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Issue 35

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# Magic Manuscripts from Somers and Jekyll in the Collections of the British Library

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Anyone who has had the pleasure to browse magic manuscripts in the British Library knows how rewarding the experience can be, particularly if the books belong to collections that have not been made accessible through adequate descriptive catalogues. A case in point are the magic manuscripts once in the possession of John Somers (1651-1716) and Sir Joseph Jekyll (*ca.* 1662-1738). With the exception of one item in the Additional collection, 23 of these important sources on medieval and early modern magical practices ended up in the library of the physician and antiquary Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753), whose books and artifacts formed the founding collection of the British Museum in 1753.<sup>1</sup> Even though the *ca.* 4,200 Sloane manuscripts are among the richest repositories on the history of science and medicine worldwide, the printed descriptive catalogues of these manuscripts are notoriously haphazard.<sup>2</sup> It is likely, therefore, that members of the Societas Magica working on late medieval and early modern ritual magic in the Sloane collection will be familiar with one or more of the Somers/Jekyll magic manuscripts, perhaps unknowingly. Frank Klaassen, for instance, relied on a fair number of these books in his study of late medieval and renaissance magic.<sup>3</sup> What is more, several treatises from these manuscripts have been published in translation as modern grimoires, and some have been edited on Joseph Peterson's Esoteric Archives.<sup>4</sup> In order to draw attention to these manuscripts not as isolated books but as a corpus of sources on ritual magic, this paper identifies these books and discusses how they entered the collections of the British Library.

My first encounter with magic manuscripts from Somers/Jekyll came

### **Picatrix cont'd**

in the form of Sloane 3853, which Scott's *Index to the Sloane Manuscripts* succinctly describes as "Tractatus et experimenta magica."<sup>5</sup> Though Scott's description is entirely accurate, it fails to capture the full spirit of Sloane 3853, which is a 268-folio composite manuscript miscellany in two parts, compiled by two scribes working independently in late sixteenth-century England. The first part of the manuscript contains the *Thesaurus spirituum*, a *Liber Razielis*-like treatise, the *Liber consecrationum*, the *Vinculum spirituum*, the *Speculum quatuor regum*, lengthy extracts from the *Liber iuratus Honorii*, all manner of conjurations and

magic circles, and instructions for skrying, and locating treasure and stolen goods. Introducing itself as the Dannel, the second part of the manuscript has a similar type of contents, but with its preference for brief, vernacular conjurations and lists of spirit names it leans even more towards necromancy than does the first part.<sup>6</sup> Inspection of the manuscript revealed a double table of contents: one was compiled by the scribe who wrote the first part of the manuscript and covers this part in detail (fols. 3r-4v); the other is in a later hand and deals with the entire manuscript in summary fashion (fol. 1r). Upon inspecting the manuscript's neighbor, Sloane 3854, it appeared that the same later hand had

provided a summary table of contents here too (fol. 1r-v). This 139-folio composite volume is known for its conjurations and the *Liber consecrationum* from sixteenth-century England, a fifteenth-century Latin version of the *Kitāb al-Iṣṭamāṭis* from Italy, and the earliest, fourteenth-century and sole complete version of the *Liber iuratus Honorii*.<sup>7</sup> On the flyleaves preceding the tables of contents in Sloane 3853 and 3854 are the comments "Lot 379 of Jekyll's sale, 1739/40," and "Lot 381 at Jekyll's sale in 1739/40," respectively. Needless to say, my interest in this Jekyll was raised, and a week of browsing through

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## Notes and Queries

### **Magic, Materials and Imagination at the Museum of Antiquities**

Tracene Harvey

Curator of the Museum of Antiquities at the  
University of Saskatchewan

From February to April 2017 the Museum of Antiquities at the University of Saskatchewan had the pleasure of hosting the inaugural showing of the exhibition *Magic Ancient and Modern: Materials and Imagination* curated by Professors Frank Klaassen (University of Saskatchewan) and David Porreca (University of Waterloo). This special exhibition, which incorporates material objects related to magic and divination from ancient to modern times in both physical and digital form, was the first of its kind to be featured at this museum. The Museum of Antiquities is best known for its impressive collection of plaster cast replica sculpture of ancient Greek, Roman, Near Eastern and Medieval European art. The opportunity offered by the *Magic Ancient and Modern* exhibit provided Museum of Antiquities' staff and volunteers with the unique opportunity to explore and learn how magic artifacts from a variety of cultures and time periods could be recreated and disseminated using digital tools.

