

Werewolf
The Images and Trials in France and Bedburg (1500 – 1610)

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Introduction

Motivation

Lycaon, told by Ovid, was a man who was notorious for his savagery. According to the legend, he tried to kill Jupiter when he was asleep. Because of his impiety, Jupiter punished him by changing him into a wolf. The legend became the first story about werewolf in the western tradition. However, only a few books and essays are written on the subject – the image of werewolf. Thus, there are two reasons for studying the subject, namely the lack of researches and studies and the attempt to reconstruct the past.

First of all, only a few research and studies of the relation between werewolf and witchcraft are available. During the witch-hunt in the early modern Europe, thousands of witches confessed under torture and were burnt. Witches were said to be able to transform themselves or someone into animals by using spells or charms, although medieval scholars had argued that actual human-animal transformation is impossible. Witches referred mostly to old women, while male witches and sorcerers¹ were also caught and executed.

During the 16th and the early 17th century, there were several famous cases of werewolves in France and in Bedburg. Although these cases had been recorded, there are only few studies done into the link between the witches and the voluntary werewolves. These werewolves are always described to be cruel, cunning and ferocious, but they are seldom studied seriously. Therefore, it would be interesting to study how these werewolves were depicted and the link between them and witches and sorcerers.

Although the image of werewolf was mostly found in the works of early modern scholars, it might indicate the image of the masses as well. The werewolf trials in the early modern Europe were usually reported in the villages and seldom found in towns or cities. Studying the image of werewolves helps to reconstruct the past and understand how people behaved in specific ways.² Fält also added that the images of the masses are becoming more popular in field of image studies, since they tell us

¹ “Male witch” comes from Apps and Gow’s book *Male witches in early modern Europe*, which distinguished the gender between male and female witches. While witches usually refer to women in the early modern European culture, there were a few men also accused of witchcraft. Putting the word “male” in front of “witch” only indicates the gender of the magician. Thus, “male witch” and “sorcerer” are interchangeable in this thesis.

² Ratz 2007, 189.

about what kinds of values were prevailing in the society.³ For example, how did the people react to the missing children and the loss of livestock reported in the rural area? What did the trials tell us about the early modern world? The rumours were probably circulated well in the rural societies, which is useful to study the image of the masses.

From the images of werewolf in the early modern culture, we not only see the meaning of the image, but also deepen our understanding of the masses. The features of werewolf also show us whether the image of werewolf changed in the western tradition or not. Therefore, studying the werewolf image helps to provide more information of the behaviours or believes in the past, and may help pave a new way for further research under witchcraft studies.

Sources and recent research

Since the subject of werewolf studies is a less popular topic than the others under the witchcraft studies, there are only few materials relating to the topic. Many studies about witchcraft and witch hunting have been done in the last few decades, but there are only few books and essays on the subject of werewolves in the 16th and 17th century.

The source material, suggested by Fält, is the first thing we should pay attention to when we set out to examine the actual process of image research.⁴ Since the focus of this thesis is the image of the werewolves in 16th and 17th century France and Bedburg, some of the original texts had been destroyed and only a few primary sources in English are available. Despite the lack of first-hand material, these stories were widely spread in the learned circle.

Due to the unavailability of the original version and the language barrier, it is hard to get access to the original version of the sources nowadays. However, many scholars in the field of witchcraft studies put a lot of efforts on collecting and translating the texts from the medieval and early modern scholars. These collections are used here as primary sources, which may not affect the liability of the information since some of them were translated from documents in the early modern period.

³ Fält 2002, 10.

⁴ Fält 2002, 9.

In terms of werewolf studies, Montague Summers' works are a great collection of the subject. Summers (1880 – 1948) was an English author and clergyman, who is famous for his studies in English drama, witchcraft, werewolf and vampire. His book – *The Werewolf in Lore and Legend* – brings us the cases in Europe during the early modern period. This book is said to be the first definitive work on werewolfery. It not only deals with the image of werewolf, but also provides a short history of lycanthropy. Reported werewolf cases were carefully categorized in the book by the geographic location. Further descriptions of werewolf and its image in literature are also included in this book. Because of his language skills, he had collected and translated almost all of the famous werewolf trials. With these sources, he distinguished werewolf from vampire: the former is alive while the latter is dead. His works help to clarify the misunderstanding between werewolf and vampire.

Thanks to the hard work of Summers, many werewolf cases and *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of Witches*), originally written in Latin by Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger and published in 1487, were translated and well edited. Those well-known French werewolf stories, such as Pierre Burgot, Gilles Granier, Jacques Roulet and Jean Grenier, were also translated and edited in *The Werewolf in Lore and Legend*. The case of Gilles Garnier, for instance, was translated from the *Arrest memorable de la Cour de parlement de Dole, du dichuictiesme iour de Ianvier, 1573, contre Gilles Garnier, Lyonnois, pour auoir en forme de loup-garou deouré plusieuers enfans, at commis autres crimes* which was first printed at Sens in 1574.⁵ These books will be used as the primary source here.

Another piece of primary source of the trial of Stubbe Peeter, *A True Discourse*, was written in 1589 and translated into English and published in London a year later. The version used in this thesis is the English-translated version which was published in 1590 as the original high Dutch version is no longer available. The author is anonymous. George Borces, one of the witnesses brought a copy of the trial to England and published it in London.⁶ The text was then translated by Edward Venge.⁷ The discourse is rather short. It contains 20 pages and a cover with an 8-grid woodcut illustration (Figure 1) showing how Stubbe Peeter transformed himself into a wolf to kill and how he was caught and executed. There is another page before the text giving out all the information of the English translated text. The content recorded the detail

⁵ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 226.

⁶ *A True Discourse* 1590, i.

⁷ Only few information could be found about Edward Venge. He was probably working for William Barley. In 1598, they were sentenced to prison because of illicit printing of a Latin grammar book, *Accidence*. Johnson 1989, 13–15.

how Stubbe Peeter had a pact with Satan and gained a girdle in order to transform himself into a wolf to kill people.

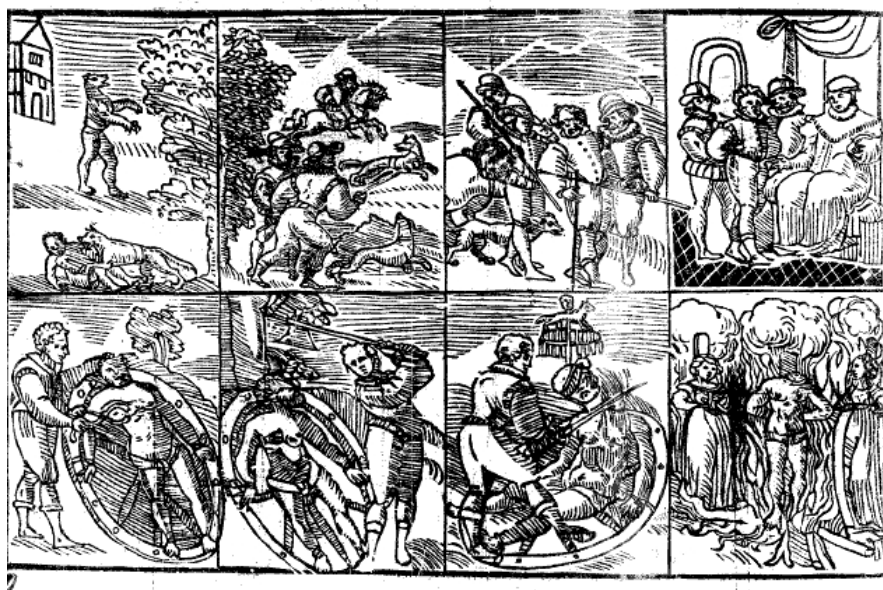


Figure 1: The Cover of *A True Discourse*

Figure 1 shows the trial of Stubbe Peeter in a lively way. The first picture of the woodcut picture illustrates the metamorphosis and a scene of murder. Then he was chased by several men and sent to the court. Finally he was laid on the wheel and burnt with two other women. This provides useful information for interpreting the image of werewolf in the areas of Bedburg and Cologne. The wood-cut illustration will be enlarged and studied carefully in the main chapters for analysing the image of werewolf.

Apart from Summers' works, there are several werewolfery studies and books published by contemporary scholars and writers. Charlotte F. Otten's *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture* is another good reference for the studies of werewolves. The book is written in 6 sections, namely medical cases with diagnoses, trial records and historical accounts, philosophical and theological approaches to metamorphosis, critical essays on lycanthropy, myths and legends, and the allegory. Comparing to Summers' works, Otten's book is a collection of primary sources in different aspect. Summer's work is his own work and a general description on the subject, while Otten's work provides essays, cases and medical reports of the topic. Thus, Otten's book not only contains the original discourse, but also looks in depth at the features and the meaning of lycanthropy. She also included several medical treatments for lycanthropy, in order to provide a wider picture of the lycanthropes.

The use of translated materials may raise the question of reliability, since the original texts are no longer available. Authors were sometimes unknown that we cannot trace the source. Old spelling and words could also be a problem to modern readers. However, it is more important to focus on the descriptions of the images, since they convey the collective knowledge of history, worldview and values of the entire society. I would like to borrow the method of interpreting the medieval hagiography. The writer of medieval hagiographies can be considered anonymous, suggested by Mari Mäki-Petäys, a researcher of the image of Alexander Nevskiy in Russian medieval sources.⁸ It is not that important to trace who the author was and whether the trials were true or not, but what kinds of social values and worldview the text gives us.

Moreover, there is a huge collection of medieval learnt men's work which will be used in the thesis. The first one is *Witchcraft in Europe 400 – 1700: A Documentary History*, edited by Alan Charles Kors and Edward Peters. Views from the learned people, such as Thomas Aquinas and Jean Bodin, can be found in the book with short comments from the editors. Although there are only a few passages that refer to human metamorphosis directly, most of the articles deal with the diabolic acts and the attitude of priests and scholars towards witchcraft. These passages will be cited in order to make the analysis of the image of voluntary werewolf more convincing and logical.

Brian P. Levack also edited the book *The Witchcraft Sources Book*, which contains the work of scholars concerning different topics such as interrogation and punishment. The passage of Jean Bodin, Henri Bouget and other scholars will be used to analyse the interrogation in the early modern period.

