions about demonic possession and exorcism in early modern England.

⁷ Erika Gasser, "Samuel Harsnett, John Darrell, and the Use of Gender as an English Possession Propaganda Strategy," *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, eds. Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2012), 257-70.

England witnessed over 150 attendants at the dispossession of William Sommers on 5th November 1597, which was a public spectacle much to the dismay of Bancroft who saw Darrell's public exorcisms as a threat to episcopal authority.⁸ The ensuing trial and the "prosecution, under the direction of Samuel Harsnett, was vigorous and zealous to the point of fanaticism."⁹ Harsnett has been identified by historians as a sharp and ambitious man who used the case of Darrell to show his devotion and loyalty to the Bishop and to the Church.

History appears silent over the fate of John Darrell. It is believed that he retired to Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, with a wife, a daughter, and a maid. The last he ever wrote on demonic possession and dispossession was his rebuttal to Deacon and Walker's *Summarie*. Whether he continued to perform dispossessions after his trial is unknown. What is certain, however, is that he never dared to conduct public exorcisms which may have been a condition of the deal he likely received in exchange for getting out of jail. Darrell's subjects had been all plagued with their own personal and social demons that had surfaced in the form of possession. Demonic possession, thus, was a religious drama played out by individuals challenged by their social conditions in order to escape their predicaments and liberate themselves from social commitments and expectations (Katherine Wright and William Sommers), to fit into the mold created by family and appear religious (Thomas Darling), and to rebel against authority and evade filial responsibility (the Starkie children), influenced by the socio-political climate of the period, and tackled by the societal response of dispossession by individuals who

⁸ Marcus K. Harnes, *Bishops and Power in Early Modern England* (London and NY: Bloomsbury, 2013), 45-6.

⁹ Corinne Holt Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell: Minister and Exorcist*, University of Florida Monographs, Humanities, 9 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962), 42.

genuinely believed in the truth of their mission, and orchestrated by the authorities so as to regulate religious and ordinary lives.

The Church of England, from its inception, was not just engaged in an ideological battle against the Roman Church; it was also fighting against itself, as various religious factions insisted on determining the course of action for the reformed Church. It was then when these theological debates were taking place that the question was raised regarding the extent of the role of the Devil in the physical world, which then became a major religious and political issue. As we never heard from John Darrell “the exorcist” again it would seem that Harsnett and other conservative forces won in this debate of demonic possession and succeeded in halting the practice of exorcisms/dispossession. It is difficult to say for certain, however, as we do not find any other Protestant exorcist, besides Darrell of course, in England during the last decade of the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, we cannot be certain that Darrell stopped performing his “healing” activities. It is possible that he did engage in the dispelling of demons, albeit discreetly, as throughout his trial, he maintained his innocence and the veracity of his dispossessions. It is noteworthy that his trial was not conclusive as a sentence was never pronounced.¹⁰ That said, he never wrote about demons or their invasion of human bodies again. And neither did John Deacon and John Walker. They wrote together two books, *Dialogicall Discourses* and *A Summarie* and, as it appears, did not wish to publish a rebuttal of Darrell’s response to their work. There is, however, a religious pamphlet bearing the name John Darrell that was published in 1617. This time it was printed openly and not by a secret press, but we cannot be certain whether it was authored by the same John Darrell who was once a

¹⁰ Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell: Minister and Exorcist*, 1.

controversial exorcist. There is no indication in the book to suggest that it was or was not indeed the same Darrell who underwent one of the most high-profile trials of the early modern period that England had witnessed.¹¹ It is important to reiterate that Darrell throughout his trial and afterwards maintained his innocence and proclaimed his honesty. This is evident when in his last book he reported that Jane Ashton, maid of the Starkie household, converted to Catholicism, even though this confession painted him in a bad light. This demonstrates that Darrell was perhaps mostly truthful in his dealings with alleged demoniacs.¹² With regard to the sincerity of John Darrell “the exorcist”, clergyman and biographer, John Strype, states: “this weak but honest man (shall I call him?) did not think himself to be a Counterfeit...”¹³

¹¹ John Darrell, *A treatise of the church. Written again them of the Separation, called Brownists* (London: William. Iones, 1617).