As the director and curator of the Museum of Antiquities, I was branching out into uncharted territory with this exhibition given my area of expertise in Greek and Roman art and archaeology with a particular specialization in numismatics. Nonetheless, the idea of recreating artifacts pertaining

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## Somers and Jekyll cont'd

the Sloane magic manuscripts in the British Library unearthed many more manuscripts than just these two.

The person referred to in the Sloane manuscripts is Sir Joseph Jekyll, born *ca.* 1662, who started out as a lawyer associated with the Middle Temple in London. In 1697 he became chief justice, to rise to legal stardom by occupying the role of one of the most senior judges in the realm as Master of the Rolls from 1717 until his death in 1738.<sup>8</sup> Jekyll thanked his quick ascendance to the patronage of John Somers, first Baron Somers, who became Lord Chancellor in 1697. At around the same time, Jekyll married Somers's second sister Elizabeth (1655-1745).<sup>9</sup> A career and a wife were not the only benefits Jekyll enjoyed from Somers's patronage, however, because upon Somers's death in 1716, Elizabeth inherited her brother's extensive library, which included several hundred medieval and early modern manuscripts. As

a matter of course at the time, the library became Jekyll's, so that even though Elizabeth survived her husband, after Jekyll's death in 1738 the manuscripts were auctioned from February 26 to March 2, 1739 at St Paul's Coffee House in London. The remaining book collection was sold in January 1740.<sup>10</sup>

Many of the Somers/Jekyll manuscripts ended up in the hands of collectors whose volumes are now part of the British Library, that is, in the Egerton, Harleian, Sloane, Stowe, and Additional collections. Of particular interest to us are the 52 "libri astrologici, mathematici, medicinales, philosophici, &c" sold on the final night of the auction.<sup>11</sup> Sir Hans Sloane, who was very much interested in these topics, purchased 23 manuscripts, among which one volume of medicine, several manuscripts with autographs by renowned British astrologers, some theurgic magic, and many volumes of necromancy and image magic. These manuscripts are Sloane 3677-3679,

3821-3822, 3824-3826, 3846-3857, and 3883-3885. One other magic manuscript, not bought by Sloane at Jekyll's auction in 1739 but by the writer and antiquary Joseph Ames (1689-1759), was acquired by the British Museum in 1902.<sup>12</sup> This manuscript is now Additional 36674.

The Sloane and Additional manuscripts can be traced back securely to Jekyll and Somers. The Sloane manuscripts, for instance, often feature references on the flyleaves to their corresponding lot numbers in the auction of 1739. The Additional manuscript has no such lot number, and instead has a brief bibliographical note by Ames (fol. 4v), identifying it as a former Somers manuscript bought by him at Jekyll's auction at St Paul's Coffee House. Somers's erstwhile ownership of these manuscripts is evidenced by pressmarks on the flyleaves, which correspond to the items in the catalogue of Somers's manuscripts in London, British Library, Harley 7191. The **cont'd on page 4**

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## Notes and Queries cont'd

to seemingly timeless magical traditions and practices using artistic and digital techniques sparked the interests of both museum staff and student volunteers. Museums professionals, archaeologists, and historians are increasingly turning to 3D digital objects for the purposes of teaching and research, and this exhibit gave students and faculty at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Waterloo the chance to explore and try out some of these techniques on their own. Student artists recreated astrological

talismans described in the *Picatrix*, which were then 3D scanned and printed for the exhibit, while a computer science student recreated John Dee's *Sigillum Dei*, as well as the *Holy Almandal* using AutoCAD software. A digital and interactive version of the *Homeric Oracle* was designed by a student for use on a tablet much to the delight of museum visitors. Other students had the occasion to take part in molybdomancy, which provided museumgoers with the chance to interpret the resulting blobs of magical curiosity on their own.

