A World Within: The Devil, Delusions and Early Modern Cognition

Thibaut Maus de Rolley

1. Thinking Demonic Illusions

The pages of early modern demonological treatises are filled with descriptions of wonders that challenged, for their readers, the boundaries between truth and falsehood, reality and illusion, wakefulness and sleep. They tell, among many things, about ghosts and apparitions, flying witches, nocturnal feasts with the devil, humans taking the shapes of animals, and men suddenly afflicted by sexual impotence, sometimes to the point of being unable to see or feel their own genitals. The authors of these texts – 'demonologists' – did not merely compile dramatic reports of these phenomena. They also tried to determine if such wonders were due to demonic agency or to non-demonic causes (God, nature, or human artifice), and, simultaneously, they sought to ascertain whether each of them had to be deemed real or illusory. As Stuart Clark has shown, these two sets of criteria (demonic and non-demonic; real and illusory) governed and structured demonological debate. Between them, they offered four categories of explanation allowing demonologists to classify any extraordinary event as: (i) real demonic effects; (ii) illusory demonic effects; (iii) real non-demonic effects; or (iv) illusory non-demonic effects.[1]

[1] Stuart Clark, 'The scientific status of demonology', in *Occult and Scientific Mentalities in the Renaissance*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 351–74 (p. 359). I am of course indebted in this chapter, and particularly in these introductory remarks, to the rest of Clark's work on demonology and visual illusions: *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), in particular Part II ('Science'), pp. 149–312, and *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). For other studies of the demonological discourse on illusion, see: Walter Stephens, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002); Claudia Swan, 'Eyes wide shut: early modern imagination, demonology, and

As this 'grid' makes clear, to classify a phenomenon as an illusion was not to consider it as non-demonic, for an illusion could be wrought by the devil. A demonic illusion – demonologists alternatively used the terms imposture, or 'prestige' (*praestigium*) – could be of two kinds. It could consist in a deception of the external senses (and particularly, but not only, of the eye), or in a deception of the internal senses (a delusion of the 'eye of the mind'). In both cases, the devil's victim perceived something that was not veridical – that did not correspond to reality. I will return in a moment to the mechanics of these illusions, in particular those of internal illusions. The point I would like to make for now is that an 'illusory demonic effect' would not necessarily be thought of by demonologists as imaginary: in other words, as a dream or an hallucination. The devil could, for instance, surround a man with a body made out of air in order to give him the appearance of a wolf. However false and illusory, this ghostly semblance of a beast had enough material existence – enough reality, as it were – to be perceived by the bodily senses. Or the devil could, like a juggler playing a card trick, substitute a wolf for a man in the blink of an eye. In this case, the effect achieved by the devil's sleight of hand was the same – the illusion of metamorphosis – even if the objects perceived by the viewer were in themselves perfectly real: a real man, then a real wolf, both carried through space at prodigious speed.

In some instances, the devil forged illusions so as to exaggerate his powers and make men believe that he could accomplish not only wonders (*mira*), but

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the visual arts', *Zeitsprünge: Forschungen zur Frühen Neuzeit*, 7 (2003), 560–81; Thibaut Maus de Rolley, 'La part du diable: Jean Wier et la fabrique de l'illusion diabolique', *Tracés. Revue de sciences humaines*, 8 (2005), pp. 29–46 (republished in *Fictions du diable: Démonologie et littérature de saint Augustin à Léo Taxil*, ed. by Françoise Lavocat, Pierre Kapitaniak and Marianne Closson (Geneva: Droz, 2007), pp. 109–30); Rebecca M. Wilkin, *Women, Imagination and the Search for Truth in Early Modern France* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), chapter 1 ('Common sense: Johann Weyer and the Psychology of Witchcraft'), pp. 7–52.

miracles (*miracula*). For almost all demonologists, true miracles were the preserve of God alone. The devil could not overrule the laws of nature, and achieved most of his effects by manipulating nature and its occult properties. His domain was not that of the supernatural, but of the preternatural: the realm of deviant and prodigious phenomena that were yet within nature. Illusions enabled the devil to blur this fundamental boundary. The purpose of illusory metamorphoses, for instance, was to lead men and women to believe that he had the power to create and alter the substance of things, something actually beyond his reach. In other instances, the devil created illusions in order to mask (and not exaggerate) the extent and the reality of his crimes in the world, by making them appear as the product of purely natural causes. Evidence that witches sometimes merely dreamed about the Sabbath, their nocturnal gathering with the devil, instead of attending it 'in the body', was thus interpreted by many as a demonic ruse, meant to undermine belief in the existence and reality of the Sabbath itself, and to save witches from the stake.[2]

'Thinking with demons' meant, therefore, engaging in a constant and subtle process of discrimination, where boundaries needed to be readjusted for each phenomenon discussed and where all the categories of explanation identified by Clark had to be considered at some point. Very few authors accepted all phenomena suspected of being demonic as being truly demonic, or, alternatively, attributed them entirely to natural causes; and none claimed that demonic effects were *all* real, or *all* illusory. A demonologist could place the Sabbath on the first square of the grid (i: real demonic effects), while presenting werewolves as the product of a demonic illusion (ii: illusory demonic effects), sexual impotence as the natural effect of the power of imagination (iii: real non-demonic effects), and, say, the levitation of demoniacs as a

[2] Thibaut Maus de Rolley, *Elévations: L'écriture du voyage aérien à la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 2011), p. 467.

juggler's trick (iv: illusory non-demonic effects). And different explanations could of course be offered for the same phenomenon, sometimes within a single treatise, as was usually the case in discussions about demonic 'transvection' – the witches' flight to the Sabbath.[3]

In order to trace these multiple boundaries between truth and illusion, it was necessary for demonologists to explain how illusions – demonic or not – were produced, and thus to detail the workings of the mind and sensory perception. These authors therefore played a major part in early modern debates about cognition and cognitive confusions. As Clark has shown in *Vanities of the Eye*, demonology significantly advanced the idea that the world might not be what it appears to be, and that the senses – and especially vision – were uncertain and unreliable.[4] The rest of this chapter will focus on two of the most influential demonologists in early modern Europe – Heinrich Kramer and Johann Weyer – and explore some of the different ways in which they conceived of the mind, the mechanisms of internal illusions, and the role played by the devil in the making of such delusions. It will examine, in particular, how these demonological discussions were underpinned by a fundamental analogy between the mind and the physical world – the 'world within' and the 'world without'. Like us, demonologists relied heavily on metaphorical language, and particularly on spatial metaphors, to conceptualise the mind and its malfunctions. The mind was conceived of as a physical space, and cognition as a spatial and dynamic process, dependent on the journeys undertook by the entities inhabiting this inner territory. However, as we shall see, demonologists differ from us in taking spatial

[3] On the discussion of demonic transvection – one of the most debated questions in early modern demonology – see Stephens, *Demon Lovers*, pp. 125–44, and Maus de Rolley, *Elévations*, chapter 8 ('Vols sous influence: Débats savants sur le transport diabolique'), pp. 413–74.

