

what is the malleus maleficarum

****What Is the Malleus Maleficarum? Unveiling the Witch-Hunting Manual of the Middle Ages****

what is the malleus maleficarum is a question that often arises when exploring the dark chapters of European history, especially during the witch hunts of the late medieval and early modern periods. This infamous book, whose name translates to "The Hammer of Witches," played a pivotal role in shaping the persecution of those accused of witchcraft. But beyond its chilling reputation, what exactly is the Malleus Maleficarum, and why does it continue to fascinate historians, scholars, and curious readers today?

The Origins and Historical Context of the Malleus Maleficarum

The Malleus Maleficarum was first published in 1487 by two German Catholic clergymen, Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger. At the time, Europe was gripped by fear of witchcraft, and the Catholic Church sought to address what it saw as a growing threat to Christian society. This treatise was not just a simple book; it was intended as a comprehensive manual for identifying, prosecuting, and punishing witches.

The Authors: Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger

Heinrich Kramer, an inquisitor, was deeply involved in witch trials and believed fiercely in the reality and danger of witchcraft. Jacob Sprenger, also a Dominican inquisitor, is traditionally credited as co-author, though some historians debate his actual involvement. Together, their names lent the text authority, making it a powerful tool in ecclesiastical courts.

Why Was the Malleus Maleficarum Written?

The book emerged during a period of heightened anxiety about heresy and demonic influence. The Church wanted to standardize the process of dealing with suspected witches, and the Malleus Maleficarum provided detailed instructions and theological justification for witch hunting. Its purpose was to convince skeptics about the reality of witches and to outline legal procedures for their prosecution.

The Structure and Content of the Malleus Maleficarum

The Malleus Maleficarum is divided into three main parts, each addressing different aspects of witchcraft and its persecution.

Part One: The Reality of Witchcraft

This section argues that witchcraft is real and a significant danger to society. It discusses the nature of witches, their supposed powers, and their alliance with the devil. The authors sought to counter arguments that dismissed witchcraft as mere superstition.

Part Two: The Powers and Actions of Witches

Here, the book describes the various ways witches supposedly harm people and communities, from causing illness and crop failures to casting spells and summoning demons. It provides examples and anecdotes to convince readers of the tangible threats posed by witches.

Part Three: The Legal Process Against Witches

Perhaps the most infamous part, this section offers detailed guidance on how to conduct trials, gather evidence, and extract confessions, often endorsing the use of torture. It also advises judges and inquisitors on how to deal with accused witches and ensure their conviction.

The Impact of the Malleus Maleficarum on Witch Trials

The publication of the Malleus Maleficarum dramatically influenced witch hunts across Europe. Its widespread circulation helped legitimize the persecution of witches and intensified the fear surrounding witchcraft.

Legal and Social Influence

The manual became a reference work for judges, inquisitors, and local authorities. It shaped legal procedures and justified harsh punishments, including executions by burning. The book's detailed descriptions of

witchcraft helped fuel public panic, leading to numerous trials and deaths.

Criticism and Controversy

Despite its influence, the *Malleus Maleficarum* was not universally accepted. Some theologians and legal experts criticized its methods and theological arguments. Nevertheless, its impact endured for centuries, contributing to one of the most tragic periods in European history.

The Malleus Maleficarum in Modern Perspective

Today, the *Malleus Maleficarum* is studied as a historical document that reveals much about medieval beliefs, fears, and societal structures. It serves as a reminder of how superstition and institutional power can combine to produce devastating consequences.

Understanding Medieval Witch Hunts

By examining this text, historians gain insight into the mindset behind witch hunts. It reflects the intersection of religion, law, and culture that fueled persecution. The book also illustrates how misogyny was embedded in the witchcraft accusations, as the text disproportionately targeted women.

Lessons for Contemporary Society

The *Malleus Maleficarum* stands as a cautionary tale about the dangers of fear-driven justice and the abuse of legal authority. Its legacy encourages vigilance against similar patterns of scapegoating and hysteria in modern times.

