

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910788317503321
Autore	Klaassen Frank F.
Titolo	The transformations of magic : illicit learned magic in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance // Frank Klaassen
Pubbl/distr/stampa	University Park, Pennsylvania : , : Pennsylvania State University Press, , [2013] ©2013
ISBN	0-271-05928-1 0-271-06176-6 0-271-06175-8 0-271-05829-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (292 p.)
Collana	Magic in history
Disciplina	133.4309
Soggetti	Manuscripts, Renaissance Magic - Religious aspects - Christianity Magic - England - History Magic - Manuscripts - History Manuscripts, Medieval
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	""COVER Front""; ""Series Page""; ""Copyright Page""; ""Table of Contents""; ""Preface""; ""Introduction""; ""Notes to Introduction""; ""PART I: The Apothecary's Dilemma""; ""Notes to PART I""; ""Chapter 1: Magic and Natural Philosophy""; ""Notes to Chapter 1""; ""Chapter 2: Scholastic Image Magic Before 1500""; ""Notes to Chapter 2""; ""Chapter 3: Some Apparent Exceptions: Image Magic or Necromancy?""; ""Notes to Chapter 3""; ""PART II: Brother John's Dilemma""; ""Notes to PART II""; ""Chapter 4: The Ars Notoria and the Sworn Book of Honorius""; ""Notes to Chapter 4""; ""Chapter 5: The Magic of Demons and Angels""; ""Notes to Chapter 5""; ""PART III: Magic After 1580""; ""Notes to PART III""; ""Chapter 6: Sixteenth-Century Collections of Magic Texts""; ""Notes to Chapter 6""; ""Chapter 7: Medieval Ritual Magic and Renaissance Magic""; ""Note to Chapter 7""; ""Notes""; ""Bibliography""; ""Index""; ""COVER Back""

In this original, provocative, well-reasoned, and thoroughly documented book, Frank Klaassen proposes that two principal genres of illicit learned magic occur in late medieval manuscripts: image magic, which could be interpreted and justified in scholastic terms, and ritual magic (in its extreme form, overt necromancy), which could not. Image magic tended to be recopied faithfully; ritual magic tended to be adapted and reworked. These two forms of magic did not usually become intermingled in the manuscripts, but were presented separately. While image magic was often copied in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, *The Transformations of Magic* demonstrates that interest in it as an independent genre declined precipitously around 1500. Instead, what persisted was the other, more problematic form of magic: ritual magic. Klaassen shows that texts of medieval ritual magic were cherished in the sixteenth century, and writers of new magical treatises, such as Agrippa von Nettesheim and John Dee, were far more deeply indebted to medieval tradition—and specifically to the medieval tradition of ritual magic—than previous scholars have thought them to be.

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