[4] Descartes's 'mauvais génie', this master of deception, owed much to the devil of witchcraft theorists: see Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, pp. 320–1.

metaphors of the mind literally, in more than one respect. The boundary between the figurative and the literal, in discussions of mental activity, is a moving and uncertain one.

2. The Topographical Mind

One of the most thorough and sophisticated discussions of demonic illusions can be found in the famous *Malleus maleficarum*, or *Hammer of Witches*, published in 1486 by the Dominican inquisitors Heinrich Kramer (or Institoris) and Jacob Sprenger, and most probably written by the former alone.[5] The main purpose of the work was to demonstrate the reality of witchcraft. As such, it repeatedly argued for a reinterpretation of the authoritative *Canon episcopi*, a tenth-century text of canon law, and its claim that nocturnal flights were a delusion induced by the devil: an experience happening in the mind, but never in the body (more on that later). To accept such a view, for Kramer, was to pave the way for the idea that all witchcraft was illusory, and thus excuse the witches from their crimes: 'they [those who deny bodily transportation] claim that all acts of sorcery […] should be ascribed to [witches] as people who do not harm since these are merely matters relating to an illusion in the imagination'.[6] However, Kramer did not rule out the possibility of such delusions.

[5] On the authorship of the *Malleus maleficarum*, see Christopher Mackay's introduction to his edition of the text: Heinrich Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches: A Complete Translation of the* Malleus Maleficarum, ed. and trans. by Christopher S. Mackay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). All further references to the *Malleus maleficarum* are to this edition. The Latin text I use is: Heinrich Kramer, *Malleus Maleficarum in Tres Divisus Partes* (Frankfurt am Main: apud Nicolaum Bassaeum, 1580).

[6] Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 3, p. 300.

How could he? The devil was indeed the ultimate deceiver, a master conjurer, keen to trick men – and even his own disciples – with external or internal *praestigia*.[7]

Scattered across several chapters of the treatise, Kramer's discourse on the mechanics of internal illusions was heavily indebted to Thomas Aquinas's discussion of the subject, notably in his *De malo* (16.11) and *Summa theologica* (1.78).[8] Kramer's understanding of internal illusions indeed relied on the scholastic Aristotelian theory of faculties of the mind.[9] According to this model (schematically summarised here), sensory cognition was achieved by the joint operation of the external senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) and the internal senses (or faculties). As Kramer remarked himself, opinions differed as to the exact number and name of the internal senses. For Aquinas, and thus Kramer, there were four of them: the common sense, imagination (or fantasy), estimation (or cogitation, or reason), and memory.[10] Sensory information received by the external senses was conveyed to the

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[7] See Kramer's discussion of natural and demonic *praestigia* in Pt. I, Q. 9, pp. 194–201.

[8] On Kramer's debt to Thomistic demonology, see Christine Pigné, 'Du *De malo* au *Malleus maleficarum*: les conséquences de la démonologie thomiste sur le corps de la sorcière', *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales*, 13 (2006), 195–219 (on internal illusions, see 209–15). On the mechanics of demonic illusion in Kramer's *Malleus maleficarum*, see also Stephens, *Demon Lovers*, pp. 300–21.

[9] For a clear presentation of Aristotelian psychology, see Katharine Park, 'The Organic Soul', in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. by Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 464–84. For the medieval theory of internal senses, see: E. Ruth Harvey, *The Inward Wits: Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1975); Simon Kemp and Garth J. O. Fletcher, 'The Medieval Theory of the Inner Senses', *The American Journal of Psychology*, 106, 4 (1993), 559–76; Robert Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Simo Knuuttila and Pekka Kärkkäinen, 'Medieval Theories of Internal Senses', in *Sourcebook for the History of the Philosophy of Mind: Philosophical Psychology from Plato to Kant*, ed. by Simo Knuuttila and Juha Sihvola (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), pp. 131–45. For the Renaissance tradition, see Lorenzo Casini, 'Renaissance Theories of Internal Senses', in *Sourcebook for the History of the Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 147–56.

[10] Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 177, and Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 7, pp. 324–5.

brain by animal spirits circulating along the nerves. The imagination received this data through the common sense and converted it into visual replicas of sense objects: 'sensible *species*', or 'phantasms', also described as similitudes, likenesses, or images. The imagination stored these images, allowing the mind to continue perceiving them when the external object was for instance out of sight, and transmitted them, again through the agency of animal spirits, to the other faculties: reason and memory, where they were more permanently stored.[11]

This dynamic and physiological conception of mental processes allowed for the construction of a cartography of the mind. Developed from Greek medical theory by early Christian writers such as St Augustine, and still widely accepted throughout the Renaissance, in spite of the challenges posed by the anatomical observations of physicians like Vesalius, the medieval 'cell doctrine' of brain function localised the faculties of the mind in the hollow ventricles (or 'cells', *cellulae*) of the brain.[12] Again, opinions differed, but a frequent view was to place the common sense in the first cell

[11] In *The Modularity of Mind* (1983), Jerry Fodor labelled as 'horizontal faculty psychology' this school of thought according to which mental processes rely on interactions between the same set of separated mental faculties, which are 'supposed to be invariant from one topic of thought to the next' – in other words, non-domain-specific (*The Modularity of Mind: An Essay on Faculty Psychology* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983), p. 10–2). By contrast with this 'common-sense theory of the mind', the 'vertical tradition' revived by Fodor – whose origins he traces back to Franz Joseph Gall's phrenology – distinguishes faculties not by the effect they have on information (discriminating, storing, etc.), but by the content of information they process. According to this model, faculties (or rather 'modules') are specialised and 'computationally autonomous': they can function independently of one another. For a presentation of modular views of the mind in cognitive psychology, from Fodor and onwards, see Ellen Spolsky, *Gaps in Nature: Literary Interpretation and the Modular Mind* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), chapter 1 ('Minds, Modules, and Models'), pp. 19–42.

[12] On the cell doctrine, see Edwin Clarke and Kenneth Dewhurst, *An Illustrated History of the Brain Function* (Oxford: Sandford Publications, 1972), pp. 10–55, and the references above (note 7). On sixteenth-century debates on the localisation of the faculties, see Marie-Luce Demonet, 'Le lieu où l'on pense, ou le désordre des facultés', in *Ordre et désordre dans la civilisation de la Renaissance*, ed. by Gabriel-André Pérouse and Francis Goyet (Saint-Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 1996), pp. 25–47.