¹² Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 31.

¹³ John Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift* (London: 1718), 495, as referenced in Rickert, *The Case of John Darrell*, 63.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

- Amorth, Gabriele. *An Exorcist Tells His Story*. Translated by Nicoletta V. MacKenzie. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999. <http://www.youngandcatholicng.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/An-Exorcist-Tells-His-Story-Gabriele-Amorth.pdf>.
- Anonymous. *Agrippa, Henry C. His Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy of Geomancy, Magical Elements of Peter de Abano, Astronomical Geomancy, The Nature of Spirits, Arbatel of Magick*. Translated by Robert Turner. London: Printed by J.C. for John Harrison, 1655.
- _____. *A list of some of the grand blasphemers and blasphemies, which was given in to the committee for religion. Very fit to be taken notice of, upon the occasion of the day of publick fasting and humiliation*. London: Robert Ibbitson, 1654.
- Augustine. *On Marriage and Concupiscence*. Translated by Holmes. London: Aeterna Press, 2014.
- _____. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini, Hipponensis Episcopi, Opera Omnia, Multis Sermonibus Ineditis Aucta Et Locupletata; Extracta E Collectione Ss. Ecclesiae Patrum*. Compiled by D.A.B. Caillau and D.M.N.S. Guillon. Vol. XI. Parisiis: Parent-Desbarres, 1837.
- Bodin, Jean. *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*. Translated by Randy A. Scot. Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation no. 7. Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 1995.
- Bray, Gerald. *Documents of the English Reformation*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co Ltd., 1994.
- Catholic Church. *Prayers to Expel the Evil Spirits*. California: n.p. 1945.
- _____. *Rituale Romanum*. Antwerp: Officina Plantiniana, 1617.

Coxe, Francis. *A short treatise declaringe the detestable wickednesse, of magicall sciences as necromancie, coniurations of spirites, curiouse astrologie and such lyke*. London: Printed by Ihon Alde, 1561.

Cressy, David, and Lori A. Ferrell. *Religion and Society in Early Modern England: A Sourcebook*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.

Darrell, John. *A treatise of the Church Written against them of the separation, commonly called Brownists. Wherein the true doctrine of a visible Church is taught, and the Church of England, proued to be a true Church. The Brownists false doctrine of the visible Church is conuincd; their shamefull peruerting of the holy Scriptures discouered, their arguments to proue the Church of England a false Church answered*. London: William Iones, 1617.

———. *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: vvritten by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels VWherein is manifested the palpable ignorance and dangerous errors of the discourers, and what according to proportion of God his truth, every christian is to hold in these poyntes. Published by Iohn Darrell minister of the gossell*. England: 1602.

———. *A true narration of the strange and greuous vexation by the Devil, of 7. persons in Lancashire, and William Somers of Nottingham Wherein the doctrine of possession and dispossession of demoniakes out of the word of God is particularly applyed vnto Somers, and the rest of the persons controuerted: togeather with the vse we are to make of these workes of God. By Iohn Darrell, minister of the word of God*. England: 1600.

———. *A brief apologie prouing the possession of William Sommers. Written by Iohn Dorrell, a faithful Minister of the Gospell: but published without his knowledge, with a dedicatorie epistle disclosing some disordered proceedings against the saide Iohn Dorrell*. Middleborough: R. Schilders, 1599.

Deacon, John, and John Walker. *Dialogicall discourses of spirits and diuels declaring their proper essence, natures, dispositions, and operations, their possessions and dispossessions : with other the appendantes, peculiarly appertaining to those speciall points, verie conducent, and pertinent to the timely procuring of some Christian conformitie in iudgement, for the peaceable compounding of the late sprong controuersies concerning all such intricate and difficult doubts*. London: George Bishop. 1601.

———. *A summarie ansvvere to al the material points in any of Master Darel his bookes More especiallie to that one booke of his, intituled, the Doctrine of the possession and dispossession of demoniaks out of the word of God*. London: George Bishop, 1601.

