

Chapter 1 : The History of European Witch-Hunts: Sluhovsky - "Devil in the Convent"

M. Sluhovsky - A Divine Apparition or Demonic Possession. - Download as PDF File .pdf), Text File .txt) or read online. Scribd is the world's largest social reading and publishing site.

He uses the case of the Loudon mass possessions in France as a reference point. The Loudon possessions occurred in an Ursuline convent. The sisters began witnessing strange events, such as black balls of matter knocking them down, skeletons walking through the halls. The dark spirits possessing them were increasingly claimed by the nuns to have taken the form of a local priest named Urbain Grandier. The nuns claimed Grandier was in league with the Devil and responsible for their possessions. Many also claimed to have impure sexual feelings for Grandier, and this impurity helped prime them for possession. The head sister of the nuns produced a document later proven a forgery by her own hand supposedly of the pact between Grandier and the Devil. Nicola of Tolentino exercised the Cisterian nuns. The writer of the official dossier recording the Cisterian case regarded the incident as a collection of unrelated individual possessions, rather than what would in later cases be clearly seen as incidences of "mass" or "communal" possession. Johannes Nider, a Dominican theologian, helped form the notion of mass possession in the minds of early modern medieval Europe. In his *Formicarius* he recorded an incident of mass possession among nuns in a convent in Nurnberg, whom he exercised. A case starting in in a Quesnoy le Conte convent, Spanish Netherlands, saw mass-possessed nuns remain afflicted even after Pope Alexander VI himself rose to the challenge and demanded the demons flee the poor nuns. Mass possessions exploded across Europe with increasing frequency beginning in the mid 15th century before all-but disappearing by Only 4 cases of mass possession were recorded outside the years from The historical rise and fall of mass possessions thus plainly followed closely with the witch craze phenomenon. An important difference is that only a few mass possession cases all from , and which led to witch trials, save one ever received widespred public notoriety. Most cases of possession did not result in accusations of witchcraft brought upon the possessed or anyone involved. The majority remained confined to the record tomes of clerical authorities, gathering dust. Demonic possessions are when people involuntarily become host to demonic forces, while witchcraft is when a person voluntarily collaborates with the Devil and his minions. Sluhovsky argues possession was a form of feminine monastic spirituality rather than psychological disorder or the venting of frustrations about the sexual and otherwise restrictions on life in a convent. Many cases seemed to involve nuns who were distressed by reformations to their convents resulting in more strict and oppressive lifestyle regimens. Demonic possessions were by all means outwardly similar to divine possessions. The signs of both possessions were usually as follows: In both cases, there was sexual metaphor present involving angels or demon. Sluhovsky argues that sometimes cases of a nun attempting to spiritually perfect herself through displaying divine possession could be mistaken for demonic possession. I found the political aspects very interesting. I wonder whether or not it was more common for elites and men in general to be convicted of witchcraft perhaps as targets of political rivals. Some things I found quite strange. Not the least of which Did that have some kind of historical precedent. Something to look into I guess. One thing I found very interesting was the sexual themes. The sexual themes in the movie are over the top. The nuns are presented as chomping at the bit to have sex, throw off their clothes, and go absolutely nuts. Their hysteria in all claiming to be possessed is presented both as a ploy to punish the lecherous priest Urbain Grandier and as a release from sexual repression. Humping the cross, nude nuns swinging from chandeliers, seducing the damn demonologist himself Pretty good movie, nonetheless.

Chapter 2 : gender and witchcraft by Abigail Schwartz on Prezi

Demonic possession was one form of revolt against repression, while a few nuns expressed their revolt more directly, and the impulse toward mysticism, seen as an embracing of the good to guard against the temptation of evil, was a different face of the same historical reality.

