

41. P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (revised reprint, Aldershot: Ashgate, [1978]1994), pp. 58–64, 113–15, 207ff.
42. See, for example, R. Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (London: Penguin Books, [1996] 1998), p. 402.
43. See, H. E. Næss, *Trolldomsprosessen i Norge på 1500–1600-tallet* (Båstad: Universitetsforlaget, 1982), pp. 17–18, 372–3; Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, pp. 19–21; R. Golden, 'Satan in Europe: The Geography of Witch Hunts', in M. Wolfe (ed.), *Changing Identities in Early Modern France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 220–1; W. Behringer, 'Neun Millionen Hexen. Entstehung, Tradition und Kritik eines populären Mythos', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 49 (1998), pp. 664ff.
44. Burke, *Popular Culture*, pp. xiv–xxiv, 3ff.
45. A. Wesselski, *Versuch einer Theorie des Märchens*, Prager Deutsche Studien 45 (Reichenberg i. B.: Franz Kraus, 1931), pp. 10ff., 144ff. Wesselski criticised 'the Finnish school' of ethnography which tried to trace the genuine origin and then chronologically and geographically follow its diffusion and transform into more sophisticated – or possible more vulgarised – versions (pp. 144, 157). See also C. Zika, 'Appropriating Folklore in Sixteenth-Century Witchcraft Literature', in Hsia and Scribner, *Problems in the Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Europe*, pp. 175–218. Zika, from a slightly different point of view, supports Wesselski's idea, though without mentioning him.
46. Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials*, p. 27.
47. Burke, *Popular Culture*, pp. 23–5, 28–9.
48. Burke, *Popular Culture*, p. 29.
49. Burke, *Popular Culture*, pp. 29–36, 46–7.
50. Wirth, 'Against the Acculturation Thesis', pp. 68–71.

8

the return of the sabbat: mental archaeologies, conjectural histories or political mythologies?

willem de blécourt

By the 1980s witchcraft historians approached the complex mixture that made up a witch trial from both a macro-sociological and a micro-anthropological point of view. The anthropological approach, however, was mainly a social anthropology, more concentrated on the people involved in a trial than on the concepts they applied. This was particularly unfortunate in the case of the witches' Sabbat since, as Norman Cohn had rightly remarked, without the imagery of Sabbats and the flights to them there would not have been any mass trial.¹ Moreover, the leading proponents of an anthropological perspective relied on texts from England and New England, which implied that had they wanted to look into Sabbat concepts, there was very little to research. Margaret Murray's theory and its reception had caused witchcraft scholars in general to turn their back on witches' assemblies. This trend was strengthened by Richard Kieckhefer, who subsumed the Sabbat under 'diabolism', since he could not find any trace of it in the early witnesses' depositions. As far as he could see stories 'about women who went on mysterious nightly rides ... with some mysterious goddess' stood apart from bewitchments. There was no evidence (at least not before 1500) that the two ever mingled on a village level.² The prosecutors had superimposed the Sabbat on witchcraft accusations when interrogating a witch and it was derived from heretical sects such as the Waldensians and the Cathars. If the notion of the witches' flight (the 'mysterious nightly ride', also called transvection) was derived from popular sources, then it was still grafted onto witchcraft by the same prosecutors in order to justify connections between witches in different localities. This whole

picture was painted in terms of a popular/elite dichotomy and the Sabbat in all its detail was considered as belonging to the elite category. Together with the focus on social history and the wish of most witchcraft historians to write a history of people previously neglected, this ensured that the Sabbat was also left out in places where it could have been useful, for instance as a decisive criterion in the categorisation of witch trials. Instead, historians applied numbers.³

It was only at the end of the 1980s that researchers regained their interest in witches' assemblies. This included the German historian of everyday life, Richard van Dülmen, the Hungarians Gábor Klaniczay and Evá Pócs, the Danish historian and folklorist Gustav Henningsen, and especially the Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg. In November 1992, French witchcraft historians organised a conference on the Sabbat theme where Ginzburg and Pócs were given a prominent place, their contributions opening the subsequent conference volume.⁴ The Paris conference was one in a series of international witchcraft conferences, of which those in Stockholm in 1984 and Budapest in 1988 are also of special interest to the subject of this chapter.⁵ While van Dülmen concentrated on different types of witches' meetings and their historical development, Ginzburg, Pócs and Henningsen paid more attention to their presumed popular roots. They argued that behind the image used by demonologists it was possible to discern fairies (Henningsen and Pócs) and eventually shamanism (Ginzburg and later also Pócs). Klaniczay commented on the latter and placed (primarily Hungarian) Sabbat imagery into its historical context. A few years later the German historian Wolfgang Behringer also interpreted the stories of the horse-herder and cunning man Chonrad Stoeckhlin as shamanistic.⁶ In this chapter we will unravel their arguments, above all by juxtaposing them.⁷ Geographically the focus will be on Italy and Hungary.

Carlo Ginzburg can be characterised as the *enfant terrible* of the historians' craft: he is always trying out new intellectual challenges while leaving it to others to pick up the pieces. He exhibits a vast interest that exceeds his early modern specialism and makes frequent forays into art history. He also combines a keen eye for detail with sweeping conclusions. If a debate catches his interest, it is one conducted with friends rather than with witchcraft historians. He first presented himself in the field of witchcraft history with his thesis *I Benandanti*, submitted in Pisa in 1964 and published in Turin in 1966.⁸ This book was initially taken by most as a rare confirmation of the Murray thesis as it ostensibly provided documentation of a fertility cult in connection with witchcraft. Only when it was translated into English as *The Night Battles* in 1984, after the success of the author's *The Cheese and the Worms*, did it become obvious that it had 'nothing to do with the "old religion"'.⁹ Instead, it purported to describe a process of acculturation in which the so-called *benandanti* gradually internalised the Inquisitors' interpretation of what they told them about their nightly experiences. Ginzburg's last book

on the Sabbat, *Storia notturna* (1989), subtitled *Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, was translated unusually quickly and published two years later with the title *Ecstasies*; consequently the English version bears traces of haste. In between he published several articles in which he kept witchcraft historians on their toes; these articles either contained a brief summary of a part of the coming book, such as 'The Witches' Sabbath: Popular Cult or Inquisitorial Stereotype?'¹⁰ and the slightly more extensive 'Deciphering the Sabbath',¹¹ or they delved into related issues, like 'Germanic Mythology', 'Freud, the Wolf-Man, and the Werewolves'¹² and 'Charivari, Youth Associations and the Wild Hunt'.¹³ Afterwards the author turned his back on the subject.¹⁴

Storia notturna ('Stories in the Dark') had a mixed reception. There was great praise, with one reviewer stating that 'after *Storia notturna*, it is difficult to imagine that the study of witchcraft will remain as tied as it has been in the past to an analysis of the phenomenon only in those periods of persecution and therefore of documentation'.¹⁵ Among historians the reaction of Klaus Graf was perhaps more typical: while he admires Ginzburg's style and presentation and is slightly jealous of the reviews in the (in this case German) press, he is highly critical of the Italian's arguments.¹⁶ But what is difficult to imagine is precisely what happened, at least among the experts and specialists.¹⁷ Why is this? One of Ginzburg's complaints about the reception of *Storia notturna* is that reviewers only considered parts of it. 'Reviews appeared', he said in an interview, 'in which only the first part was discussed – which is of course highly unusual – because the authors did not feel capable of saying something about the rest.'¹⁸ This seems to be the general fate of this book. References to it are selective, whether concerned with witches or fairies, for example.¹⁹ This fragmented response is hardly astonishing when set against the wide array of topics Ginzburg discusses in *Storia*, such as fourteenth-century trials of heretics and lepers in the south of France, seventeenth-century German animal disguise, the prehistoric movements of the Scyths, the distribution of the fairy-tale Cinderella, or arctic shamanism, while in passing giving a new meaning to the concept of the 'Oedipus complex' – and this is only a selection. On top of this, although presented as a search for the popular roots of the Sabbat, the book is not about the Sabbat as such. This all suggests that it is not so much the topics themselves that make most historians cautious, but the way they are linked.

