This volume of twelve essays and an introduction, all in French, presents papers from a 2012 symposium at the University of Orleans and is titled with reference to Stuart Clark's *Thinking with Demons* (1997). It falls into two equal parts: the first deals with demonological treatises of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, while the second considers influences upon early modern demonology, particularly the classical inheritance.

In part 1, Julien Véronèse traces the development of Dominican inquisitor Nicholas Eymerich's thoughts on learned magic, including his assimilation of demonic magic to heresy, and finds a source for his early unpublished treatise *De jurisdicctione inquisitorum in et contra Christianos demones innocentes* (1359) in Guido Terreni's response to John XXII (1320); the essay concludes with a thirteen-page table noting the similarities between the two texts. Catherine Chêne takes as her subject matter Book 5 of the Dominican Johannes Nider's enormously influential demonological treatise, the *Formicarius* ("The Anthill," 1436–38), which she considers a precursor to early modern treatises on demonology, though still with a focus on pastoral care rather than persecution. Chêne especially considers Nider's approach to demonic possession and sexual assault, which draws heavily on Scholastic thought. Martine Osterero devotes her essay to the unpublished *De calcinatione demonum* of renowned Dominican inquisitor Nicholas Jacquier (1457), which, written one year prior to his more famous demonological treatise *Flagelium hereticorum fascinatorum*, insists upon the reality of demons and demonic sorcery and the need to combat both; Osterero also offers an interesting lexical study of the term *calcare* ("to press underfoot") in contrast to *etore* ("to cast out") in relation to early modern demonology. Franck Mercier reveals a fascinating social slippage in the common understanding of demonic powers in the Burgundian court of the mid-fifteenth century. Johannes Tinctor's *Traité du crime de vauderie* (1465), written primarily for an aristocratic audience, excoriates the practice of learned magic and sets limits on the powers of angels and demons; Tinctor's arguments, however, are undercut by the illuminated frontispieces that accompany his text in court manuscripts, which depict humans in magical flight through the power of demons. Jean-Marc Mandonio introduces the Dominican Leandro Alberi, a sixteenth-century Bolognese inquisitor who was concerned with learned magic and translated into Italian Giovanni Francesco Pico della Mirandola's demonological dialogue, *Strix* (1523). In his prefaces to this translation, Alberi notes the role of women and the influence of pagan antiquity in contemporary demonology. Christian Renoux offers a lexical study of the terms "possession" and "obession" in demonological treatises and historical accounts of possession from Nider and the *Malleus maleficarum* to the end of the seventeenth century. He finds the terms being rendered distinct in the seventeenth century, where their difference is related to the interiority of the devil at work in the victim, the permanence of the demonic attack, and victims' control and memory of their actions, speech, and emotions.

Part 2 begins with Philippe Faure's survey of the ways in which the supernatural impacted on the lives of the laity, and particularly women, in the later Middle Ages. Faure examines the demonic imagery in the visionary writings of Mechthild of Magdeburg and Birgitta of Sweden, then the treatises of spiritual discernment by Henri Suso and Jean Gerson, but provides no connection between these two sets of texts. Florence Chave-Mahir continues her meticulous lexical research into the historical records of exorcism with a study of the post-mortem miracles, particularly the liberation of the possessed, attributed in the fifteenth century to the arm of the eleventh-century saint John Gualbert. She argues that the sudden upsurge in cases...
of possession at this time in Tuscany is related to the dispute between two neighboring abbeys
over the rightful ownership of Gaulbert’s relic, while it also attests to the rising suspicion of
the practice of learned magic in the later Middle Ages. Turning to fourteenth- and fifteenth-
century mystery plays, Eylese Dupras offers insight into a different, popular representation of
demons in the Middle Ages—as comic foils to the saints, angels, and God. While demons
also appear as agents of fear, depicted as torturing and even cooking the damned in “Hell’s
Kitchen,” their roles as dupes and victims have an equally important didactic function in con-
firming God’s omnipotence and the saints’ ultimate victory over the demonic.

Marina Montesano and Marianne Closson both consider the role of classical inheritance
in the rise of early modern concerns over sorcery, a welcome change from the blame usually
accorded medieval Scholasticism on this account. Montesano finds images of flying women
who rapaciously devour children in the writings of Pliny, Apuleius, Petronius, and Ovid, which
fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian authors consciously modeled. She observes that the
regions most influenced by this classical tradition were the ones where the early modern image
of the witch arose most powerfully. Closson notes that Renaissance humanists, with their
valorization of classical literature, were more prone than medieval theologians to read classi-
cal literary accounts of animal metamorphosis as revealing basic truths about the power of the
devil and his sorcerers to alter the human form. Since these ancient stories of sorcery accorded
with contemporary confessions drawn from witch interrogations, they could reveal pagan lit-
erature as “true fiction” (309).

The volume concludes with Jean-Patrice Boulet’s study and first-time edition of the unique
copy of the Liber Bilath, a Latin treatise on demonic magic found in a fifteenth-century Floren-
tine manuscript of magic texts, which contains formulas to rouse Bilath, here the king of de-
mons, and make him answer questions about the past, present, and future in any of the three
biblical languages. The Liber Bilath reveals a conception of demons as mortal beings, with so-
cially upwardly mobile aspirations, capable of passing on their powers from one generation
to the next. Boulet examines the Arab, Hebrew, and Byzantine sources for the demon’s name
and traces his presence in other late medieval texts on angelic and demonic magic.

Despite the evident scholarship in this volume there are some notable limitations, with little
innovation in methodology or material. There are few references to scholars outside the Franci-
cophone tradition, with the exception of Michael Bailey, and even Clark, whose work gives a
title to the volume, is not further cited. The abstracts, written in English, are barely literate and
should have been proofread. In all, many of the French scholars who publish with SISMEIL
appear to work in a kind of scholarly bubble, with the same editors, authors, and indeed the
same essays, appearing in SISMEIL miscellanies year after year. For instance, the essays here by
Véronique and Renoux also appear in the 2015 SISMEIL collection Sœurs et démons (15e-
17e s.). I would question whether such a sealed environment can actually produce the best
scholarship, and wonder whether a diversification of authors and linguistic environments might
rather invigorate the ideas and approaches addressed in SISMEIL miscellanies.

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