In addition, useful second-handed materials are available for the discussion of the image of werewolf and witchcraft. *Animals in the Middle Ages*, edited by Nona C. Flores, and *Werewolves, Witches and Wandering Spirits*, edited by Kathryn A. Edwards, are a collection of animal studies in the early modern Europe. Kirby Flower Smith's *An Historical Study of the Werewolf in Literature* analysed the image of werewolf in literature. Willem de Blécourt's article *I Would Have Eaten You Too: Werewolf Legends in the Flemish, Dutch and German Area*, for example, focuses on the image of werewolf in the legends in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. He summarized the images of werewolf in these areas and looked for the meaning in the

⁸ Mäki-Petäys 2002, 100.

society. As a warning to children is one of the suggestions to the meaning of werewolf from the essay. These books and essays, therefore, help widen the discussion of the image of werewolf.

Also, there are a wide variety of research materials on the witch-hunt which are good references in order to learn more about the medieval mind. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark's *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Period of the Witch Trials*, Levack's *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe* and Jeffrey Burton Russell's *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* provide not only the formation of the idea of witch-hunt, but also the views of the secular world. With reference to these books, it may help deepen the discussion of the image of werewolves.

Richard M. Golden edited a four-volume *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: the Western Tradition* in which the specific terms of witchcraft are clarified by the contemporary scholars such as William Monter and Stuart Clark. Definitions of terms, such as "sabbat" and "lycanthropy", will be used in the following chapters.

Brad Steiger, a veteran author, published *The Werewolf Book: An Encyclopedia of Shape-Shifting Beings* in 1999. Terms and definitions are given wisely ranging from legends and fables to contemporary films and dramas. Although this encyclopedia is not an academic work, the short and clear definitions are useful to explain the concept of metamorphosis in the medieval time.

When we talk about the gender-related witch-hunt in the early modern Europe, there are many references available. Perhaps Lara Apps and Andrew Gow's *Male witches in early modern Europe* is the most relevant book to the subject, as it talks about male witches in early modern Europe. Human metamorphosis is also discussed, albeit it is not related to the topic of werewolf. The book, however, shows that the men were also accused of witchcraft in the early modern Europe, which is useful for interpreting the image of werewolf as sorcerers in the society.

Lyndal Roper's *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, sexuality and religion in early modern Europe* is highly recommended by scholars for gender studies. The focus of the book is not surprisingly on old women, but sorcerers are not totally ignored. The book not only deals with the issue of gender in the Holy Roman Empire, but also highlights the changing moral standard in the Empire during the 16th century. The emphasis on gender helps to analyse the image of witches and sorcerers in the early modern German society.

Last but not least, *Thinking with Demons* written by Stuart Clark should not be forgotten in the studies of demonology. The book deals with all aspects of demonology, ranging from the linguistic aspect and the concept of demonology to the history of the studies. Several chapters also give a thorough explanation of metamorphosis.

Since there is a lot of research done by other scholars in the past few decades, it is impossible to list them all one by one here. The researches stated above are those which are closely related to the subject – the image of werewolf and the link between sorcerers and the voluntary werewolf.

Research questions

Traditionally, the image of werewolf was depicted to be cunning, cruel, greedy and violent in folklores and literature. Learnt from the legend of Lycaon, the image of the voluntary werewolf is always depicted in a negative way and relating to lust of human flesh and sexual abuse. The only exception was found in William of Palermer which is a long poem how the son of the king Sicily, William, was seized by a werewolf and took the throne again when he returned.⁹

Although the image of werewolf is not necessarily referring to men, the bloodsucking werewolf is usually said to be a masculine creature. Due to the lack of trials of female werewolves, this thesis will only focus on the cases which were told or reported in the 16th century France and Cologne. Thus, this thesis aims to show the image of the voluntary werewolf by studying the most furious werewolf trials.

First of all, it is important to show the readers the image of werewolf. The most important question in this thesis is what the image of werewolf tells us about the past. The image of werewolf should have special meanings to the people living in the early modern period. Therefore, two main questions will be answered in the first chapter. What is werewolf? Why were the werewolves depicted in a negative way? It was probably influenced by the legend of Lycaon that the werewolves were believed to be cunning and cruel. Regardless of the geographical distance, the image of these werewolves was depicted as a wicked sorcerer and a cold-blood killer. By answering

⁹ Hinton 1996, 133-134.

the main questions, readers will have a better understanding towards werewolves and why they were depicted as sorcerers in the trials.

After we have a clearer concept of werewolf, the main questions in the second chapter will be: How were they treated in trials and why was that so? Once the werewolves had been caught, they were said to local court for the interrogation. Although they were accused of murdering a lot of young children, they were questioned and punished like other witches. Although the image of French and German werewolves was quite similar to each other, the political differences should be taken into account in the discussion. For example, the legal systems in both countries were quite different from each other. While the French court reinforced the appellate tradition in the trials, it was less common found in the Holy Roman Empire.

These questions are useful for studying the image and werewolf and its meaning in its time. Even though it is impossible to get to know the attitude of the people from below towards werewolves and witchcraft directly, it is possible to get some hints from the works of learned people. Thus, these research questions are useful for learning more about the meaning of werewolf image and help reconstruct the past.

Methodology

In terms of methodology, approaches of image studies, microhistory, and comparative studies will be adopted. According to Ratz, textual analysis is important, because abstract images are represented by words in language.¹⁰ The passage of *A True Discourse* will be cited in the old English spelling since it is quite readable without much problem and the original text should be kept. Other sources will also be cited in the original or translated version. Detailed description of each case will be used in order to analyse the each of the werewolf case intensively.

Pictures of werewolf are important to the image studies as well. However, there are only a few of them found in the sources. The cover of *A True Discourse*, for example, tells the story of Stubbe Peeter and it will be included in the analysis of his image. The images will be studied carefully in the main chapters as well.

Inspired by Johannes Dillinger's "*Evil People*": *A Comparative Study of Witch*

¹⁰ Ratz 2007, 192.

Hunts in Swabian Austria and the Electorate of Trier, this thesis will compare and contrast the image of werewolves in France and Bedburg. Share features of werewolves may give similar answers to the research questions, which will be discussed together. When it comes to the differences, these cases will be described separately first and then it comes to a comparative conclusion.¹¹

Therefore, the thesis will consist of two chapters. The first chapter, “Werewolf as a mirror image” will be divided into three parts, namely “Pact with the Devil and Sabbat”, “Metamorphosis” and “Sexual abuse and incestuous acts”. These were major crimes which were committed by witches and always found in the confessions and trials. This chapter starts with the definitions of the special terms such as “sabbat” and “pact with the Devil” towards witchcraft. The sources will be cited and then be analysed with the learnt men’s views. At the same time, pictorial description will be discussed.

Chapter 1.1 deals with the meaning of the pact with Devil and sabbat, and tried to prove the voluntary werewolves were sorcerers. Chapter 1.2 talks about the methods of metamorphosis and the discussion of its possibility in the early modern learnt circle. Since the voluntary werewolves were usually accused of metamorphose with the aid of Satan, the accusation applied to witches could also apply to these voluntary werewolves. Chapter 1.3 will focus on the crimes related to sexual abuse and incestuous acts. Although the sexual harassment could have happened in reality, it was one of the condemnations of witchcraft repeated by scholars in the early modern society. The sexual intercourse, however, was sometimes said to be done between human beings and demons or other animals. These crimes will be discussed in detail in order to show the negative image of werewolf as sorcerers. Thus, the image of werewolf in the first chapter will be based on the imaginary crime they were said to have committed.

The second chapter, “New interrogative procedures”, also consists of three parts, in which presents a different image of the werewolf. While the image of werewolf is formed with reference to the theological crime, its image in chapter two is told because of the more realistic crime – murder. Chapter 2.1 will talk about the series of murder which had happened in the rural areas. The description of the werewolf will come first, and will be compared to other werewolf image to find out the share features of werewolves. After the metamorphosis, the sorcerers were depicted to be a fearful creature but remained their cunning personalities in the shape of werewolf.

¹¹ Dillinger, Stokes (tr.) 2009, 11-12.

Ferocious, violent and cruel seem to be the common features of werewolves when they were accused of killing people and livestock.

Then, Chapter 2.2 will deal with interrogation system in the early modern France and the Holy Roman Empire. The interrogation system witnessed a breakthrough of the judicial development during the 16th century in both countries, since the new introduced inquisitorial procedures gradually replaced the old accusatorial ones. The features of inquisitorial procedures could be found in the trials, although the interrogation was usually mentioned with few lines. The wood-cut illustration of Stubbe Peeter's trial will be used here for further discussion and showing the interrogation procedure.

Chapter 2.3 will focus on the punishment of the werewolves. The death sentence involved in the review of a higher court in early modern France, but it was less common in the Holy Roman Empire. It was probably due to the loose administration system in the Empire that discouraged the review of sentences. While some of the werewolves were sentenced to death, some of them were sent to hospital or monastery to be taught by the faith of Christ. Two different ways of punishment might show the effect of the review. Again, the cover of A True Discourse will be discussed with the sentences, since it shows how the sorcerer was punished and burnt to purify his sins.

The image of werewolf is an interesting and challenging topic as there are only few thorough studies available. By comparing and contrasting the similarities of the werewolves in the 16th Century France and Cologne, the thesis aims to learn more about the attitudes of the people towards the beast and witchcraft, and try to pave a new way to further studies.

Historical background

His clothes changed into bristling hairs, his arms to legs, and he became a wolf. His own savage nature showed in his rabid jaws, and he now directed against the flocks his innate lust for killing. He had a mania, even yet, for shedding blood. But, though he was a wolf, he retained some traces of his original shape.¹²

¹² Ovid 43 B.C. – A.D.18, in Otten 1986, 227-228.

Ovid retold the story of the Arcadian King, Lycaon, which is probably the oldest legend of werewolf.¹³ Other versions are slightly different from this, however, several elements of werewolf story could be found here. Human sacrificed, for instance, is one of the most important elements of the werewolf stories. The sacrifice of the child was later found in other stories that the werewolf murdered children. At the same time, the werewolf goes mad and becomes bloodsucker which tastes human blood for pleasure. Therefore, the image of werewolf is usually depicted as an insane and ferocious creature in the early modern Europe.

The story of Romulus and Remus brings us another picture of werewolf. The legendary founders of Rome were twin brothers suckled and reared by a she-wolf who filled them with her lycanthropic powers. The jealous Romulus killed his brother giving readers a cross-cultural myth of two great patriarchies being established through an act of fratricide.¹⁴ The image of she-wolf also tells us that a werewolf is not necessarily a man. It can be, as Summers suggested, a man, a woman or a child, although it is most often the first one.¹⁵

Metamorphosis is one of the crucial elements in werewolf stories, which has not changed much since Lycaon. The transmutation of Lycaon involved in supernatural power that human beings could not complete it without the help from God, demons or Satan. Therefore, werewolves were usually linked to witchcraft, especially in the early modern period.