(corresponding to the lateral ventricles of the brain), at the front of the head, usually alongside the imagination. Reason was located in the middle cell (the third ventricle), in the position of the judge, and memory in the third cell (the fourth ventricle), in the posterior part of the brain. Anatomical illustrations offered a mapping of this world within the brain, often in the form of three juxtaposed circles or oblongs, labelled like a crude topographical map.[13] From the 10th century, the three cells, like three communicating caves, appear linked together by open passages, consonant with the dynamic conception of sensory perception.[14]

Kramer's presentation of the faculties and their function was in line with this rough outline. The imagination was 'a place of preservation for forms [*species*] received by perception'[15] – in other words, received through the external senses and the common sense. These forms, or images, explained Kramer, were set in motion by animal spirits and humours. They flowed from one faculty to the other, and were eventually stored in the memory, a 'storehouse of conceptions that are not received by perception'.[16] The common sense was located in the front part of the brain, imagination in the middle, and memory in the third *cellula capitis*, at the back of the

[13] Clarke and Dewhurst, *An Illustrated History of the Brain Function*, figs. 26–38.
[14] Ibid., figs. 39–58. Even if this mapping of the brain relies on a distinctly different conception of the architecture of the mind (see above, note 11), it chimes somewhat with the suggestion made by supporters of a modular view of the mind that cognitive processes are anatomically localised in specific regions of the brain – a topic that has become a thriving field of study with the development, from the late twentieth century, of non-invasive brain imaging techniques. For a review of research on brain mapping in cognitive psychology and cognitive neurosciences, see Pieter van Eijsden et al., 'Neurophysiology of functional imaging', *Neuroimage*, 45. 4 (2009), 1047–54. For a critical assessment of these endeavours, see William R. Uttal, *The New Phrenology: The Limits of Localizing Cognitive Processes in the Brain* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).
[15] Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 177.
[16] Ibid., Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 177.

head.[17] The devil, Kramer reminded his readers, could forge external or internal deceptions. But to do the latter, he first had to glide into the body of his victim – demonic delusions constituted a form of demonic possession.[18] According to Augustine, quoted by Kramer, the devil tempted and seduced individuals by manipulating their senses:

> This evil creeps in through all avenues of perception. It adopts shapes, it adorns itself in colours, it clings to sounds, it subordinates itself to smells, it suffuses itself with flavours.[19]

But this remark could be taken literally: the external senses provided pathways into the body, and because of his spiritual nature, which made him as malleable and evanescent as air, the devil could easily (but with the permission of God) penetrate these breaches.[20] Women were particularly vulnerable to these attacks, since the female body was considered to be more porous and open than the male body, and thus more easily invaded and possessed.[21]

These were widely shared and accepted ideas about demonic possession. A more problematic one was the localisation of the devil inside the body. Unlike God,

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[17] Ibid., Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 178; Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 7, p. 325. In the latter reference, Mackay's translation incorrectly places memory 'in the front part of the head': the Latin text says 'in posteriori parte capitis' (Kramer, *Malleus Maleficarum*, p. 269; see also p. 282: 'in ultima parte capitis').

[18] Kramer considered the invasion of the mind by the devil as one among 'various methods of possession' (*The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 10, p. 343).

[19] Augustine, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, 12. Quoted in *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 9, p. 196.

[20] See Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 186. On this conception of the senses as 'entry points', see Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 188–9.

[21] Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, pp. 140–58 (see in particular the reference to Kramer's *Malleus maleficarum*, p. 147).

the devil occupied a location in space. So where did he go, once he had got past the gates of the external senses? Could he physically occupy the mind? Or did he act on the internal senses from other parts of the body? Because they wanted to 'reserve a privileged space' for God, medieval theologians had tended to confine the presence of invading demons to the debased portions of the body: the bowels, away from the heart and spiritual system.[22] The production of demonic internal illusions, argued Kramer, could not happen unless the devil could take possession of the faculties of the mind; he had to be actually present in the head (and thus in its ventricles).[23] But how could two spirits – the devil and the soul, which God made impenetrable to the devil – be in the same place at the same time? It was true, remarked Kramer, that the centre of the heart was the seat of the soul, but it could also be argued, as did the *De spiritu et anima* (a work then widely attributed to Augustine) that the soul was 'in the entire body and in every part of the body'.[24] Scholastic distinctions enabled Kramer to solve the difficulty, and to conclude that the devil and the soul could indeed cohabit in the head, since there was 'no confusion of their respective workings': 'granting that the soul is in the head, still the devil can work there, for his work is different from the work of the soul'.[25]

When inside the ventricles, the devil could not be perceived by the internal senses. He could not assume an aerial body, and he could not forge new *species* that

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[22] On the localisation of the devil inside the human body, and more generally, the physiology of spirit possession, see Caciola, *Discerning spirits*, pp. 176–222 (the quotation is p. 207).
[23] This question is discussed at length in Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 9 ('How demons exist inside bodies and heads without causing harm when they work changes involving conjuring').
[24] Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 9, p. 336.
[25] Ibid., Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 9, p. 336. On Aquinas's conception of the soul, see Norman Kretzmann, 'Philosophy of Mind', in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. by Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 128–59.

did not previously exist in the two storehouses of the mind, the memory and the imagination. However, he had the power to hijack, as it were, the images flowing along the nerves or in the cavities of the brain, shifting them from one faculty to another. In particular, he could impress upon the imagination images borrowed from the memory, producing visions of things that were not actually perceived by the external senses:

> The demons can direct and set into motion the internal spirits and humours, so that the images stored in the places of preservation are brought forth from the storehouses to the origins of perception, that is, to the virtues of imagination and fantasy, so that this person can imagine certain things.[26]

Demons could also 'transform' these images by combining them, thus creating chimeras and fantastical mirages that had never been perceived, as such, by their victims, and did not even exist.

All this was well within the powers of the devil. These were natural processes, that could actually happen without any demonic intervention, while asleep, under the influence of passions, or because of a humoral imbalance.[27] The devil only had to exercise his power of 'local motion' over material objects. In other words, he had but to act upon bodies and move them through space, as he did notably when transporting witches to the Sabbath, when shaping bodies made out of air, or when performing various *praestigia*. Kramer's descriptions of internal illusions actually echoed his own presentation of the devil as a consummate juggler (*ioculator*), for the trick, here, was

[26] Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 178.
[27] Kramer discusses these natural illusions in Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 179; Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 7, p. 325; Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 9, p. 336.

fundamentally a feat of legerdemain.[28] It relied on the devil's ability to manipulate objects, to convey them swiftly from one hiding place to another, to substitute one for the other. The devil performed in the ventricles of the brain as if on a juggler's stage, with the eye of the imagination for his sole audience.