From the start, the highly interactive and engaging nature of this exhibit led to its resounding success. This exhibit employed over twenty-five students, faculty and other professionals in its creation, and resulted in nearly two thousand people visiting the Museum of Antiquities over the course of its initial run. This success will continue to play out during its time at the University of Waterloo and other venues this coming fall and beyond due to another key to success for this exhibit: it can be downloaded, 3D printed, and displayed anywhere.

## Somers and Jekyll cont'd

scribe of this catalogue, probably a secretary of Somers entrusted with the library, is also the writer of the somewhat erratic summary tables of contents that appear in the Sloane and Additional manuscripts.<sup>13</sup>

With the exception of a few fourteenth- and fifteenth-century items, the manuscripts were of fairly recent date when Somers acquired them, some dating to the late seventeenth century even.<sup>14</sup> None of them was, however, copied by Somers or people in his direct circle. Internal evidence and bibliographical references allow us to trace all manuscripts back to before Somers's ownership. Sloane 3851, for example, is an anthology of ritual magic in the vernacular, including conjurations, Agrippan and pseudo-Agrippan excerpts, and excerpts from *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* by Reginald Scot (ca. 1538-1599). David Rankine posited that the manuscript was composed in the 1620s to 1630s by a certain Arthur Gauntlet (whose

name is mentioned on fol. 2v), and passed from him by way of several others to Elias Ashmole (1617-1692).<sup>15</sup> Additional 36679, to give another example, is a composite manuscript compiled in Somers's library but whose component parts have different origins. The opening parts were once owned by the poet Gabriel Harvey (ca. 1552/3-1631), who annotated them throughout.<sup>16</sup> Harvey identified the physician John Caius (1510-1573), second founder of Gonville and Caius College in Cambridge, as the original owner of some Agrippan and pseudo-Agrippan excerpts in this part of the manuscript (fol. 23r). Harvey's part of the manuscript also contains the first detailed skrying records, from 1567, by a certain H. G., whom Frank Klaassen surmised may have been the adventurer Sir Humphrey Gilbert (ca. 1539-1583).<sup>17</sup> Later parts of Additional 36679 contain autographs by John Dee (1527-1609), Simon Forman (1552-1611), William Lilly (1602-1681), and Ashmole. These parts are likely to have been assembled

by the latter, who was an avid collector of Dee's writings and those of earlier and contemporary astrologers. Ashmole is also the writer of Sloane 3678, which was produced in the early 1670s and contains copies of a number of Dee's writings. The first part of the composite manuscript Sloane 3679 is yet another manuscript that reached Somers through Ashmole, as David Pingree established. This is an early seventeenth-century version of the *Picatrix*, copied from an older manuscript owned by the astrologer Richard Napier (1559-1634), who obtained it from Forman. The copy of the *Picatrix* passed from Napier to his nephew Sir Richard Napier (1607-1676), who donated it to Lilly. Lilly subsequently traded the book with Ashmole against another copy of the *Picatrix* (probably Sloane 1305). Henry Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough (1623-1697), finally, acquired the *Picatrix* from Ashmole with a number of other magic manuscripts, and these then ended up in the possession **cont'd on page 5**

## The Societas Magica invites proposals for essays to run in future issues of the newsletter.



We are looking for short essays (1500-2500 words) announcing new developments deriving from research in the study and teaching of magic and its related topics. We would be especially interested to see lead articles on modern magic, or periods other than medieval. We are also looking for smaller pieces for our notes and queries column. News about dissertations in progress or completed, manuscript discoveries, or other such items are all welcomed.

Please contact David Porreca: [dporreca@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:dporreca@uwaterloo.ca)



[www.societasmagica.org](http://www.societasmagica.org)

## Somers and Jekyll cont'd

of Somers.<sup>18</sup> Other manuscripts that reached Somers through Ashmole are, for instance, Sloane 3822, 3824, and 3846. Ashmole dated some of his writings in these manuscripts to the 1670s.