The stereotype of the witch as a woman therefore has statistical merit, but this was not the case in all regions. The most remarkable contrary example was in Iceland where between the years and only ten of the recorded witch-trials targeted a woman while only two, with one in debate, of the 22 known executions were of women. The first is the entrenchment of masculinity in the Icelandic magical world view dating to the Viking Age and evidenced in the language, literature, and mythology of Old Norse culture. The second reason is the absence of a relationship between magic, sexuality, and the demonic. With the Devil less of a marquee name in Iceland and a lack of interest in demonology among Icelanders, re-contextualizing women within a world of masculine magic was not possible. The dates used for this study to bookend the hunt in Iceland are and Routledge, , Burns, *Witch Hunts in Europe and America*: Greenwood Press, , Additionally, the *Museum of Icelandic Sorcery and Witchcraft* mentions a case from in which a man was accused of casting illness spells yet was forced to simply make economic restitution. The final following through of a death sentence conviction in is then the tidiest option for an end date. For the purposes of this study, the word magic refers to the general act of attempting to manipulate events by use of supernatural forces outside of the accepted Christian faith of Danish authority at the time. When used here, the word witchcraft and the label of witch will be referring to the Christian constructions of the period and will be used to reference how magic was viewed by the 3 Gunnar Karlsson, *The History of Iceland* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, , Within that tradition the Old Norse word for magic was *galdr*. Just as with magic in the rest of Europe, misfortune was everywhere and belief in the reality of *galdr* provided a sense of control over seemingly uncontrollable circumstances. Using incantations to do harm to persons or property were likely to be prosecuted as opposed to instances attempting to improve the results of a fishing trip or keep livestock healthy. In its original Old Norse context, *galdr* specifically refers to a song as an incantation of either good or bad intention, but during the early modern period it became congruous with the Latin *maleficium* malicious wrongdoing. Terminology is where the first clues emerge as to how deep the roots of masculinity in this magical tradition really were. In the rare instance a woman was under arrest, a combination of the charge and the name of the woman on trial was used. The records of this case are incomplete and the sentence of smothering is inconsistent with witch-trial convictions of the period. The exclusivity of a single masculine term for a witch and the cobbled together reference for a woman only possibly associated with magic indicates that *galdr* was generally perceived as a male endeavor at the time. Females were not wholly excluded from earlier magical traditions. Penguin Books, , Clarendon Press, , She is depicted in the sagas as an elderly woman who roamed the countryside and was paid to council, prophesize, and sometimes heal. Ordfront, , Killings, and David Widger [http: University of Pennsylvania Press, ,](http://www.upenn.edu/~widger/) *Heimskringla Sagas of the Norwegian Kings* and in perhaps the most well-known connection of Odin to the dead, it was he who brought forth the Valkyries to escort the spirits of fallen Viking warriors to Valhalla. Runes were the letters of an alphabet used to write Germanic languages prior to Latin influence. Among this knowledge were eighteen magical runes. Runic magic does not appear often in the primary sources as a female endeavor and is the first convention in *galdr* which becomes more closely associated with men than with women going forward. Runes then remained potent symbols in Iceland throughout the centuries including the Christian era where they appeared often on gravestones signaling there was still a spiritual component connecting them with the dead. Use of runes in connection to magic continued well into the early modern period and became one of two pieces of written evidence used in the witch-trails to prove that *galdr* was at the heart of the crime. If runes were found to be used by the man in question, the case was as good as closed and the conviction assured. The first burning of an accused witch in was the result of just such