3. The Clouded Mind

In the preface to his influential *De Praestigiis daemonum* (*On the Illusions of Demons*, 1563), the German physician Johann Weyer (or Wier) explained that to address the question of witchcraft was to enter a dark 'labyrinth of enchantments' (*incantamentorum labyrinthus*), full of traps and deceptions, where one risked, at every step, losing the thread of truth by confusing the real and the illusory.[29] In Weyer's view, finding the way out implied that one recognised how much of the phenomena attributed to the agency of demons belonged to the realm of illusion, and how little to that of reality. Against those who, like Kramer, had endeavoured to establish the reality of witchcraft, Weyer argued that the crimes and activities ordinarily imputed to *female* witches – poisoning excepted – were imaginary ones,

[28] Like many demonologists, Kramer explained the 'prestiges' of the devil by comparing them to those wrought by jugglers. If jugglers could achieve wonderful effects by natural and artificial means, *a fortiori* the devil, with his incomparable agility, speed, and knowledge of nature: 'For whatever a human knows how to do by art, a demon can know better' (*The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 9, p. 198). On the figure of the devil as a juggler, see Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, pp. 78–83 and 151–2; Thibaut Maus de Rolley, 'Le diable à la foire: jongleurs, bateleurs et *prestigiateurs* dans le discours démonologique à la Renaissance', in *Kunst der Täuschung: über Status und Bedeutung von ästhetischer und dämonischer Illusion in der Frühen Neuzeit (1400–1700) in Italien und Frankreich*, ed. by Kirsten Dickhaut (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), forthcoming.

[29] Johann Weyer, *De Praestigiis daemonum et incantationibus ac venificiis libri V* (Basel: Oporinus, 1563), p. 20. The treatise was expanded in 1568 in a version in six books: *De praestigiis daemonum, et incantationibus ac veneficiis libri sex* (Basel: Oporinus, 1568). The text of the preface is missing from the modern English translation: [Johann Weyer,] *Witches, Devils and Doctors in the Renaissance: Johann Weyer,* De Praestigiis Daemonum, ed. by George Mora *et al*. (Tempe: Center for Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998).

including the Sabbath, the pact with the devil, and their nocturnal flights. Because of the natural frailty of their sex, women, and especially old women, were all too easily deluded by their own imagination, but also by the internal illusions forged by the devil. The argument, at its core, was no less misogynistic than Kramer's. God, explained Weyer, would not allow the devil to persecute these excessively dumb and weak creatures except by dreams and delusions. To permit other forms of persecution (such as a bodily transportation to the Sabbath) would be to submit them to an excessive and unjust punishment. However, *male* witches – learned magicians in the guise of Faust – were guilty of invoking the devil, colluding with him and committing all sorts of diabolical crimes. Unlike their female counterparts, these male magicians had to be executed.[30]

Weyer insisted on the fact that witches' delusions could be explained by natural causes in ways that did not necessarily entail the intervention of the devil. Women were particularly vulnerable to the illusions created by a humoral imbalance, being melancholic by nature (a point hotly disputed by Jean Bodin, Weyer's fiercest opponent). In a chapter on 'the distorted imagination of melancholics' (II, 24 in the first version of the text; III, 7 in the expanded one), Weyer reminds his readers that stirred and overheated humours – and first and foremost, the black bile – produce vapours that rise from the abdomen to the brain, infecting the 'abode of the mind' and altering the workings of the imagination. Victims of such melancholic delusions are assailed by chimeral thoughts and fantastical visions in their sleep or, more rarely, while awake.[31]

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[30] See Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, pp. 117–8 and 198–203; Maus de Rolley, *Elévations*, pp. 440–53; Wilkin, *Women, Imagination and the Search for Truth*, pp. 10–8.
[31] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, pp. 183–6.

In the following chapter, Weyer expands on the role of the imagination and how it could be corrupted. His explanations lack the precision and sophistication of Kramer's scholastic psychology. Long quotations borrowed mainly from Marsilio Ficino, Aristotle and the fourth-century neoplatonist Iamblichus introduce rudiments of the theory of the faculties detailed above.[32] According to Iamblichus, the function of the imagination (indifferently designated by Weyer as *phantasia*, *imaginatio*, or *vis imaginativa*) was to receive the information provided by the external senses and shape it into 'likenesses and apparitions' (*similitudines specierum, et apparitiones*), which it would then convey to the other faculties, the 'opinion' and the 'intellect' (there is no mention of the memory in these chapters).[33] The imagination was a 'treasure-house for the forms received through the senses' (a quotation from Aristotle's *De somno*); these images were carried through the nerves and the mind by animal spirits and vapours.[34]

When excessively hot or abundant, humoral exhalations could confuse the *species* and divert them from their course. They could also contaminate them with their qualities, and therefore transform them. A phlegmatic vapour would cause dreams about water, whereas a 'black and melancholic vapour' would make 'something horrible appear – a demon-image, as it were'.[35] Weyer also insisted that these cognitive confusions could be triggered by the imagination itself, without any external stimulation. Quoting Ficino's discourse on the power of imagination, he

[32] On Iamblichus's and Ficino's views on the imagination, and their use by Weyer, see Guido Giglione's chapter in this volume. Henri Busson signals that Weyer's knowledge of Ficino's theory of the imagination comes from Pietro Pomponazzi's *De incantationibus* (1556): see Henri Busson, 'Introduction' to Pomponazzi, *Les causes des merveilles de la nature ou les enchantements*, ed. and trans. by Henri Busson (Paris : Rieder, 1930), pp. 67–8.
[33] Weyer mentions the *vis memorativa* in III, 17, in a quote from Della Porta (*Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 225); the *sensus communis* is mentioned in III, 19 (p. 232).
[34] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, pp. 186–9.
[35] Ibid., p. 188.

presented the imagination as a rebel faculty, a disruptive force that, when under the influence of passions (desire, pleasure, fear, and sorrow), could trick the mind and the body, to the point of altering it by sending the animal spirits, through the nerves, to impress the flesh with images.[36] But even in that case, the process remained essentially the same: *species* and animal spirits manipulated (and corrupted) by vapours, themselves stirred up by passions.