These examples demonstrate that the magic manuscripts under discussion have a complex custodial history prior to Somers's ownership. In some cases this history can be traced back to the original scribe of a manuscript, as in the part of Sloane 3846 that contains a version of the *Liber Razielis* that Ashmole said was written by William Parry of Clifford's Inn in London (an Inn of Chancery) in 1564 at the request of John Gwyne of Llanidloes (fl. 1560s), surveyor of North Wales (fol. 128r).<sup>19</sup> In other cases, the custodial history cannot be traced back completely, but whatever the origins of a manuscript, we usually have at least the name of an intermediary owner. The key figure in all this seems to have been Ashmole, through whom a good number of manuscripts reached Somers. "*Magus*, savant, and man of the world," Ashmole is not an unlikely person to have owned magic manuscripts, and many of the Somers/Jekyll manuscripts contain additions, notes, and scribbles in his hand that reveal deep involvement with the contents of these books.<sup>20</sup> Whether Ashmole himself performed operations from the manuscripts, many of which are overtly necromantic, is a moot point because whereas Ashmole supported astrology and natural magic, he strongly opposed necromancy.<sup>21</sup> Yet what

is even more difficult to grasp is why Somers would collect magic manuscripts, and why Jekyll continued them in his collection. Rankine claimed that Somers was "an angel magician who collected numerous manuscripts of grimoires and magical practices" and that Jekyll "shared his [Somers's] passion for magic" and "gathered a huge collection of magical manuscripts."<sup>22</sup> Though Somers and Sloane corresponded on a number of subjects, including the Royal Society, which Somers presided from 1698 to 1703, there are no strong indications that Somers was involved in spirit conjuring in a theoretical or practical capacity.<sup>23</sup> The same would seem to apply to Jekyll, who did not go down in history as Master of the Rolls-*cum*-magical operator. In any case, thanks to the antiquarian efforts of Ashmole, Somers, Jekyll, and Sloane, the British Library is blessed with an outstanding collection of magic manuscripts.

I will not dwell on the contents of the Somers/Jekyll manuscripts so as not to spoil the fun of making discoveries for others. Instead, I would like to conclude with some observations on new features in early modern necromancy. Klaassen observed that there is a growing reliance on the vernacular, a use of printed sources, and the introduction of fairy conjuring in the sixteenth century, and these three features are indeed borne out by the Somers/Jekyll manuscripts.<sup>24</sup> Yet there are perhaps three more early modern developments. First, medieval practitioners of

necromancy are firmly rooted in a clerical underworld, as Richard Kieckhefer established, but there are good indications from the sources that this is changing in early modernity.<sup>25</sup> The *Liber consecrationum* in Sloane 3854, fol. 191r, for instance, calls upon a "mynyster" or "consecrator" who is explicitly not the "master in this worke" to hallow the sword. This might imply that the operator is perhaps no longer able to consecrate objects for magic rituals. Second, in some early modern Solomonic traditions seems to be a growing preference for hexagrams over pentagrams, while still calling the magic circles pentacles, for instance, in Additional 36674, and Sloane 3824, 3849, and 3851.<sup>26</sup> The hexagrammatic pentacle is a development that Kieckhefer did not need to discuss when

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## Somers and Jekyll cont'd

he analyzed the iconography of magic circles with the help of the medieval Munich handbook, but that apparently emerged in the early modern period, perhaps under the influence of Hebrew Solomonic treatises.<sup>27</sup> (The hexagram occurs not just in manuscripts, but also in print culture, as the pentacle in the *Heptameron* demonstrates.<sup>28</sup>) Third, magic circles in (copies of) medieval necromantic manuscripts seem to orient themselves most often to the east—in keeping with the etymology of *orient*—, sometimes to the south, rarely to the west, but not to the north (e.g., Sloane 3853, 3854). While preserving a preference for the east, magic circles in early modern necromantic manuscripts allow for the possibility of orienting to the north (e.g., Sloane 3851), which is a marked departure from medieval practices in both cartography and magic iconography.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Arthur MacGregor, ed. *Sir Hans Sloane: Collector, Scientist, Antiquary, Founding Father of the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1994). For the early development of Sloane's library, see M. A. E. Nickson, "Hans Sloane, Book Collector and Cataloguer, 1682-1698," *The British Library Journal* 14 (1988): 52-89.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Ayscough, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the British Museum hitherto Undescribed* [...], 2 vols. (London: John Rivington, 1782); Edward J. L. Scott, *Index to the Sloane Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1904). Ayscough's *Catalogue* is organized by topic, which makes references to magic manuscripts easy to find (*s.v.* magic and witchcraft, II.870-881), but the compiler made little effort to describe the manuscripts systematically or in