- Denison, John. *The most wonderfull and true storie, of a certaine witch named Alse Gooderige of Stapen hill, who was arraigned and conuicted at Darbie at the Assises there as also a true report of the strange torments of Thomas Darling, a boy of thirteene yeres of age, that was possessed by the deuill, with his horrible fittes and apparitions by him vttered at Burton vpon Trent in the countie of Stafford, and of his maruellous deliuerance*. London: n.p., 1597.
- Donovan, J. *The Catechism of the Council of Trent published by command of Pope Pius the Fifth*. Baltimore: Lucas Brothers, 1829.
- Co., G. *A breife narration of the possession, dispossession, and, repossession of William Sommers and of some proceedings against Mr Iohn Dorrell preacher, with aunsweres to such obiections as are made to prove the pretended counterfeiting of the said Sommers. Together with certaine depositions taken at Nottingham concerning the said matter*. Amsterdam: n.p., 1598.
- Harsnett, Samuel. *A declaration of egregious popish impostures to with-draw the harts of her Maiesties subiects from their allegiance, and from the truth of Christian religion professed in England, vnder the pretence of casting out deuils. Practised by Edmunds, alias Weston a Iesuit, and diuers Romish priestes his wicked associates. Where-vnto are annexed the copies of the confessions, and examinations of the parties themselues, which were pretended to be possessed, and disposessed, taken vpon oath before her Maiesties commissioners, for causes ecclesiasticall*. London: James Roberts, 1603.
- Hutchinson, Roger. *The image of God, or laie mans boke in which the right knowledge of God is disclosed, and diuerse doubtbes besides the principal matter*. London: 1560.
- Jorden, Edward. *A Briefe Discourse of a Disease called the Suffocation of the Mother Written vppon occasion which hath beene of late taken thereby, to suspect possesion of an euill spirit, or some such like supernaturall power. Wherin is declared that diuers strange actions and passions of the body of man, which in the common opinion, are imputed to the diuell, haue their true naturall causes, and do accompanie this disease*. London: John Windet, 1603.
- Kieckhefer, Richard. *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century*. Pennsylvania: Penn State Press: 2006.
- Kramer, Heinrich, and James Sprenger. *The Malleus Maleficarum*. Translated by Rev. Montague Summers. New York: Dover Publications, 1971.
- Mackay, Christopher S. *The Hammer of the Witches: A Complete Translation of the Malleus Maleficarum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

- Marescot, Michel. *A true discourse, vpon the matter of Martha Brossier of Romorantin pretended to be possessed by a deuill*. Translated by Abraham Hartwell. London: Imprinted by F. Kingston for Iohn Wolfe, 1599.
- Maxwell-Stuart, P.G. *The Occult in Early Modern Europe: A Documentary History*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.
- Menghi, Girolamo. *Flagellum daemonum, exorcismos terribilis, potentissimos, & efficacies: Remediaque probatissima, ac doctrinam singularem in malignos spiritus expellendos, facturasque et maleficia fuganda de obsessis corporibus complectens*. Venice: 1576.
- More, Mary. *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, late of the county of Northumberland, by witch-craft: and how miraculously it pleased God to strengthen them, and to deliver them: as also the prosecution of the sayd witches, as by oaths, and their own confessions will appear, and by the indictment found by the jury against one of them, at the sessions of the peace held at Alnwick, the 24. day of April, 1650*. London: T.H., 1650.
- Ri, A. *The triall of Maist. Dorrell, or A collection of defences against allegations not yet suffered to receiue convenient answers Tending to cleare him from the imputation of teaching Sommers and others to counterfeit possession of diuells. That the mist of pretended counterfetting being dispelled, the glory of Christ his royall power in casting out diuels (at the prayer and fasting of his people) may evidently appeare*. Middleborough: R. Schilders, 1599.
- Scot, Reginald. *The discovery of witchcraft proving that the compacts and contracts of witches with devils and all infernal spirits or familiars are but erroneous novelties and imaginary conceptions : also discovering, how far their power extendeth in killing, tormenting, consuming, or curing the bodies of men, women, children, or animals by charms, philtres, periapts, pentacles, curses, and conjurations : wherein likewise the unchristian practices and inhumane dealings of searchers and witch-tryers upon aged, melancholly, and superstitious people, in extorting confessions by terrors and tortures, and in devising false marks and symptoms, are notably detected ... : in sixteen books*. London: William Brome, 1584.
- Stuart, James. *Daemonologie, in Forme of a Dialogue, Diuided into three Bookes*. Edinburgh: Robert Waldegrave, 1597.
- Summers, Montague. *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology*. Translated by R. T. Clark. The History of Civilization. Edited by C.K. Ogden. London: Routledge, 1996.
- The Book of Common Prayer*. London: 1559.
http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1559/BCP_1559.htm.

