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Sommario/riassunto

This book about receptions of Simon Magus uncovers further facets of one who was held to be the evil archetype of heretics. Ephraim Nissan and Alberto Ferreiro explore how Simon Magus has been represented in text, visual art, and music. Special attention is devoted to the late medieval Catalan painter Llus Borrass and the Italian librettist and musician Arrigo Boito. The tradition of Simon Magus demonic flight, ending in his crashing down, first appears in the patristic literature. The book situates that flight typologically across cultures. Fascinating observations emerge, as the discussion spans flight of the wicked in rabbinic texts, flight and death of King Lear's father and a Soviet-era Buryat Buddhist monk, flight and doom of the fool in an early modern German broadsheet, and more. The book explains and moves beyond extant scholarly wisdom on how the polemic against Mani (the founder of Manichaeism) was tinged with hues of Simon Magus. The novelty of this book is that it shows that Simon Magus receptions teach us a great deal about the contexts in which this archetype was deployed.