Storia notturna is a very rich and intricate book, with a sophisticated composition and informed by a profound scholarship. As we will see in the course of this chapter, the book is also alarming. Any attempt at a summary remains inadequate, but for the purpose of this chapter the following has to suffice – other bits and pieces will surface later on. The first part of the book contains a reconstruction of the series of fourteenth-century trials leading to a new 'witch cult'. Ginzburg then traces two clusters. One is medieval and concerns women travelling in the train of a supernatural female leader or participating in one of her assemblies. This female figure (Kieckhefer's

'mysterious goddess') was known by the name of Diana or Herodias. Locally she was called Habundia, Richella, Satia, Oriente, or simply the 'mistress of the games'. The second cluster entails groups of men battling for agricultural fertility at particular times of the year. They fought in spirit or in some ritual animal disguise and the winners could be assured of a prosperous harvest. Here the examples generally derive from the early modern period and from eastern Europe and they include Friulian (from the Friuli region of Italy) *benandanti*, Hungarian *táltos*, Romanian *calusari* and Baltic werewolves. According to Ginzburg, these two clusters form the first layer discernable underneath the Sabbat. Writing as if his material represents an archaeological dig, he next discerns the contours of something even older. In the course of his book this becomes more and more concrete. In his own (translated) words: 'Behind the women ... linked to the "good" goddesses of the night, hides a cult of an ecstatic nature'; 'The nightly flights to devilish meetings echoed an age-old theme: the ecstatic journey of the living to the world of the dead.'²⁰ Several chapters later, Ginzburg writes: 'The ecstasies of the followers of the goddess irrevocably call to mind the ecstasies of the – male and female – shamans from Siberia and Lapland', concluding at that point: 'The popular nucleus of the Sabbat – the magical flight and the metamorphosis – seems to hark back to a very old Eurasian substratum.'²¹ The second cluster is dissected in a similar vein. 'All the routes we have negotiated to determine and explain the roots of the witches' Sabbat converge at one point: the journey to the world of the dead.'²² These far-reaching conclusions are based on an analysis that is vaguely structural, profoundly phenomenological, only morphological in name and hardly historical: it is selective instead of serial and devoid of contexts.

The two strands meet in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Friulian *benandanti*: 'Friuli ... should be considered as a kind of border area, where the two generally separated versions of the ecstatic cult overlapped and converged.'²³ Thus the *benandanti* rather than Sabbats constitute the central point of *Storia*; in fact, fertility battles are hardly to be found in the records of European witch trials.²⁴ As Ginzburg formulates it: the 'theme disappears',²⁵ although this presumes it had been present at some point of time. *Storia notturna* harbours a dimly concealed north Italian and even Friulian bias. The two complexes are only defined and related to each other because of their appearance in Ginzburg's original thesis. There we also find the first launch of the idea of a shamanistic deep layer. Then, however, it is no more than a vague suspicion, based on the reading of German authors. 'I have not dealt with the question of the relationship which undoubtedly must exist between *benandanti* and shamans', he writes in the foreword.²⁶ But in the run-up to *Storia notturna* this impression turned into an undeniable conclusion without additional evidence or considerations. We can thus consider *I Benandanti* as the matrix of *Storia notturna*: the latter provides a vindication and justification of the thesis Ginzburg wrote in his early twenties. In *I Benandanti* we also already meet with a rudimentary form of what can be seen as one of Ginzburg's

main methodological devices: the stringing together of different narrative elements or motifs. For instance, only in one case – of a woman who was already exceptional in several other aspects – is there mention of an abbess who had to be revered at a meeting; but for Ginzburg this provides enough grip to link her to 'that polymorphous feminine divinity' and in the same sentence to the Wild Hunt.²⁷ In *Storia* this method is perfected and supported by references to Ludwig Wittgenstein and Rodney Needham. However, the practice of establishing series of 'isomorphisms' across societies surpasses any structural analysis;²⁸ in a sense, founding his method on a particular theory of knowledge is little more than adding an extra, intellectual layer and is comparable to what early modern demonologists did to popular expressions of magic and witchcraft. It also gets the author into serious difficulties in the later stages of the book. How can one put history back into a linking exercise based on superficial resemblances?

I Benandanti contains an elegant and well-considered presentation of surprising material which is still unique in a European witchcraft context. At this early stage of his career it already shows Ginzburg's mastery of bibliography and his engagement in a cultural approach to magic that was in some ways far ahead of its time. It also put people on the historical stage who, around 1600, lived in a remote corner of Europe, Friuli, and who called themselves *benandanti* (literally 'well-walkers'). When interrogated by the Udine branch of the Roman Inquisition, they told stories of how their spirits left their bodies at night to fight evil people with fennel stalks. By analysing the dossiers of about 40 of them, Ginzburg argues that within two generations the *benandanti* came to concur with the Inquisitors and admitted that they had actually visited a witches' Sabbat, thus turning from good into bad (but with the prospect of becoming good Christians again). As the book is also a blueprint for *Storia*, however, the lamentable implication is that the weaknesses it also contains are repeated. This especially pertains to Ginzburg's failure to recognise the *benandanti* as healing specialists (as opposed to ascribed maleficious witches), to the way he conflated the specialisms of men and women, and to his identification of the *benandanti*'s opponents as the wandering dead.²⁹ In the transition to *Storia*, which covers thousands of years, the acculturation process which Ginzburg situates in the decades around 1600 and which constitutes the main argument in *I Benandanti* has become insignificant, although more in a methodological sense than as to its content. Acculturation as the main thesis in *I Benandanti* is anyhow unconvincing, for (apart from a recurrent problem of the Inquisitors in understanding the local dialect) it is only based on the admissions of four *benandanti* and can be attributed to inquisitorial pressure.³⁰ We still do not know whether the Sabbat interpretation of their nocturnal forays was also echoed outside the interrogation room, although there is material enough, such as later trials and folklore records, to establish this.³¹

On the other hand, the notion of acculturation does reveal Ginzburg's thinking about witchcraft. He attempted to study witchcraft from below, to

find the 'popular' behind the 'elite' inquisitorial procedures. However, he still looked through the lens of the Inquisitors and this affected his perspective on the very subject he proclaimed to be writing about: witchcraft. Trials of *benandanti* only render a partial perspective on witchcraft. The Roman Inquisition prosecuted no malicious witches, since the view was that 'denunciations for *maleficium* ... were based on suspicions rather than on observation of a magical procedure'.³² The *benandanti* were not only protectors of the crops, but also cunning folk: charmers, fortune-tellers and professional unwitchers. They could recognise witches because, as they told their clients, they had met them in nightly battles. Comparison is therefore only relevant with other cunning folk, and these were generally not prosecuted as witches.³³ If we consider the Sabbat as an intrinsic (but not inevitable) element of a witch trial, in which diabolism met with the malicious deeds ascribed to witches, then it may not be appropriate to take the Sabbat image that was grafted onto the stories of the *benandanti* as a point of departure to search for its conceptual folklore roots – especially when we keep in mind that this image was already in circulation for at least a century (or two centuries, if we agree with Ginzburg). The Sabbats may have been more or less similar in both cases, but the underlying 'popular' concepts vary significantly. It would have been different if the Inquisitions into the *benandanti* had taken place when the new witch trials started, but even then they would have been in the wrong area.