The metamorphosis is said to be done by using a girdle, a belt or putting ointment on their skin. Witches and sorcerers were believed to receive these tools from Satan by making a pact with him. This is why werewolves were linked to witchcraft. The fundamental element in the accusation of witchcraft was making a pact with the Devil. It was firstly mentioned in the story of the monk Theophilus, who was told to have a pact with Satan in the Byzantium culture.¹⁶

¹³ Smith 1894, 13.

¹⁴ Steiger 1999, 232-233.

¹⁵ Summers 2003, 2.

¹⁶ Kieckhefer 1989, 197 and Golden(ed.) 2006, 867.

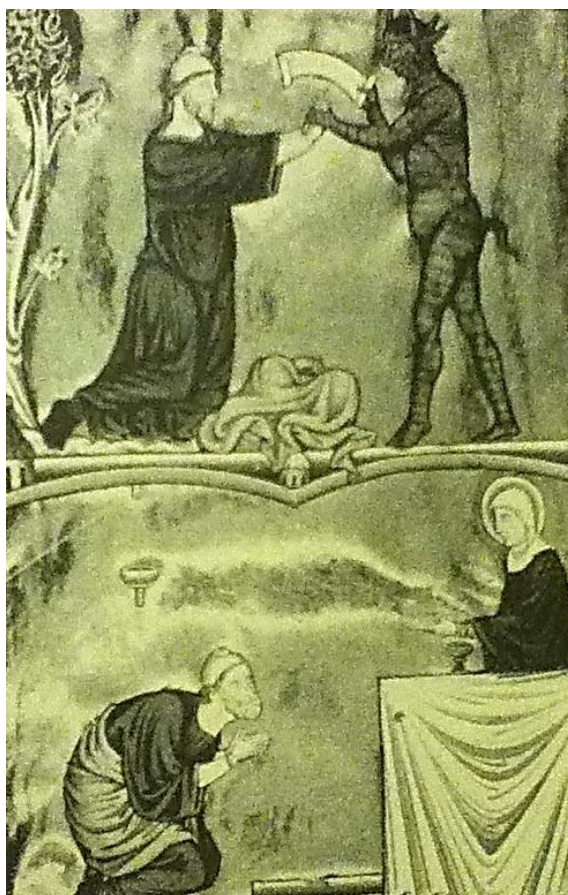


Figure 2. The Pact between Theophilus and the Devil and later repented and saved by a virgin¹⁷

Theophilus (left) was kneeling in front of the Devil (right). The Devil was holding his hands and the pact between them. The scene of making a pact with the Devil was also found in the werewolf trials. Even though he repented later, the story of Theophilus became the source of the pact with the Devil in the witchcraft belief.

Once the pact was sealed, witches and sorcerers received the aid from Satan to practice harmful magic to raise bad weather destroying crops or to take revenge from their neighbours.

With the aid of Satan, this voluntary werewolf “seems completely to have assumed the furry lupine”.¹⁸ One may ask, how did the person gain the tool for the metamorphosis? Summers cited Richard Rowlands’ work, *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence*, that

¹⁷ Kors and Peters(ed.) 2001, 139.

¹⁸ Summers 2003, 2.

[.....] the werewolf are certaine sorcerers, who hauing annoyed their bodyes, with an oyntment which they make by the instinct of the deuil; and putting on a certaine enchanted girdle, do not only vnto the view of others seeme as wolues, but to their own thinking haue both the shape and they do dipose theselues as very wolues, in wurring and killing, and moste of humaine creatures.¹⁹

Rowlands' view helps to explain why the voluntary werewolves are condemned other than being cunning and ferocious. For instance, Stubbe Peeter was condemned to be a "wicked sorcerer" since he was said to have made a pact with the Devil. At this particular moment, he is depicted as a man who used his free will to decide to be one of Satan's servants. As a reward, a girdle is said to be given to him for transforming himself into a werewolf and fulfilling his lust. Wiseman added that "the putting on of the girdle remains an act of will".²⁰

Witches and sorcerers had been practicing magic for centuries, but it started to be banned since the Late Middle Ages. In the Greco-Roman world, only harmful magic was condemned to be illegal. This concept was gradually absorbed by the Christian's world in the later centuries. The classical demons became the Christian demons which were said to be relating to Satan.²¹

The rise of learnt magic raised the concerns of the Church, since many young scholars were fond of necromancy, alchemy and astronomy. Necromancy involved in summoning demons, with which the Church concerned most. The fear of secret demonic agency worried the Church and it was being condemned by scholars between 13th and 15th century.²² However, the condemnations of learnt magic were always mixed with the rituals from the below. This concept was accumulating gradually and magic eventually became the practice which involved in demonic activities.

Magicians, thus, were condemned to be wicked witches and sorcerers by the learnt men. But what do the cases tell us about the mentality of the people at that time? It is not a question that can be answered easily because of the dearth of information of the people from below. However, the loss of livestock and the missing children probably worried the peasants and parents. They might then turn to the local elites for help, which began the trial in their living area. The trials in both countries witnessed the judicial change, since the courts came to the verdict by considering the evidence,

¹⁹ Summers 2003, 3.

²⁰ Wiseman 2004, 55.

²¹ Bailey 2001, 963.

²² Bailey 2001, 964-965.

the testimonies made by witnesses and the confession of the accused.

These werewolf cases were reported to the court and the werewolves were said to have confessed. The trial of Stubbe Peeter, for instance, helps us to learn more about the historical background of witch-hunting in the Holy Roman Empire. Stubbe Peeter is said to be sent to the local court in Bedburg, but not to a higher court in Cologne. Unlike the centralized regimes such as France, Spain and England, the Holy Roman Empire was loose in its administration system.²³ Although the Empire provided little legal unity for taking action against witchcraft, *Carolina* was introduced in 1532. In this Imperial code, harmful witchcraft was punishable by death and torture was admitted.²⁴ E. William Monter commented that *Carolina* is “the great breakthrough” in prosecuting witchcraft.²⁵ The death penalty of Stubbe Peeter, is probably a good example showing the reinforcement of the *Carolina*.

Although the legal system of the Holy Roman Empire and the French court were quite different, once the werewolves were arrested, they had to confess and be interrogated. In Jean Grenier’s case, not only he was caught, but also his father, Pierre Grenier, who was said to be “proved to be a simple rustic” and finally released. Jean Grenier was sent to the Franciscan friary of S. Michael the Archangel, a house of the stricter Observance at Bordeaux after President Dassis pronounced.²⁶ The difference of the legal systems may also help interpret the trials in different places.

In terms of the impact of the religious reformation in both places, it may also help us to have better understanding between the church and the secular world. Scholars have been discussing the impact of the Reformation on the witch-hunt in the Holy Roman Empire. Scholars have been arguing the large scale of witch-hunt was the result of the Reformation. However, the Reformation could be seen to accelerate the process but not the main cause. Alan Charles Kors and Edward Peters argued that the impact of the Reformation is exaggerated since reformers such as Martin Luther seldom stressed on the witchcraft.

France also underwent the movement of Calvinism at the same time. What we could see from the werewolf cases, the interrogation was mostly set at the secular court, but not by the church. Therefore, it is doubtful how influential the religious reformation was in these places.

²³ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 22-23.

²⁴ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 65.

²⁵ Monter 1968, 69-70.

²⁶ Case of Jean Grenier, in Summers 2003, 234.

The historical background of the werewolf stories and the society in the early modern Europe helps to interpret these cases in a logical way. Moreover, by comparing and contrasting the differences between these two areas will give us a better understanding of the meaning of the werewolf stories among the learnt men and the people from below.

1. Werewolf as a mirror image

Werewolf is sometimes depicted as a sorcerer, who is believed to be able to transform oneself into any kind of an animal. This voluntary werewolf was treated as a sorcerer because it was usually said to have a pact with the Devil in order to gain a girdle, ointment or supernatural power for the metamorphosis. While the other one, the involuntary werewolf, could be seen as a victim as it was said to be cursed to become a werewolf until it was cured or the curse was lifted.

In this chapter, the image of werewolf as a sorcerer will be studied here. Apart from making a pact with the Devil, some of the voluntary werewolves in France were also said to have attended the sabbat. Attending the sabbat is one of the most common crimes to be condemned by the learned men in the early modern Europe. The worship of the Devil was seen to be a betrayal of God. It was condemned most by scholars in the early modern society, since Satan was believed to be the source of all sins.

After having a pact with the Devil, these sorcerers were said to have received a girdle or special ointment for the metamorphosis. Some of them were said to transform themselves into a werewolf only on certain days, while the others were believed to use their free will to practice metamorphoses whenever they wanted. Because of the use of free will, this voluntary werewolf was depicted as a sorcerer even in the shape of wolf.

Learned people of the early modern period treated these werewolves as sorcerers not only because they were thought to have betrayed God, but also condemned their lust and lechery sins. Sexual abuse and incestuous acts were commonly found in the trials of werewolves. While the werewolves were often depicted as vile murderers, they were usually said to have preference to kill little children and especially little girls and young maidens. These were the important elements to form the werewolf image in the early modern period.

Thus, this chapter will be separated into three parts in order to analyse the image of werewolf as a sorcerer in a more thorough way. By studying the image of the werewolves in France and in Germany, the social and cultural background will also be considered in this chapter. Through the comparative studies of the werewolf image, this chapter aims to show a clearer image of werewolf and the some of the problems concerned in these two areas in the 16th century.

1.1 Pact with the Devil and Sabbat²⁷

Making a pact with the Devil was probably the most important reason that voluntary werewolves were convicted as a sorcerer because some scholars agreed that it involved the use of free will to betray God. In the trials of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun(1521), Gilles Garnier(1573), Stubbe Peeter(1589), the trial at Angers(1598) and the case of Jean Grenier(1603), these werewolves were said to have confessed that they had made a pact with the Devil to metamorphose themselves into a werewolf. Some of them were also told to have attended the sabbat in their confession. Although these two were not necessarily linked, they were often used as the indication of the accusation of witchcraft at the court. Under this part, these cases will be discussed according to the origins: that is, the French werewolves come first and then the one from the Holy Roman Empire.