Why Is the Malleus Maleficarum Still Relevant?

Even centuries after its publication, people continue to study the *Malleus Maleficarum* for its historical significance and the insight it offers into human psychology and societal dynamics.

- **Historical Understanding:** It helps contextualize the witch hunts that swept across Europe and the social mechanisms behind them.
- **Cultural Reflection:** The book sheds light on medieval culture, religious

beliefs, and gender relations.

- **Academic Interest:** Scholars analyze the *Malleus Maleficarum* to understand legal history, theology, and the evolution of societal fears.
- **Pop Culture Influence:** The book has inspired numerous fictional works, films, and media exploring witchcraft and persecution.

Exploring what the *malleus maleficarum* offers a window into a complex and troubling era. It reminds us how knowledge, when wielded without compassion or critical thinking, can be used to justify injustice. While the book itself is a product of its time, its echoes resonate in modern discussions about morality, justice, and human rights.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the *Malleus Maleficarum*?

The *Malleus Maleficarum*, also known as *The Hammer of Witches*, is a treatise on witchcraft written in 1487 by Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger. It served as a guide for identifying, prosecuting, and punishing witches.

Who wrote the *Malleus Maleficarum* and when?

The *Malleus Maleficarum* was written by two German Catholic clergymen, Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, in 1487.

What was the purpose of the *Malleus Maleficarum*?

The purpose of the *Malleus Maleficarum* was to provide a systematic approach for the Inquisition to identify, try, and punish individuals accused of witchcraft.

How did the *Malleus Maleficarum* influence witch hunts in Europe?

The *Malleus Maleficarum* greatly influenced witch hunts in Europe by legitimizing the prosecution of witches and spreading the belief that witchcraft was a serious crime punishable by death.

Is the *Malleus Maleficarum* considered a reliable historical document?

While the *Malleus Maleficarum* is an important historical document, it is widely criticized for its misogynistic views and unscientific methods, and it

is not considered reliable by modern standards.

What impact did the Malleus Maleficarum have on women during the witch trials?

The Malleus Maleficarum contributed to the persecution of many women, as it portrayed women as more susceptible to witchcraft and was used to justify their prosecution and execution during witch trials.

Is the Malleus Maleficarum still relevant today?

Today, the Malleus Maleficarum is studied as a historical text that reflects the social, religious, and legal attitudes of the late Middle Ages towards witchcraft, but it is not used as a legitimate source for law or science.

Additional Resources

****Unveiling the Malleus Maleficarum: History, Impact, and Legacy****

what is the malleus maleficarum is a question that often arises in discussions surrounding witchcraft, medieval history, and the darker chapters of European legal and religious practices. The Malleus Maleficarum, Latin for "The Hammer of Witches," is a notorious treatise on witchcraft written in 1487 by Heinrich Kramer, a German Catholic clergyman and inquisitor. This document played a pivotal role in shaping attitudes toward witchcraft and became a principal guide for the persecution of alleged witches during the late Middle Ages and the early modern period.

Understanding what the Malleus Maleficarum encapsulates requires examining its origins, contents, and the profound consequences it had on society, law, and religion. This article delves deeply into these aspects, providing a comprehensive analysis by evaluating its historical context, theological arguments, and the long-lasting effects it induced in European witch hunts.

Historical Context of the Malleus Maleficarum

To grasp what the Malleus Maleficarum represents, it is essential to place it within the historical framework of late 15th-century Europe. The book emerged during a period marked by religious upheaval, social anxiety, and heightened superstition. The Catholic Church was grappling with challenges to its authority, and fear of heresy and diabolical influence permeated many aspects of society.

Heinrich Kramer, an inquisitor commissioned by Pope Innocent VIII through the papal bull **Summis desiderantes affectibus** (1484), authored the Malleus Maleficarum to provide a systematic approach to identifying, prosecuting, and

punishing witches. The treatise combined theological arguments with practical advice on interrogation and legal procedures, effectively codifying witch-hunting practices.

