# The Forgotten Crusaders—A Comparative Analysis of the Roles of and Effects on Christian Women in the West and the East during the Crusading Era

Neal Bonenberger

Although the crusades were a predominantly male-initiated and executed movement, any serious attempt at analyzing and understanding their true impact would be remiss in ignoring women and the varying effects the crusades had on their lives and social status. The crusades, in order to be truly understood to their full extent, must be considered as not merely a series of military campaigns or even simply as the result of religious and political agenda. Rather, one must examine the crusades in their holistic sense as a social impetus spanning numerous centuries and affecting nearly every person of the Middle Ages—specifically women. This critical lens can and must be applied to the women who lived during the time to enable a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the crusades. Just as the crusades dramatically altered the lives of Christian men, the Christian women living during the crusades had a similar experience taking on roles as active participants or supporting elements that can be examined as they differed with geography in the east and west. This widely differing experience sheds new light upon an extremely engaged, though frequently historically neglected, demographic of the crusades. Al

The limited involvement of women in the west was apparent in the first moments of the crusades. While it is difficult to identify with pinpoint accuracy the inception of the crusades, Pope Urban II's address at Clermont in 1095 can be marked with fairly unanimous agreement as the moment when the papal office first issued a call to arms for the crusades, and he did so with a clear

intention of limiting women in the west. Pope Urban II's initial message was interpreted as one in which he "tried to confine participation to arms bearers" by simultaneously discouraging "the old, the infirm and women" from becoming active members in the efforts.[2] However, Pope Urban II did grant the exception that women "could accompany their husbands or brothers with permission from church authorities."[3] The women who obeyed Pope Urban II and remained behind in the west had an entirely different role in the crusades and were affected in noticeably different ways than their peers who ventured east.

Although the crusades were an appealing concept for both men and women in the west, they were wrought with intimidating obstacles including the financial toll, danger, and a great degree of personal sacrifice. For these reasons many men were dissuaded from taking up the cross; as such, most women did not frequently go east on the crusades either. Though they might not have taken the pilgrimage to the east, their contributions should by no means be overlooked. Those women who remained in the west still took on an extremely important role that could best be described as a supporting element for crusading culture. Of course, just as history tends to make note of men of a certain status, the historical documents that detail the involvement or effects on women are similar in the sense that they document women who tended to be noteworthy in status. However, by comparing the accounts regarding these sparsely mentioned women, scholars prove their varying involvement and further support the enormous effect that geography had on their roles.

Western women were pivotal in fostering and supporting a culture that promoted crusading. In some instances, their dedication to the crusades even superseded their spousal support to their crusading husbands. One can observe this phenomenon in the slightly comical example of Adela of Blois. When Count Stephen of Blois returned home in 1101 after he disgracefully deserted the First

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[2] Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 2nd ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 15.

[3] Ibid.

crusades as being left in “a widowed state, while their husbands lived on”—in accordance with the social expectations of an ideal crusade-era woman that had developed.[8]

This notion of a perfect crusade-era woman came to be echoed and exemplified in crusading rhetoric, which had a strong emphasis on the Virgin Mary and Eve. Mary epitomized the highest level of servitude and devotion that every woman in the west should strive to imitate.[9] Additionally, crusading rhetoric included references to the Genesis story of Eve in which Adam asserted that she was sent by God to serve as his “helpmate.”[10] Thus, women in the west were expected to act with the willing obedience to their men that Eve exemplified while possessing the virtues of the immaculate Virgin Mary.

This image of an idealistic western woman contributed to what was perhaps the most important role that women in the west assumed during the crusades. As crusading men flocked east to reclaim Jerusalem and urged by the promises of “immediate remission of sin,” a problematic vacuum was created.[11] In these inevitable absences, women rose to the demanding circumstances and fulfilled their new duties serving as the heads of their houses, regents of assets, and financial managers.[12] Many who preached the crusade assured their listeners that their family members being left behind would be cared for. Quite often, this resulted in femal

fell to male patriarchs were thrust upon their women. Women in the west were charged with the critically important role of maintaining a society in which crusading could occur.