The pact with the Devil was originally written in the Byzantium early in the seventh century, which was adopted by medieval storytellers. The legend of Theophilus was one of the most influential sources for later Christian ideas of pact with the devil and its requirement for magical practices. According to the story, the priest Theophilus is guided by a Jewish magician and is given magical powers in return for his apostasy.²⁸

In the Western Christendom, the link between magic and the demonic part became closer starting between the 12th and 13th century.²⁹ The magician, usually the learnt practitioner of necromancy or other ritual magic, was to be condemned, because by entering into the pact he had given to the Devil something that was due to God alone.³⁰ This thought was gradually turning to be applied to magicians, sorcerers and witches. Therefore, when these sorcerers were said to have sold their souls to the Devil, they were treated as the damnable sorcerers who should be punished or even executed.

In order to have a pact with the Devil, it was supposed to have been done in several possible ways. It was usually supposed to compose in a person's blood, but it

²⁷ "Sabbat" used here as a reference to the witches Sabbat, although some authors write "Sabbath". To avoid confusion, I prefer writing "Sabbat" according to *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*. Golden(ed.) 2006, 987-991.

²⁸ Edward Peters also added that late medieval lawbooks often listed the crime of sorcery among laws pertaining to the restriction of Jews who were not accepted in the mainstream society. Thus, it is logical to find the negative depiction of the Jewish magician in the legend since Jews were thought to have betrayed Jesus. Peters 1978, 13.

²⁹ Levack 2006, 37.

³⁰ Levack 2006, 39.

could also include an array of ritual acts of homage like kissing the Devil on buttocks – the kiss of shame, with a material or sexual consideration literally reifying the covenant.³¹ According to these cases, the Devil was believed to appear in different forms like a phantom, for example. Sometimes, it was said to be black with cold corpse.

The concept of the pact with the Devil had been circulating in the learnt circles for centuries. In the second part of *Malleus Maleficarum*, two types of ceremonies were mentioned which sealed the pact.

One is a solemn ceremony, like a solemn vow. The other is private, and can be made to the devil at any hour alone. The first method is when witches meet together in conclave on a set day, and the devil appears to them in the assumed body with him, and urges them to keep faith with him, promising them worldly prosperity and length of life; and they recommend a novice to his acceptance.³²

Several examples of witches were then mentioned and followed by the private method:

The other private method is variously performed. For sometimes when men or women have been involved in some bodily or temporal affliction, the devil comes to them, at times in person, and at times speaking to them through the mouth of someone else; and he promises that, if they will agree to his counsels, he will do for them whatever they wish.³³

With reference to the methods of making the pact, it was usually done in the private way in the confessions. The accused were told to have met the Devil under different circumstances. The setting, however, was usually set in the woods or the countryside.

So why were the werewolves depicted as sorcerers? Because of the use of free will, ordinary people were seen to be sorcerers or witches when they made a pack with the Devil. All the accused in these five trials were also said to be living under poverty and to have sold themselves to the Devil to gain rewards. The rewards were usually the ability to metamorphose into werewolf.

In the first case of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun, Pierre Burgot was said to confess that there was a hailstorm when he was collecting his flock. A man, probably

³¹ Golden(ed.) 2006, 867.

³² Summers 1948, 99.

³³ Summers 1948, 101.

depicted as a demon, told Pierre Burgot that no one sheep would have missed if he served the demon as his lord. Pierre Burgot was described to have accepted the proposal and agreed to meet that man a sennight after to seal the bond. How the pact was made was written in details among the other cases. Pierre Burgot was said to be

[.....] kneeling before the demon in homage, vowed to obey him, renouncing God, Our Lady, all the Company of Heaven, his Baptism and Chrism. He swore also never to assist at Holy Mass, nor yet to use Holy Water. He then kissed the deamon's left hand, which was black, and cold as the hand of a corpse.³⁴

The Devil was believed to have no blood suffice in the theological terms.³⁵ Thus, his was depicted to be “cold as the hand of a corpse”. Pierre Burgot was said to be “kneeling before the demon in homage”, which was similar to Theophilus' position shown in Figure 2. After “the seal”, the demon was said to promise him money and he attend a sabbat of warlock in a wood near Château Charlou.

The second case was the trial of Gilles Gariner and it was addressed by Daniel d'Auge to the learned Matthieu de Chllemaison, Dean of the Chapter of Sens.³⁶ Gilles Garnier was said to be a solitary who could not find any food to support his family. The pact with a phantom or spectral man was said to be done whilst Gilles Garnier was wandering in the woods one evening.³⁷ One of the most important powers that the Devil had was the power to create illusions.³⁸ Therefore, he was illustrated in different forms when he appeared to try to tempt people. However, the details of how the pact was made were unclear. Nor the detail of sabbat was mentioned in his confession.

There were several trials in France in the year of 1598, and the most famous werewolf trial was at Angers. The case of Jacques Roulet was said to have devoted himself to the Devil. Again, he was depicted as a poor person who was vagabonded from village to village with his brother Jean and a cousin Julien.³⁹ He was also said to have confessed to attendance at a sabbat.⁴⁰ The details of the pact and the sabbat were not written in his case.

³⁴ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 223.

³⁵ Levack 2006, 35.

³⁶ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 225.

³⁷ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 225.

³⁸ Levack 2006, 35.

³⁹ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 230-231.

⁴⁰ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 231.

Another case of a notorious werewolf, Jean Grenier, was retold by Sabine Baring-Gould, a British cleric and novelist. According to the retold version, Jean Grenier was said to have sold himself to the Devil and “acquired the power of ranging the country after dusk, and sometimes in broad days, in the form of a wolf”.⁴¹ He was also said to have named the person – Pierre Labourant – who was a man with an iron chain about his neck and gave him the wolf-skin for metamorphosis.⁴² However, there was another version of his background before the court.

When I was ten or eleven years, old, my neighbour, Duthillaire, introduce me, in the depths of the forest, to a M. de la Forest, a black man, who signed me with his nail, and then gave to me and Duthillaire a salve and a wolf-skin. From that time have I run about the country as a wolf.⁴³

Again, he was said to be the son of a poor labourer in the village of S. Antoine de Pizon, and the pact was made in the forest with a black man (the Devil). But the attendance to the sabbat was not mentioned in his case.

The trial of Stubbe Peeter in Bedburg was slightly different, as there was no clear description of how the pact was made and no information about the sabbat could be found. Stubbe Peeter was depicted as a wicked sorcerer who had been practicing black magic since he was 12. He was also condemned to be “forgetting God that made him” and to give “both soule and body to the Devil forever”.⁴⁴ According to *A True Discourse*,

The Devil, who hath a ready ear to listen to the lewd motions of cursed men, promised to give him whatsoever his heart desired during his mortal life[.....]⁴⁵

By studying the confessions, two reasons from these werewolf trials suggest why the accused were intent to make a pact with the Devil. First of all, poverty seems to be the most common driving force which we can find in the trials of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun, Gilles Gariner and Jacques Roulet. According to Brian Levack, a scholar of witchcraft studies, there were many poor, often old women believing that the Devil offered people material pleasures in exchange for adoration, pledged their service and sold their souls to him.⁴⁶ Although his words focused mainly on old

⁴¹ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 64.

⁴² Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 63.

⁴³ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 65.

⁴⁴ *A True Discourse* 1590, 3.

⁴⁵ *A True Discourse* 1590, 3.

⁴⁶ Levack 2006, 18.

women, we should not neglect the accused sorcerers depicted as poor ordinary people. He then added that “poor people were the weakest and most vulnerable members of society”, so they were “most readily chosen as scapegoat for the ills of society”.⁴⁷ As it has been mentioned above, these sorcerers were said to have met the demon or the Devil in the forest and gained money or food for rewards. Due to the poor living conditions in their lives, they were depicted to be weak-minded people who were easily tempted by the Devil or demons.

In the cases of Stubbe Peeter and Jean Grenier, however, the pact made with the Devil was not mentioned in detail. Perhaps psychological factor plays another important role here. Both of them were said to have intention to transform themselves into a werewolf in order to fulfill their desire of eating human and livestock flesh. Thus, they were said to have prayed to the Devil and got a reply from him.

Living in poverty and the unusual desire for the metamorphosis seem to be the motivation of men who were depicted as sorcerers to have made a pact with the Devil and transform themselves into a werewolf or other animals. The betrayal of God seems to be the major crime they were told to have committed. Some of them were even told to have attended to a sabbat, which was one of the most unforgivable crimes of witches.

These werewolves were treated as sorcerers since they were said to have used their free wills to have a pact with the Devil. But why were they depicted in a negative way? Jean Bodin, a professor of law at Toulouse, royal adviser to the king of France, and public prosecutor at Laon,⁴⁸ listed the reasons why the witches and sorcerers had to be sentenced to death in his work *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*(1580).

[T]he first occupation of witches is to deny God and all religion. The law of God condemns that person who has left the true God for another to be stoned, [.....]⁴⁹

In Bodin’s view, having a pact with the Devil means the betrayal to God as it was believed that the sorcerers used their free will to do so. This is probably the most intolerable crime in the learned circle, since God was the only one to be worshipped. Thus, the sorcerers were condemned and their images were always negative in the early modern literature.

⁴⁷ Levack 2006, 158.

⁴⁸ Bodin 1580, in Kors and Peters(ed.), 2001, 290.

⁴⁹ Bodin 1580, in Kors and Peters(ed.), 2001, 291.



Figure 3. The Devil (left) baptizing his converts into the religion of their new master ⁵⁰

From Figure 3, the man in the middle was kneeling in front of the Devil and being baptized. It could be seen as a reverse practice to the baptizing in the Catholic Church. We can see from this picture that these men and women turned to Satan to be his slaves. Figure 3 shows how the witches and sorcerers were baptized by Satan, which is also related to the pact between werewolves and Satan stated above. Doing homage to Satan, they would do all evil things, such as killing children or causing hailstorm to destroy crops, at his commands. In the werewolf cases, they were said to have received the tools for the metamorphosis to kill young children.

Despite the pact with Devil, attending the sabbat was condemned as well. Although there were only few lines in which the sabbat was mentioned, the sabbat was depicted as a parody of correct religious observance. At the sabbat, the revelers would dance and there would be a sexual orgy, with the Devil, his demons and the attendees indiscriminately coupling with each other.⁵¹ The attendees were said to report the evil things they had done since the last meeting and to pay homage to the Devil.

What did sabbat mean to the scholars in the early modern period? Stuart Clark, another contemporary scholar for demonology, suggested that there was a kind of enthusiastic imprecision in the recourse to opposition in the ‘high’ culture of the 16th

⁵⁰ Levack 2004, 103.