The gender division of the Friulian specialists is another complicated issue. In *Storia* Ginzburg confesses that he had overlooked 'the ecstatic specialisations that distinguished male and female *benandanti*'.³⁴ However, gender remained a weak spot in his work; he maintained that the men and the women 'called themselves *benandanti*', and that the women *benandanti* were seers of the dead.³⁵ But there is very little evidence of female *benandanti*, while there are signs of the assimilation of female specialists into the group of primarily male *benandanti* by Inquisitors and by Ginzburg. The case of Anna la Rossa, as presented in *I Benandanti*, serves as an illustration here. She 'claimed that she could see the dead and converse with them'. Ginzburg comments next: 'it was not stated that Anna la Rossa was a *benandante*, in fact the word was not even mentioned'. Yet several pages later he has overcome this obstacle and calls Anna 'one of the *benandanti* who claimed she could see the dead'; in the next chapter she has become a *benandante* as a matter of fact.³⁶ The reason for this incorporation is given by quoting another woman healer who, when asked whether she was a *benandante*, replied: 'No sir, I am not one of the *benandanti*, but my deceased husband was; he used to go in procession with the dead.' At this point Ginzburg decides: 'Here then is the explicit confirmation of a link which had been suggested hypothetically: whoever could see the dead, went with them that is, was a *benandante*.' This is a very weak link, the more so because the husband apparently refused to exercise his ability for the public good.³⁷ It also does not confirm that *women* who were able to communicate

with the dead were *benandanti*.³⁸ 'On the whole,' Ginzburg concludes, 'in Friuli the myth of the processions of the dead occupied a relatively marginal place ... in that complex of beliefs that we associate with the *benandanti*'.³⁹ On the basis of his own evidence, 'marginal' is an overstatement. Nevertheless, the notion of the contact with the dead had stuck itself in Ginzburg's mind (I shall later try to explain how); in subsequent publications he states that the *benandanti* as well as a host of other figures all 'claimed to be able to travel periodically (in spirit or in animal form) to the world of the dead'.⁴⁰ By the time he came to write *Storia notturna* this notion had acquired overwhelming proportions.

Richard van Dülmen defined four stages in the evolution of the Sabbat, depending on the witch's relation with the Devil. In line with other authors, he stated that the full Sabbat image was only completed around 1600, and even afterwards it did not penetrate everywhere.⁴¹ (For Ginzburg there are no more developments after 1430.) While we may debate the details of van Dülmen's thesis on the basis of additional material, he rightly alerted us to change and the differentiation of the Sabbat image. Fragments of demonological interpretations of bewitchments could also easily spread without the Sabbat. Had Ginzburg given any attention to this uneven development, he probably would not have presented the general image of the witches' Sabbat which opens *Storia notturna*, for it represents a construct which only occasionally was turned into reality when someone questioned witches, with or without using torture.⁴² If we follow Ginzburg, the meeting was 'usually' held in 'remote places', whereas trial transcripts show that in a lot of cases witches said that they met near (or even in) their own homes.⁴³ Their means of transport could vary from 'broomstick, ointment, astride on animals, or changed into animals themselves', as mentioned by Ginzburg, to walking – even Montague Summers noticed that witches went on foot to nearby Sabbats.⁴⁴ Metamorphosis during transvection was certainly not a widespread element; metamorphosis at the Sabbat was even more rare, and riding on animals is not the same as turning into them. The next element in Ginzburg's sketch refers to the Black Mass, which is often missing in trial accounts. As van Dülmen concluded, a non-satanic dance was the regular feature, at least north of the Alps where most of the witch hunting occurred.⁴⁵ Any attempt to present a general picture of the Sabbat must therefore fail, as it ignores regional differences and historical development.⁴⁶ The Basque Sabbat imagery, for example, in which children are abducted to a Sabbat, made into a witches and given dressed toads, would hardly have been recognised in Denmark, where the notion of the Sabbat can merely be 'glimpsed' in the way witches danced around a church.⁴⁷ The story a witch told her interrogators about the consumption of a child's corpse at the Sabbat was 'a most unusual element in Lorraine confessions',⁴⁸ whereas it was commonplace in the early Swiss trials. Ginzburg nevertheless denotes his Sabbat characteristics as 'basic elements'; both demonological and trial sources would confirm the image 'in essence' – a remarkable contrast with his detailed scrutinising of other texts.

Many elements Ginzburg traces back into a prehistorical nebula were never part of a witches' Sabbat and only come into the picture through his method of stringing different descriptions together on the basis of one or two other similarities in their forms. This especially concerns all the connections to the dead, if they are not merely rhetorical. It is not that various elements were not present in some places at some times. The bone miracle (the ritual resurrection of bovines) in the late fourteenth century, reportedly performed by Oriente, was even a less isolated incident than Ginzburg shows: around 1400 several more north Italian instances occurred, and the motif figured in the life of St Germain, without, however, becoming a stable Sabbat ingredient outside Italy.⁴⁹ Witches certainly visited wine cellars (but that does not make them revenants). Fertility fights appeared to be largely unrelated to meetings of malicious witches – the adversaries were certainly not the dead but neighbouring people.⁵⁰ The Wild Hunt, with its primarily male leaders, did not contribute to the Sabbat stereotype, nor to any local variations.⁵¹ On the other hand, it would not be very difficult to find many more examples that would fit Ginzburg's scheme of a journey to the otherworld, but this would be more appropriate in a study about possible shamanistic elements in European culture than in an uprooting of the Sabbat (the legend of Jack and the Beanstalk figures a world tree and stolen treasure, sadly missing from Sabbat descriptions). What follows is that Ginzburg used a questionable ordering principle for his book *Storia notturna*. The rather disturbing conclusion can only be that neither the male *benandanti* nor the female Friulian fortune-tellers contributed anything to the production of the early Sabbat image. The historical backgrounds of the Friulian magical experts and their geographical connections were primarily their own and did not constitute any Sabbat roots. Or to keep with Ginzburg's metaphor of ever deepening layers: digging in Friuli primarily results in finding Friulian remains, and if they happened to have been imported from the Balkans they had still been used in Friuli. If the Sabbat, as a concept developed and applied by prosecutors in the 1420s, contained any 'popular' element, it may be found in female assemblies, foremost of narrative character, possibly associated to some female 'deity' and to fairy lore. Since the demonologists reported this themselves, such an observation is not particularly new. To postulate a Europe-wide occurrence of fairy-like women is tricky, however, because, as historian and folklorist Hans Peter Broedel recently concluded: 'the available evidence is scattered and contradictory, and suggests a group of more or less related components rather than a single, coherent belief-system'.⁵² This again points to the importance of regional differentiation.

Gustav Henningsen started his academic career researching actual witchcraft in Denmark in the 1960s, but when he wanted to undertake comparable work in Spain he found this had already been done by anthropologist Lison Tolosana. The historian Caro Baroja pointed him to the then hardly researched archives of the supreme court of the Spanish Inquisition in Madrid.⁵³ Eventually this led

to the discovery of a series of documents from Sicily, where from 1587 people had started to talk about the *donna di fuora*, the 'ladies from outside'. Here then was again evidence of a pre-inquisitorial female assembly and, unlike Friuli (at least Ginzburg's interpretation of it), the Inquisitors did not succeed in demonising the stories beyond their own culture.⁵⁴ Henningsen noticed that the Sicilian 'white Sabbat' stood in contrast to the demonological one: 'the beautiful fairies have turned into horrible demons, the splendid food into a rotten, stinking mess; the sweet music has become hateful caterwauling, the joyful dance exhausting capering, and the pleasurable love – painful rape'. The only problem was to find places in Europe where fairy traditions were clearly superseded by a satanic Sabbat, and his attempts only yielded examples 'from regions in the European periphery that never experienced witch-hunts', including southern Spain and Morocco.⁵⁵

For Ginzburg the Sicilian records were disturbing (not to mention that they had been discovered by a Dane in Spanish archives).⁵⁶ He first suggested that the 'white Sabbat' had perhaps been created out of a black equivalent.⁵⁷ In *Storia* he terms Sicily an 'anomaly' because it did not suit the ethnic map he was redrawing which would explain similarities between 'Sabbat' elements in, for instance, Scotland, Friuli and Romania. As he had concluded in the previous chapter: 'The ecstatic cult of the night goddess seems to be absent in that part of the German world that has not known the influence of the Celts'.⁵⁸ The only 'Celtic' traces in Sicily he could detect were the Breton romances, and it was unlikely that they had resulted in lasting traditions on a popular level. This, in one of Ginzburg's unparalleled mental leaps, provided the lever to direct the reader to the pre-Grecian Mediterranean goddess, and – more historically reliable – to the Sicilian cult of the *matrones*. For his part Henningsen fully recognises the stories about mysterious meetings as legends told by the magical experts, the 'local opinion leaders'. As legends are known to cross language barriers, to 'migrate', this leaves open the option of derivations, including from Breton material.