evidence. In , Grimur Jonsson had been accused of sorcery by another man put to death in the same year, despite Danish law prohibiting such testimony. Grimur confessed to using runic inscriptions to ward off foxes from attacking his sheep. He was eventually found guilty and sentenced to the stake. There was no evidence of runic script among her possessions. Lithoprint, , Staves were intricate symbols drawn or etched onto paper, into wood, or in stone to accompany spells completing a formula for casting. The staves and their formulas were preserved in books called grimoires and possession of these books often resulted in a verdict of guilty. The books were originally confessed to being used to seduce women and attempt healing before a pressured confession stated use for causing illness to a local reverend who had accused them of working galdr against him. What became of female magical practice receives no attention in the early modern sources as there are no references to healers or to the seers of the Old Norse tradition. This is not to say it was not practiced at all, but because accusations were few, involved a male when they were so rarely made, and there was a lack of learning among women in areas which early modern galdr seemed to require, it seems improbable. It is also unlikely women were practicing much magic based on the folklore traditions which surrounded many of the formulas. *Annales Islandici* , *Posteriorum saeculorum* Reykjavik: Tempus, , One formula and related artifact took the masculine necessity to an extreme. This rich tradition predisposed Icelanders to point their fingers at men once the hunt reached their shores. Even had authorities managed to overcome this tradition in order to target women, evidence which Icelanders would buy as credible proof was unlikely to be found. Even an attempted re-contextualization of women within the new European notion of witchcraft would have failed. This is because Icelandic society had little regard for a major factor of the European hunt – demonology and the way in which female sexuality played into the European satanic-panic. Across most of Europe, the ruling elite and literate upper class magistrates, sheriffs, judges were convinced by theologians, clerics, and other groups responsible for the manufacturing and dissemination of spiritual ideas, of a relationship between witches and Satan. The diabolical aspects of witchcraft were what frightened the upper classes and with a fear of magic doing harm already playing 26 Simpson, 27 Simpson, on the insecurities of the populace, fear of a Devil in which they already believed fanned the flames. In order for the Christian judicial machine to conduct such a widespread purge, the people needed to believe there was not just a threat of maleficium against them and their families, but that Christ had been rejected, Christian civilization was in danger, and it was all from an organized conspiracy in the name of a common spiritual enemy. It was said that the Devil would show himself to prospective witches and lure them into a pact to do his bidding with promises of sexual pleasure, wealth, or influence. They were then to gather and celebrate their evil by dancing naked, participating in orgies including sexual acts with Satan himself. It contextualized fears of blasphemy, sexual deviancy, and gave authorities an opportunity to hunt down more than one witch at a time. The recurring theme in these treatises was that women were easily tempted by Satan into sexual congress due to their naturally weak moral constitution. The most important example of this comes from the *Maleficarum* which addresses women as intellectually inferior, highly superstitious, and infected with insatiable carnal lust. Manchester University Press, , Women had a role to play in exacerbating the situation by voicing delusions, or perhaps better understood as fantasies, about their sexual relationship with the Devil. A great many claims of demonic sex came to light outside of trials as confessions, some without coercion, or even before being taken into custody. This allowed for the expression of life experience by giving voice to previously voiceless thoughts and emotions. Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, , *An Account of the Historical Practice of Witchcraft*, transl. Dover Publishing, The Devil would come to her for decades to make love, even when she slept beside her husband. These expressions then took the form of demonic manifestations as their religious and cultural conditioning had them believe that the Devil was in the business of granting all too human desires of which they should be ashamed. Female sexuality was also under attack within the framework of demonic possession. No case better illustrates this than that of Nicole Obry France, Nicole was 16 years old, recently married to one of her uncles, who one day said she encountered a spirit at a nearby church. Following the encounter she suffered seizures and after interrogation from a priest it was determined she was possessed. Exorcisms were performed during

which much was gleaned by the clergy regarding the nature of the possession. The Devil then called the girl, in the throes of possession, a prostitute and whore. She later began lactating and complained of sore breasts. This is a typical case of the period highlighting the way female sexual anxieties were fundamental to constructions of demonic theory. Palgrave Macmillan, , Records are scant but we know that there was less of a misogynistic approach to witchcraft in the years before the Reformation. Palladius claimed that scores of witches were being found and as one after another gave up their associates the hunt would only grow larger. His plans came to an end in when the government established two important restrictions on how witches could be hunted. The new laws stated that testimony from those convicted could never be used as evidence to convict another and no torture was permissible until after a death sentence verdict had been handed down. The sabbath is largely absent in Danish accounts, likely due to the testimony laws removing incentive to believe in large gatherings, but this did not rid the trials of sexual content. The woman as temptress to evil was still very much part of the Danish religious culture, and just as her European neighbors, it was the continuation of medieval ideas. Medieval church murals often show women being the first to succumb to temptation and therefore were the first to enter Hell as a warning to men not to be lured by their charms. Of the known witch-trials in Denmark between and , percent of those brought to trial were women. This was the complexion of witch-hunting in Denmark when officials were sent to Iceland. To stamp out heresy, local sheriffs were appointed from Copenhagen rather than being chosen locally. For centuries Christianity had been an institution forced into the culture by the elite and slowly incorporated by the people. The desire to have agency over the things which brought harm was motivation enough to maintain belief in galdr with no consequence on testing the waters of Christianity. The latter borrowed heavily from the Maleficarum and declared traditional galdr was born from the Devil, but the Devil as a major influence never caught on. This was the most the Devil was ever mentioned in a trial by locals. In the rest of Europe, diabolism was a necessary agent through which attitudes towards women, justified via their sexuality, could be propagated and used to enact a female-centric witch-hunt. A demonizing of women was then not possible in Iceland with such a cold reception to diabolism and all of the sexual baggage which would have accompanied it. An attempted re-contextualization of women would not have stood a chance from the outset as the Danish approach to witch-hunting acted as an unintentional filter, watering down the European misogyny by enacting laws which reduced the importance of the sabbath, and therefore the setting for many sexual dalliances and theories of conspiracy. Danish medieval ideas of women may have helped its own hunt maintain misogynistic tendencies, but the concept of female corruptibility had no means of transmission in the previous centuries with Iceland alone for so long as a pagan outpost.