The Book of Common Prayer. London: 1549.

http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/BCP_1549.htm.

Tyson, Donald. *The Demonology of King James I: Includes the Original Text of Daemonologie and News from Scotland*. Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2011.

Weyer, Johann. *On Witchcraft: An Abridged Translation of Johann Weyer's De Praestigiis Daemonum*. Edited by Benjamin G. Kohl and H. C. Erik Midelfort. Translated by John Shea. Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1998.

_____. *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum (Liber officiorum spirituum)*. Edited and translated by Joseph H. Peterson. Twilit Grotto Esoteric Archives. USA: 2000. Accessed September 20, 2017. www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/weyer.htm.

B. SECONDARY SOURCES

Almond, Philip C. *England's First Demonologist: Reginald Scot & The Discoverie of Witchcraft*. London: I.B. Taurus, 2011.

_____. *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern England: Contemporary Texts and their Cultural Contexts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

_____. *Heaven and Hell in Enlightenment England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Ankarloo, Bengt., and Gustav Henningsen, eds. *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Ashton, Robert. *Reformation and Revolution 1558-1660*. The Paladin History of England. Edited by Robert Blake and Cameron Hazlehurst. London: Paladin, 1985.

Bailey, Michael D. *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages*. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

Baillie, Eva M. *Facing the Fiend: Satan as a Literary Character*. Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2014.

Bhogal, Harman. "Miracles, Cessationism, and Demonic Possession: The Darrell Controversy and the Parameters of Preternature in Early Modern English

- Demonology." *Preternature: Critical And Historical Studies On The Preternatural* 4, no. 2 (2015): 152-180.
- Bossy, John. *Christianity in the West 1400-1700*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Bowd, Stephen. "John Dee and the Seven in Lancashire: Possession, Exorcism, and Apocalypse in Elizabethan England." *Northern History* 47 (2013): 223-46.
- Broedel, Peter. *The Malleus Maleficarum and the construction of witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief*. Studies in Early Modern European History. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- Brownlow, Frank W. *Shakespeare, Harsnett, and the Devils of Denham*. London and Toronto: Associated Presses, 1993.
- Cameron, Euan. "For Reasoned Faith or Embattled Creed? Religion for the People in Early Modern Europe." In *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, edited by Helen Parish, 34-51. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- . *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, & Religion, 1250-1750*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Carus, Paul. *The History of the Devil and the Idea of Evil From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*. London: Chicago Open Court Publishing Company, 1900.
- Clark, Stuart. *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- . *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2001.
- Clulee, Nicholas H. *John Dee's Natural Philosophy: Between Science and Religion*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Coffey, John. *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689*. Harlow: Longmans, 2000.
- Cohn, Norman. *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Collinson, Patrick. *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism*. Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- . *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988.