Authorship and Publication

Heinrich Kramer, sometimes referred to as Henricus Institoris, was deeply involved in inquisitorial work in the Holy Roman Empire, particularly in German-speaking regions. He wrote the *Malleus Maleficarum* to address what he perceived as a growing threat posed by witches, who were believed to align themselves with the devil to harm individuals and communities.

First published in 1487 in Speyer, Germany, the book quickly gained notoriety. Despite initial resistance from some Church authorities, it was widely disseminated and became one of the most influential manuals for witch persecution over the next two centuries. Its repeated reprinting and translation into multiple European languages attest to its significant reach.

Content and Structure of the Malleus Maleficarum

The *Malleus Maleficarum* is divided into three main parts, each addressing different aspects of witchcraft and its prosecution. Understanding these sections highlights the treatise's comprehensive nature and the methods it advocated.

Part One: The Reality and Nature of Witchcraft

The first section seeks to establish the existence of witchcraft and its evil nature. Kramer painstakingly argues from a theological perspective, citing scripture and Church doctrine to assert that witchcraft is not only real but a grave sin against God. He categorizes witches as servants of Satan who perform harmful acts through demonic assistance.

This part also discusses the characteristics and behaviors attributed to witches, including their supposed ability to cause storms, infertility, and disease. The text reflects prevailing medieval beliefs about magic and the supernatural, reinforcing fears that witches were a direct threat to Christian society.

Part Two: The Powers and Actions of Witches

The second section delves into the specific powers witches allegedly possess. Kramer describes their supposed abilities to fly, cast curses, and manipulate natural elements. He also examines the process of making pacts with the devil and the rituals involved in witchcraft.

This part serves not only to explain the perceived mechanics of witchcraft but also to justify harsh measures against accused individuals. By portraying witches as possessing supernatural powers granted by Satan, Kramer legitimizes aggressive legal and inquisitorial actions.

Part Three: Legal Procedures for Prosecuting Witches

Perhaps the most controversial section, the third part offers practical guidance on the investigation, trial, and punishment of witches. It outlines methods for interrogation, including the use of torture, and discusses evidentiary standards that heavily favored conviction.

Kramer advises inquisitors to be resolute and uncompromising, emphasizing that the eradication of witchcraft justifies extreme measures. The text also recommends that accused witches be denied bail and that confessions obtained under duress be accepted as valid, reflecting the period's legal culture and priorities.

The Influence and Impact of the Malleus Maleficarum

The Malleus Maleficarum's influence extended far beyond its initial publication, becoming a cornerstone document in the history of witch hunts and trials. Its role in shaping judicial and societal responses to witchcraft was profound and multifaceted.

Legal and Religious Consequences

The treatise provided a template for secular and ecclesiastical courts to prosecute witches, often leading to brutal interrogations and executions. Its endorsement of torture and the presumption of guilt contributed to a surge in witch trials, particularly across Germany, France, and England.

While not universally accepted by all Church authorities—some condemned Kramer's work for its extremism—the Malleus nonetheless solidified the association of witchcraft with heresy and diabolical evil in the popular and legal imagination.

Social and Cultural Ramifications

The dissemination of the *Malleus Maleficarum* fueled widespread fear and suspicion, especially toward women, who were disproportionately targeted as witches. The text's portrayal of women as especially susceptible to demonic influence contributed to gender biases ingrained in witch-hunting practices.

Moreover, the treatise helped foster an environment where accusations could be based on superstition and fear rather than evidence, leading to miscarriages of justice and social fragmentation. Communities were often torn apart by paranoia, and the legacy of these trials has left a lasting imprint on European culture.

Criticism and Modern Perspectives

In contemporary scholarship, the *Malleus Maleficarum* is frequently analyzed as a product of its time—reflecting medieval anxieties, misogyny, and the intertwining of religion and law. Modern historians and legal experts critique its methodology and ethical implications while recognizing its historical significance.