Oddly enough, though some crusading rhetoric included examples of religiously revered women, the ancillary contributions of women were largely ignored and undermined in crusading culture and language. Perhaps the best historical attempt to recognize women of the Middle Ages is that of Constance Rousseau, who argues that women became progressively more involved and included as the crusades progressed. While she substantiates this argument with several examples of crusade rhetoric, her argument neglects the geographical component that contributed to this progression for women. Rousseau contextualizes her argument with the supposition that that "the sexes enjoyed equality in the sphere of grace."[14] However, Rousseau ignores the glaring fact that in all eras of history one must consider the divide that exists between theory and practice. In the case of her claimed equality, this only came to fruition around the Third Crusade for western women.[15] Initially, when Urban II wrote recruiting letters or spoke to his audience at Clermont he "addressed the recipients as 'brethren,'" using the gender selective term *fracrubac*,

was in their role as military participants. While some of these women—like men who took up the cross—were impoverished and hoped to find a new affluent life in the east, others were of such notability that they have been included in the annals of crusading history. Perhaps the most notable of these crusading women was Eleanor of Aquitaine whose journey is one of both political and crusading lore.

Eleanor of Aquitaine was crowned Queen of France in the early 12th century and when her husband, King Louis VII of France, departed for the east during the Second Crusade she too left France for the east—not as a supporter or a faithful wife, but rather as a very present and noteworthy crusade leader. Because of her actions and merits, Eleanor "perceived herself as a maker of policy distinct from her royal husband," a description that is echoed by others in the history of crusading. [27] Eleanor was such a force in crusading history that following the Second Crusade she was even blamed for some of the unsuccessful aspects. While this is not a positive example, it undeniably affirms the power she held.[28] Eleanor's journey east is one of undeniable importance when analyzing the varying roles of women in the west versus the east.

Yet another interesting case is that of Maria Comnena, who came not from the medieval west, but rather came to the Latin East from Constantinople as a Byzantine princess. Maria was noted for her shrewd—albeit borderline manipulative— political prowess particularly when considering her "political machinations surrounding the succession of her daughter to the kingdom of Jerusalem."[29] She and Eleanor of Aquitaine represent a blended or hybrid woman, born in another region yet each one coming to the zenith of her power in the east; together they represent

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[27] Matthew Bennett, "Virile Latins, Effeminate Greeks and Strong Women: Gender Definitions on Crusade" ? in *Gendering the Crusades*, eds. Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 22.

[28] Ibid., 22-23.

[29] Natasha Hodgson, "The Role of Kerbogha's Mother," in *Gendering the Crusades*, eds. Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 165-166.

face with a veil, seized a sword, and rushed into the fight."[34] Furthermore, select women in the east served in incredibly powerful political roles. While some select noble

no means detracted from their power that increased in the Latin East, particularly when considering that they more directly affected the crusade more so than the noblewomen of the west.

Just as women in the west were important to crusading ideology, so too were the women who inhabited the east or arrived during the crusades. However, these women who arrived in the east were often used in a vastly different manner. Quite often they were propagandized and used by Muslim jihad leaders to emasculate their Christian opponents. In Imad Ad-Din's chronicles, he described a most likely exaggerated instance in which "three hundred lovely Frankish women"

to occur and contributed to crusading ideology. While some historians, such as Constance Rousseau argue that time was the largest contributing factor for women's influence, geographical proximity is, as proved by the aforementioned examples, a more important factor. The Christian women in the east, just like their male counterparts, took on a far more active role as leaders in the crusading era. Surely, in a movement as large and lengthy as the crusades, no one can simply summarize the effects on or roles of one demographic. By comparing the roles of Christian women in the east versus those in the west and the effects the crusades had on both groups, however, it is apparent that those in the east held greater power that more directly affected the course of the crusades.