detail. The electronic catalogue of the British Library is more reliable than either printed catalogue, but since it too relies on antiquated information, it should be used with caution. See Explore Archives and Manuscripts, The British Library, [http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/search.do?fn=search&vl\(freeText0\)=jekyll+sloane](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?fn=search&vl(freeText0)=jekyll+sloane), accessed May 1, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic: Illicit Learned Magic in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Don Karr and Stephen Skinner, eds., *Sepher Raziel, also known as Liber Salomonis: A 1564 English Grimoire from Sloane MS 3826* (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2010); Don Karr, Calanit Nachshon, and Stephen Skinner, eds., *Liber Lunae or the Book of the Moon & Sepher ha-Levanah* (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2011); Michael-Albion MacDonald, ed., *De Nigromancia [attributed to] Roger Bacon, Sloane MS. 3885 and Additional MS. 36674* (Gillette: Heptangle Books, 1988); David Rankine, ed., *The Book of Treasure Spirits: A 17th Century Grimoire of Magical Conjurations to Increase Wealth and Catch Thieves through the Invocation of Spirits, Fallen Angels, Demons and Fairies* (London: Avalonia, 2009); idem, *The Grimoire of Arthur Gauntlet: A 17th Century London Cunning-man's Book of Charms, Conjurations and Prayers* (London: Avalonia, 2011). Joseph Peterson, Esoteric Archives <http://www.esotericarchives.com>, accessed May 1, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Scott, *Index*, 331.

<sup>6</sup> Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic*, 161-165; László Sándor Chardonens, "Necromancing Theurgic Magic: A Reappraisal of the Liber iuratus Extracts and the Consecration Ritual for the Sigillum Dei in an Early Modern English Grimoire," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 10 (2015): 172-198. See also Alec Ryrie, *The Sorcerer's Tale: Faith and Fraud in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 133-138.

<sup>7</sup> Charles S. F. Burnett and Marie

Stoklund, "Scandinavian Runes in a Latin Magical Treatise," *Speculum* 58 (1983): 419-429; Gösta Hedegård, *Liber iuratus Honorii: A Critical Edition of the Latin Version of the Sworn Book of Honorius* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> Tim Keirn, "Jekyll, Sir Joseph (bap. 1662, d. 1738)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online ed., Jan 2008 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14709>, accessed May 1, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Stuart Handley, "Somers, John, Baron Somers (1651-1716)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online ed., May 2008 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26002>, accessed May 1, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Cyril Ernest Wright, *Fontes Harleiani: A Study of the Sources of the Harleian Collection of Manuscripts Preserved in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1972), 204, 308-309.

<sup>11</sup> John Whiston, *A Catalogue of Valuable Manuscripts [...] All of which were Collected at the Expence [sic] of the Late Lord Somers, and since Belonged to the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Jekyll [...] (1739)*. Lots 342-352 (octavo), 372-395 (quarto), and 396-412 (folio) are the manuscripts in question. Some preliminary research reveals that items not bought by Sloane may tentatively be traced to other collections. Lot 380 (originally between what are now Sloane 3853 and 3854), for instance, probably survives in a copy by Charles Rainsford (1728-1809) as Alnwick, Alnwick Castle, MS. 588. For the latter, see Adam McLean, The Alchemy Website <http://www.levity.com/alchemy/alnwick.html>, accessed May 1, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the Years MDCCCC-MDCCCXV* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1907), 183-186.

<sup>13</sup> Note in Sloane 3846, between fols. 2 and 3.

<sup>14</sup> Aside from the fourteenth- and fifteenth-

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## Somers and Jekyll cont'd

century items in Sloane 3854 and a fourteenth-century flyleaf in Sloane 3884 (fol. 70), the items in the other magic manuscripts that are said to antedate 1500 according to the descriptive catalogues are from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, judging by the scripts and the page layouts (e.g., the *Liber Thebit Ben Corat* in Sloane 3846, fols. 88v-95r, and the *Liber imaginum Sebel* in Sloane 3847, fols. 101r-112r).

<sup>15</sup> Rankine, ed., *The Grimoire of Arthur Gauntlet*, 23-27.