The Sicilian argument is a classic example of a further phase in the archaeology of culture. This not only treats cultural entities – such as a piece of a story, an expression, a custom – as material artefacts to be sifted out of historical texts but also presumes that their distribution can be interpreted in a similar way. If, for instance, the bone miracle is found in both Nordic stories (Thor) and in north Italian witch trials, then either there will have been a way in which (because of seniority) the first influenced the second, or one has to presume that both go back to a common ancestor. In order to allow for the latter, a second presumption has to be admitted, namely that the piece of culture is tied to a particular people. Thus, as Hungarian folklorist Éva Pócs argues in her book *Fairies and Witches*, when there are 'common features of the Slavic and Central European German (or even Scandinavian) traditions', they may possibly be regarded as 'common Indo-European remains'. Or more specifically:

On the basis of striking similarities between Scottish-Irish and the SE and Central European fairy beliefs or the common features of the *Bonnes Dames* and the *Abundia* and *Satia* traditions (related to the Gallic *Matronae* cult), the question of *Celtic* heritage may also arise.⁵⁹

If this way of reasoning bears a remarkable resemblance to some lines in *Storia notturna*, this is not due to copying (both publications appeared in the same year)⁶⁰ but to a common reliance on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century folklorists. Pócs, moreover, takes one step further by using the concept of a 'relict area': this presumes that a peripheral region that has not been touched by a certain development from a particular centre may have preserved traditions that were superseded and thereby lost in the affected areas. As she formulates it: 'Witchcraft never became a central belief in the Orthodox, eastern territories of the Balkans, and that is why elements of archaic belief systems preceding the appearance of witchcraft could remain.'⁶¹ This would have solved Henningsen's problem, and indeed Pócs writes elsewhere about 'white Sabbats' turning black: 'We have no reason to doubt that such processes did take place in those areas of Central and Western Europe where a "pre-witchcraft" fairy mythology similar to the Sicilian-Balkan one did actually exist.'⁶² What is important here is not the availability or lack of evidence, but the way of thinking which replaces 'origin' by geographical marginality. In the 1970s this became outdated and was rightly replaced with a more dynamic, relativistic and contextualised concept of culture, in which changes of form, content and meaning are acknowledged.

Ginzburg knew this very well; if he had not figured it out himself, he was told so on several occasions by German ethnologists. But for reasons about which we can only speculate he chose to ignore the critique of diffusionism in the second part of *Storia* and to juggle around with it in the third. After having established a Celtic layer and shamanistic features, he combines the two by suggesting historical contact between Siberians and Celts with the Scyths as mediators. He then proceeds to explain that the reason why shamanism could strike a chord was that it appealed to notions already present and to a basic human system of polarities, such as life and death, male and female, body and spirit. To illustrate the latter, Ginzburg analyses the myths clustered around mono-sandalism and the tale of Cinderella (who also lost only one shoe), mainly by again applying his stringing tricks.⁶³ One way to see this is that his particular methods and determination to alter existing witchcraft historiography led Ginzburg into a cul-de-sac from which he could only escape by an intellectual somersault. We can also take a step back and deduct that Ginzburg, in a very entertaining way, shows how silly diffusionism can be if one carries it to its extreme consequences.

The demise of diffusionism in the sense of a broad theory based on the ancient movements of people does not, of course, imply that the notion of diffusion as distribution is inadequate itself. When we take Hungary as an

example, it is obvious that, as a place on the periphery, it experienced its main witch-trial periods much later than the 'heartland of the witchcraze'. This was made abundantly clear by Gábor Klaniczay, who between 1984 and 1994 published a series of (partly overlapping) articles about the Hungarian witch trials.⁶⁴ In these he drew on the ongoing results of a Hungarian research team, which he co-founded with Éva Pócs, the aim of which was to make available as much of the Hungarian witch-trial material as possible.⁶⁵ One of the themes Klaniczay discusses is foreign influence on Hungarian witch trials, particularly from German states. In northern Hungary and Transylvania, for example, the influence of German Lutheranism can be seen in the disproportionate number of healers in the first, late sixteenth-century trials. At the end of the seventeenth century the prosecution of male shepherds and vagrants spilled over into western Hungary from Catholic Austria. German-speaking soldiers played a main role in instigating trials in the eighteenth-century Hungarian plains. What is more, from 1690 onwards the main legal codex justifying prosecutions was the Austrian edition of Carpzov's *Practica Rerum Criminalium*.⁶⁶ This alone shows that various trial series had a distinct social and cultural background; the accusations among the seventeenth-century Transylvanian aristocracy are another illustration of this. The Hungarian witch trials were 'a huge cultural melting pot, collecting and combining magical notions and mythologies of various functions and different regions and peoples'.⁶⁷

The documents of these trials would also be extremely suitable for Sabbat research. As Klaniczay phrases it: 'The lack of innate demonological traditions promises an uncorrupted popular concept of witchcraft; the existence of shamanistic beliefs in the region makes it legitimate to look for local archaic versions of the sabbath.'⁶⁸ Here we can already discern the influence of Ginzburg (for the *absence* of shamanism would also support such a search with a similar force of argument). Nevertheless, Klaniczay harboured some doubts, pointing to the very 'small minority' of trials with shamanistic traits. In one of his last articles on the subject⁶⁹ he stressed from the start that, under torture, suspected witches very quickly learned what was expected of them, namely to produce believable descriptions of Sabbats.⁷⁰ They also told their interrogators what they knew, and in this way any account of group meetings, be they feasts, marches, battles or charivaris, could end up in confessions.⁷¹ In all probability this applies to some extent to witness' depositions, too, since witnesses were still in a subordinate position. One of the remarkable features of the Hungarian witchcraft material is that it contains testimonies about Sabbats, not just by suspects (as elsewhere in Europe) but also by witnesses who had been the target of witches. Theirs were versions of an abduction story, relating how they had been overwhelmed by witches in the middle of the night, changed into a horse and ridden to a meeting. This may be a rare instance of the existence of Sabbat notions among the populace, unrelated to the elite demonologies, but we have to keep in mind that it concerns late

eighteenth-century trials, among them those in Hódmezővásárhely, where foreign soldiers played a role as catalyser and susceptible children provided crucial evidence. Before we object that the witnesses could still have tapped into age-old local traditions, we also need to take into account that the principal elements of this particular story can be found all over western Europe and that the main subtype concentrates on the uncovering and shaming of the nightly visitor, rather than on a ride to a witches' meeting. This all makes it more likely that the story was imported in the Hungarian plains and subsequently told as a personal experience – Klaniczay cites a deposition by the Hungarian servant of an Austrian officer in which it is told how witches rode him to the Sabbat, and by a nine-year-old girl who added her own details to a similar story.⁷²