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# The Acts of Union and the Shaping of British Identity

Michael Hickey

The Acts of Union of 1707 represented a major turning point in the history of England and many historians consider it the birth of the British nation. However, the evolution of the concept of British identity began further back and continued to be forged and redefined long after the creation of Great Britain. Rather than being the outcome of an inevitable trajectory of

By the year 1706, the idea of an English and Scottish union was an old one which had been around for over one hundred years. James I and VI pioneered the concept of combining his two kingdoms beyond that of a personal union, though this was far from a realistic option at the time. King James himself appointed an English parliamentary commission in 1603 to meet with a Scottish commission to arrange a political union; a venture which quickly failed. Repeated attempts to arrange such a union were made in the years before 1706; the failures serving as testaments to the general resistance to the idea of union on both sides of the border. While many in Scotland did recognize the cultural and commercial ties they had with England, there was fear that Scottish identity would be jeopardized by the idea of union.[1] The English perspective was defined by a general anti-Scottish sentiment, one shared by Queen Anne herself. Fear of Scottish Jacobitism only fanned the flames of this prejudice. The strength of English identity led to the belief that union with Scotland was the surest way of achieving dominion over it.[2]

The Acts of Union themselves demonstrate the favorable nature of the union toward English customs and institutions. The new Parliament of Great Britainhe Etisd(rv)16(i)-on in 1603 t7 0 0 1 72.02

More important to Defoe than the English benefits from union was the method in which it would be achieved. Hundreds of years of military incursion and attempts at occupation had sullied Scottish opinion of the English. This opinion was further aided by the failure of the English to successfully acculturate Scotland even after the personal union of crowns. Peace between England and Scotland was not just a product of union according to Defoe, but also the best means to achieve it. He saw war between the two countries as ultimately being of benefit to the Scots, with even successful conquest draining English resources and ensuring continued resistance to attempts at acculturation.[8] By bringing the Scots into union peacefully, it would

His representation of the Scottish nation was a powerful one which held a strong place in popular imagination.

Being the ultimate expression of his opposition to union, None of Belhaven's other writings or speeches would ever be as influential as his address to Parliament in November of 1706. His words conveyed a great deal of passion, portraying the English push for union as Hannibal storming the gates and destroying the throne of Scotland.[11] Inflammatory rhetoric served to create a sense of urgency and convey the palpable nature of the threat to Scottish independence. Where English proponents like Defoe touted the benefits of Scottish participation in English trade, Belhaven argued that trade represents the golden chains of English slavery.[12] He even implied that the English had a hand in the failure of the Darien scheme to prevent Scotland from achieving independent economic prosperity.[13] Despite the negative light that Belhaven cast on English intention, there still were many Scots who saw value in a federal union with England. To challenge the virtues of the Acts of Union, Belhaven argued that the creation of the new heterogeneous nation proposed by Defoe was made impossible by the preservation of English institutions in the new British state.[14]

Of foremost importance to Belhaven was the royal succession, the issue which could cause the undoing of over a hundred years of personal union. The passage of the Act of Security demonstrated Scottish resentment at English attempts to alter the succession without consent from the Scottish Parliament.[15] The ability of Scotland to determine a succession independent of England would have confirmed Scotland's sovereignty. Belhaven asserted the English push of

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Baron Belhaven, John Hamilton. *The Lord Beilhaven's speech in Parliament the second day of November 1706. on the subject-matter of an union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England* (Edinburgh, 1706), 8.

Ibid., 9.

Ibid.

Ibid., 11.

Murray G. H. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain,* 26.

union was to avoid Scottish separation and to accept the union would be a surrender of sovereignty to the English desire for a common succession.[16] The second article of the union also specifically forbids the succession of the British crown to "Papists" as was already determined by the 1701 Act of Succession under William and Mary.[17] This served to undercut Scottish support for the independent restoration of James VIII or any other Catholic Stuart in exile. Future British monarchs would lack any significant ties to Scotland and subsequently the crown was therefore made to serve English interests.