- Davidson, Jane P. *Early Modern Supernatural: The Dark Side of European Culture, 1400–1700*. Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2012.
- Driscoll, Mike. *Demons, Deliverance, and Discernment: Separating Fact from Fiction about the Spirit World*. El Cajon: Catholic Answers Press, 2015.
- Duffy, Eamon. *Saint, Sacrilege and Sedition: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformations*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012.
- Duling, Dennis C. "Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David." *The Harvard Theological Review* 68, no. 3/4 (1975): 235-52.
- Dumitrescu, Cristian. "A Historical Survey of Healing and Exorcism." *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 11, no. 2 (2015): 25-44. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol11/iss2/5>.
- Dunn, James D. G., and Graham H. Twelftree. "Demon Possession and Exorcism in The New Testament". *Churchman* 94, no. 2 (1980): 210-225.
- Elmer, Peter. *Witchcraft, Witch-Hunting, and Politics in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- . "“Saints or Sorcerers’: Quakerism, Demonology and the Decline of Witchcraft in Seventeenth-Century England.” In *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief*, edited by Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts, 145-79. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Evan, G. R. *Augustine on Evil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Ewen, L’estrage C. *Witchcraft and Demonianism: A Concise Account derived from sworn Depositions and Confessions obtained in the courts of England and Wales*. London: Heath Cranton Limited, 1933.
- Fincham, Kenneth, and Peter Lake, eds. *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England, Studies in Modern British Religious History*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006.
- Fishwick, Henry. "The Lancashire Demoniacs." *The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 35 (1883): 129-46.
- Fix, Andrew. "Angels, Devils, and Evil Spirits in Seventeenth-Century Thought: Balthasar Bekker and the Collegiants." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 50, no. 4 (1989): 527-47.

- Freeman Thomas. "Demons, Deviance and Defiance: John Darrell and the Politics of Exorcism in late Elizabethan England." In *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660*, edited by Peter Lake and Michael Questier. Studies in Modern British Religious History, 34-63. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000.
- Frieden, Ken. "The Language of Demonic Possession: A Key-Word Analysis." *The Daemonic Imagination: Biblical Text and Secular Story*, edited by Robert Detweiler and William G. Doty, 41-52. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990.
- Gasser, Erika. *Vexed with Devils: Manhood and Witchcraft in Old and New England*. New York: New York University Press, 2017.
- . "Samuel Harsnett, John Darrell, and the Use of Gender as an English Possession Propaganda Strategy." In *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, edited by Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle, 257-82. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2012.
- George, Charles H., and Katherine George. *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation 1570-1640*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1961.
- Gibson, Marion. *Possession, Puritanism and Print: Darrell, Harsnett, Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Exorcism Controversy*. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Gibson, Marion, and Esra, Jo Ann. *Shakespeare's Demonology: A Dictionary*. Arden Shakespeare Dictionaries. Sandra Clark. London: Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Guiley, Rosemary Ellen. *The Encyclopedia of Demons and Demonology*, s.v. "Ghirolamo Menghi", New York: Facts on File, 2009.
- Haigh, Christopher. *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Haigh, Christopher, ed. "Anticlericalism and the English Reformation", *The English Reformation Revised*, edited by Christopher Haigh, 56-74. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Halvorson, Michael J., and Karen E. Spierling, eds. *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe*. St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History. London and New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Harmes, Marcus K. *Bishops and Power in Early Modern England*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Heal, Felicity. *Reformation in Britain and Ireland*. Oxford History of the Christian Church. Edited by Henry and Owen Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

- Hunter, Michael. "Alchemy, Magic and Moralism in the Thought of Robert Boyle." *The British Journal for the History of Science* 23, no. 4 (1990): 387-410.
- Hoorens, Vera. "Why did Johann Weyer write *De praestigiis daemonum*? How Anti-Catholicism inspired the Landmark Plea for the Witches." *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 129, no. 1 (2014):3–24.
- Jansons, Linarnds. "Baptismal Exorcism: An Exercise in Liturgical Theology." *Lutheran Theological Journal* 45, no. 3 (2011), 183-97.
- Jensen, Robin. *Living Water: Images, Symbols, and Settings of Early Christian Baptism*. *Vigilae Christianae, Supplements: Texts and Studies of Early Christian Life and Language*. Edited by Douwe (David) Runia and Gerard Rouwhorst. Danvers: Brill, 2011.
- Johnstone, Nathan. *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Jones, Norman. *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002.
- Kallendorf, Hilaire. *Exorcism and Its Texts: Subjectivity in Early Modern Literature of England and Spain*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.
- Kamerick, K. "Shaping Superstition in Late Medieval England." In *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, edited by Helen Parish, 15-33. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Kapitaniak, Pierre. "The Devil Turned Go-Between: False Conjurations on the Jacobean Stage." In *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*, edited by Richard Raiswell and Peter Dendle, 365-80. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012.
- Kelly, Henry A. *The Devil at Baptism: Ritual, Theology, and Drama*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- Kenneth, Felicity. *Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, Oxford History of the Christian Church, Edited by Henry and Owen Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Kieckhefer, Richard. *Forbidden Rights: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century*. Philadelphia: Penn State Press, 2006.
- Kittredge, George L. "King James I and 'The Devil Is an Ass'." *Modern Philology* 9, no. 2 (1911): 195-209.