This Hungarian example shows the importance of unravelling the dynamics of that storytelling event in which witchcraft testimonies were expressed, with all its extremely uneven power relations. After all, as Klaniczay reminds us, 'with their fantastical sabbat stories the accusers tried to kill the accused. These are stories aimed to convince the judge and to threaten and stigmatize the witch.'⁷³ To shift the focus from this event in an attempt to reconstruct an origin that can at best only be conjectural carries with it the danger of denying history itself. How then to approach the shamanism which would reveal itself in the Sabbats of Hungarian witches? Here things become puzzling once more. As we have seen, Ginzburg's notion of the shamanistic tendencies of the *benandanti* and the followers of Diana remains no more than a vague suspicion centred around the broad concepts of trance, or ecstasy, which is how he translated flight and shapeshifting (with the bone miracle thrown in for good measure). If there is anything clear about shamans, however, then it is that they certainly did not play in teams.⁷⁴

Yet by discussing eastern European wizards who conformed to the Friulian *benandanti*, both Klaniczay and Pócs take their concept of shamanism from Ginzburg, although other Hungarian scholars preferred a type of shamanism that did not involve group combat.⁷⁵ Klaniczay, however, is careful enough to remark that the Hungarian *táltos* only started their 'struggles for fertility' at the end of the eighteenth century.⁷⁶ He also observes that the 'shamanistic' fragments he found were merely unconnected traces and that the wizards' profile was 'distinct' from Asian shamanism. At the end of his paper 'Shamanistic Elements in Central European Witchcraft' he moves away from ecstatic fights and concludes:

There was, indeed, a place in the witchcraft beliefs where shamanic figures could and generally did fit in: in the role of the diviner, the cunning folk, the wizard, the professional magician, who engaged in magical counter-aggression against the presumed witches.⁷⁷

In the early 1980s there was still very little research available on cunning folk; now there is at least enough to state that if they performed any rituals, those differed significantly from shamanistic trance. Moreover, Siberian shamans did not fight or even detect witches. This leaves precious little room for a European variant of shamanism, and in Budapest Henningsen proposed dropping the term altogether when speaking about the predecessors of witchcraft.⁷⁸ Indeed, one of the reviewers of *Storia* asked whether it was 'really necessary to go back that far in the past to discover the origins of witchcraft'. In his view the *benandanti* were already profoundly Christianised and any reference to their 'Neolithic ancestors' (meaning shamans) would only diverge from the Counter-Reformation struggle the Friulians were caught in.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, in his turn German witchcraft historian Wolfgang Behringer took Klaniczay's suggestion on cunning folk to support his own argument as to why the activities of the late sixteenth-century south Bavarian, Chonrad Stoecklin, could legitimately be called 'shamanistic'.⁸⁰

In spite of this, Behringer's case study, which ranges through the Swiss, Austrian and Italian Alps, is a measured response, even refutation of the main arguments in *Storia notturna*. Ginzburg had already paid attention to Stoecklin in *I Benandanti* – he had found him mentioned in a publication of 1931 written by a local historian – and indicated that the story of the horse-herder healer would be a valuable subject for analysis.⁸¹ At that time Ginzburg thought that the evidence in the case formed the 'most exact parallel' to the *benandanti*, but Behringer only agrees with this if 'Ginzburg's exaggerated claims to have discovered a mythic essence that supposedly survived over centuries or even across millennia without losing any of its vital force' were tuned down a bit. These were not Ginzburg's exact words,⁸² but Behringer's intention seems clear. 'For our interpretation, the question of origins is almost of no significance', he remarks later; it is an 'exercise in anachronism'.⁸³ Behringer also provides the most promising building blocks for a solution of the search for a hypothetical 'white Sabbat' out of which the diabolical version would have been summoned – if we accept that the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Swiss legends about the *Nachtvolk* (the regional fairies) were already present at the end of the fourteenth century. In fact, he concludes his book by pointing to the geographical correspondence of these traditions with the first witch trials and more or less suggests that the fairies' meetings were forcefully transformed into Sabbats.⁸⁴ Shortly before, however, he had shied away from undermining Ginzburg's shamanistic musings, extending his hand to the Italian instead.⁸⁵ 'We can still recognize that the mythic world of many early modern Europeans provided fertile soil ... for shamanistic ideas', he writes; 'the surviving fragments of myth, these vestigial mythologems, were powerful enough to generate myths over and over again'.⁸⁶ Shamanism was a positive possibility of interpretation, and since the Russian ethnographer Vladimir Basilov had shown that it could prosper under Islam, it could do the same under Christianity. Shamanistic ecstasies can be found all over Europe,

Behringer declares, referring to almost the same (unconvincing) collection of examples as Ginzburg. Behringer suddenly throws aside all the sensitivity he displayed when dealing with local traditions and the ideology of folklorists. He uses a definition of shamanism – ecstasy, contact with the spirit world – that is too generalised (it would include spiritist mediums, for instance) and formulated for the purpose of comparative analysis, which he does not undertake. If Stoeckhlin had actually gone into a trance and not just *told* stories, why were there no witnesses to report on the process of inducing this trance, or on the outward signs of his altered state of consciousness? In other words, why is shamanism so alluring?

In one of the endnotes to the chapter on ritual animal disguise in *Storia notturna*, where he refers to his essay on the charivari, Ginzburg notes that the Tübinger ethnologist Hermann Bausinger had commented on the similarities between his (Ginzburg's) argument and that of the Austrian National Socialist, Otto Höfler. On that occasion Ginzburg had neglected to mention explicitly Höfler's *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen* (1934).⁸⁷ But Ginzburg was quite familiar with the Austrian's work and the prickly exchange with Bausinger only lay at the surface of a sensitive issue that pervaded Ginzburg's work on the *benandanti* and subsequently on *Storia*. For, although from a Jewish and socialist background, as a young student Ginzburg had been inspired by German-speaking folklorists of the interbellum and not just on the subject of diffusionism. He had found the Latvian werewolf Thies in Höfler's book (he copied the latter's spelling of the werewolf's name and never bothered to carefully read the original trial transcript by von Bruiningk).⁸⁸ The Wild Hunt, one of Höfler's main areas of interest, had already been connected with the witches' flight by Jacob Grimm. Ginzburg's idea of shamanism was derived from Will-Erich Peuckert and Lily Weiser-Aall; the similarity between witches flying on broomsticks and shamans had been observed in 1927.⁸⁹ (The amount Ginzburg owes to Swiss folklorist Karl Meuli deserves a separate study.) The most that can be said of Peuckert's political affiliations is that he carefully avoided clashes with the Nazis and that his 1951 book *Geheimkulte* is a clear refutation of Nazi theories, including those by Höfler. In his later years Peuckert primarily became a compiler of folklore texts (as well as experimenting with 'witches' ointments'). Nevertheless, in *I Benandanti* Ginzburg called him a 'racist', apparently not as one would expect from a Jewish position towards a Nazi, but as an Italian would denote a German.⁹⁰ The 'unmistakably Nazi overtones' in Höfler's book were only noticed later⁹¹ and Ginzburg never seems to have discovered the fascist leanings of the Romanian historian of religions Mircea Eliade, whom he quotes favourably in *Storia*.⁹² Among other things, *Storia* can be seen as a recasting of the Germanic background of the *benandanti* and as showing Ginzburg's awareness and subsequent attempt at an exorcism of the fascist influence on his work.⁹³ Whereas, for instance, in *I Benandanti* Friuli was pictured as a meeting place between 'Germanic and Slavic currents',⁹⁴ in *Storia* this was replaced by a 'Celtic substrate', which shows that

Ginzburg was thinking in terms of a Celtic-Germanic opposition, an instance of *interpretatio romana*. And although he referred to the Wild Hunt-Wodan-Yggdrasil-shamanism chain in passing, he carefully avoided elaborating on it. At least Ginzburg addressed the question of the relation between political ideology and historical interpretation. However, the notion of the wandering dead, derived from the Wild Hunt, had become too important to abandon or even to change, and the denunciation of Höfler and other Nazis⁹⁵ also meant hiding Ginzburg's considerable indebtedness to them, originated at a time when his political antennae were not fully matured. Underneath the layer of fascism we can discern a strong nationalistic presence.