As a physician, Weyer was certainly familiar with the cell doctrine, and would probably have come across illustrations like the often plagiarised drawing of the ventricles published in 1503 by Gregor Reisch in his *Margarita philosophica*, a successful university textbook providing a detailed account of Aristotelian psychology.[37] However, Weyer did not map the workings of the faculties in much detail. He located them in the brain – 'the organ of thoughts and imaginings'[38] – though without giving a clear idea of their respective places within it, nor mentioning the three ventricles: a sign, perhaps, of the influence of Vesalius, who rejected the ventricular localisation of the faculties.[39] Weyer also remained quite vague on the problematic issue of the localisation of the devil within the body. Like Kramer and virtually every demonologist of the period, Weyer believed in the devil's ability and

[36] Ibid., p. 187.
[37] See Clarke and Dewhurst, *An Illustrated History of the Brain Function*, figs. 48–55.
[38] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 285.
[39] Weyer did not mention Reisch's *Margarita philosophica* in the *De praestigiis*, nor in his medical treatises. However, he quoted several times Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica* (1543), praising him as a peerless physician and anatomist (*Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 229). For Vesalius, the ventricles were 'nothing more than cavities or passages in which air is attracted by inspiration, and the vital spirit, conveyed to them from the heart, is mutated into animal spirit by the power of the substance of the brain itself': Vesalius, 'On the Cerebral Ventricles' (*On the Fabric of the Human Body*), quoted in Marco Catani and Stefano Sandrone, *Brain Renaissance: From Vesalius to Modern Neuroscience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 98. On Weyer and Vesalius, see Wilkin, *Women, Imagination and Search for Truth*, pp. 25–36.

eagerness to invade the human body, which was, according to St Cyprian (quoted in I, 20) comparable to a besieged citadel:

> [The devil] passes around us one by one, and, like an enemy laying siege to closed walls, he explores and tests whether some part of our bodily members be less stable and dependable – an avenue whereby he can penetrate to our inner parts.[40]

The external senses, again, were those breaks in the wall allowing the devil to 'insinuate himself' into his victims' bodies in order to delude them. However, unlike the *Malleus maleficarum*, the *De praestigiis* never makes quite clear whether the devil needed to enter the brain to interfere with his victims' thoughts. In Weyer's descriptions of demonic internal illusions, the starting point of the process is invariably the devil's direct action on humours. The devil, it is repeatedly said, 'stirs up' humours and vapours, which then disturb the course of the animal spirits and *species* in the brain, corrupt them, and affect in turn the internal senses.[41] His place, it

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[40] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 63. In the third book of his treatise (the fourth in the expanded version), Weyer dismissed several tales of demonic possession as cases of melancholy, or frauds orchestrated by the alleged demoniacs and their priests (see in particular chapters 25–28). However, he accepted many others as authentic. The wonders accompanying these possessions could be denounced as illusions forged by the devil (the presence, for example, of objects inside the body of the possessed), but these possessions were nevertheless presented as real. What Weyer denied was the possibility that possession might be caused by witchcraft. On Weyer and demonic possession, see Brian P. Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession & Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 75–7.

[41] See for instance (all references to Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*): 'he has corrupted their mind with empty images, lulling or *stirring to this task the bodily humours and spirits'* (p. 181, my italics); 'Why then will a crafty spirit like the Devil not be able, with God's permission, to insinuate himself into the organs of sense, and *stir the humours and vapours* suitable for his purposes, or bring his won special air into the organs?' (p. 186, my italics); 'The devil is no less able, being a spirit, to *stir*

seems, is within the black bile. Melancholy, Weyer reminded his readers, was known as the devil's bath (*diaboli balneum*), and the devil took indeed 'great delight in immersing himself in this humour' and mingling in its fumes.[42] Melancholic vapours were a vehicle allowing him to circulate around the body – and possibly enter the brain.

However, what these remarks suggest is that the devil, in Weyer's conception, operated essentially from the recesses of the abdomen – from the spleen, where black bile was secreted. More than a juggler directly manipulating images within the brain, the devil appears here as a physician of sorts (an 'old scheming physician', as Weyer himself put it[43]) regulating, or rather deregulating, the production of humours within the body. This portrayal of the devil as a figure stirring up humours in order to raise storms in the upper regions of the brain also conjures up that of the *tempestarii*, those weather witches who, according to Kramer, were able to provoke hailstorms by stirring water (or urine) in a hole in the ground.[44] Like the weather witch controlling atmospherical phenomena from the ground, Weyer's devil, it seems, acted on the internal senses at a distance, from the lower regions of the body, without necessarily taking physical possession of the cavities of the brain.

According to Weyer's *De praestigiis*, the devil, however, does more than simply agitate or heat humours. Drawing on Aristotle's *De insomniis* and Pseudo-Augustine's *De spiritu et anima*, Weyer argues that the devil had the ability to 'form

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up such humours and make them receptive to his illusions' (p. 189, my italics); 'it is not difficult for the devil when *he sets in motion the humours and spirits* suitable for these illusions' (p. 193, my italics).

[42] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, pp. 188, 315, 346.

[43] Ibid., p. 315.

[44] See Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 15, pp. 380–6, and Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 3, p. 299. Storm raising is listed by Weyer among the principal beliefs attached to witchcraft (*Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 166). On this motif, see Maus de Rolley, *Elévations*, pp. 437–8.

apparitions' by shaping the vapours of melancholy and cloaking himself in these fumes, thus creating a ballet of ethereal figures within the dark caves of the brain:

> Having obtained from God the power of forming such apparitions [*species*] and impressing them upon physical spirits of the soul, the demons use these forms to portray persons – now joyful, and engaged in eating, drinking, dancing, singing, and sexual intercourse – now sad, and devising or suffering every kind of evil – now human, now bestial, now smothering someone, now flying about.[45]

Witches believed they were flying to and attending the Sabbath, when they were actually watching independently, immobile in their beds, a private ghost show set for the eye of the imagination. In the following chapter, Weyer quotes Augustine and Pseudo-Augustine at length to remind his reader of the devil's ability to make bodies out of air, 'devise phantom-images', and 'transform himself into various appearances and likenesses'.[46] It is actually quite unclear whether the remarks of this chapter apply only to external illusions, or to external and internal illusions. The final paragraphs, which paraphrase the *Canon episcopi* and therefore deal with delusions happening 'in the mind' and during sleep (more on that below), suggest the latter. Thus the devil, in Weyer's view, could once inside the body forge images by shaping and assuming aerial bodies; he did not merely combine existing images brought forth from the memory, like Kramer's Thomistic – and less powerful – demons.

4. The Metaphorical Mind

[45] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 193.
[46] Ibid., pp. 189–92.