⁵¹ Golden(ed.) 2006, 987-988.

and 17th centuries due to the profusion of various styles of oppositional thought.⁵² He also cited Aristotle's view towards the opponents: (i) as correlatives to one another, (ii) as contraries to one another, (iii) as privatives to positives, (iv) as affirmatives to negatives.⁵³ Influenced by Aristotle, it helped to notify the dual classifications of witch-believing Europe.⁵⁴

Clark found that the witch was the product of an age of cognitive extremism. It was partly due to the influence of Aristotle's influence, but the logical properties were more important to construe the opposition.⁵⁵ Thus, evil and witches were seen to be the opposition to the moral standard and were superimposed in the early modern society.

Richard Kieckhefer also shared the similar view of a mirror-imaging between witchcraft and saint-hood.⁵⁶ He quoted the words from Peter Brown that

[t]he contrast between the saint is not that the saint commands the demons while the sorcerer is their agent: both can command; but the saint has an effective 'vested power', whereas the sorcerer works with a technique that is unreliable and, above all, cumbersome.⁵⁷

The greatest difference between the saints and witches is that the latter is thought to be in lack of control of demons. Then the witches stand as a reflection of the saint-hood image. Other scholars of image studies like Maijastina Kahlos took the example of the image of good pagans as the reversed images to Christians.⁵⁸

Viewed in this light, sabbat was thought to be a parody of the Catholic Mass, which may reflect the view of the early modern Church. The secret gathering of the sabbat may probably hint the threat of rebellions or the spread of heresies such as Catharism⁵⁹ and Waldensianism.⁶⁰ Pierre Burgot was said to have attend the sabbat

⁵² Clark 1996, 38.

⁵³ Clark 1996, 38.

⁵⁴ Clark 1996, 39.

⁵⁵ Clark 1996, 39.

⁵⁶ Kieckhefer 1994, 368, in Levack(ed.) 2001, 40.

⁵⁷ Kieckhefer 1994, 360-361, in Levack(ed.) 2001, 32-33.

⁵⁸ Kahlos 2008, in Alenius, Fält and Mertaniemi(ed.) 2008, 64-65.

⁵⁹ The Cathars of southern France troubled the Church most at its time, since they protested against ecclesiastical wealth and power. At the same time, they held a dualistic theology that derived from Persian Zoroastrianism. They recognise two gods: a god of good who reigned over the universe of the spirit and a god of evil who ruled the material world. By drawing heavily on popular anti-clericalism by the dawn of the thirteen century, the Cathars expanded so swiftly that it posed a dangerous threat to the unity of Western Christendom. Hollister 2006, 193-194.

with warlocks once. Even though the warlock does not refer to the witches or sorcerers, it means one who breaks a treaty, the violator of his oath and a man forsworn.⁶¹ It was quite unusual to a person who attends to such kind of meeting. Thus, it was doubtful why Pierre Burgot had attended a gathering with people with bad reputation.

In Clark's *Thinking with the Demons*, opinions of early modern scholars towards sabbat were cited. Nicolas Rémy, *procuerur général* of the duchy of Lorraine between 1591 and 1606, wrote about the witches' dances and rituals that

[T]hey love to do everything in a ridiculous and unseemly manner. For they turn their backs towards the Demons when they go to worship them, [.....] in other such ways they behave in a manner opposite to that of other men.⁶²

Here, "they" refers to the witches who attended sabbat, although it was not clearly stated in the text. The dual classification may apply to analyse the meaning of sabbat, as the witches were to have worship Satan and demons at sabbat in the way opposite to the Catholic Mass in the early modern period. There were some woodcut illustrations like Figure 4 showing the ceremony taken place at the sabbat.

⁶⁰ The Waldensian sect was founded by a merchant of Lyon, Peter Waldo. Around 1173, he gave all his possessions to the poor and took up a life of apostolic poverty. He and his followers sought the Church's permission to preach in towns but they were rejected. But Peter Waldo continued to preach, which raised the Church's concerns and finally got the condemnation. Hollister 2006, 194.

⁶¹ Summers 2003, 8.

⁶² Clark 1996, 14



Figure 4. Witches at sabbat ⁶³

The witch in the middle was portrayed to be kissing the buttocks of the Devil, which was a ceremony reiterated in the learnt men's concepts of the sabbat. It was one of the damnable things condemned in the learnt circle since the witches were believed to have done homage to the Devil but renounced God and the Catholic religion. Although the attendance to sabbat was not mentioned in detail in the trials, Figure 4 thus helps us to visualise what had happened at sabbats. We then understand why werewolves were condemned to be sorcerers.

Pierre Crespet, Prior of the French Celestines, located the witches' dance in a festive tradition that began with Bacchanalian orgy and it was widely discussed by the contemporary Lyons and other Frenchmen.⁶⁴ Perhaps the French learnt men paid more attention to the studies of sabbat, so there were at least some lines found in the werewolf trials that some were said to have attended to sabbat. It is not saying that the scholars in the Holy Roman Empire did not pay attention to the sabbat, but it was usually found in the medium or large scale of witch trials. At least, we could not see any information about sabbat in Stubbe Peeter's case.

Since these werewolves were told to have made a pact with Devil and some even had attended to a sabbat, it is reasonable to see them as sorcerers who had renounced God and the religion. The emphasis and spread of the pact with Devil and the sabbat may reflect the fear of Devil in the Reformation Age. During the 16th century, the

⁶³ Levack 2004, 103.

⁶⁴ Clark 1996, 23.

Reformation took part in both countries, namely Martin Luther in the Holy Roman Empire and Jean Calvin in France. “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”⁶⁵ was always reiterated by scholars for analysing the clerical attitude towards witchcraft. The impact of the Reformation has been exaggerated but it served as accelerating the witch hunt. Hollister suggests that people were more aware of the damnable acts as they paid more attention to behaving well than they had done before. The immoral acts were thus thought to be related to heresy.⁶⁶ Levack holds a similar thought that the Reformation placed on personal piety and sanctity. The reformers instructed the people to lead a more demanding, morally rigorous life.⁶⁷

Levack stressed on discounting the possibility of religious wars between Protestants and Catholics inspired witch-hunting, since the Protestants took lead in some areas while Catholic did so in others.⁶⁸ Take the trial of Stubbe Peeter as an example, Bedburg was not located in a Reformer state. It is questionable whether the Reformation and Counter Reformation were so influential at that time. However, we may count the dissemination of the fear of evil done by the Reformists, since it was circulated not only in the learned circle but also to different classes in the society.⁶⁹ With the help of the reverse images, it might have raised the concerns of the villagers and peasants towards the crime of witchcraft.

The rise of Protestantism itself appeared to many Catholics to be the work of Satan, while Catholic priests often matched their Protestant colleagues in convincing their parishioners of Satan’s omnipresence and in raising their fears of him.⁷⁰ Therefore, the impact of the Reformation probably accelerated the witch hunt by spreading the fear of Satan to ordinary people even if they might not be aware of the issue. The emphasis of the pact with the Devil and the sabbat was probably served as the mirror-image to be taught with the moral standards in the early modern society.

1.2 Metamorphosis

Metamorphosis is assuming another shape or transforming a victim. European witches mainly took the shapes of hares, cats, wolves, dogs, mice, bees, toads, flies

⁶⁵ Exodus 22:18.

⁶⁶ Hollister 2006, 339-341.

⁶⁷ Levack 2006, 114.

⁶⁸ Levack 2006, 111 & 126.

⁶⁹ Levack 2006, 113.

⁷⁰ Levack 2006, 114.

and certain types of birds, but they could also appear as inanimate objects or natural phenomena.⁷¹ It was also said to be an innate capacity, but it was possible to be acquired, either from the Devil or from another witch. The gender distinction was probably derived from the folk traditions that werewolves were mostly male.⁷²

In these case studies, these sorcerers were said to gain a girdle, a wolf-skin or be taught to transform themselves into a werewolf, after the pact with the Devil was supposed to be sealed. Although the metamorphosis is not accepted as a real phenomenon, there were several ways recorded that one might be able to transform oneself into an animal, namely by putting on a girdle or a belt, by putting special ointments on one's skin or by using certain spells or charms. All five cases will be discussed in this part according to the method used for the metamorphosis.

First of all, putting on a girdle, a belt or a wolf skin was mentioned in the trials of Stubbe Peeter and Jean Grenier. These tools were commonly described in the witch trials or confessions in the early modern period, which became one of the important elements for the metamorphosis. Here, a girdle or a belt is important to a man who turns himself to be a werewolf. Smith pointed out that there are two essential points of the story, namely putting on a wolf-skin or its equivalent to turn wolf and take it off to resume the human form.⁷³

As it was quoted in 1.1, Stubbe Peeter was said to have received a girdle as a reward after the pact with the Devil was made.

The Devil, gave unto him a girdle which, being put around him, he was straight transformed into the likeness of a greedy, devouring wolf [.....]⁷⁴

In Jean Grenier's case, the tool was mentioned to be a wolf-skin. When he was asked why he looked so dingy and black, he referred to the wolf-skin which was given by Pierre Labourant.⁷⁵

In both cases, the metamorphosis was said to have a time limit, which means the werewolf could not stay in the shape of werewolf forever. Jean Grenier told the maidens that "Pierre Labourant gave me that (the wolf-skin), he wraps it round me,

⁷¹ Golden(ed.) 2006, 754.

⁷² Golden(ed.) 2006, 754 and de Blécourt 2007, 32.

⁷³ Smith 1894, 25.

⁷⁴ *A True Discourse* 1590, 4.

⁷⁵ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 63.

and every Monday, Friday and Sunday, and for an hour at dusk every other day”.⁷⁶

In contrast, Stubbe Peeter was said to enjoy much more freedom for the metamorphosis. It is written in the pamphlet that the “no sooner should he put off the same girdle, but presently he should appear in his former shape, according to the proportion of a man, as if he had never been changed”.⁷⁷ He seemed to have the control of the metamorphosis and not to be limited by the duration of the metamorphosis.

Making a pact with the Devil and putting on the girdle or other tools alike involve the use of free will. Montague Summers, an English author and clergyman, who is famous for studies of witchcraft and one of the translators of *Malleus Maleficium* cited Nathan Bailey’s words from *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* that this voluntary werewolf was a sorcerer “who by means of enchanted Girdle, &c. takes upon him the Shape and Name of a Wolf”.⁷⁸ S. J. Wiseman added that “the putting on of the girdle remains an act of will”.⁷⁹ Therefore, it is reasonable to see Stubbe Peeter and Jean Grenier as sorcerers since they were said to have used their free wills to do such things.