Misogyny and Gender Bias

A central criticism focuses on the treatise's explicit misogyny. Kramer argued that women were inherently more prone to witchcraft due to perceived moral and intellectual weaknesses. This gendered perspective helped justify the disproportionate persecution of women, a phenomenon well-documented in historical witch trials.

Legal Abuses and Human Rights

From a legal standpoint, the *Malleus Maleficarum* is seen as a deeply flawed manual that encouraged abuses of due process, including torture and forced confessions. It exemplifies the dangers of legal systems driven by fear and prejudice rather than evidence and fairness.

Legacy in Popular Culture and Scholarship

Despite its dark history, the *Malleus Maleficarum* remains a subject of fascination in literature, film, and academic study. It provides valuable insights into medieval mentalities and the historical roots of witchcraft persecution. Scholars continue to explore its impact on law, gender

relations, and religious thought.

The treatise is often cited in discussions about the evolution of legal standards, the role of ideology in justice, and the historical mechanisms of scapegoating marginalized groups.

Key Takeaways About the Malleus Maleficarum

- **Definition:** A 15th-century treatise on witchcraft authored by Heinrich Kramer, serving as a manual for identifying and prosecuting witches.
- **Historical Role:** Influential in the rise of witch hunts and trials across Europe, particularly during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance.
- **Content Highlights:** Combines theological arguments, descriptions of witchcraft practices, and legal procedures endorsing harsh penalties.
- **Impact:** Contributed to widespread fear, social persecution, and legal abuses, disproportionately affecting women.
- **Modern Viewpoint:** Criticized for its misogyny, flawed legal approach, and role in human rights violations, yet remains important for understanding historical witch hunts.

Exploring what the Malleus Maleficarum truly represents reveals the complexities of medieval thought and the interplay between religion, law, and society. It stands as a stark reminder of how fear and ideology can shape legal systems and the importance of critical reflection on historical documents that have left indelible marks on human history.

What Is The Malleus Maleficarum

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what is the malleus maleficarum: The Hammer of Witches: Malleus Maleficarum
Heinrich Kramer, 2024-01-18 Heinrich Kramer's seminal work, The Hammer of Witches: Malleus Maleficarum, is an authoritative treatise on witchcraft, reflecting the tumultuous socio-political climate of 15th-century Europe. Composed in a methodical and persuasive style, this book blends theological arguments with legal precedents and empirical observations to validate the persecution

of witches. The text is meticulously structured, featuring a tripartite division that explores the nature of witchcraft, the legal ramifications, and the methods of detection and prosecution. Its historical context is critical, as it emerged during the height of the witch hunts, providing insight into the intersection of religion and law in shaping societal norms and fears of the time. Heinrich Kramer, a Dominican friar and inquisitor, was profoundly influenced by the prevailing hysteria surrounding witchcraft and heresy. His experiences in the field, alongside his theological training, cultivated a nuanced understanding of the tension between religious doctrine and popular superstition. Kramer's collaboration with Jacob Sprenger in this venture underscores the book's authenticity and authority, as both authors sought to establish a unified approach to combating witchcraft amidst widespread societal paranoia. The Hammer of Witches is an indispensable read for scholars of both history and literature, offering a fascinating glimpse into the dark depths of human belief and institutional power. Its analytical depth and historical significance warrant a place on the shelves of anyone interested in the roots of modern witch hunts and the complexities of moral and legalistic reasoning in society. Engage with Kramer's work to better understand the harrowing legacy of witch trials and the long-standing impacts on contemporary views of justice and paranoia. In this enriched edition, we have carefully created added value for your reading experience: - A succinct Introduction situates the work's timeless appeal and themes. - The Synopsis outlines the central plot, highlighting key developments without spoiling critical twists. - A detailed Historical Context immerses you in the era's events and influences that shaped the writing. - An Author Biography reveals milestones in the author's life, illuminating the personal insights behind the text. - A thorough Analysis dissects symbols, motifs, and character arcs to unearth underlying meanings. - Reflection questions prompt you to engage personally with the work's messages, connecting them to modern life. - Hand-picked Memorable Quotes shine a spotlight on moments of literary brilliance. - Interactive footnotes clarify unusual references, historical allusions, and archaic phrases for an effortless, more informed read.