Ginzburg forcefully inserted his fascination with the dead time and time again into his unriddling of the Sabbat. This is hardly borne out by early modern evidence, but directly connected to the folklorists who initially inspired him and some of whom he later renounced. During the 1930s, folklore, as the branch of knowledge which provided the required expertise to discuss the cultural aspects of witchcraft, was still saturated with nationalism. The dead were primarily one's own dead; folklore offered the means of identification with one's perceived ancestors, and by suspending history this comforting feeling was given an absolute certainty. Ginzburg's lyrical enthusiasm for Jacob Grimm extends to his ideological background.⁹⁶ The concept of continuity not only provided the framework for the decontextualised details which plague *Storia notturna*; it is also one of the foremost articulations of nationalist proclivities.

The few theories about shamanism which emerged in the 1920s, on the other hand, were very circumscribed as they expressed an awareness of the influence of arctic customs on Norse traditions. When a connection with witchcraft was made, it centred on the broomstick. As such, shamanism came to constitute a counterweight to the militaristic ideas of the *Männerbünde*, the all-male fraternities or societies. In Hungary, shamanism had been used to express a national identity, separate from communism, which is one of the reasons why Ginzburg's findings were appropriated by other Hungarians to underline eastern European unity. In all these cases the concept of shamanism was not only politically loaded, it was also justified as resulting from geographical contacts, with the Laps, the Ugrians and the Friulians. However, when Ginzburg resumed thinking about shamans in the 1980s, they had shed these contexts, even their arctic origins, and were developing into a spiritual force in western society. In *Storia*, Ginzburg thus tries to show how 'the traces of this Eurasian continuum' were not just restricted to 'northern Europe' – that is to say Nordic mythology.⁹⁷ Shamans, their romantic quality enhanced by Eliade in another undertaking to atone for Nazi sympathies, became universal New Age role models who could establish their own links to the spirit world. They were also perceived as masculine (their transvestism was dispensed with), and what is in this context perhaps most important, as mediators between the living and the dead, they were the ultimate historians.

This may explain the lure of shamanism, not just for Ginzburg but for other historians, too. Confronted with the choice between the powerful individual male shaman with his anti-totalitarian connotations and the feminine groups of teasing fairies, most witchcraft researchers instinctively went for the first.

notes

1. Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), p. 252.
2. Richard Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300–1500* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), p. 40. See later, Richard Kieckhefer, 'Avenging the Blood of Children: anxiety over child victims and the origins of the European witch trials', in Alberto Ferreiro (ed.), *The Devil, Heresy and Witchcraft: Essays in the Honor of Jeffrey B. Russell* (Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 1998), pp. 91–118.
3. For instance, H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany 1562–1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 9: 'I decided that any hunt resulting in 20 or more executions in one year could qualify as large.'
4. Nicole Jacques-Chaquin and Maxime Préaud (eds), *Le sabbat des sorciers en Europe (xv^e–xviii^e siècles)* (Grenoble: Millon, 1993).
5. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (eds), *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Gábor Klaniczay and Éva Pócs (eds), *Witch Beliefs and Witch-Hunting in Central and Eastern Europe* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993; *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* 37 (1992)).
6. Wolfgang Behringer, *Shaman of Oberstdorf: Chonrad Stoecklin and the Phantoms of the Night* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998). The original German version appeared in 1994. See also Wolfgang Behringer, 'How Waldensians Became Witches: Heretics and Their Journey to the Other World', in Gábor Klaniczay and Éva Pócs (eds), *Communicating With the Spirits* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2005), pp. 155–92. This important article only became available after the conclusion of the writing of this chapter.
7. On 7 October 1999 a roundtable discussion with Carlo Ginzburg was organised at the Budapest Institute for Advanced Study. Discussants were Wolfgang Behringer, Gustav Henningsen, Gábor Klaniczay and Éva Pócs. A report will be published in Gábor Klaniczay and Éva Pócs (eds), *Witchcraft Mythologies and Persecutions*.
8. His very first article, dealing with a case from the inquisitorial records of Modena, was originally published by his university in 1961. An English translation appeared after 29 years: Carlo Ginzburg, 'Witchcraft and Popular Piety: Notes on a Modenese trial of 1519', in Ginzburg, *Myths, Emblems, Clues* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990), pp. 1–16.
9. The quote is from Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 223, who was one of the few to properly assess *I Benandanti*. For the general and more accurate view after the English edition, see, for example, Brian Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (London: Longman, 1987), p. 53.
10. In Steven L. Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture. Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Amsterdam, Berlin and New York: Mouton, 1984), pp. 39–51.
11. Ankarloo and Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 121–37; Ginzburg, 'Présomptions sur le Sabbat', *Annales E.S.C.* 39 (1984) 341–54; Ginzburg, 'Nächtliche Zusammenkünfte. Die lange Geschichte des Hexensabbat', *Freiburger Vierteljahrschrift für Kultur und Politik* 25 (1985) 20–36.
12. Both in Carlo Ginzburg, *Myths, Emblems and Clues*. The French translation of 'Germanic Mythology' appeared as: 'Mythologie Germanique et Nazisme. Sur un ancien livre de Georges Dumézil', *Annales E.S.C.* 40 (1985) 695–715.
13. Ginzburg, 'Charivari, associations juvéniles, chasse sauvage', in Jacques Le Goff and Jean-Claude Schmitt (eds), *Le Charivari* (Paris, 1981), pp. 131–40. The German translation appeared in the German edition of *Miti emblemi spie: 'Charivari, Jugendbünde und Wilde Jagd. Über die Gegenwart der Toten'*, in Carlo Ginzburg, *Spurensicherungen. Über verborgene Geschichte, Kunst und soziales Gedächtnis* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1983), pp. 47–60. I have not found an English version of this article.
14. See lately, Tony Molho, 'Carlo Ginzburg: Reflections on the Intellectual Cosmos of a 20th-Century Historian', *History of European Ideas* 30 (2004) 121–48, and Ginzburg's most recent collection of essays: *Wooden Eyes: Nine Reflections on Distance* (London and New York: Verso, 2002).
15. John Martin, 'Journeys to the World of the Dead: The Work of Carlo Ginzburg', *Journal of Social History* 25 (1992) 613–26, 621.
16. Klaus Graf, 'Carlo Ginzburg's "Hexensabbat" – Herausforderung an die Methodendiskussion der Geschichtswissenschaft', *Kea* 5 (1993) 1–16; for an extended version see <www.geschichte.uni-freiburg.de/mertens/graf/ginzburg.htm>. The seemingly critical review of *Storia* by Perry Anderson, 'Witchcraft', *London Review of Books*, 8 November 1990, was primarily a publicity stunt to promote the English translation. Anderson, whom Ginzburg counts among his friends, repeatedly overshot his mark and Ginzburg did not have any qualms replying two months later (10 January 1991), when readers could weigh the arguments for themselves. The review circulated among witchcraft historians as a sign of Ginzburg's fallacy, see Behringer, *Shaman*, p. 193, n.6.
17. Since Ginzburg called Stuart Clark's interpretation of the Sabbat in terms of symbolic reversal 'superficial', Clark chose to honour the book with a single footnote in which he directs future research to 'different associative principles': Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 134, n.1.
18. Hans Peter Ros, 'Over de intrinsieke grenzen van onze kennis. Een interview met Carlo Ginzburg', *Groniek* 28 (1995) 325–35, 329.
19. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 35, 44, 50, 51, only quotes from the second chapter of *Ecstasies*; Diane Purkiss, *Troublesome Things: A History of Fairies and Fairy Stories* (London: Penguin, 2000), pp. 142–8, only refers to the third chapter.
20. Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990), pp. 100, 101. In the following quotations I have substituted my own translation of the text for the sake of clarity.
21. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 136.
22. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 242.
23. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 159.
24. These battles were a distinct Slavic phenomenon and may have been more than just dream experiences; see Cathie Carmichael, 'The Fertility of Lake Cerknica', *Social History* 19 (1994) 305–17.
25. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 172.
26. Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p. xxi (preface to the Italian edition).

27. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, p. 100. The link with the Wild Hunt had already been established earlier in the book, see p. 40. See also *Ecstasies*, pp. 101–2.
28. See Carlo Severi, 'Le Chamanisme et le dame du Bon Jeu', *L'Homme* 32, 121 (1992) 166–77; also Graf, 'Carlo Ginzburg's "Hexensabbat"', 8–11, who accuses Ginzburg of having built his method on an 'essentialist fiction'.
29. I have voiced my reservations of *I Benandanti* previously in German. See Willem de Blécourt, 'Spuren einer Volkskultur oder Dämonisierung? Kritische Bemerkungen zur Ginzburgs "Die Benandanti"', *Kea. Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften* 5 (1993) 17–29.
30. Ginzburg argues that when *benandanti* identified witches, they also acquired a bad reputation on a village level and finally became to be seen as witches themselves (*The Night Battles*, pp. 78, 94, 96, 118, 121). There is no reason, however, to suppose that a certain increase of the ambivalence of unwitchment experts coincided with the presumed success of the Inquisitors' persuading them to be joined with the Devil.
31. See Franco Nardon, *Benandanti e inquisitori nel friuli del seicento* (Trieste: Università di Trieste, 1999).
32. Mary Rose O'Neil, 'Missing Footprints: Maleficium in Modena', in Klaniczay and Pócs, *Witch Beliefs*, pp. 123–43, 124.
33. Willem de Blécourt, 'Witch Doctors, Soothsayers and Priests: On Cunning Folk in European Historiography and Tradition', *Social History* 19 (1994) 285–303; Owen Davies, *Cunning Folk: Popular Magic in English History* (London: Hambledon and London, 2003), esp. chapter 7.
34. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 26, n.42.
35. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, pp. 13, 159.
36. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, pp. 33, 35, 41, 72.
37. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, pp. 38–9.
38. There is only one other case where the two overlap, that of Florida Basili, but she later denied that she was a *benandante*. See Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, pp. 62–5.
39. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, p. 68.
40. Carlo Ginzburg, 'Freud, the Wolf-Man, and the Werewolves', in Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 147.
41. Richard van Dülmen, 'Imaginationen des Teuflischen. Nächtlichen Zusammenkünfte, Hexentänze, Teufelssabbate', in Richard van Dülmen (ed.), *Hexenwelten. Magie und Imagination vom 16.–20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Fisher, 1987), pp. 94–130; van Dülmen, 'Die Dienerin des Bösen. Zum Hexenbild in der frühen Neuzeit', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 18 (1991) 385–98.
42. See Robert Rowland, "'Fantastical and Devilish Persons': European Witch-Beliefs in Comparative Perspective', in Ankarloo and Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 161–90, who also writes about the 'underlying uniformity' of the witches' confessions, although his general sketch differs from Ginzburg. Rowland, however, calls the concern with origins 'misplaced' (p. 166, n.8).
43. The question of place may have to be partially recast in terms of the numinous: see Melinda Égető, 'Witches' Sabbath on the Vineyard Hills', in Éva Pócs (ed.), *Démonológia és boszorkányság Európában* ['Demonology and Witchcraft in Europe'] (Budapest: L'Harmattan–PTE Néprajz Tanszék, 2001), pp. 365–7 (English summary).
44. Montague Summers, *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology* (London: Kegan Paul, 1926), p. 118.
45. See also Gábor Klaniczay, 'Hungary: The Accusations and the Universe of Popular Magic', in Ankarloo and Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 219–53, esp. p. 252.

46. See also Elisabeth Biesel, 'Les descriptions du sabbat dans les confessions des inculpés lorrains et trévirois', in Jacques-Chaquin and Préaud, *Le sabbat des sorciers*, pp. 183–97; Biesel, 'Die Pfeiffer seint alle uff den baumen gessen. Der Hexensabbat in der Vorstellungswelt einer ländlichen Bevölkerung', in Gunther Franz and Franz Irsigler (eds), *Methoden und Konzepte der historischen Hexenforschung* (Trier: Spee, 1998), pp. 289–302.
47. Gustav Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition (1609–1614)* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1980); Jens Christian V. Jensen, 'Denmark: The Sociology of Accusations', in Ankarloo and Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 339–65, 362.
48. Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (London: HarperCollins, 1996), p. 39.
49. Maurizio Bertolotti, 'The Ox's Bones and the Ox's Hide: A Popular Myth, Part Hagiography and Part Witchcraft', in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggero (eds), *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 42–70. Behringer, *Shaman*, pp. 59–60, 138, cites trials in South Tirol and Voralberg; see also chapter 8.
50. Gábor Klaniczay, 'Shamanistic Elements in Central European Witchcraft', in Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early-Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 129–50, esp. p. 136.
51. See Behringer, *Shaman*, p. 80: the Wild Hunt 'appears to have little to do with the fairy-like appearance of the night people'; see also pp. 36–8, 45–6, 136, n.28.
52. Hans Peter Broedel, *The Malleus Malificarum and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 102.
53. Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, p. xxvii.
54. See, for the end of the eighteenth century, Giovanna Fiume, 'The Old Vinegar Lady, or the Judicial Modernization of the Crime of Witchcraft', in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (eds), *History from Crime* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), pp. 65–87.
55. Gustav Henningsen, "'The Ladies from Outside": An Archaic Pattern of the Witches' Sabbath', in Ankarloo and Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 191–215, esp. pp. 207–14.
56. He had heard Henningsen's presentation in Stockholm (published in Swedish in 1987) and was later given the then unpublished English version (see *Ecstasies*, p. 140, n.1) with a misdating of the Stockholm conference.
57. Henningsen, "'The Ladies from Outside"', appendix, p. 207.
58. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 103.
59. Éva Pócs, *Fairies and Witches at the Boundaries of South-Eastern and Central Europe* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedakatemia, 1989), p. 13.
60. 'Tündér és boszorkány', the Hungarian version of *Fairies and Witches*, was published in *Ethnographia* in 1986, but we can be sure that Ginzburg does not read Hungarian (*Ecstasies*, p. 177, n.40). Ginzburg's publications before 1986 do not contain this particular line of thought.
61. Pócs, *Fairies and Witches*, p. 9.
62. Éva Pócs, 'The Popular Foundations of the Witches' Sabbath and the Devil's Pact in Central and Southeastern Europe', in Klaniczay and Pócs, *Witch Beliefs*, pp. 305–70, 327. When this paper was presented at the Budapest conference, Henningsen's article (originally in Danish) had not been published in English yet. But he had