- Kitson, P. M. "Religious Change and the Timing of Baptism in England, 1538-1750." *The Historical Journal* 52, no. 2 (2009): 269-94.
- Klaniczay, Glábor. *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Translated by Susan Singerman. Edited by Karen Margolis, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Krapf, Eduardo E. "On the Pathogenesis of Epileptic and Hysterical Seizures." *Bulletin of World Health Organization* (1957): 740-62.
- Lake, Peter, and Michael, Questier, eds. *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660*. Studies in Modern British Religious History. Volume 2. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000.
- Landy, Joshua, and Michael Saler, eds. *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age*. California: Stanford University Press: 2009.
- Lederer, David. *Madness Religion, and the State in Early Modern Europe: A Bavarian Beacon*. New Studies in European History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Levack, Brian. *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.
- Levack, Brian, ed. *Demonology, Religion, and Witchcraft*. New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology. Vol. 1. New York: Routledge: 2001.
- . *Possession and Exorcism*. Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology. Vol. 9. New York: Garland Publishing, 1992.
- Levin, Carole, Anna Riehl Bertolet, and Jo Eldridge Carney, eds. *A Biographical Encyclopedia of Early Modern Englishwomen: Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts, 1500-1650*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Macfarlane, Alan. *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Machado, Fatima Regina. "A New Look at Haunting and Poltergeist Phenomena: Analyzing Experiences from a Semiotic Perspective", *Hauntings and Poltergeists: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by James Houran and Rense Lange, 227-47. Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland & Company Inc., Publishers, 2001.
- Maggi, Armando. *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

- Marshall, Peter. "The Reformation of Hell? Protestant and Catholic Infernalisms in England, c. 1560–1640." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61, no. 2 (2010): 279–98.
- McClain, Lisa. *Lest We Be Damned: Practical Innovation and Lived Experience among Catholics in Protestant England, 1559-1642*, Religion in History, Society, and Culture. Edited by Frank Reynolds and Winnifred Fallers Sullivan. New York and London: Routledge, 2004.
- Menghi, Girolamo. *The Devil's Scourge: Exorcism during the Italian Renaissance*. Translated by Gaetano Paxia. Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2002.
- Messadié, Gerald. *A History of the Devil*. Translated by Mare Romano. New York: Kodansha International, 1996.
- Mollmann, Bradley J. "Seeking the Supernatural: The Exorcisms of John Darrell and the Formation of an Orthodox Identity in Early Modern England." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Miami University, 2008.
- Moore, Cornelia N. "The Quest for Consoling and Amusement: Reading Habits of German Women in the Seventeenth Century." In *The Graph of Sex and the German Text: Gendered Culture in Early Modern Germany 1500-1700*, edited by Lynne Tatlock, 247-68. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.
- Moore, Robert I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe 950-1250*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
- Morton, Peter A. "Lutheran Naturalism, Popular Magic, and the Devil." In *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2012.
- Muir, Edward. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Nauman, Elmo, ed. *Exorcism through the Ages*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1974.
- Neil-Smith, Christopher. *The Exorcist and the Possessed*. St. Ives: James Pike Ltd., 1974.
- Newton, Diana. *Papists, Protestants and Puritans 1559-1714*. Cambridge Perspectives in History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Nischan, Bodo. "The Exorcism Controversy and Baptism in the Late Reformation." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18, no. 1 (1987): 31-52.