what is the malleus maleficarum: The Malleus Maleficarum Heinrich Kramer, 2007-12 Also known as The Witch Hammer, The Malleus Maleficarum was a handbook for hunting and punishing witches-written by Inquisitors HEINRICH KRAMER (c. 1430-1505), an Alsatian clergyman, and JAMES SPRENGER (c. 1436-1494), a Swiss monk-to assist the Inquisition and Church in exterminating undesirables. Mostly a compilation of superstition and folklore, the book was taken very seriously at the time it was written in the 15th century and became a kind of spiritual law book used by judges to determine the guilt of the accused. While some of the articles covered in The Witch Hammer are humorous to modern audiences, they were a matter of life and death in the mid-1400's. Anyone interested in religion, the Inquisition, or the witch hunts that ravaged Europe will find this 1928 translation, by MONTAGUE SUMMERS (1880-1948), an unbelievable and enlightening read.

what is the malleus maleficarum: Malleus Maleficarum Heinrich Institoris, 1928

what is the malleus maleficarum: *Malleus Maleficarum* Heinrich Institoris, Jakob Sprenger, 1970

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what is the malleus maleficarum: *Malleus Maleficarum, Or: The Hammer of Witches* Heinrich Godfrey Kramer, 2011-02-01 Like Hitler's Mein Kampf, Kramer and Sprenger's Malleus Maleficarum is a book that is read for historical importance rather than enjoyment. As such it should form a part of every thinking person's library as a warning beacon, if for no other reason that it is a seminal

textbook on the inhumanity of humanity. First written in 1484 (and reprinted endlessly), *Malleus Maleficarum* was immediately given the imprimatur of the Holy See as the most important work on witchcraft, to date. And so it remains—a compendium of fifteenth century paranoia, all the more frightening for its totalitarian modernity. (Anything that is done for the benefit of the State is Good.) In form, it is a how to guide on recognizing, capturing, torturing, and executing witches. In substance, it is a diatribe against women, heretics, independent thinkers, romantic lovers, the sensitive passions, human sexuality, and compassion. In writing the *Malleus*, Kramer and Sprenger claimed to be doing God's work. These men, and those who followed them worshiped only their own arrogance. Read it and be afraid! Forming a portion of every working law library for 300 years, there is no estimate of how many women and men were put to death through the mechanism of this book. Some historians estimate that the numbers may run into the millions. The text is rife with case law examples of witchcraft, some of which are clearly delusional and some downright silly, or would be, if they hadn't ended in gruesome deaths for the accused. Take the case of the poor woman who was burned for offering the opinion that it might rain today shortly before it did. Of note are Kramer and Sprenger's assertions that prosecutors are (conveniently) immune to witchcraft, and their instructions to Judges to tell the truth to the witch that there will be mercy shown (with the mental reservation that death is a mercy to those prisoner to the devil). Such twisted logic is the cornerstone of the *Malleus*. The translator, Rev. Montague Summers, waxes rhapsodic on the learning and wisdom of the authors of the *Malleus*. He was apparently of a mind with Kramer and Sprenger, and wrote two embarrassingly effusive and bigoted introductions (in 1928 and 1946), praising the brilliance of this work and its importance in this feminist era. Summers' commentary is as frightening as anything Kramer and Sprenger wrote in the text proper, the more so for being 20th century, and particularly post-World War Two. Like the Papal Bull of VIII which is now considered integral with the *Malleus*, future commentators will make much of the statements of Summers, a modern man. As a license to kill, the *Malleus Maleficarum* was used too often and far too freely. Kramer and Sprenger's madness did not die with them—though millions have died because of the madness presented in this book.