- circulated an English version which was, moreover, translated and published in Hungarian in 1985 in the journal *Világosság* ('Light'). See note 56 above.
63. Given the trade contacts between northern Italy and East Asia it is hardly surprising that a version of the Italian story of Cinderella found its way to the other end of the Eurasian continent.
 64. Klaniczay's first essay in this series, 'Shamanistic Elements in Central European Witchcraft', was originally published in Hungarian in *Ethnographia* in 1983; an English version appeared in 1984. See also Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power*, pp. 129–50.
 65. Gábor Klaniczay, 'Hungary: The Accusations and the Universe of Popular Magic', in Ankarloo and Henningsen (eds), *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 219–55, esp. pp. 241–3. See also Éva Pócs, 'Preface: Fifteen Years of a Research Team', in Pócs, *Demonológia*, pp. 337–46.
 66. Klaniczay, 'Hungary', pp. 229, 226–7.
 67. Gábor Klaniczay, 'Witch-Hunting in Hungary: Social or Cultural Tensions', in Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power*, pp. 151–67, esp. pp. 158–60, 165. This was also Klaniczay's contribution to the Budapest conference: Klaniczay and Pócs, *Witch Beliefs*, pp. 67–91.
 68. Klaniczay, 'Hungary', p. 244.
 69. In an obligatory summary of eastern European witchcraft history, Klaniczay repeats the findings of Pócs (as expressed at the Budapest conference) when dealing with the popular background of the Sabbat. See Gábor Klaniczay, 'Bûchers tardifs en Europe centrale et orientale', in Robert Muchembled (ed.), *Magie et sorcellerie en Europe du Moyen Age à nos jours* (Paris: Colin, 1994), pp. 215–31.
 70. Gábor Klaniczay, 'Le sabbat raconté par les témoins des procès de sorcellerie en Hongrie', in Jacques-Chaquin and Préaud, *Le sabbat des sorciers*, pp. 227–46, esp. p. 227.
 71. See also Pócs, 'The Popular Foundations', p. 334. Van Dülmen and Muchembled argued that in Germany and northern France Sabbat accounts referred to popular feasts: van Dülmen, 'Imaginationen des Teuflichen', p. 118; Robert Muchembled, 'Satanic Myths and Cultural Reality', in Ankarloo and Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, pp. 139–60, esp. pp. 149–50.
 72. Klaniczay, 'Le sabbat', pp. 237–9. See also Pócs, *Between the Living and the Dead: A Perspective on Witches and Seers in the Early Modern Age* (Budapest: Central European University, 1999), pp. 79–80.
 73. Klaniczay, 'Le sabbat', p. 230.
 74. Ronald Hutton, *Shaman: Siberian Spirituality and the Western Imagination* (London: Hambledon & London, 2001).
 75. Klaniczay, 'Shamanistic Elements'; Éva Pócs, 'Hungarian *Táltos* and his European Parallels', in Mihály Hoppál and Juha Pentikäinen (eds), *Uralic Mythology and Folklore* (Budapest and Helsinki, 1989), pp. 251–76. See also Pócs, *Fairies and Witches*, p. 81, n.232.
 76. Klaniczay, 'Shamanistic Elements', pp. 141–2. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 132, derived his remark about the fertility activities of the *táltos* from these later instances, although he was familiar with Klaniczay's article, which he read in the 1984 English version.
 77. Klaniczay, 'Shamanistic Elements', p. 149.
 78. Gustav Henningsen, 'The White Sabbath and other Archaic patterns of Witchcraft', *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* 37 (1991–92), pp. 301–2.

79. Jean-Michel Salman, review of *Le sabbat des sorcières*, *Annales* 50 (1995) 183–7, esp. 186.
80. Behringer, *Shaman*, pp. 88, 140.
81. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, pp. 52–3, 191, n.59 (the 1931 publication is available at the Warburg Institute); see also Behringer, *Shaman*, p. 137; Wolfgang Behringer, *Hexenverfolgung in Bayern. Volksmagie, Glaubenseifer und Staatsräson in der Frühen Neuzeit* (München: Oldenbourg, 1987), pp. 131, n.31, 189–91.
82. Behringer, *Shaman*, p. 138. See also Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, p. 52: 'the closest resemblance'. The 'mythic essence' stems from an unacknowledged quote of Ginzburg's preface to the Italian edition of *Myths, Emblems, Clues*, which is translated in English as 'a mythical nucleus which retained its vitality fully intact for centuries – perhaps for millennia' (pp. xii–xiii).
83. Behringer, *Shaman*, p. 146. The last phrase fails in the German original, but is actually an improvement.
84. Pócs started her research among similar lines (*Fairies and Witches*; relicts in: *Between the Living and the Dead*, pp. 49–50, 88–91), but abandoned them in favour of Ginzburg's shamanism.
85. Pócs noticed later that 'the Stoeckhlin fairy magicians' confirmed Ginzburg's findings: Pócs, *Between the Living and the Dead*, p. 95.
86. Behringer, *Shaman*, pp. 143, 145.
87. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 201, n.47.
88. See Willem de Blécourt, 'A Journey to Hell: Reconsidering the Livonian "Werewolf"', *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* (forthcoming). Pócs also relies on Höfler in this, see her *Fairies and Witches*, p. 82.
89. Ginzburg cites an entry in the *Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionwissenschaft*, Vol. 3, cols 307–8, which clearly represents an intermediate phase and will itself have been derived from the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*. See Lily Weiser-Aall, 'Hexe', *HdA* III, cols 1827–1920, esp. cols 1849–51: 'Hexenritt'; see also Artur Haberlandt, 'Besenritt' in *HdA* I, cols 1147–50.
90. See Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, p. 174, n.8 (to the preface of the Italian edition), where Ginzburg mentions Peuckert's 'racist antithesis between the virile Germans ... and the effeminate Mediterraneans'. At p. 192, n.69, Peuckert is attributed with 'racist presuppositions'.
91. Carlo Ginzburg, 'Deciphering the Sabbath', in Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 135. See also the balanced rebuttal of Höfler's work in *Ecstasies*, p. 173, n.2. See also Behringer, *Shaman*, p. 77, who exposes Höfler more directly.
92. See Mircea Eliade, 'Some European Secret Cults', in Helmut Birkhan (ed.), *Festgabe für Otto Höfler zum 75. Geburtstag* (Wien and Stuttgart: Braumüller, 1976), pp. 190–204, in which the Romanian *calusari*, and by implication the *benandanti* and the Latvian werewolf Thies, are presented as the remnants of a *Männerbund*.
93. In this sense Ginzburg's discussion of the politics of George Dumézil in 'Germanic Mythology' (see note 12 above) acquires an extra, biographical meaning.
94. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*, p. 58.
95. Such as the Dutch Germanist Jan de Vries; see *Ecstasies*, pp. 114–15, n.45.
96. In *Storia* one of Grimm's insights is described as born 'in the flash of a fading bolt of lightning' (*Ecstasies*, p. 139). In contrast, Behringer blames Grimm for distorting the whole picture of the 'Nachtvolk', which led to decennia of misconception.
97. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 220.

Palgrave Advances

Titles include:

Jonathan Barry and Owen Davies (*editors*)
WITCHCRAFT HISTORIOGRAPHY

H.G. Cocks and Matt Houlbrook (*editors*)
THE MODERN HISTORY OF SEXUALITY

Saki R. Dockrill and Geraint Hughes (*editors*)
COLD WAR HISTORY

Patrick Finney (*editor*)
INTERNATIONAL HISTORY

Jonathan Harris (*editor*)
BYZANTINE HISTORY

Marnie Hughes-Warrington (*editor*)
WORLD HISTORIES

Helen J. Nicholson (*editor*)
THE CRUSADES

Alec Ryrie (*editor*)
EUROPEAN REFORMATIONS

Richard Whatmore and Brian Young (*editors*)
INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Jonathan Woolfson (*editor*)
RENAISSANCE HISTORIOGRAPHY

Forthcoming:

Katherine O'Donnell, Leann Lane and Mary McAuliffe (*editors*)
IRISH HISTORY

Palgrave Advances
Series Standing Order ISBN 1-4039-3512-2 (Hardback) 1-4039-3513-0 (Paperback)
(outside North America only)

You can receive future titles in this series as they are published by placing a standing order. Please contact your bookseller or, in the case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address, the title of the series and the ISBN quoted above.

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke,
Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

palgrave advances in witchcraft historiography

edited by
jonathan barry and owen davies

palgrave
macmillan