Chapter 3 : Witchcraft Reader (, Paperback) | eBay

A divine apparition or demonic possession? Female agency and Church authority in demonic possession in sixteenth-century France. This reading is also reprinted in Oldridge's "The witchcraft reader" (link above).

Loudun was notable for several reasons. It was a town full of churches and religious houses. It stood at the edge of the Huguenot heartland around La Rochelle, it was divided between Protestants and Catholics and, in , it was the scene of a conference between the two churches, with a view to finding grounds for reconciliation. The most striking event in Loudun before the demoniac crisis, however, was a devastating outbreak of plague from May to September , which killed 3, out of a population of 14, An evil power had struck the town. As the plague faded away, a newly founded convent of Ursuline nuns, among them several well-connected aristocrats, began to be visited by demonic phenomena, though its walls had not been breached by the plague. Urbain Grandier was charming and eloquent, arrogant and hated. He made enemies in high places and he was rumoured to enjoy the favours of rich widows. He was believed to be the father born to the daughter of the prosecutor Trincant. He took as his mistress Madelaine de Brou, the orphaned daughter of a royal councillor. It became known in Loudun that he had written "a little handwritten book against the celibacy of priests," addressed to "his dearest concubine". The worldly parish priest had not only made enemies in the town by his licentious behaviour. It was rumoured that he was the author of a pamphlet that greatly offended the Capuchins and Cardinal Richelieu, the most powerful man in France. This folly, if indeed Grandier committed it, came home with a vengeance when Suzanne Hammon, the sister of the shoemaker and one of the few laywomen associated with the possession case, accused him of being a sorcerer. Urbain Grandier was a libertine, a scoundrel and, for all his wit, a fool but it seems highly unlikely that he was any kind of sorcerer or necromancer. Had such a notion been suggested when he was in his pride, he would have laughed it to scorn as fanciful nonsense. Indeed, he tried to mock the accusation when it came, but the fatal judgement was inexorable. Only a few marginal and rural physicians were prepared to speak out against the reality of the demonic phenomena. Their more astute medical colleagues knew better than to challenge such agents of Richelieu as the baron de Laubardemont, two of whose sisters-in-law belonged to the convent. The arrival of the Devil In late September , the nuns began to see strange phenomena around the nunnery. Before many days had passed, these solidified into the spectral shape of Urbain Grandier, stalking the corridors of the nunnery at night. Gradually, more and more of the nuns began to go into convulsions and to speak with strange voices. Nicolas Aubin, a Protestant pastor in Loudun, wrote in his published account of the affair that the nuns "struck their chests and backs with their heads, as if they had their necks broken, and with inconceivable rapidity; they twisted their arms at the joints of the shoulder, the elbow, or the wrist, two or three times around. Lying on their stomachs, they joined the palms of their hands to the soles of their feet; their faces became so frightful one could not bear to look at them; their eyes remained open without winking. Their tongues issued suddenly from their mouths, horribly swollen, black, hard, and covered with pimples, and yet while in this state they spoke distinctly. They threw themselves back till their heads touched their feet, and walked in this position with wonderful rapidity, and for a long time. They uttered cries so horrible and so loud that nothing like it was ever heard before. They made use of expressions so indecent as to shame the most debauched of men, while their acts, both in exposing themselves and inviting lewd behaviour from those present would have astonished the inmates of the lowest brothels in the country. Marthe Thibault, Jeanne Pasquier. Magdeleine Beliard, Marthe Thibault. For full details of which demons afflicted which women, in what parts of the body, see Michel de Certeau The battle for the souls of the afflicted Fortunately, powerful and experienced exorcists were available, to command and control the demons. They used incense and the sacraments, the crucifix and the Bible, incantations and prayer to wrestle with the powers of darkness. The efficacy of their labours demonstrated the truth of Catholic religion and the inherent force of Catholic rites, against the claims of Protestants. Over and over again, the afflicted women went into contortions and spoke obscenities in strange

