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WITCHCRAFT IN EUROPE AND AMERICA



The earliest texts in this comprehensive collection on witchcraft date from the 15th century and the latest are from the early 20th century. The majority of the material concerns the 16th to 18th centuries, the so-called "classic period." In addition to these classic texts, the collection includes anti-persecution writings, works by penologists, legal and church documents, exposés of persecutions, and philosophical writings and transcripts of trials and exorcisms.

Date Range: 1500 to 1930

Content: 263,207 images

Source Library: Cornell University, University of Pennsylvania, and others

Detailed Description:

Witchcraft in Europe and America is a comprehensive collection that offers a broad range of documents on an intriguing subject. Included are many rare and fragile manuscripts containing eyewitness accounts and court records of the trials of witches, including harrowing original manuscript depositions taken from the victims in the torture chamber. These documents, in both original manuscript and in print, often reveal the harsh penalties of remote doctrinal disputes. Perhaps the most significant of all manuscripts in the collection is the minutes of the witchcraft trial of Dietrich Flade, a sixteenth-century city judge and rector who spoke out against the cruelty and injustice of the persecutions in the 1580s.

The pronouncements of advocates of witch persecution can be compared and contrasted to the courageous warning of men who doubted the validity of witch believers and witch trials. Numerous dissertations and limited printed works examining the theological, legal, and social implications of witchcraft are reproduced in their entirety. This collection unlocks much more than the world of witchcraft; spanning the 15th to 20th centuries, it helps researchers trace the history and culture of Europe from the late Middle Ages through the Enlightenment.

The majority of texts are in Latin, English, and German. There are also selected documents in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, and Dutch.