Protestantism was key to the English concept of Britain and theoretically served as a common link between its various regions. The importation of the German Hanoverian dynasty over the preservation of the Stuart dynasty demonstrates the English value attributed to Protestantism. Anti-Catholic pamphlets and almanacs circulated throughout Britain during the period following 1707, printed in larger numbers than even the Bible.[18] During periods of war with Catholic nations or during the numerous Jacobite uprisings, persecution of Catholic Britons occurred in England, Wales, and Scotland. While this alienation was a common occurrence through Britain, other barriers remained between the various denominations of Protestantism. Article XXV of the Acts of Union details the preservation of the Presbyterian Church, assuring its governance within Scotland and its independence from Anglican interference.[19] Defoe lamented that the French often got more respect in England than the Scots did, despite their common religion, tongue, and crown.[20] He was forced to assure English readers that Presbyterians in Scotland would not encourage religious dissenters to destroy the Anglican

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Baron Belhaven and John Hamilton, *The Lord Beilhaven's speech in Parliament,* 9-10.

Scotland, *The articles of the union*, 3.

Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707 - 1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 22-23.

Scotland, *The articles of the union*, 12.

Daniel Defoe, *An essay at removing national prejudice,* 11.

Church or join the Scots in a potential invasion of England.[21]

The British state took numerous steps in the years following 1707 to incorporate the Scottish Highlands into the rest of Britain. Measures were taken to strip the Highlands of their distinct features, such as banning the wearing of tartan, requiring oaths of loyalty to the Hanoverian king, and reducing the power of chieftains.[26] The loss of aspects of cultural identity is never a welcome development, but creeping English attempts at acculturation were offset by growing opportunities for Scots within Britain and abroad. Increasing participation of Scots within trading companies and government institutions in turn allowed for greater Scottish patrimony. This trend played into English fears of losing preeminence within Britain and was exploited by anti-Scottish activists. Scottish stereotypes were increasingly used in English writings, plays and cartoons. English prints such as *The Caledonians Arrival in Money-Land* depict Scots exploiting the riches of Britain to aggrandize themselves and their fellow countrymen.[27]

of Scottish economic life, the union allowing it to become the center of highly profitable trade with the American colonies.[30] Defoe even felt that Glasgow and other towns on the coast of Scotland were in a better trading position than London, able to avoid the hazards of the English channel and reach the colonies sooner than English merchants.[31] Increased Scottish involvement in what had previously been an exclusively English empire caused insecurity among Englishmen around the middle of the eighteenth century. John Free observed that where Scots and Irish who had previously passed themselves off as English abroad, it was now Englishmen who hid their identity behind the term 'British'.[32] The favorable conditions of the Acts of Union toward the English did not stop Scots from participating in trade, which they considered themselves equally entitled.

Despite Defoe's predictions of Scottish economic development that would result from union with England, not all areas benefitted in the way Glasgow did. Most areas of Scotland were merely exporting raw materials such as wool and coal to England, but were not consuming much in the way of manufactured goods. Defoe blamed this trade imbalance on the removal of the court and nobility from Scotland to England, who chose to invest their wealth in their English estates rather than at home.[33] While many Scottish merchants and gentry individually benefitted from the opportunities presented by British trade networks, the majority of Scots remained in the same if not worse positions than before union.[34] Defoe argued that Scotland would greatly benefit from wool manufacturing, and it was the duty of Scottish gentlemen to take advantage of

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Ibid., 745-746.
Ibid., 749.
John Free, *Seasonable reflections*, 29-30.
Daniel Defoe, *A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain*, 781-782.
Ibid, 783.

their favorable economic positions created by the union to enrich their own country.[35] While Scottish elites had the means to participate in English companies and government institutions, other opportunities in Scotland were harder to come by. The unequal distribution of economic opportunity within Scotland following the union gave the majority of Scots little reason to favor a new British identity.

The story of the creation of Britain is one centered around unanticipated Scottish ascendency in the face of overly favorable conditions toward the English. Predications of peaceful and advantageous subjection were touted as the English drive for union and were seemingly guaranteed by institutionalized English preeminence. However, the resilience of Scottish cultural identity within Britain, inspired by the exemplification of Lord Belhaven and other anti-unionists, was aided by the unanticipated consequences of the union. Reinforced denominational disparity contributed to Scottish distinctiveness, aided further by Scottish elites who embraced British identity at the perceived expense of English interests. Fear and prejudice on the part of the English toward the Scottish post-union was the result of unforeseen conceptual alteration by the Scots. British identity was no longer a tool of English acculturation, but a compromise of regional and cultural preservation.