voices, usually in church, often in public, and frequently in the presence of visiting dignitaries such as the local bishop and Prince Louis de Bourbon, who went into religious ecstasies at the sight. On occasion, the exorcists managed to force the demons to relinquish control of the possessed women, but their successes remained limited. By the foot of the bishop was found a document, which was indeed the signed pact which the exorcist had demanded. The pact, signed on the left by Grandier, on the right by Asmodeus, Leviathan, etc. In trials for witchcraft, more conspicuously than in other situations, the location of truth is determined by the interests of the powerful. When Urbain Grandier came to trial for bewitching the nuns, on July 8, , the decision was virtually a foregone conclusion. The case was prepared by Laubardemont, and every judge would have known who stood behind him. The meetings of his supporters are declared illegal and branded as Huguenot rebellion. There is a surviving letter from Urbain Grandier to Louis XIII , protesting his innocence and asking for doctors of the Sorbonne to be appointed as independent investigators. Unlike his father, Henri IV, who only converted to Catholicism when he became King, Louis was notably pious, indeed he was probably the only truly faithful Catholic among all the Bourbon kings of France, so he was no more likely to intervene on behalf of a libertine and sorcerer than he was to offend Cardinal Richelieu. On August 8, in Paris, two men, one of them a priest, were condemned to death for sorcerous practices aimed at Cardinal Richelieu. On August 18, , the sentence was pronounced: Ursula of this town. There on his knees, to ask pardon of God, the King, and the law; this done, he is to be taken to the public square of St. Croix, and fastened to a stake on a scaffold, which shall be erected on the said place for this purpose, and there to be burned alive, with the pacts and magic figures remaining with the clerk of the court, together with the book written by his hand, composed against the celibacy of priests, and his ashes scattered to the wind. And before proceeding to the execution of the present sentence, we order the said Grandier to be submitted to the first and last degrees of torture, concerning his accomplices. Urbain Grandier Poitiers, Following torture with the Spanish boots, which crushed his legs to a pulp, Grandier was dragged to his execution the same day. Every time he called on God to aid him, his torturers "rebuked him, since on that same morning we were very certain that he was a magician, and on that basis, we knew very well that when he spoke of God favourably he meant to speak of the Devil To the end, Grandier professed his faith in God and his belief that he was on his way to heaven. The Recollect exorcist who accompanied Grandier to the pyre, Father Lactance, exorcized the wood lest the Devil hinder its burning, refused the kiss of peace to Grandier, and put the flame to the pyre himself. He died shortly afterwards, doubtless exhausted by his heroic struggles with the demons. However, some of the demons proved obstinate and the spiritual struggle continued long after the execution of Urbain Grandier. The nuns continued to go into convulsions, to utter profanities in strange voices, and to be observed by distinguished visitors. Even less fortunately, some of the bold exorcists succumbed to the dark forces with which they wrestled. First to fall was Father Tranquille, who had been the most intransigent of the exorcists before the trial. According to Laubardemont, writing to Richelieu, "His body is agitated, without pain, in a most prodigious fashion. In July , the Minim father and mathematician, Marin Mersenne, exchanged letters with the gentleman-scholar Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc on the subject of Surin, "himself possessed or obsessed, as is shown by his letters. During the Enlightenment, this case was held against the French Catholic Church, which continued to conduct exorcisms, as a demonstration of Catholic oppression and bigotry. F5 H8 John R. P38 T52 Bibliography of the Loudun events Most of the pamphlet literature that appeared on the case is not accessible at ND, and I know of no modern collection of primary material dealing just with Loudun. However, we do have a couple of relevant items. Undoubtedly, the best secondary account is that of the late Michel de Certeau, a major French theorist. As a former Jesuit, he writes sympathetically about both Grandier and Surin. As a psychotherapist and historian, he deals far more carefully with the psychological condition of the afflicted women than most historians of witchcraft have done. A relation of the deuil Balams departure out of the body of the Mother-Prioress of the Ursuline nuns of Loudun Faithfully translated out of the French copie, with some observations for the better illustration of the pageant London, microfilm: Early English books, ; reel , no. The Eighteenth Century; reel , no. Robert Rapley, A Case of Witchcraft: G73 R36 J. Crane, "Thomas

DOWNLOAD PDF DIVINE APPARITION OR DEMONIC POSSESSION? MOSHE SLUHOVSKY

Killigrew and the possessed nuns of Loudun: B A4 Background bibliography The events of Loudun need to be set into the context of previous French possession and witchcraft cases, and into the bitterly divided religious situation of France during and after the Wars of Religion. The latter comprises too large a historiographical literature to be listed here, although a work on a slightly earlier period might prove especially useful: Pearl, *The Crime of Crimes*: F5 P43 Jonathan L. W48a Julien Maunoir, *Miracles et Sabbats*: M3 Anita M. Walker and Edmund H. Dickerman, "The haunted girl: S5 Moshe Sluhovsky, "A divine apparition or demonic possession? Female agency and church authority in demonic possession in sixteenth-century France", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 27 D 1. Cunningham, " The Devil and religious controversies of sixteenth-century France ", *Essays in History* 35 Jean-Joseph Surin Among the participants in the events at Loudun, perhaps the most notable was the great Jesuit mystic, Father Surin. Although ND Library does not have his writings on the affair, his correspondence contains references to the events and his involvement, and his religious thought is an important context for Catholic responses to the affair.

