

Book I, chapter 9, John turned to magic, omens, dreams, divination, and other forms of vice touching on the preternatural that courtiers must avoid, concluding his discussion at the end of Book II. Thus John's work provided not only a window on the newly emerging life of the court but also an analysis of the insecurities of that world, based on many years of shrewd observation and a profound moral concern.

In his discussion of the magical arts, John drew widely on his extensive reading of classical Latin literature, the Bible, the encyclopedic work of Isidore of Seville, and the Church Fathers, particularly St. Augustine. John considered all of his sources and authorities to be discussing the same phenomenon, and some scholars have dismissed these sections of the *Policraticus* as simply a parade of recondite learning. But John was genuinely alarmed at the prevalence of magic, particularly in the form of fortunetelling, divination, and forbidden forms of astrology. He had firsthand experience of its appeal to many courtiers (including Becket), and he possessed a profound awareness of the dangers it posed to unwitting, ambitious, unlearned courtiers who needed both instruction about its true nature and a body of authoritative evidence to justify John's warnings.

John even included some autobiographical details in Book II, 28, telling of his own youthful experience in which a priest tried to use him as a medium in a procedure of crystal gazing. At the end of Book II, 17, John refers to the general belief in night-riding women and infant cannibalism that was found in the *Canon Episcopi*, as well as in the work of Burchard of Worms. John stated that, with divine permission because of human sin, demons may cause humans to suffer only in the spirit things that they believed happen in the flesh. John brusquely dismissed the idea that such assemblies actually occurred, and insisted that the entire belief was the result of the illusions created by sporting demons, affecting only poor old women and simpleminded men. In this regard, John firmly asserted the power of proper religious and moral instruction as the only legitimate means of combating the powers of demons, which operated only on the spirit and not in the material world. John's work was an important example of twelfth-century humanist moral skepticism.

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**See also:** ASTROLOGY; AUGUSTINE ST.; BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIVINATION; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HOLDA; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; LAMIA; SABBAT; SKEPTICISM; SORCERY.

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**JOHN XXII, POPE (RULED 1316–1334)**

Throughout his pontificate, John XXII exhibited a marked concern over matters of sorcery, divination, and demonic invocation. The pope feared magical assaults and assassination attempts on his own person, and he used charges of heresy, sorcery, and idolatry as political weapons against his enemies. He also promoted the more general persecution of sorcery by ordering papal inquisitors to take action against sorcerers and by issuing a sentence of automatic excommunication against all those who practiced any form of demonic invocation that entailed the supplication or worship of demons. His bull on this matter, *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower), remained an important part of the legal apparatus against practitioners of sorcery for the remainder of the Middle Ages.

John XXII was born Jacques Duèse in Cahors, France, in 1244. He was educated by the Dominican Order, and studied theology and law at Montpellier and Paris. He became a very prominent canon lawyer, a professor of both civil and canon law, and rose through the ranks of the Church to become bishop of Fréjus, then of Avignon, and then cardinal-bishop of Porto. He came to the papal throne as the final choice in a long and hotly contested election (the papacy had been vacant for nearly two years). John's reign was eventful to say the least. He worked diligently to reassert papal power, especially financial power, in the wake of the recent move of the papal curia from Rome to Avignon; he involved himself in the dispute over the proper nature of religious poverty taking place within the Franciscan Order, fiercely opposing the so-called Spiritual Franciscans and their position of absolute poverty; he took issue with leading theologians such as William of Ockham and Marsilius of Padua; and he enmeshed himself in a protracted political contest with the Holy Roman emperor Louis IV.

John's involvement with matters of sorcery began almost as soon as he assumed the papacy. In 1317, he had Hugues Géraud, bishop of Cahors, arrested on charges of attempting to kill him through sorcery. Further charges of sorcery, demonic invocation, poisoning, and attempted assassination soon followed, leveled at various members of the papal court, prelates of the Church, and political enemies of the pope. In 1318, for example, the archbishop of Aix, Robert Mauvoisin, was charged with performing certain illicit magical practices, although he escaped condemnation. In 1319,

the Franciscan Bernard Délicieux was tried at Toulouse for possession of books of sorcery. In 1320, Matteo Visconti, the ruler of Milan, and his son Galeazzo, powerful opponents of John in Italy, were accused of plotting to murder the pope with sorcery, and from 1320 to 1325, numerous charges of heresy and demon worship were brought against John's political enemies in the Mark of Ancona.