It would be untrue to claim that there were none who came to identify themselves primarily as Britons, and in the long term the development of British identity did become more organic. That being said, the Acts of Union and the conditions created by them ultimately did help preserve regional identity within the context of British nationality. English and Scottish identities, both of which saw themselves being threatened in the wake of union, attempted to mold British identity to serve their respective interests. A shared government was not enough to

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Ibid., 786-787.

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# Witchcraft and Women:
# A Historiography of Witchcraft as Gender History

Kayla Theresa Natrella

Estimates that the early modern witch trials claimed the lives of nine million Europeans, 80-90% of whom were women, led early feminists such as Margaret Murray, Mary Daly, -hunt an intentional woman- feminists used very limited source material and what they knew about the witch persecutions to *Witch Cult in Western Europe,* Mary Daly , *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*, as well as Barbara Ehrenreich and Dierdre English , *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers*, were among the foundational texts that forced the question of women and gender to the center of witchcraft discourse.[1] Christina Larner was one of the first se8 7(e)-5(n H)5(e)-5(al)-4(e)o62re

was why women were more susceptible than men to witchcraft accusations and what does that

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like Barstow, attributes sadism and the appeal of sexuality and violence, to the treatment of accused witches during the witch persecutions.[23]

-hunt was just that, a witch-hunt, not a woman-hunt. With the woman-hunt theory aside, she proposes different approaches to the question of why there was a severely disproportionate number of female victims. To explain this, she introduces the distinction between sex-related (an act which is predominantly associated with one sex) and sex-specific acts (an act which can only be performed by one sex). She argues that witchcraft is sex-related and suggests that women were more prone to suspicion because men considered the feminine nature to be malicious, sensual, evil, and irrational.[24] Writing about a decade later, Stuart Clark and Robin Briggs both supported her suggestion, elaborating upon it by explaining that the society was one dominated by polarized binary thought. As such, if men are associated with positive attributes, then women must be associated with their negative counterparts. If God is the embodiment of good and the Devil, His polar opposite, then, accordingly, men are innately closer to God and women to the Devil. T

of the *Bible*.[25]

treatment of the subject of gender in the study of witchcraft. Both Hester and Barstow argue that witch-hunts were sex-specific rather than sex-related. In *Lewd Women and Wicked Witches: A Study of the Dynamics of Male Domination*, Hester distinguishes between scholars who argue that witch-hunts were sex-related (only discussing Christina Larner in this category) and scholars

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[23] Joseph Klaits, *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch Hunts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 72-73.

[24] Larner, *Enemies of God*, 93

[25] Briggs, *Witches & Neighbors* :
*New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology: Volume IV, Gendering and Witchcraft*, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2001), 433.

who argue that the witch-hunts were sex-specific, discussing the works of Ehrenreich and English, Daly, and Carol Karlsen in this latter category. Placing her own work in the sex-specific category, she uses court records from the Assize Courts, pamphlets on individual Essex trials, and secondary sources to make her case that accusations of witchcraft were part of the strategic and organized efforts of men to push women back into the domestic sphere where they could be controlled.[26] *Witchcraze*. Barst

-class European men looked at and treated their women basically as they did their African slaves and Indian serfs and as they had treated Jews and

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A major criticism of the argument that the witch-hunt was a woman-hunt is that the witch persecution could not have been a deliberate form of repression against women because women also accused witches. Larner countered this assertion by explaining that the patriarchal social structure divides women and the nonconformity of women threatens women who do conform.[28] Clive Holmes proposes three ways in which women might participate in the proceedings against women: to testify as possessed victims, to report on the results of physical searches of the

[29] His main contribution is to the discussion of whether or not women as witnesses in witch trials discounts misogyny and gender as categories for the discussion of witchcraft history. His conclusion is that

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[26] Marianne Hester, *Lewd Women and Wicked Witches: A Study of the Dynamics of Male Domination* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 132, 137, 157, 199.