Chapter 4 : The Witchcraft Reader : Darren Oldridge :

Demonic possession in Western Christianity is, like witchcraft, a discourse into which questions of gender can be articulated, and often have been articulated historically, with the sex of the.

Witchcraft and the Occult, Demonic possession The hanging of a possessed peasant woman: This had not been a feature of ancient Judaism. Those Hebrew Scriptures known as the Old Testament contain few references to demonic possession, and none at all to exorcism. There was certainly a deep hostility towards all forms of magic: Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. In each case, it was God who specifically sent an evil or lying spirit to torment individuals. During that phase of Judaism which succeeded the writing of the canonical Old Testament, there developed a belief in the Devil and in other fallen angels, partly as a result of influences from neighbouring cultures. This is to be found expressed in some of the books of the so-called Apocrypha, written in the second century BC. For example, Tobias, the son of Tobit, is advised by an angel on how to conduct himself during his wedding night in order to deal with the demon Asmodeus, infesting his bride: The which smell when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him. This is the source of the notion of fallen angels. It was quoted extensively in both the New Testament and Christian apocrypha, and its ideas strongly influenced many of the Church Fathers. Thus, the early Christians had a pervasive belief that demonic forces were constantly to be battled, and stories of Jesus casting out demons feature prominently in the Gospels. In Acts, the apostles cast out demons. The other New Testament texts make no mention of the topic. Since the competing views of possession and dispossession during the early modern period always cited biblical texts, it may be useful to summarize what the early Church believed. In the Bible, victims of possession are never held responsible for their situation. There are no references which imply that their possession was caused by some sin in their life. None of the victims were criticized for having allowed themselves to become possessed. The case of the Gadarene swine Matt. Various passages refer to possession of a single individual by multiple demons. This is an unusual example, however, as usually demons are described as harmful. Two characteristics that continued to be ascribed to possessing demons in the early modern period are worthy of note: The early Church saw evil spirits as characterized by varying degrees of wickedness Matt. Dispossession was generally straightforward. With one exception, Jesus or an apostle simply ordered the evil spirit to depart, and the demon immediately complied. Jesus cured the child: The power to dispossess could remain in items used by the apostles: No specialized ministry of exorcism is described among the apostles, and there is emphasis on the faith required to make the cure succeed. By doing battle with demons, the saints acquired power over them and were then able to cast them out of others. On one occasion, Antony rebuked a demon that was infesting a young nobleman. When he was attacked by the possessed man, Antony told his companions, "Do not be angry with the young man, for he is not responsible but the demon in him. For the society that succeeded the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, deserted ruins and wildernesses were everywhere outside the towns, places that were feared as the haunt of ghosts and evil spirits. Monasteries too were noted for demonic visitations, and magicians were held to attract evil spirits by their activities, even if they did not conjure such visitation themselves. Medieval moral literature is full of cautionary tales about conjurers being seized by powerful demons whom they could not control. St Augustine was especially vehement in his denunciation of all dealing with demons, whether by divination or conjuration. In this, the early Church participated in a widespread fear in Late Antiquity of all forms of magic, no matter how seemingly trivial. The contribution of the theologians was to attribute all magical efficacy to demons, although they may have intended to lessen the extent of the harsh imperial punishments inflicted on magicians. From the beginning, casting out demons is associated with evangelical activity. Not all saints are characterized by such work, but the preachers often are. However, there is no suggestion of the prolonged theatrical exorcisms of later centuries. Throughout the lives of the saints, it is their calm power that is emphasized. St Martin of Tours, for example, "touched no one with his hands, and