<sup>16</sup> *Catalogue of Additions*, 183.

<sup>17</sup> Frank Klaassen, "Ritual Invocation and Early Modern Science: The Skrying Experiments of Humphrey Gilbert," in Claire Fanger, ed. *Invoking Angels: Theurgic Ideas and Practices, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 341-366; Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic*, 167-173. The *Key of Solomon* that opens Sloane 3847 is said on the title page to have been copied by yet another H. G. in April 1572.

<sup>18</sup> David Pingree, *Picatrix: The Latin Version of the Ghāyat Al-Ḥakīm* (London: Warburg Institute, 1986), xix-xx.

<sup>19</sup> Karr and Skinner, *Sepher Raziel*, use this date in Sloane 3846 for the related vernacular copy of the *Liber Razielis* in Sloane 3826 (yet another Somers/Jekyll manuscript), but this seems to me to be a seventeenth-century hand. The John Gwyne mentioned by Ashmole in Sloane 3846 may be the same as the Johannes Gwynn who was the recipient of John Dee's alchemical testament in 1568. See Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum* [...] (London: J. Grismond, 1652), 334.

<sup>20</sup> C. H. Josten, *Elias Ashmole (1617-1692): His Autobiographical and Historical Notes, his Correspondence, and other Contemporary Sources Relating to his Life and Work*, 5 vols. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966), 1.2.

<sup>21</sup> Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum*, 443-447.

<sup>22</sup> Rankine, *The Grimoire of Arthur Gauntlet*, 26.

<sup>23</sup> I consulted three biographies of Somers without finding a single reference to magic: Richard Cooksey, *Essay on the Life and Character of John Lord Somers, Baron of Evesham* [...] (Worcester: J. Holl, 1791); Henry Maddock, *An Account of the Life and Writings of Lord Chancellor*

*Somers* [...] (London: Clarke and Sons, 1812); John Oldmixon, *Memoirs of the Life of John, Lord Somers* (London: J. Roberts, 1716).

<sup>24</sup> Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic*, 173-178.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 151-172. See also Sophie Page, *Magic in the Cloister: Pious Motives, Illicit Interests, and Occult Approaches to the Medieval Universe* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013).

<sup>26</sup> One exception I have come across is a hexagram described as a "hexagonus Salomonis" in Sloane 3847, fol. 158v.

<sup>27</sup> Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 173. William J. Kiesel, *Magic Circles in the Grimoire Tradition* (Richmond Vista: Three Hands Press, 2012) does not discuss the emergence of hexagrams either.

<sup>28</sup> Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, *De occulta philosophia lib. III. Item, spurius Liber de caeremoniis magicis* [...] (Lyon: Beringos Fratres, n.d.), 561.

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## Societas Magica Activities at the 52nd International Congress on Medieval Studies - Western Michigan University, May 11-14, 2017

### Session 41, MEDIEVAL TOOLS (A ROUNDTABLE)

Sponsors: AVISTA: The Association Villard de Honnecourt for the Interdisciplinary Study of Medieval Technology, Science, and Art; DISTAFF (Discussion, Interpretation, and Study of Textile Arts, Fabrics, and Fashion); EXARC; Medica: The Society for the Study of Healing in the Middle Ages; Research Group on Manuscript Evidence; Societas Magica  
Organizer: Sarah Thompson,

Rochester Institute of Technology  
Presider: Sean M. Winslow,  
Univ. of Toronto

A roundtable discussion with Constance H. Berman, Univ. of Iowa; Carla Tilghman, Washburn Univ.; Frank Klaassen, Univ. of Saskatchewan; Linda Ehram Voigts, Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City; and ~~Darrell Markewitz, Wareham Forge.~~