The devil infested the two worlds separated by the boundary of the skin, the 'world within' and the 'world without'. In both, he behaved and operated in a similar way, using the same powers and techniques: the power of local motion, sleight of hand, and the ability (at least in Weyer's view) to shape and assume bodies made out of air. There was nothing abstract about these actions, nor, more generally, about the mechanisms of sensory perception these texts described. As Stuart Clark remarks, 'Aristotelian cognitive theory was couched in a particular language of veridicality – a kind of scholastic realism',[47] and this was certainly true for the explanations provided by demonologists. This realism was reinforced in their descriptions of demonic illusions by a language that established a series of analogies between the world within and the world without, and evoked, particularly in Weyer's treatise, an interior landscape within the body. Inside, there were winds, toxic fumes and stormy vapours. In the 'citadel' of the body, there were 'gates', 'cells', 'storehouses' and 'avenues' (the nerves), criss-crossed by 'figures' and 'apparitions' engaged, as we have seen, in scenes halfway between a Sabbath and a joyful banquet. This was not a landscape complete with forests, cities and cabbage planters, like the 'new world' discovered by Alcofribas Nasier, the narrator of Rabelais's *Pantagruel*, inside the giant's mouth.[48] Still, we find here a hint of this motif of the body as an inhabited country, a geographical entity replicating to some extent the features of the exterior world.[49] To

[47] Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 15.
[48] On this episode (*Pantagruel*, chap. 32), and its debt to Ancient and medieval literature, see the classical study of Erich Auerbach, 'The World in Pantagruel's Mouth', *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), pp. 262–84.
[49] Jonathan Sawday points out the 'riot of geographical metaphors' in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century anatomical discourses, before the rise of the Cartesian metaphor of the body as machine. The anatomist, in these texts, is presented as a 'microcosmic explorer' and the human body as a New World to discover and conquer. See Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 22–32.

demons able to glide through external senses, the cavities of the human brain might very well have appeared like the grotesque and gigantic mouth of Pantagruel.

Underlying these analogies was the conception of the body as a microcosm: a world in miniature reflecting in its structure and elementary composition that of the large world, the universe. Beyond what they suggested about the place of man in creation, these analogies had a cognitive value, explaining the unknown by the known, the invisible by the visible, the abstract by the concrete. The experience of natural phenomena occurring in the macrocosm made it possible to think and make sense of the secret workings of the microcosm. In a passage of the *De insomniis* glossed by Weyer, for example, Aristotle explains the formation of mental images in dreams by comparing them to meteorological phenomena – shape-shifting clouds, and the exhalations that arise when the earth is heated by the sun.[50] This analogical principle underpinned early modern conceptions of the body as a 'weather system' or a hydraulic one, and more generally the various metaphors of human biology employed in the period that reflected changing conceptions of the natural world.[51] But it is also the more fundamental experience of geographical space and motion in space that provided a model for Kramer's and Weyer's conceptualization of cognitive processes. Perception was ultimately a matter of concrete entities (the animal spirits, the sensible *species*) and substances (the vapours of melancholy) moving and interacting in a

[50] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 188.
[51] Owsei Temkin, 'Metaphors of Human Biology', in *The Double Face of Janus and Other Essays in the History of Medicine* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), pp. 271–83. The analogy between meteorological phenomena and human physiological processes worked in both directions in Aristotelian thought, as Lisa Taub shows in 'Physiological Analogies and Metaphors in Explanations of the Earth and the Cosmos', in *Blood, Sweat and Tears: The Changing Concepts of Physiology from Antiquity into Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Manfred Horstmanshoff, Helen King and Claus Zittel (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 41–64.

physical space. It was the product, to a large extent, of journeys undertaken in certain directions by the 'objects' inhabiting this topographical mind.

Modern cognitive sciences shed an interesting light on this mapping of the mind and the analogies between microcosm and macrocosm that support it. Research in cognitive linguistics and the philosophy of the mind suggests that our mental representations of abstract domains are largely built up by analogy with our bodily interactions with our physical environment, and therefore our embodied experience of space. In their seminal book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), George Lakoff and Mark Johnson claimed that this analogical principle – more precisely, this metaphorical principle – is a fundamental mechanism of the mind. We think in metaphors, and the foundation of much of this metaphorical thinking is provided by spatial metaphors, which are grounded in our physical (but also cultural) experience of the world: 'The structure of our spatial concepts emerges from our constant spatial experience, that is, our interaction with the physical environment.'[52]

Spatial metaphors allow us to think and talk about abstract things that we cannot see or touch: time, for instance, but also thoughts themselves, and the workings of the mind.[53] In his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Ernst Cassirer had already remarked that the use of 'spatial representations' to express 'spiritual processes' was the clearest example of the 'interpenetration of sensuous and spiritual expression in language'; in other words, that the distinction between the physical

[52] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), p. 57. Lakoff and Johnson develop the concept of the embodied mind in *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

[53] Daniel Casasanto and Roberto Bottini, 'Spatial language and abstract concepts', *WIREs Cognitive Science*, 5 (2013), 139–49; Daniel Casasanto and Lera Boroditsky, 'Time in the mind: Using space to think about time', *Cognition*, 106 (2008), 579–93; Lera Boroditsky, 'Metaphoric structuring: understanding time through spatial metaphors', *Cognition*, 75 (2000), 1–28.

world and the mind is a fragile and debatable one, as theorists of the 'embodied mind' would argue today.[54] Cassirer presented this use of spatial metaphors as a universal one, present 'not only in languages of the Indo-Germanic group but in linguistic families far removed from it'.[55] The analysis of metaphors used to describe the brain and the workings of the mind shows indeed that spatial metaphors and 'reification metaphors' (that is to say, metaphors presenting ideas, thoughts, and emotions as objects moving in a physical space) constitute one of the major types of metaphors employed in everyday and scientific language, alongside the metaphor of the brain as a computer, and that of the brain as a person.[56] Like early modern demonologists, we tend to construct a dynamic topography of the mind. We imagine it as a world mirroring the world we live in, with its regions, pathways, gateways, storage units; a landscape in which thoughts, emotions and sensory information move around, flow, wander or are kept in reserve. Those spatial and reification metaphors enable us to conceptualize and express complex cognitive and emotional processes. As the recent Pixar animated film *Inside Out* brilliantly demonstrates, they constitute an extremely efficient tool for visualizing, describing and understanding the workings of the mind.

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[54] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms: Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 198. The relevance of Cassirer's remarks to metaphor theory was first pointed out by René Dirven in 'Metaphor as a Basic Means for Extending the Lexicon', in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in Language and Thought*, ed. by Wolf Paprotté and René Dirven (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985), pp. 85–120 (p. 86).

[55] Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, p. 199.