- Oesterreich, T.K. *Possession Demoniactal and Other among Primitive races, in Antiquity, the Middle ages, and Modern times*. Translated by D. Ibberson. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner And Co. Ltd., 1930.
- Oldridge, Darren. "Protestant Conceptions of the Devil in Early Stuart England." *History* 85, no. 278 (April 2000): 232-46.
- Parish, Helen, ed. *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Parish, Helen, and William G. Naphy eds. *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*. Studies in Early Modern European History. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002.
- Pickering, Andrew. *The Witches of Selwood Forest: Witchcraft and Demonism in the West of England, 1625-1700*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017.
- Raiswell, Richard and Peter Dendle, eds. *The Devil in Society in Premodern Europe*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2012.
- . "Demon Possession in Anglo-Saxon and Early Modern England: Continuity and Evolution in Social Context." *Journal of British Studies* 47, no. 4 (2008): 738-67.
- Raymond, Joan, ed. *Conversations with Angels: Essays toward a History of Spiritual Communication 1100-1700*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2011.
- Raymond, Joan. *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Rickert, Corinne Holt. *The Case of John Darrell: Minister and Exorcist*. University of Florida Monographs. Humanities, 9. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962.
- Russell, Jeffrey Burton. *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- . *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Ryrie, Alex. *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Steward Realms 1485-1603*. Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Educated Ltd., 2009.
- Sands, Kathleen R. *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004.

- Scarisbrick, John J. *The Reformation and the English People*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991.
- Scribner, Robert W. "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the 'Disenchantment of the World'." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23, 3 (1993): 475-94.
- Sharpe, James. *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter*. London: Profile, 1999.
- Sluhovsky, Moshe. "The Devil in the Convent". *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 5 (1 December 2002): 1379-411.
- . *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism, & Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Stephens, Walter. "Strategies of Interspecies Communication, 1100-2000." In *Conversations with Angels: Essays toward a History of Spiritual Communication 1100-1700*, edited by Joad Raymond, 25-48. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth century England*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978.
- Uszkalo, Kirsten C. *Bewitched and Bedeviled: A Cognitive Approach to Embodiment in Early English Possession*. Cognitive Studies in Literature and Performance. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Wagner, John A., and Susan Walters Schmid, eds. *Encyclopedia of Tudor England*. Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2012.
- Waite, Gary K. *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. European Culture and Society Series. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- . "Demonic affliction or divine chastisement? Conceptions of illness and healing amongst Spiritualists and Mennonites in Holland, c.1530-c.1630." In *Illness and Healing Alternatives in Western Europe*, edited by Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, Hilary Marland, and Hans de Waardt, 59-79. London: Routledge, 1997.
- . "'Man is a Devil to Himself': David Joris and the Rise of the Sceptical Tradition towards the Devil in the Early Modern Netherlands, 1540-1600." *Nederlands Archief Voor Kerkgeschiedenis / Dutch Review of Church History* 75, no. 1 (1995): 1-30.
- Walker, D. P. "The Cessation of Miracles." In *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, edited by Helen Parish, 111-124. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.

- _____. "Demonic Possession Used as Propaganda." In *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology: A Twelve Volume Anthology of Scholarly Articles*, edited by Brian P. Levack, 283-94. New York: Garland Publishing, 1992.
- _____. *Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.
- Webster, Tom. "(Re)possession of Dispossession: John Darrell and Diabolic Discourse." In *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604*. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions: History, Culture, Religion, Ideas, edited by John Newton and Jo Bath, 91-112. Leiden: Brill, 2008.
- Whiting, Robert. *Local Responses to the English Reformation*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998.
- Wright, Robert J. "The First Prayer Book of 1549." Project Canterbury. 2002. <http://anglicanhistory.org/essays/wright/1549.pdf>.
- Wootton, David. "Reginald Scot / Abraham Fleming / The Family of Love." In *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture*, edited by Stuart Clark, 119-38. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2001.
- Young, Francis. *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity*. Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic. Cambridge: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- _____. *English Catholics and the Supernatural 1553-1829*. Catholic Christendom, 1300-1700. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013.
- _____. "Catholic Exorcism in Early Modern England: Polemic, Propaganda and Folklore." *Recusant History*, 29 (October 2009): 487-507.
- Zika, Charles. "The Devil's Hoodwink: Seeing and Believing in the World of Sixteenth-Century Witchcraft." In *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology, Vol. 1: Demonology, Religion, and Witchcraft*, edited by Brian P. Levack, 83-129. New York: Routledge, 2001.