what is the malleus maleficarum: The Hammer of Witches Christopher S. Mackay, 2009-05-28 The *Malleus Maleficarum*, first published in 1486–7, is the standard medieval text on witchcraft and it remained in print throughout the early modern period. Its descriptions of the evil acts of witches and the ways to exterminate them continue to contribute to our knowledge of early modern law, religion and society. Mackay's highly acclaimed translation, based on his extensive research and detailed analysis of the Latin text, is the only complete English version available, and the most reliable. Now available in a single volume, this key text is at last accessible to students and scholars of medieval history and literature. With detailed explanatory notes and a guide to further reading, this volume offers a unique insight into the fifteenth-century mind and its sense of sin, punishment and retribution.

what is the malleus maleficarum: Hammer of the Witches Heinrich Kramer, Henricus Institoris, 2017-10-04 Hammer of the Witches *Malleus Maleficarum* 1486 by Heinrich Kramer Translated by Montague Summers It has been recognized even from the very earliest times, during the first gropings towards the essential conveniences of social decency and social order, that witchcraft is an evil thing, an enemy to light, an ally of the powers of darkness, disruption, and decay. Sometimes, no doubt, primitive communities were obliged to tolerate the witch and her works owing to fear; in other words, witchcraft was a kind of blackmail; but directly Cities were able to co-ordinate, and it became possible for Society to protect itself, precautions were taken and safeguards were instituted against this curse, this bane whose object seemed to blight all that was fair, all that was just and good, and that was well-appointed and honourable, in a word, whose aim proved to be set up on high the red standard of revolution; to overwhelm religion, existing order, and the comeliness of life in an abyss of anarchy, nihilism, and despair. The *Malleus Maleficarum*, usually translated as Hammer of Witches, is the best known and the most important treatise on witchcraft. It was written by the Catholic clergyman Heinrich Kramer (under his Latinized name

Henricus Institoris) and first published in the German city of Speyer in 1487. It endorses extermination of witches and for this purpose develops a detailed legal and theological theory. It was a bestseller, second only to the Bible in terms of sales for almost 200 years. Magical acts and witchcraft had long been forbidden by the Church, whose attitude towards witchcraft was explained in the canon *Episcopi* written in about 900 AD. It stated that witchcraft and magic were just delusions and that those who believed in such things had been seduced by the Devil in dreams and visions. However, in the same period supernatural intervention was accepted in the form of ordeals that were later also used during witch trials. Possessions by the Devil are considered real even in present times by some Christians and it is a part of doctrine that demons may be cast out by appropriate sacramental exorcisms. In *Malleus*, exorcism is, for example, one of the five ways to overcome the attacks of incubi. Prayer and transubstantiation are traditionally excluded by Christians from the category of magical rites. In 1484 clergyman Heinrich Kramer made one of the first attempts at prosecuting alleged witches in the Tyrol region. It was not a success: he was expelled from the city of Innsbruck and dismissed by the local bishop as senile and crazy. According to Diarmaid MacCulloch, writing the book was Kramer's act of self-justification and revenge. Ankarloo and Clark claim that Kramer's purpose in writing the book was to explain his own views on witchcraft, systematically refute arguments claiming that witchcraft did not exist, discredit those who expressed skepticism about its reality, claim that those who practised witchcraft were more often women than men, and to convince magistrates to use Kramer's recommended procedures for finding and convicting witches.

what is the malleus maleficarum: *The 'Malleus Maleficarum' and the construction of witchcraft* Hans Broedel, 2013-07-19 This electronic version has been made available under a Creative Commons (BY-NC-ND) open access license. The *Malleus* is an important text and is frequently quoted by authors across a wide range of scholarly disciplines. Yet it also presents serious difficulties: it is difficult to understand out of context, and is not generally representative of late medieval learned thinking. This, the first book-length study of the original text in English, provides students and scholars with an introduction to this controversial work and to the conceptual world of its authors. Like all witch-theorists, Institoris and Sprenger constructed their witch out of a constellation of pre-existing popular beliefs and learned traditions. Therefore, to understand the *Malleus*, one must also understand the contemporary and subsequent debates over the reality and nature of witches. This book argues that although the *Malleus* was a highly idiosyncratic text, its arguments were powerfully compelling and therefore remained influential long after alternatives were forgotten. Consequently, although focused on a single text, this study has important implications for fifteenth-century witchcraft theory. This is a fascinating work on the *Malleus Maleficarum* and will be essential to students and academics of late medieval and early modern history, religion and witchcraft studies.