[56] Juliana Goschler, 'Metaphors in Cognitive and Neurosciences: Which [*sic*] impact have metaphors on scientific theories and models?', *metaphorik.de*, 12 (2007), p. 11: '"Path" and "container" are particularly frequently used source domains: the brain is described as a landscape or a container. Information, signals, memories, thoughts, and the like, are – at least linguistically – treated as "things", concrete objects that move around in 'paths' inside the "container".' The online databank of metaphors for the mind built by John Barnden at the University of Birmingham lists similar metaphors, in particular 'Mind as Physical Space' <http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/~jab/ATT-Meta/Databank/>

In spite of the realism of the Aristotelian theory of cognition, demonological discourses on illusions obviously did make use of metaphors, and particularly of spatial metaphors. The metaphorisation of the mind and mental activity pervade the language used by our two demonologists, Latin, a language in which ways of speaking about cognitive processes are 'consistently and coherently structured in terms of movement and position in physical space'.[57] However, the boundary between the figurative and the literal can often be difficult to draw. The entities, substances, motions and places described by demonologists in the 'world within' were not necessarily conceived of as metaphorical ones, even if we are often tempted to understand them as such. The body might not have been considered by demonologists to be a real citadel, but spirits for them did flow; mental images did exist in space; they did move and wander inside the mind. The distinction between the figurative and the literal is an uncertain one in these texts, largely because it is dependent on historical conceptions of the mind and the body. The use of spatial metaphors to conceptualize mental activity might be a universal (or at least widely shared) principle, but that does not mean that these metaphors do not have, as Antonina Harbus puts it, 'significant biographies or past lives' worth exploring.[58] Metaphors are culturally and historically relative. They interact with changing cultural and scientific knowledge – here, beliefs about the human body and the mind. The very definition of what is

[57] William S. Short, 'Thinking Places, Placing Thoughts: Spatial Metaphors of Mental Activity in Roman Culture', *I Quaderni del Ramo d'Oro*, 1 (2008), 106–29 (p. 106).
[58] Antonina Harbus, 'Thinking in Metaphors: Figurative Language and Ideas on the Mind', *Sydney Studies in English*, 30 (2004), 3–20 (p. 9). As Harbus points out, a criticism that can be addressed to the conceptual metaphor theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson is that it tends to overlook the historical and cultural origin of metaphors. For recent examples of diachronic metaphor research, see the volume *Metaphor and Metonymy across Time and Cultures*, ed. by Javier Díaz-Vera (Berlin; Munich; Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2015), and James J. Mischler, III, *Metaphor across Time and Conceptual Space: The interplay of embodiment and cultural models* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2014).

metaphorical or not thus appears historically contingent: what we spontaneously recognise as a metaphor might not have been interpreted as such in the past. It might be that some of our modern metaphors and ways of talking about mental processes derive from what were originally non-metaphorical representations of the mind, or that these metaphors, in certain contexts and at certain moments of their 'past lives', were invested with a literal meaning – which might actually have imbued them with new life.[59]

5. The Errant Mind

Repeatedly quoted by Kramer and Weyer alike, the *Canon episcopi*, the crux of the demonological debate on illusion, offers a good example of the pitfalls presented by metaphors of mental activity appearing in discussions of demonic illusions. First found in Regino of Prum's collection of canon law (c. 906), and probably derived from an earlier source, the *Canon episcopi* evoked folk beliefs that cannot be assimilated to the concept of satanic witchcraft which underlay the early modern European witch-hunt. However, the text was interpreted from the fifteenth century as a discussion of witchcraft beliefs, and particularly of the witches' flight to the Sabbath. Indeed, its author famously reported that 'some wicked women',

> perverted by the Devil, seduced by illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess themselves, in the hours of night, to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the dead of night to traverse great spaces of earth, and to obey

[59] This hesitation between the literal and the figurative is also noted by Dominique Brancher in her study of Renaissance metaphors of cognition: Dominique Brancher, '"Un gramme de pensée": Figures de la cognition chez Montaigne et Rabelais', *Poétique*, 173 (2013), 3–26.

> her commands as of her mistress, and to be summoned to her service on certain nights.[60]

The essential lesson of the *Canon episcopi* was that women who believed in the reality of these supernatural expeditions were deluded by the devil. Their journeys were the product of demonic illusions comparable to 'dreams and nocturnal visions'. The mechanisms of such delusions were not explained in great detail:

> Thus Satan himself, who transfigures himself into an angel of light, when he has captured the mind of a miserable woman and has subjugated her by infidelity and incredulity, immediately transforms himself into the species and similitudes of different personages and deluding the mind which he holds captive and exhibiting things, joyful or mournful, and persons, known or unknown, leads it through devious ways, and while the spirit alone endures this, the faithless mind thinks that these things happen not in the spirit but in the body.[61]

Most of what is said here can be read literally, for the passage describes the concrete operations undertaken by the devil in order to confuse his victim's mind: i) he appears in the guise of an angel so as to lure his victim – in this context, the remark invited a more literal interpretation than in its source, Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians (II Corinthians 11.14); ii) he 'transforms himself' into *species* and similitudes

[60] I use the English translation of the *Canon episcopi* given in *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, ed. by Brian P. Levack (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 34–5.
[61] *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, p. 34.

presented to the eye of the mind;[62] and iii) he 'exhibits' forged images of persons and things – again, the context suggests that these visions are presented to the internal senses. The mention of the 'captive' mind is more ambiguous. Is the mind captive because the 'miserable woman', of whom the 'mind' is the metonymy, has become a servant of the devil? Or because the devil has physically invaded the woman's brain, in the literal manner described by Kramer?

The spatial metaphor used by the Canonist a few lines afterwards is equally ambivalent: the devil deludes his victims by leading their minds 'through devious ways' (*per devia quaeque deducit*).[63] The same metaphor appears a couple of sentences before, when the text condemns those who believe in the wicked women's claims: 'for an innumerable multitude, deceived by this false opinion, believe this to be true, and so believing, *wander from the right faith* and are involved in the error of the pagans' (my italics). To be 'in [the] error' – to be cognitively and spiritually confused – is again expressed in terms of spatial motion. It is to be led astray. As we know, the link between cognitive and spatial confusion is embedded in the Latin language, where the same word – *error* – designates both. William Short's analysis of Latin vocabulary of mental activity shows that this common metaphor is part of a unified system of metaphorical expression that systematically equates *ideas* with *locations* and *thinking* with *moving*. If reasoning is following a path, then being mentally confused is wandering from place to place, or wandering away from a fixed

[62] I follow here Clark's reading of the passage: 'The English rendering 'species' is obviously open to ambiguity, and 'image' would be more accurate, since the Latin word used in the *Canon* clearly refers to the Aristotelian theory of *species*.' (*Vanities of the Eye*, p. 326, n. 48.)
[63] In his translation of the *Malleus maleficarum*, Mackay translates the expression by 'through all sorts of places off the beaten path' (Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, p. 204).