The second way for the metamorphosis was suggested by Henri Bouget (d.1619) who was a demonologist and Chief Justice of Saint-Claude in France. From the other werewolf trials, it was said that,

[.....] in order to turn themselves into wolves, they first rubbed themselves with an ointment, and then Satan clothed them in a wolf’s skin which completely covered them.⁸⁰

The lively description of the metamorphosis could not be found in the translated material in Summers’s book, but in Otten’s. Written by Bouget, *Of the Metamorphosis of Men into Beasts*, Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun and the others were said to have “confessed the same”.⁸¹

Michel Verdun, however, was the only werewolf said to return to his human form by the wound.⁸² Smith also suggested that “if a werewolf is wounded he is at

⁷⁶ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 64.

⁷⁷ *A True Discourse* 1590, 4.

⁷⁸ Summers, 2003, 13.

⁷⁹ Wiseman 2004, 55.

⁸⁰ Bouget 1590, in Otten 1986, 87.

⁸¹ Bouget 1590, in Otten 1986, 89.

⁸² Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers, 2003, 225.

once obliged to return to his human form”.⁸³ Willen de Blécourt, another scholar of werewolf studies, shares the same view that this involuntary act leads the werewolf to return to human.⁸⁴

The metamorphoses in the trials of Gilles Garnier and the trial at Angers were not mentioned in detail. They might also have metamorphosed into a werewolf by rubbing themselves with the special ointment or using certain charms or spells taught by the Devil or demons.

Perhaps the detail of the metamorphosis was not mentioned in some cases due to the genre of the text. Although they were cited from the translated version of the protocols, the process of metamorphosis might not sound that important to the judges or other learnt men. Take Bouget’s essay mentioned above, whether the Devil could perform the metamorphosis was the focus of his work, but not the process of the transformation. They might focus on the confession the accused made rather than the metamorphosis. However, the cases of Jean Grenier and Stubbe Peeter served another group of audience. The trial of Stubbe Peeter was written in a pamphlet and published in England in 1590 and was said to be known all over Europe.⁸⁵ The story of Jean Grenier was told by Sabine Baring-Gould who was English writer in the 19th century. The story would sound livelier to the ordinary people if the process of metamorphosis was included. Therefore, the different genres might be the reason why the metamorphosis was not mentioned in detail in some cases.

Let us return to the discussion of the metamorphosis in the learnt circle. Stuart Clark raised the question whether it is possible to metamorphose.⁸⁶ The debate of the metamorphosis can be summarized to the question of the powers of demons. As it was said before, Devil and demons did not have the power to create new things or change one’s shape in the Universe created by God. They could only follow the rules laid by God but could not change anything.⁸⁷ Undoubtedly, no one will accept it as a real practice according to the modern scientific views, but it was also rejected by most of the scholars, except Jean Bodin, in the early modern period.

Bodin devotes the sixth chapter of his book *On the Demon-Mania of Witches* (1580) – *De la Lyvanthropie et si le Diable peut changer les homes en bestes* – to a

⁸³ Smith 1894, 34.

⁸⁴ de Blécourt 2007, 26.

⁸⁵ Otten 1986, 9.

⁸⁶ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 165.

⁸⁷ Jacques- Lefevre 2002, in Edwards(ed.) 2002, 184-185.

study of lycanthropy. In his view, the demon can really and materially metamorphose the body of a man into that of an animal, only he cannot change and alter the human understanding.⁸⁸

However, other medieval scholars disagreed that the metamorphosis was not possible in reality because only God who created the world was able to change the shape of things. According to the *Question X: Whether witches can by some Glamour Change Men into Beasts* in the first part of *Malleus Maleficarum*, Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, two Dominican inquisitors, cited the passage from Episcopus (XXVI, 5):

Whoever believes that it is possible for any creature to be changed for the better or for the worse, or to be transformed into any other shape or likeness, except by the Creator Himself, Who made all things, and by Whom all things are created, is without doubt an infidel, and worse than a pagan.⁸⁹

With reference to the Bible, things could only be created in God's hand. Since Satan was also created by God, he could only follow the rules in the universe. This rejection of metamorphosis was echoed not only by the Catholic priest, but also by the Protestants a century later. Jean Calvin, a Protestant reformer, wrote in his *Sermon on Deuteronomy* (1555) that the metamorphosis could not be done by the Devil.

And why not? We have an example in Pharaoh's sorcerers [Exodus 7-8], who made frogs come up as well as Moses did: not that the devil has anything in his own power, for we must not imagine that he can fight against God. We know that he is under God's hand and can do nothing without [God's] leave or permission.⁹⁰

In Bouquet's opinion, "lycanthropy is an illusion" because

[.....] it is said in Genesis that man was created in the image and likeness of God, and this principally refers to the soul, and would it not be unspeakably absurd to maintain that so beautiful and holy a likeness should inhabit the body of a beast?⁹¹

Bouquet believed that if the soul left the body, the person would have undoubtedly dead,. Thus, he raised the questions such as how man lost his soul when he was

⁸⁸ Summers 2003, 78.

⁸⁹ Kramer and Sprenger 1487, Summers(tr.) 2003, 61.

⁹⁰ Calvin 1555, in Kors and Peters(ed.) 2001, 267.

⁹¹ Bouquet 1590, in Otten 1986, 83.

metamorphosed and how he recovered it when he resumed the shape of a man.

Clark summarized the views from the medieval scholars and gave further explanation to the topic that

For the most part it was attributed to the strange effects of the human imagination, especially when inflamed by melancholy. Alternatively, the devil might replace lycanthropic humans with real wolves so quickly that transmutation appeared to occur, or represent illusory wolves to the sense either by ‘wrapping’ real humans in the required shape or condensing the air between eye and object in such a way as to produce a suitable effigy.⁹²

The conclusion should be the metamorphosis is not accepted since it is not real. However, the image of the metamorphosis may bring us more information how a werewolf was depicted in the early modern period.

The image of werewolf is seldom found in painting or wood-cut illustration. Among these five cases, only the cover (Fig. 1) of *A True Discourse* could be found and showed the trial of Stubbe Peeter. The wood-cut illustration presented the image of werewolf and how it killed people. Perhaps it was an effective way to raise the awareness of the illiterates towards werewolves. Here, the highlights of Figure 2 give us the image of how a werewolf depicted in the early period.



Figure 5. Stubbe Peeter as a werewolf (enlarged)

With the enlarged illustration (Fig. 5), we can see that once Stubbe Peeter had put on

⁹² Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 165.

the girdle (the belt-liked thing around his wrist), he would become a werewolf which ran on four legs and killed people. The scene was also in the forest. According to Summers, wolves frequent both forests and open country either singly, in pairs, or in packs.⁹³ The trials of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun and the trial at Angers were said to involve more than one werewolf, while Gilles Garnier, Stubbe Peeter and Jean Grenier were depicted to be the only ones who were accused.

Also, Summers summed up the common the features of werewolf in his book, which could also be found in the trials discussed.

The size and proportions of the wolf roughly resemble those of a large mastiff dog, [.....] The prevailing colour is a tawny or rufous grey, and the greyness is apt to increase with age. The head, back of the neck, shoulders, loins, and crupper are blackish with yellow tints. There is a very thick and dense underfur of a slate or brown colour, intermixed with whitish and black-tipped hairs. The things and outsides of the legs are reddish yellow, varying to a darker brown; the tail is full, of medium length, dark brown above and lighter below, and tipped with black. The inner side of the limbs is a dirty yellowish grey. The lower jaw, the margin of the upper jaw, the inside of the ear, and the belly are more or less white. The exterior of the ears is usually dark brown and covered with short velvety fur; whilst the whiskers are black and few in number.⁹⁴

Some features of the werewolf could be found in the cases we discussed in this thesis. For example, Pierre Burgot “seemed to himself to be changed into a wolf, his limbs were hairy, his hands and feet the paws of a beast”.⁹⁵ The image of the werewolf had not been changed so much comparing to the one in the legend of Lycaon that it was said to look like a real wolf.

So, what does the image of werewolf tell us? In Summer’s opinion, the distinctive features of werewolves – unbridled cruelty, bestial ferocity, and ravening hunger – showed that the wolf had something of the demon, of hell.⁹⁶ Also, it is the symbol of night and winter, of stress and storm, the dark and mysterious harbinger of death.⁹⁷ Werewolves were seldom found in the cities and towns but more likely in the countryside. These might have special meaning to the peasants who relied on the nature in the early modern period.

⁹³ Summers 2003, 64

⁹⁴ Summers 2003, 63.

⁹⁵ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 224.

⁹⁶ Summers 2003, 65.

⁹⁷ Summers 2003, 65

Looking for the meaning of the metaphor of werewolf, Wilem de Blécourt also wrote that “examples of enrichment by virtue of being a werewolf point to contamination by notions about male witches” in the early modern society.⁹⁸ The werewolves were thought to be sorcerers not only because they used of free will to make a pact with Satan, but also they retained the intelligence and cunning of their human form.⁹⁹ Thus, it was believed that the voluntary werewolves were sorcerers.

Although the metamorphosis is rejected, the meaning of the metamorphosis helps to analyse the views from the learned men. There were said to have many possibilities to transform themselves into certain kinds of animals, but the prerequisite was to have a pact with Devil in order to receive the girdle, wolf-skin or ointment for the metamorphosis. Since the use of free will was involved in the metamorphosis and werewolves were said to retain his greed and cunning personality, they should be seen as sorcerers and witches.

1.3 Sexual abuse and incestuous acts

Werewolves were often depicted as a masculine creature, although there were other trials of “she-wolf” such as Claudia Jamprost and Clauda Gaillard reported in the early modern period. From the features of the werewolf quoted in 1.2, the description of werewolf was usually strongly-built with sharpened teeth and paws. Apart from this, lust is associated with the wolf dating back in the Antiquity. Their devouring lust was also accused by the medieval scholars, since it led to incestuous acts or sexual abuse from their confession. This devouring lust thus demonstrates why the voluntary werewolf was treated as a sorcerer.

The metamorphosis hinted the masculine image. For example, the use of a girdle or a belt was said to indicate the gender of the werewolf. This masculine image of werewolves may help to deepen our understanding towards the early modern Europeans’ mind.

Lyndal Roper wrote that “how a culture imagines the body is one of its most fundamental and revealing elements; and how individuals imagine their own bodies

⁹⁸ de Blécourt 2007, 33.