[27] Barstow, *Witchcraze*, 164.

[28] Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion*, 86.

[29] *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology: Volume IV, Gendering and Witchcraft*, ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2001), 120.

both men and women believed in the reality of witchcraft and feared witches, so both men and women participated in the accusation of witches.[30]

The argument that since women also accused witches, then the witch-hunt could not have been a cover for a deliberate and organized massacre of women would be valid, but since the society truly believed that witchcraft was real and witch trials were really intended to eliminate enemies of God and society, it makes sense that women would also participate. Nor does it eliminate the importance of including gender or misogyny in the discussion of witchcraft history, especially in regard to the question of why women were accused more often than men. J.A. Sharpe makes the argument that by participating in the trials, women were not just passive victims of patriarchy, but social actors with their own concerns and goals

limits). In this case, their concerns were the protection of their domestic space from the threats of witchcraft.[31]

-bearing and menstruating

d dangerous, especially if uncontrolled (by men).[32] In *Witches & Neighbors*

connection between witchcraft and child-

signs that for women this transfer into the pool of suspects had a modest tendency to coincide with the menopause of the end of childbearing; while it would be rash to build too much on this

[33] Although he acknowledges the potential for the connection, he contributes nothing else to investigating that relationship.

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[31] -152.

- *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology: Volume IV, Gendering and Witchcraft,* ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2001), 166-168.

[32] Larner, *Enemies of God*, 93.

[33] Briggs, *Witches & Neighbors*, 264

Briggs also, in agreement with Larner, acknowledges the need to shift from the question of whether or not the witch-hunt was a deliberate woman-hunt to the question of what made women particularly vulnerable to witchcraft accusations.[34] This is the question that Larner begins to answer in *Enemies of God* and Briggs briefly touches upon in *Witches & Neighbors*. In *Oedipus and the Devil* and *Witch Craze*, Lyndal Roper uses psychoanalysis to push this question, building upon some of the ideas already proposed by scholars such as Larner. She also addresses the

end of child-bearing.

-hunt was a witch-

hunt, rather than a thinly concealed woman-hunt, because the people of the society (intellectual and peasant alike) honestly believed in supernatural forces and magic as a constant reality in everyday life.[35] Rather than the question of whether or not the witch-hunt was a deliberate persecution of women, however, Roper is more interested in the new questions of what made women particularly vulnerable to accusations and what does this say about the position of

torture and death were almost guaranteed to follow. Unlike Briggs, however, Roper uses psychoanalytical methods to explore the question.[37]

Roper is especially interested in the prevalence of somewhat older women among the accused witches. She proposes that witch stories and accusations originated in fears surrounding procreation, motherhood, fecundity and age.[38] Roper supports her argument by explaining that

eady strongly impacted

demographics and resources and inspired fear and greater protection of fertility. Furthermore, in

success. Since social status correlated so closely with reproductive potential, old women who were past child-bearing years were hated and their barrenness and sexuality regarded with revulsion. In this, Roper might agree with Daly that targets of witchcraft were often women who survived marriage (widows) or rejected marriage (spinsters), but more so because they rejected maternity or were no longer fertile than because they asserted independence or deliberately deviated from the patriarchy.[39] gs, like

[40] Roper uses rich archival sources to give expression to the fears that she proposes dominated communities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These fears

impotency, barrenness, miscarriages, stillbirths, infanticide, livestock, crops, etc.[41]

[37] Roper, *Witch Craze*, 8-9.
[38] Ibid., 158.
[39] Daly, *Gyn/Ecology*, 184.
[40] Roper, *Witch Craze*, 164.
[41] Ibid., 159

In her conclusion, Roper asserts that the witch craze was about mothers.[42] The witch killed babies, ground their corpses into powder, and used that powder to enhance her power. She was the anti-

inverting not on [43]