location.[64] And conversely, in Antiquity as in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance, the physical act of wandering could be understood as the sign of a mental, emotional or spiritual disturbance.[65]

To what extent was the wandering of the mind metaphorical here? Or rather, to what extent would the wandering of the mind have been understood by demonologists as metaphorical? According to the theories of cognition shared by Kramer and Weyer, the metaphor could indeed have a physiological basis, and thus be interpreted literally. As we have seen, errors of perception could be explained as the result of literal wanderings of spirits and *species* going 'through devious ways' (for example, flowing from memory to the organs of perception, when they were supposed to go in the opposite direction). What we spontaneously accept as a metaphor might therefore have been understood in slightly different terms by early modern demonologists. Besides, the result of the devil's deception, according to the *Canon episcopi*, was precisely to create the illusion of motion in space. To lead the mind 'through devious paths' meant not just to deceive it, but somewhat more literally to give it the illusion of erratic movement. By presenting various and contrasted images of things and persons to the eye of the imagination, the devil led indeed the mind to believe that the senses were confronted with quickly changing objects, and thus that the body was itself in motion – traversing great spaces of the earth together with a company of women. For Weyer, but also for Kramer, it was clear that the illusions referred to in the *Canon* were those of demonic transvection, the Sabbath itself, and other 'wandering excursions and activities' like lycanthropy, which led witches to

[64] Short, 'Thinking Places, Placing Thoughts', pp. 117–8.
[65] On the links between the 'art of thinking' and the 'art of travel', in Ancient Greece and in the Renaissance, see the work of Normand Doiron: *Errance et méthode: Interpréter le déplacement d'Ulysse à Socrate* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval; Paris: Vrin, 2011); *L'Art de voyager: Le déplacement à l'époque classique* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval; Paris: Klincksieck, 1995).

believe that they were wolves 'roaming far and wide' (the final lines of the *Canon* indeed evoked the question of metamorphosis).[66] The wandering of the mind produced dreams marked with the idea of physical wandering: the wild rides in the train of Diana were, so to speak, the realisation in the spirit – not in the body – of the metaphor of the wandering mind. And this would have been even more keenly felt by the witchcraft theorists who interpreted these nocturnal expeditions as demonic transvections – erratic journeys *par excellence*.[67]

According to the *Canon episcopi*, the fact that these journeys took place in the mind and not in the body did not necessarily make them less true. As Walter Stephens points out, 'the crucial distinction drawn by the *Canon episcopi* is not between truth and falsehood, or between waking and dreaming, but rather between *body* and *spirit*'.[68] Its fundamental point is to assert that 'the spirit can have real experiences in which the body does not participate'.[69] St Paul, as the *Canon* later explains, might have known a true ecstatic experience 'in the spirit' without it happening 'in the body': the ecstasy of the mind is not necessarily mirrored by a bodily transportation. Therefore, the witches' minds can be 'led in devious paths' without their bodies physically doing so. The *Canon episcopi* posed immense difficulties for the demonologists who, like Kramer, endeavoured to demonstrate the reality of witches' crimes.[70] Among those were precisely the consequences of its dissociation of the mind and body. If the devil's activities could be confined to the secret world of the

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[66] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 193.
[67] Grégoire Holtz and Thibaut Maus de Rolley, 'Le diable vagabond', in *Voyager avec le diable: Voyages réels, voyages imaginaires et discours démonologiques (XV^e–XVII^e siècles)*, ed. by Grégoire Holtz and Thibaut Maus de Rolley (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne, 2008); on the link established between flying and erring in Renaissance literature and knowledge, see Maus de Rolley, *Elévations*.
[68] Stephens, *Demon Lovers*, p. 127.
[69] Ibid., p. 127.
[70] Maus de Rolley, *Elévations*, pp. 432–9.

mind, without translating into distinct physical signs, they were impossible to trace, and the reality of the witches' collusion with the devil therefore impossible to demonstrate empirically.[71] Unlike Weyer and the Canonist, Kramer needed a physical, literal realisation of the metaphor of the mind 'carried off' by the devil. An extreme literalist, so to speak, he needed the possibility to read not only on bodies but in the motion of bodies in space the signs of the cognitive and spiritual confusion induced by the devil. In the same way that he saw the incessant ramblings of lovers, who 'travel[ed] unexpectedly, either by day or night, across a great distance despite the roughness of the journey' (note the echoes of the *Canon episcopi*) as the unmistakable sign of demented minds under demonic influence,[72] Kramer expected the bodies of witches whose minds were led astray by the devil to manifest it through some extraordinary form of spatial motion. Carried away by their desire for the devil himself, witches should wander superlatively, as it were: not 'as if flying' (*quasi volando*), like lustful lovers did, but properly flying.[73] For Kramer and all the demonologists eager to demonstrate the reality of demonic transvection, the witches' flights were the literal physical manifestation of a spiritual wandering.

But again, this is precisely what the *Canon episcopi* denounced. Those who 'wandered in their faith' were those who failed to distinguish not only between dreaming and waking, between mind and body, but also, I would suggest, those who confused the figurative and the literal, and tended to take metaphors of cognitive and spiritual confusion at face value. This is a constant in Kramer's *Malleus maleficarum*. To some extent, it is also true in Weyer's *De praestigiis*. Indeed, the devil who 'led

[71] Stephens, *Demon Lovers*, p. 130.
[72] Kramer, *The Hammer of Witches*, Pt. I, Q. 7, p. 183. See also Pt. II, Q. 2, Ch. 3, p. 427: 'when [lovers] cannot sleep during the night-time but are so deranged that they have to walk through every trackless area [*per devia quaeque incedere habeant*]…'
[73] Ibid., Pt. II, Q. 1, Ch. 6, p. 322.

the mind in devious ways' was also for Weyer a roaming force who revelled in physically 'leading travellers astray from the right path',[74] occasionally transporting them from place to place through the air.[75] However, what distinguished Kramer and Weyer was that for the latter, this exact correspondence between demonic cognitive confusions and confusions in spatial motion was reserved for men. As a humanist physician, Weyer was undoubtedly a 'discerner of external signs', 'relying on the outside of the body to know its inside'.[76] However, when it came to women, wandering with the devil was for him confined to the cavities of the brain. The metaphor – 'to be carried away by the devil' – could only materialise in the world within, not in the world without.

[74] Weyer, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors*, p. 34. On the following page, Weyer associated in the same sentence the physical transportation of bodies and demonic internal illusions: 'It is the habit of the devil to transport bodies in various ways and throw their humours into disorder and disturb the source of the nerves in the brain…'
[75] Maus de Rolley, *Elévations*, pp. 444–6.
[76] Wilkin, *Women, Imagination and the Search for Truth*, p. 28.