⁹⁹ Smith 1894, 4.

relates to their identity at the most profound level”.¹⁰⁰ In her book *Oedipus and the Devi: witchcraft, sexuality and religion in early modern Europe*, Roper concentrated on the changing attitude towards the men and women in the early modern German societies. She pointed out that well before the Reformation, the Discipline Ordinance of 1537 had already been introduced in Ausburg, which marked the changes of the moral standard in the society. It furnished a justification of the council’s power of intervention to discipline not only the ‘public’ sins such as swearing or adultery, which had always lain within its purview, but to take over the entire field of sexual regulation from the church.¹⁰¹

Since the werewolves were usually depicted as men, they were also said to assault young maidens or women.¹⁰² It was clearly stated in *A True Discourse* that Stubbe Peeter was not only accused of practicing black magic and transforming himself into a werewolf, but also having incest with his daughter and his sister. “The lewd sin of lechery” was condemnation in the text. After Stubbe Peeter was arrested and confessed, his daughter, Stubbe Beell, and companion, Katherine Trompin, were also caught and sentenced to death because they were believed to be his assistants. Stubbe Peeter was said to have cruelly committed most wicked incest with her (Stubbe Beell)” that “he begat a child by her, daily using her as his concubine”. His sister who was not mentioned clearly in the text though was said to be laid by Stubbe Peeter as well. Also, he was said to “lay by her (Katherine Trompin)” because of her “tall and comely stature”. Even though he was probably having lots of concubines, his lewd and lust were not satisfied as mentioned in the passage.¹⁰³

Bodin insisted that witches and sorcerers should be executed because of the crime of incest. In his view, “witches are incestuous”:

For Satan gives them to understand that there was never a perfect sorcerer or enchanter who was not born from father and daughter, or mother and son [.....] All these impieties are directly against God and His honour.¹⁰⁴

Bodin’s words can be applied to Stubbe Peeter’s case that he was said to have begot a child from his daughter. This incestuous act implies that Stubbe Peeter was a “wicked sorcerer” as mentioned in *A True Discourse*.

¹⁰⁰ Roper 1994, 171.

¹⁰¹ Roper 1994, 56.

¹⁰² de Blécourt 2007, 39.

¹⁰³ *A True Discourse* 1590, 7-9.

¹⁰⁴ Bodin 1580, in Kors and Peters(ed.) 2001, 293.

While Stubbe Peeter was condemned to have committed incest with his daughter and sister, the other werewolves were also accused of unusual sexual behaviours. In the trial of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun, they were even said to have “frequently covered she-wolves, taking more pleasure in this coupling than in the natural entering of women”.¹⁰⁵ They were also said to have killed a nine years old girl whom they assaulted in a vineyard.¹⁰⁶ The description of their lust showed the masculinity of werewolves.

Although other sexual harassment was not mentioned in other werewolf case, there were some hints showing the preference of prey. At the beginning of Jean Grenier case, there were several girls tending their sheep on the sand-dunes. When Jean Grenier was said to have approached them and look for the prettiest one to whom he would marry.¹⁰⁷ Then a little girl was told to have often complained to her parents of the conduct of Jean Grenier. He was said to have “bitten to death a little girl, had lapped her blood, and, being in a famished condition at the time, had devoured every portion of her, with the exception of the arms and shoulders”.¹⁰⁸ Later on, it was well known that several little girls had vanished in the area. It was probably due to the flesh of little girl tasted much better than dogs.¹⁰⁹ Gilles Garnier, and the other werewolves in Angers were also said to have preference killing young girls or small children.

According to Lara Apps and Andrew Gow, two scholars working on the topic of male witches, the male accused or the sorcerers were usually related to female witches or accused of different types of witchcraft from that of female witches.¹¹⁰ However, the sexual activity and the lust of the werewolf sound similar to the condemnation of sexual intercourse done by female witches. While the female witches were often said to be old women who were intend to have intercourse with the Devil or other demonic bodies,¹¹¹ the sorcerers were depicted to be more active to have sex with other women or girls.

Unlike the old, widowed witches, some of the sorcerers were burnt or punished at a younger age. For instance, Stubbe Peeter was burnt at 25 and Jean Grenier had

¹⁰⁵ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 224.

¹⁰⁶ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 224.

¹⁰⁷ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 62-63.

¹⁰⁸ Baring-Gould 1603, in Ottern 1986, 64.

¹⁰⁹ Baring-Gould 1603, in Ottern 1986, 64.

¹¹⁰ Apps and Gow 2003, 43.

¹¹¹ Golden 2006, 1024.

been sent to a monastery in Bordeaux in 1603 and found dead 7 years later. Some of them were said to have married like Gilles Garnier and Stubbe Peeter. Because of the masculine image of the werewolves, the lewd behaviour was always linked to the m. Willem de Blécourt wrote in his essay about the werewolf legends in the Flemish, Dutch and German Area that it implies sexual threat of the ordinary people.¹¹² Since werewolves usually refer to men, who are supposed to be more energetic and active than the old witches for the sexual activity. They might not need to have intercourse with the Devil at sabbat like what was said to the old witches. Rather, they could look for the girls or young women whenever they wanted for their own pleasure. Viewed in this light, the masculine image of werewolf implies the activeness of sexual activity which is reasonable to explain why werewolves were always accused of the lechery sin.

Even though the age of the other werewolves among the five trials discussed were unknown, they were still said to be with young women or to be more willing to kill girls. It is probably because werewolves were always depicted as a strong and violent animal that young girls might not be able to escape once they were caught.

However, Roper argued that this “sex viewed as a male appetite” is the modern view towards sexual activity.¹¹³

The male sexual will was ailed with mastery, so that sexual intercourse irreducibly meant ‘doing his will’ and was embedded in patriarchal relations of subordination. Yet, at the same time, to be a man was to be more rational and less subject to the force of lust than a woman. The fear that ‘having her’ might actually entail submission to the unbridled, dominating lust of the woman was never far from the surface of male imagination.¹¹⁴

She added that “this was a society which retained a cosmology placing women in the world of irrational, the bodily, the sensual and hence the sexual”.¹¹⁵ Thus, the women’s sexual passions were seen as a strong force in the early modern period.

Moreover, old witches were usually said to be sexually experienced and independent comparing to the young maidens.¹¹⁶ According to Levack, this depiction of old witches showed a deep male fear towards them. Therefore, they were said to be

¹¹² de Blécourt 2007 39.

¹¹³ Roper 1994, 62.

¹¹⁴ Roper 1994, 62.

¹¹⁵ Roper 1994, 62.

¹¹⁶ Levack 2006, 152.

attracted by their devil lover in the literature.

When we interpret the trials of werewolf, the early modern view seems not to be fitted here. Stubbe Peeter, Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun were said to confess that they have committed certain kinds of crimes relating to sexual intercourse. Roper highlighted the recategorization of the crime of rape in the 1537 ordinance. Although women were said to have stronger sexual passion, the ordinance was now argue that the woman had in some sense been ‘persuaded’ to his will.¹¹⁷ No matter how rational the early modern men supposed to be, we could not neglect that some men were probably having mental problems or they were sado-masochistic.

The emphasis on the sexuality or the masculine image of werewolves might bear other meanings to the people in the early modern period. Willem de Blécourt again wrote that the image of werewolf meant a special kind of deviant sexuality in some regions.¹¹⁸ The stress on the sexuality of the werewolves probably showed how much the peasants or the country people concern with the issue, since they depended on the animals economically.¹¹⁹ The deviant male sexuality might have destroyed the equilibrium in a village.

Also, Roper listed the crimes which men were said to commit such as drinking and fighting which turned the rational man into an irrational, pig-like creature at the moment.¹²⁰ Perhaps the crime of sexual deviant served the same meaning to the early modern people that he might threaten social order.

Therefore, the masculinity of the werewolf image shows us the sexual deviant with which the people concerned in the early modern society. Although many examples showed that the women’s passions were a stronger driving force for the sexual intercourse, it does not seem to fit into the cases of the werewolf we have discussed so far. Personal mental problems may be the more satisfied reason explaining why the werewolves did not act as rational as they were assumed to be in their own time.

¹¹⁷ Roper 1994, 61.

¹¹⁸ de Blécourt 2007, 33.

¹¹⁹ de Blécourt 2007, 38.

¹²⁰ Roper 1994, 112.

Summary

The first chapter deals with the image of werewolves and explained why they were seen as sorcerers. Making the pact with Devil and attending to sabbat were the fundamental crimes which were condemned by the learnt men in the early modern Europe. Since these men were said to have renounced God and their religion, it was not tolerant in the Christian Europe. By slaving in front of Devil, they were thought to be the wicked sorcerers like their female counterpart.

In Chapter 1.2, we have dealt with the idea of metamorphosis. Although metamorphosis was rejected by most of the early modern scholars, they argued that its process involved in the use of free will, which lead to the conclusion that the voluntary werewolves should be treated as sorcerers. Wearing a girdle or a wolf-skin, putting a special ointment on their skin or using certain kinds of spells were the methods mentioned in different trials. All these methods were said to be done with the aid of Satan. Most of them thought that it was simply an illusion caused by the Devil, since the person would have dead when the soul left the body. The metamorphosis was proved to be unrealistic in practice, but the image of werewolves might show the fear of werewolves.

Chapter 1.3 analysed the image of werewolves with sexual abuse. Some of the werewolves were said to have committed the crime of incest or rape, while the others were depicted to have preference to harass young maidens. The incestuous act of sorcerers and witches was condemned by Jean Bodin. The lechery of sin was also commonly found in the werewolf trials. It seems that the werewolves tried to fulfill their lust and to gain pleasure from the sexual intercourse or harassment. Although women's passions towards sex were thought to be playing the stronger driving force in the early modern society, it was not applicable here in the discussion as the werewolves were depicted to have strong intention to have such practices. Perhaps the sexual deviant man is the best explanation to these sexual activities of the werewolves.

Päivi Collander, another scholar of image studies, pointed out the importance of dehumanization of the image of the enemy. She used the example of the image of Huns as "others" in the late Antiquity, but it is also useful here. By dehumanizing the enemy, it indicates not only animal essence and behaviour but also the destruction and fear that is part of the attack.¹²¹ The sorcerers might have come from the same racial

¹²¹ Collander 2008, 77.

group of the early modern people, but werewolves might have been seen as an enemy which threatened the stabilities of the society.