reproached no one in words, as a multitude of expressions is generally rolled forth by the clerics; but the possessed being brought up to him, he ordered all others to depart, and the doors being bolted, clothed in sackcloth and sprinkled with ashes, he stretched himself on the ground in the midst of the church, and turned to prayer. According to Gregory of Tours, in his *Vitae Patrum*, Gregory, bishop of Langres, "had the possessed come to him, and without touching them but simply making on them the sign of the cross, he ordered the demons to leave without a word. Immediately these demons, hearing his command, set free the bodies which their malice had enchained. Such use of the cross was justified with reference to the magical powers of the rod of Moses, in Exodus. The sacraments and sacramentals also came to be viewed as instruments of power, especially chrism exorcized olive oil and balsam and holy water exorcized salt and water. After the development of the cult and feast of Corpus Christi in the thirteenth century, the consecrated host assumed the premier position among these. As the Catholic Encyclopedia comments, "One of the most remarkable effects of sacramentals is the virtue to drive away evil spirits whose mysterious and baleful operations affect sometimes the physical activity of man. To combat this occult power the Church has recourse to exorcism and sacramentals. Such noted saints, filled with divine charisma, could cast out demons by their mere authority. Lesser mortals were obliged to rely upon the ritual of exorcism. This evolved gradually, and was clearly related to both mystical asceticism and ritual magic. These extraordinary measures clearly indicate the degree of purity expected of an exorcist or magician. Among the formulas for discovering a thief or silencing enemies, one finds the techniques for expelling demons. The demon would be conjured to reveal how he might be expelled, just as sometimes preachers would compel demons to vouch for the truth of the Gospel. Such techniques were employed until the regularization of the procedure in the *Rituale Romanum*, published under Pope Paul V, in This is not the new ritual of These states were defined piecemeal, so that there was not always a great deal of agreement on precise definitions, but they were broadly understood by most of the people concerned. Historians, however, have not always understood. They have either lumped them all together as "hysteria", a medical diagnosis that is now defunct in the United States but which is supposed to be equivalent to the contemporary diagnosis known in English as "suffocation of the mother", or else they have lumped them all together as "possession", and imagined that they are employing contemporary terminology. Thus, Michael MacDonald discusses the case of Mary Glover in terms of "possession", even though virtually no one mentioned that possibility at the time because the contest was between a diagnosis of bewitchment and one of hysteria. Carol Karlsen, discussing New England cases, does not differentiate between direct possession and bewitchment. The problem is that historians "know" that possession and bewitchment are impossible. They therefore tend to favour those contemporaries who diagnosed fraud or disease, disregarding the extent to which those diagnoses were just as politically constructed as demonological ones were. In England under the Stuarts and in France, except during the reign of Louis XIII, the state and its agents, whether religious or medical, had good reasons to seek to discredit possession cases, as the propaganda wars which they engendered tended to be politically disruptive. It is therefore necessary to clarify how things stood during the period of the witch trials of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This will enable students to listen to the texts for distinctions and confusions which have escaped many professional historians. There were five possible diagnoses for extraordinary symptoms: Occasionally used in the case of exceptionally pious people, such as Father Surin during the Loudun aftermath. Hysteria, or "suffocation of the mother": In males, epilepsy might be diagnosed. Walker, in his *Unclean Spirits*; often linked to disease diagnoses, as a partial explanation; sometimes diagnosed in contentious cases, usually for political reasons. Everyone demonized Anabaptists and other sectaries, a tradition that was followed right through to the condemnation of the Quakers, the French Prophets and the Methodist enthusiasts. Given the feverish level of rhetorical contestation, it is far from surprising that the power to cast out demons became a major weapon in the confessional conflict. Accordingly, there was an increase in cases, which was attributed to the nearing of the end times: He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short. Both sides attempted to show that theirs was the one true religion, as demonstrated by their inheriting the apostolic power to cast out demons.

Catholics and Lutherans continued to use and refine the rite of exorcism; Calvinists insisted that it was a superstitious innovation and employed prayer and fasting, citing the gospels. Catholics were especially keen to demonstrate the power of the consecrated host to perform miracles; Calvinists denied the Real Presence and insisted that the age of miracles had ceased with the passing of the apostles. Both sides tried to use dispossession as propaganda, often by interrogating the demonic voice in ways that bordered on magical conjuration. Of the many documented examples, a few will have to suffice here. Her testimony and subsequent treatment reveal a distinction made between witches, who voluntarily entered into a pact with the devil, and the possessed, whose connection with the devil was involuntary. Fontaine displayed evidence of being both, and she was treated with compassion and moderation. Her case was apparently not used for political or religious propaganda, somewhat unusually, perhaps because of her uncertain status. In several other French cases of possession and exorcism involving girls or young women, such as those of Nicole Obry, Nicole le Roy, Marguerite Obry, and Martha Brossier, Catholic anti-Protestant propaganda demonstrated that the Eucharist and priests were capable of exorcising the possession. Some of these cases became the site of intense medical and religious contestation. French exorcism controversies and demonological literature stemmed largely from particular political events, starting with the religious wars in the s. Pro-papal Catholic zealots, including Jesuits, Dominicans, and Capuchins, used demonic possession and its exorcism as propaganda against both Protestants and Gallican Catholics. A contemporary case in Utrecht involving two apparently demoniac adults, Mayken Huberts and Clara Gelaudens, turned out rather differently, demonstrating the importance of local considerations. The tale of these two sisters-in-law reveals that demonic possession was a highly charged, emotional issue about which many social groups, not just the elites and power brokers, had opinions. The magistrates handed down a verdict which convicted no one. They leaned toward a judgment of fraud, but ordered the husbands to keep their wives indoors and threatened to commit the women to the madhouse if they appeared again on the streets of the city. In and , two Ursuline novices underwent an exorcism in southern France, in a notorious case that laid the foundations for the possessions at Loudun. In the spring of , their confessor, Father Louis Gaufridy, was condemned of witchcraft and rape by Dominican inquisitors and burned at the stake by state officials. The Dominican inquisitors found Gaufridy guilty of causing the Ursulines to be possessed by demons, and of luring the young women to caves where they participated in illicit activities. Rather than accepting the role of victim, the Ursulines, working together, accomplished the miraculous: Through an intricate interplay of accusation and expiation, carefully worked through the demons that possessed them, the Ursuline novices rehabilitated themselves as virtuous women religious. The situation in Italy was somewhat different from that in France, because of the absence of any significant Protestant movement.