what is the malleus maleficarum: *Malleus maleficarum* /. Jacob Sprenger, 1494

what is the malleus maleficarum: *Malleus Maleficarum* Montague Summers, 2004-06-01 And the power of God is stronger than the power of the devil, so divine works are more true than demoniac operations. Whence inasmuch as evil is powerful in the world, then it must be the work of the devil always conflicting with the work of God. Therefore as it is unlawful to hold that the devil's evil craft can apparently exceed the work of God, so it is unlawful to believe that the noblest works of creation, that is to say, man and beast, can be harmed and spoiled by the power of the devil.

what is the malleus maleficarum: *Malleus Maleficarum: The Witch Hammer* James Sprenger, Montague Summers, Heinrich Kramer, 2018-07-11 The *Malleus Maleficarum* is a seminal treatise regarding witchcraft and demons, presented here complete with an authoritative translation to modern English by Montague Summers. At the time this book was published in 1487, the Christian church had considered witchcraft a dangerous affront to the faith for many centuries. Executions of suspected witches were intermittent, and various explanations of behaviors deemed suspect were thought to be caused by possession, either by the devil or demon such as an incubus or succubus. Kramer wrote this book after he had tried and failed to have a woman executed for

witchcraft. Unhappy at the verdict of the court, he authored the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a manual for other witch seekers to refer to. For centuries the text was used by Christians as a reference source on matters of demonology, although it was not used directly by the Inquisition who became notorious for their tortures and murders.

what is the malleus maleficarum: The Malleus Maleficarum P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, 2007-06-15 This title offers a new translation of the medieval treatise on witchcraft, the *Malleus Maleficarum*, by the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Institoris.

what is the malleus maleficarum: The Malleus Maleficarum , 2013-01-18 The *Malleus Maleficarum* is one of the best-known treatises dealing with the problem of what to do with witches. It was written in 1487 by a Dominican inquisitor, Heinrich Institoris, following his failure to prosecute a number of women for witchcraft, it is in many ways a highly personal document, full of frustration at official complacency in the face of a spiritual threat, as well as being a practical guide for law-officers who have to deal with a cunning, dangerous enemy. Combining theological discussion, illustrative anecdotes, and useful advice for those involved in suppressing witchcraft, its influence on witchcraft studies has been extensive. The only previous translation into English, that by Montague Summers produced in 1928, is full of inaccuracies. It is written in a style almost unreadable nowadays, and is unfortunately coloured by his personal agenda. This new edited translation, with an introductory essay setting witchcraft, Institoris, and the *Malleus* into clear, readable English, corrects Summers' mistakes and offers a lean, unvarnished version of what Institoris actually wrote. It will undoubtedly become the standard translation of this important and controversial late-medieval text.

what is the malleus maleficarum: Malleus Maleficarum Heinrich Kramer, James Sprenger, Montague Summers, 2018-07-11 The *Malleus Maleficarum* is a seminal treatise regarding witchcraft and demons, presented here complete with an authoritative translation to modern English by Montague Summers. At the time this book was published in 1487, the Christian church had considered witchcraft a dangerous affront to the faith for many centuries. Executions of suspected witches were intermittent, and various explanations of behaviors deemed suspect were thought to be caused by possession, either by the devil or demon such as an incubus or succubus. Kramer wrote this book after he had tried and failed to have a woman executed for witchcraft. Unhappy at the verdict of the court, he authored the *Malleus Maleficarum* as a manual for other witch seekers to refer to. For centuries the text was used by Christians as a reference source on matters of demonology, although it was not used directly by the Inquisition who became notorious for their tortures and murders.

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what is the malleus maleficarum: Malleus maleficarum Heinrich Institoris, Jakob Sprenger, 1595

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