She was not the first to make this suggestion. Larner, Briggs, Clark, and Roper, among others, all agree that the witch was often someone whom authorities and neighbors viewed as socially

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Madonna. Whereas Mary became a mother without having sex, the witch has sex, but either does not bear children, or kills the children that she bears.[44] Since, as Roper suggests, motherhood was

Roper also addresses the question of the position of women at the time of the witch trials by examining witch confessions. Unlike some earlier historians, Roper understands that the people really believed in witchcraft and did not doubt that confessions were true. At that time, torture was an indispensable

truthful.[47] The interrogators, demonologists, and clerics wanted to understand more about witchcraft and witches so that they could identify them more readily; therefore they looked for

ns were truthful.

how these women perceived their position or role in the society.

Diane Purkiss also incorporates psychoanalysis, as well as her literary background, into her study of witchcraft and gender. As part of an investigation of the same question of how women understood witchcraft and witches as well as, or in connection with their positions or

itions at witch trials. She

clerks or judges often elicited the statements in the texts from women and, because women often were illiterate, men would inscribe the depositions that they submitted and may have intervened in the content. Despite these reservations, Purkiss still contends that the stories that women relayed in the depositions were powerful fantasies through which these village women negotiated their fears and anxieties of housekeeping and motherhood. In addition to being an anti-mother, Purkiss suggests that the witch was an anti-housewife, threatening the domain of women who were responsible first, for bearing and raising children, and second, for maintaining a well-kept

[47] Ibid., 46.

household.[48] In the crisis of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-

starvation was a persistent fear, the pressure of which fell primarily on the housewife.[49]

ls kept for meat, milk, hides, and wool were frequent targets of witches.[50] Purkiss asserts that the good housewife carefully managed, conserved, and

more vulnerable to suspicion of witchcraft, especially if misfortune befell the family.[51]

The witch was dangerous because she disrupted motherhood and the household, and thus,

that of the early feminists, such as Daly, in that the witch is a figure who rejects normative behavior. Roper and Purkiss differ from the early feminists, however, in their view of women as active agents in the witch trial and process, rather than as helpless victims slaughtered in a holocaust. These were women defending their territory their homes or in many cases, defiantly enduring inconceivable pain and torture. Roper and Purkiss also employ psychoanalysis to find the voices of the accused women and the accusing women to attempt to understand their fears and how they understood their position in society, rather than rely on the projections of male demonologists. Although they do not support the original assertion of the early feminists that the witch-hunt was actually a woman-hunt, they have not marginalized the question of women in the history of witchcraft and continue to explore witchcraft studies from the

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[48] Diane Purkiss *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology: Volume IV, Gendering and Witchcraft,* ed. Brian P. Levack (New York: Routledge, 2001), 280-281.

[49] Ibid., 283.

[50] Briggs, *Witches & Neighbors*, 88; Roper, *Witch Craze*, 159

[51]

ment, the early feminists wrote books on witchcraft and women that were ahistorical and lacking in evidence. Yet, despite the lack of credibility of their findings and conclusions, the questions they asked initiated a surge of witchcraft scholarship. Since the questions were initially posed by feminist activists and philosophers rather than historians, the study of witchcraft as part of gender history began as an interdisciplinary field. As such, the interdisciplinary contributions of Christina Larner (sociology and history, Lyndal Roper (history and psychoanalysis), and Diane Purkiss (literature and history), among others, have yielded diverse and insightful perspectives into the history of witchcraft.

Despite the significant contributions these historians have made to the study of gender history, they fail to give any substantial attention to the investigation of the persecution of male witches. Recently, historians such as Lara Apps, Andrew Gow, and Rolf Schulte have been giving more attention to the male witches as a subject of witchcraft studies from the gender history perspective. Even during the early modern period, people stereotypically thought of the witch as a female figure. The investigation of the male witch is likely to continue, as much of witchcraft gender history does not yet offer convincing evidence to answer questions of whether or not the male witch was regarded as effeminate and fit into the popular fantasy of the witch figure, or whether the male witch, like the female witch, was viewed as a threat to domestic arrangements.

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