In using accusations of heresy, sorcery, and demonic invocation for clear political purposes, Pope John was hardly alone in the early fourteenth century. Many individuals during this period found they could use such charges to eliminate or at least discredit rivals at court, or to augment or secure their own positions. Famously, servants of the French King Philip IV brought numerous charges of heresy and idolatry against the Knights Templar, undermining the order, leading to its dissolution in 1314, and allowing the French crown to seize much of the Templar property and wealth. Philip had also used charges of heresy and sorcery in his political struggle with Pope Boniface VIII. Yet, just because such charges were politically expedient and often clearly employed without real conviction, this does not mean that the belief in sorcery, the fear of possible magical assault, and the conviction that demonic invocation represented a terrible evil in the world were not very real for John XXII. In 1320, through a letter from William, Cardinal of Santa Sabina, he ordered the inquisitors of Toulouse and Carcassonne in southern France to take action against any sorcerer who invoked demons, offered sacrifices to them, or otherwise worshiped them. Later, in 1326, he issued the bull *Super illius specula*, in which he declared a sentence of automatic excommunication on anyone who engaged in demonic invocation, offered sacrifices to demons to procure supernatural services, or worshiped demons in any way. The pope was compelled to act, so he wrote, because such practices were drawing many Christians into grave error, sin, and heresy. Later papal decrees continued to spur inquisitors and other Church officials to act against sorcery and demonic invocation, and John's rulings would form an important legal basis for the prosecution of cases of sorcery, and later of witchcraft, in ecclesiastical courts.

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**See also:** GUI, BERNARD; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INVOCATIONS; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; TEMPLARS.

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### JONCTYS, DANIEL (1611–1654)

A physician, Jonctys offers a good example of the dramatic turnabout some academically trained people made in their views regarding witchcraft. Born in Dordrecht, he began his medical studies in Leiden in 1630, graduating five years later, followed by a Grand Tour during which he visited France, Germany, and Italy. In 1638, he published *Verhandelinge der Tooversieckten* (Treatise on Witchcraft Diseases), a translation of *De morbis a fascino et incantatione ac veneficiis inducitis*, a 1633 work by the German physician and Wittenberg professor Daniel Sennert (1572–1637). In opposition to Johann Weyer, this moderate Paracelsian claimed that witches concluded pacts with the Devil with the deliberate aim of harming other people. This alone was sufficient to sentence them to death, even though the pact could not have given them the power to realize their nefarious aims. Jonctys hoped that this translation would contribute to the debate about the reality of witchcraft. He emphasized that he did not believe that witches could change the course of nature, but also that they deserved punishment because of the pact.

In 1641, he published a long poem that, among other things, criticizes the attitude of the Reformed Church toward modern science. In reprisal, the Dordrecht church-council banned him, prompting Jonctys to move to Rotterdam, where the local Reformed Church was known to be less heavy handed. In his new domicile, he was soon allowed to participate again in church services. He also joined the local secular elite, being elected to a one-year term as alderman in 1648. In Rotterdam, his tendency to give a liberal interpretation to Calvinism seems to have increased, judging from his 1651 attack on the use of torture *De pyn-bank wedersproken en bematigd* (The Rack Opposed and Restrained). Its first two parts are a translation of a treatise that the Arminian minister Johann Greve (1584–1624) had published three decades earlier against the brutal treatment he had experienced after his imprisonment by orthodox Calvinists.

Greve had been born around 1584 in the duchy of Cleves in a well-to-do, patrician family. After studying theology, he became a minister of the Reformed Church where he joined the more liberal faction. In 1610, he was called to a small town in Holland. In 1618, the conflict inside the Dutch Reformed Church between Arminian Remonstrants and orthodox Counter-Remonstrants reached its zenith when Maurice of Orange used these troubles to justify his coup d'état. Greve was deposed, and on his refusal to step down was formally banished from the territory of