Chapter 5 : Curriculum Vitae

"Moshe Sluhovsky's fascinating study links spirit possession, exorcism, and mystical practice in early modern Europe. Women and men, healers and priestly exorcisers are caught up in a new quest for truth and introspection as they try to figure out whether these dramas of body and soul come from the devil or God.

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Kisha Tracy Moshe Sluhovsky. *Believe Not Every Spirit: University of Chicago Press, Possession, Mysticism, and Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism* examines possession, mysticism, and the "typically female" body through the lens of changes in Catholicism in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, primarily France, Spain, and Italy. Demonstrating a knowledge of a wide range of primary records detailing what he identifies as varying degrees of possession, Sluhovsky also reveals a command of the previous critical approaches to this subject, employing them but not allowing his own work to be restricted by their weaknesses. Instead of focusing on purely psychological, anthropological, and sociological models of explaining either demonic or divine possession, this work analyzes specific cases, relating them to the evolution of Catholic belief and the anxieties between the Church and those who practiced a more interiorized system of spirituality. The introduction to *Believe Not Every Spirit*, although occasionally difficult to follow, is effective in how it outlines the methodology and framework of the study. In particular, it defines how this work seeks to accomplish something different with a topic that has been researched extensively. Sluhovsky states that the three subjects of the book are the changing roles of exorcism, the definition of discernment methods, and the influence of mysticism. The Church was concerned with devising systems for validating or condemning the spirits invading human bodies and souls, but these practices, called discernment, were far from uniform, creating debate among all interested parties concerning the right of the individual to diagnose him- or herself. Sluhovsky approaches the concepts of demonic and divine possession as interrelated, identifying the act of discernment of possessing spirits as equally significant as the act of possession itself. In the first chapter, Sluhovsky makes a distinction between possession of the body and possession of the soul. Sluhovsky asserts that later, in the early modern era, possession became a matter of the soul, a reaction to the interiorization of spirituality exemplified by the mystic tradition. He does avoid here the error of absolutes and does not argue that perception changed completely from one century to the next. Rather, he points out that the trend seemed to change and that more possessions appeared to be attributed to the soul rather than the body, indicating the influence of the interiorized spirituality followed by practitioners of mysticism, which Sluhovsky groups into the broad categories of pre-*Quietists* and *Quietists*. Sluhovsky clearly discusses the anxieties of the Church concerning both mystics and possession. There was a distinct concern with individuals, especially women, being able to interpret their own religious experiences. This concept of the Church suspecting mystics is not a new claim. They often believed that they were prime targets of the devil, incurring his wrath by devoting their lives to the pursuit of a one-on-one relationship with God. These concerns made discernment a primary focus. Yet the question becomes: What are the distinguishing signs separating diabolic and divine possessing spirits? And, additionally, who were qualified to be authorities of both discernment and exorcism? The answers to these difficult questions were the subject of much theological debate. In this undefined space, opportunities developed for individuals to step into new roles. You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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Chapter 6 : Spirit possession in South Asia, dissociation or hysteria? Part 2: Case histories

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Sluhovsky approaches the concepts of demonic and divine possession as interrelated, identifying the act of discernment of possessing spirits as equally significant as the act of possession itself. In the first chapter, Sluhovsky makes a distinction between possession of the body and possession of the soul.