### Session 141, SEX MAGIC: PAST AND PRESENT, IMAGINED AND REAL

Sponsor: Societas Magica

Organizer: Marla Segol, Univ. at Buffalo

Presider: Mildred Budny,  
Research Group on Manuscript Evidence

*Erectile Dys-monk-tion: Monastic Uses for the Old Irish Magical Anti-Viagra*

Phillip Bernhardt-House,  
Skagit Valley College-  
Whidbey Island

*Roots and Shoots: Late Antique and Medieval Models for*

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## Kalamazoo cont'd

*Contemporary Sex Magic*  
Marla Segol

### Friday 12 May, evening

**MANUSCRIPTS TO MATERIALS**  
(ROUNDTABLE + MUSEUM EXHIBIT +  
RECEPTION)

Sponsor: Research Group on  
Manuscript Evidence and Societas  
Magica

Organizer: David Porreca, Univ.  
of Waterloo

Presider: Jason Roberts, Univ.  
of Texas-Austin

*Practical Magic: Making Magical  
Artifacts and Using Them*

Frank Klaassen, Univ. of  
Saskatchewan

Responses: Claire Fanger, Rice  
Univ.; David Porreca; Marla  
Segol, Univ. at Buffalo

### Session 355, READING MAGIC WEST TO EAST

Sponsor: Societas Magica  
Organizer: Jason Roberts, Univ. of  
Texas–Austin

Presider: Claire Fanger, Rice  
Univ.

*Eastern Magic in a Western  
Home: The Influence of Iberian  
Translated Ghāyat al-Hakīm on a  
Fictional Necromancer*

Veronica Menaldi, Univ. of  
Minnesota–Twin Cities

*East to West to East: Reading the  
Arabic Alchemical Tradition in  
Late Medieval Cracow*

Agnieszka Rec, Chemical  
Heritage Foundation

*“Let em Desiste from Hellenic*

*Devilries”: The Specter of Greek  
Paganism in the Anti-Magic  
Theology of the Russian Orthodox  
Stoglav*

Jason Roberts

### Saturday 13 May, lunchtime

Societas Magica Business  
Meeting

### Session 437, OCCULT CAPITALS OF ISLAM

Sponsor: Societas Magica  
Organizer: Matthew Melvin-  
Koushki, Univ. of South Carolina–  
Columbia

Presider: Nicholas G. Harris,  
Univ. of Pennsylvania

*Baghdad, the City of Jupiter*  
~~Liana Saif, Univ. catholique de  
Louvain (cancelled)~~

*What Did it Mean to Be a  
Magician in al-Baqillani’s  
Baghdad? The Social Implications  
of the Discourse on Magic*

Mushegh Asatryan, Univ. of  
Calgary

*Lettrism at Sultan Barquq’s  
Court and Beyond: Cairo as  
Occult Capital at the Turn of the  
Fifteenth Century*

Noah D. Gardiner, Univ. of  
South Carolina–Columbia

*“Here Art-Magick Was First  
Hatched”: Shiraz as Occult-  
Scientific Capital of the Persian  
Cosmopolis*

Matthew Melvin-Koushki

### Session 489, MAGIC CIRCLES: MATERIAL, RITUAL, SOCIAL

Sponsor: Societas Magica  
Organizer: David Porreca, Univ.

of Waterloo

Presider: Frank Klaassen, Univ.  
of Saskatchewan

*“Walk Like an Egyptian”:* *Magic  
Circles in Ancient Egypt from  
Mehen to Ouroboros*

Mark Roblee, Univ. of  
Massachusetts–Amherst

*Magic Circles: What’s Inside?  
What’s Outside? (PGM, Picatrix,  
Munich Handbook)*

David Porreca

*John of Morigny and His Circle*  
Claire Fanger, Rice Univ.

### Session 515, ISLAMIC MAGIC: TEXTS AND/AS OBJECTS

Sponsor: Research Group on  
Manuscript Evidence; Societas  
Magica

Organizer: Liana Saif, Univ.  
catholique de Louvain

Presider: David Porreca, Univ.  
of Waterloo

*Books as Robots: Authorship and  
Agency in Islamic Alchemical  
Manuscripts*

Nicholas G. Harris, Univ. of  
Pennsylvania

*Approaching Shams al-ma‘ārif al-  
kubrā through Early Manuscripts:  
MSS Arabe 2650–51 in the  
Bibliothèque nationale de France*

Edgar Francis, IV, Univ. of  
Wisconsin–Stevens Point

*Legible Signs? Cyphers,  
Talismans, and the Theologies of  
Early Islamic Sacred Writing*

Travis Zadeh, Yale Univ.

Respondent: Noah D. Gardiner,  
Univ. of South Carolina–  
Columbia

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