According to Joyce E. Salisbury, animals of the imagination strongly affected people's views of themselves and the animal after the 12th century.¹²² *A True Discourse* shows the readers that the trial of Stubbe Peeter also served an educational purpose.

This, Gentle Reader, have I set down the true discourse of the wicked man Stubbe Peeter which I desire to be a warning to all sorcerers and witches.....¹²³

The pamphlet of the trial of Stubbe Peeter was probably a warning to the readers. According to Joy Wiltenburg, there was a wide range of crime discourses published in the 16th century German-speaking area. It was probably due to the curiosity of human beings.¹²⁴ However, the author had to face the problem of unifying the audience. By stressing on the horrified cases with a short preface to the Christian readers, the author explained the reasons for creating to the document, and added the religious considerations, pointing to the event as an example of God's severe justice against evildoers.¹²⁵ These few lines quoted from *A True Discourse* were probably serving the same purpose.

The cases of the French werewolves translated by Summers are merely descriptions compared to the trial of Stubbe Peeter stated in *A True Discourse* and the story of Jean Grenier retold by Sabine Baring-Gould. The different purposes of the sources lead to further discussion of the meaning of werewolf image.

All in all, chapter one has dealt with the image of werewolves as sorcerers. Due to the renouncement of God and their homage to Devil, they were also seen to be damnable sorcerers like their female counterpart. The image of werewolf was about the theological crime they were said to have committed. Although sexual abuse is one of the crimes in reality, some of them were doubtful such as the case of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun who were said to have sexual intercourse with she-wolf. The discussion of the image of werewolf in this chapter explained why they were seen as sorcerers. The damnable image of werewolves probably worried the inhabitants living in the rural areas, which led to the trials in the early modern society.

¹²² Salisbury 1996, 49.

¹²³ *A True Discourse* 1590, 18.

¹²⁴ Wiltenburg 2002, 25.

¹²⁵ Wiltenburg 2002, 28.

2. New interrogative procedures

The image of werewolves was discussed in the first chapter with the theological crimes they were said to have committed. In the second chapter, we should study the image of werewolf with the crime in reality. Series of murder were found in all five trials in our studies. What these murders and trials tell us about the early modern society is the focus of this chapter.

Similar to the first chapter, this chapter also consists of three parts. The first part of the chapter is 'Series of murders', in which the murders will be found from the confessions. The second part 'Interrogation and confession' and the last part 'Appellate tradition and sentences' deal with the legal system in early modern France and the Holy Roman Empire.

The differences of the legal system and the punishment will be the focus of this chapter. France has been regarded as a country which was one of the pioneers becoming a modern country in the early modern period. To a certain extent, the relatively strong and effective central authority prevented innocent people from being accused of witchcraft at its time. Thus, there were fewer large-scale trials in early modern France than that reported in the Holy Roman Empire.

In contrast, the loose central government in the Holy Roman Empire was suggested to be one of the causes of witch hunting. Without the central government, local courts and nobles enjoyed more freedom locating and prosecuting witches in their regions. The Imperial Code introduced in 1532 was also seen as a breakthrough of witch hunting as it granted the power to the courts to prosecute witches. Therefore, the differences between the legal systems in two countries showed that why there were more witch trials in the Holy Roman Empire, although there were more werewolf trials in early modern France.

One point should be noted here that these werewolves were treated as sorcerers. The cases were handled as a small-scaled witch trial in which no more three persons involved. Therefore, the werewolves were either burnt or sent to monastery, which was commonly found in other witch trials. The werewolf image will be discussed here in order to deepen our understanding of the views from villagers. The interrogation found in the trials will also tell us more about legal systems in both countries.

2.1 Series of murders

In the previous chapter, we have talked about the concept of demonology and the attitude of the learned men and clergy towards witchcraft, but the betrayal of God is not enough to explain what made these werewolves to be a notoriously-known sorcerer in the neighbourhood. The series of murders, missing persons and livestock and incestuous act were probably spreading within the community by mouth. The rumours were believed to accumulate the details of forming the image of the “wicked sorcerer”.

According to the trials, all werewolves were depicted as the greedy and violent bloodsucker who enjoyed drinking human blood and tasting human flesh. They were usually said to have killed people only after the metamorphosis. Gilles Garnier was the exception, while the others were not accused of murdering when they were in their human forms.

In the last part of the first chapter, we have already discussed their preference of assaulting and murdering young maidens and children. They were usually said to be lusting for human flesh, but some were driven by the reality or the command of Satan. The preference of prey indicates that these werewolves could be seen as cannibals who killed and ate young children in the early modern society.

The actual number of the victims was unknown. It was usually written that the werewolves had confessed to kill several children, but there were some hints from the materials. Stubbe Peeter, for example,

[He] had murdered thirteen young children, and two goodly young women big with child, tearing the children out of their wombs, [.....] he used many times to kill lambs and kids such like beasts, [.....], as if he had been a natural wolf indeed [.....]¹²⁶

Here, the old wordings may confuse the modern readers. For instance, “two goodly young woman big with child” refers to two pregnant women. Stubbe Peeter was said to have killed them and torn their babies out of the wombs and this bloody scene showed the ferocity of werewolf. Readers can also find the scene of a murder from the first picture of Figure 5. Both the text and the cover illustrate the way how professionally Stubbe Peeter murdered. The cruel depiction of werewolf might worry the villagers in the early modern society.

¹²⁶ *A True Discourse* 1590, 6-7.

The setting was always said to be in the forests or in the vineyard, where the victims were mostly said to be wandering or working alone. It was probably easier for the werewolves to prey on the victims, especially when they were said to be in pairs or in a group. Take the case of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun as an example:

[.....] they killed a woman who was gathering peas. They also seized a little girl of four years old and ate the palpitation flesh, all save one arm. Several other persons were murdered by them in this way, for they loved to lap up the warm flowing blood. [.....] Another time they killed and ate raw a goat belonging to Maître Pierre Bongré.¹²⁷

Undoubtedly, the victims could not be able to escape from the werewolves as they were not able to look for help. The image of the murderers here was depicted to be ferocious werewolves, who not only ate raw livestock to fill their stomachs, but also killed people for joy.

Another case from Jean Grenier also mentioned about the pleasure of murdering young children.

He lusted for the flesh of small children, which was tender, plump, and rare. When hungry, in wolf's shape he had often killed dogs and lapped their hot blood, which was not so delicious to his taste as that of young boys, from whose thighs he would bite great collops of fat luscious brawn.¹²⁸

Again, he was said to have killed dogs when he was hungry like Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun. The taste of young children flesh, however, was thought to taste much better than the animal ones.

Stubbe Peeter, as what he was described, killed people and livestock for joy and the fulfillment of his thirst of blood as if he was a real wolf. A statement found in the text is commenting that "he tooke such pleasure and delight in shedding of blood".¹²⁹ Thus, he was depicted as a bloodsucker in *A True Discourse*.

Theses werewolves were depicted to be greedy and cunning, but they were said to be a bloodsucker and wicked sorcerer. The lust for human flesh, which we have already seen in the legend of Lycaon, was always found in the werewolf trials. The

¹²⁷ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 224.

¹²⁸ Case of Jean Garnier, in Summers 2003, 232.

¹²⁹ *A True Discourse* 1590, 5.

series of murders show that how cruel and horrible these werewolves were.

On the one hand, werewolves were believed to kill people for pleasure. On the other hand, some of them were said to be at one's command or to feed their families. Jean Grenier, for example, was said to have confessed that he sometimes followed the command of his master, the Lord of the Forest (the Devil). Then he went out hunting for children.¹³⁰ Jean Grenier paid homage to the devil, which has been discussed in the first chapter. Another example was Gilles Garnier who brought many pieces of children's flesh to his wife.¹³¹

Even in the early modern society, there had been doubts whether witches and sorcerers ate human flesh. Bouget wrote in his essay that

[s]uch people ought to consider that from all time there have been tribes which use this practice, even if they were not were-wolves. [.....] Witches go even further; for they take down the corpses from gibbets in order to eat their flesh.¹³²

Although the werewolves were seldom depicted to eat human flesh like the witches, they were usually accused of murder for tasting human flesh and blood. Sometimes, they were also condemned to have killed and eaten babies and pregnant women.

Since these men were mostly depicted to be a werewolf when they preyed on children and livestock, they killed the victims by using their sharp teeth and paws. In the trial at Angers, Jacques Roulet "confessed to have attacked and devoured with his teeth and nails many children in various parts of the country whither he had roamed".¹³³ Pierre Borgot and Michel Verdun were also said to have used their teeth to tear out the throat of a nine-year-old girl in a similar way.¹³⁴

Gilles Garnier was the exception among the werewolf trials. He was said to have killed children in the wolf shape and brought their flesh to his wife. However, he was also accused of murder when he was said to be in his human form. The case was written as follows.

[U]pon the Friday before the Feast of S. Bartholomew last he seized a young boy aged

¹³⁰ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 66.

¹³¹ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 226.

¹³² Otten 1986, 88.

¹³³ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 231.

¹³⁴ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 224.

twelve or thirteen years under a large tree near the wood [.....], where he strangled him in the same manner as before, [.....] had he not been seen and prevented by certain persons who came to the help of the young boy, who was however already dead. The said Gilles Garnier was then and at that time in the form of a man and not of a wolf ¹³⁵

It was quite unusual to have a case that the werewolf tried to kill someone when he was still in the human shape. Gilles Garnier was not only condemned to be a sorcerer and a werewolf, but also a murderer in reality. One possibility was that he might have suffered from lycanthropy that he thought he was a werewolf when he was in his human shape.

The werewolves seemed to have killed a lot of people successfully, but sometimes they failed. One of the cases found in *A True Discourse* was about a child whom was nearly killed by Stubbe Peeter. A group of children were playing while he was approaching them:

[.....] this vile wolf running and caught a pretty fine girl by the collar, with intent to pull out her throat; but [.....] the wolf could not pierce the collar of the child's coat [.....] and therewithal the sudden great cry of the rest of the children which escaped so amazed the cattle feeding by, that being fearful to be robbed of their young, they altogether came running against the wolf with such force that he was presently compelled to let go his hold and to run away to escape the danger of their horns [.....]¹³⁶

It seems that it would be easier to a werewolf to have a single target rather than a group of people. Because of the great cry, other children nearby came and helped the victim escape from Stubbe Peeter's hands. Other unsuccessful cases found in the texts were also due to the cry which alerted the people nearby to save the poor victims.

Killing people, drinking their blood and eating their flesh are the crimes which is enough to justify the death penalty towards witches and sorcerers. They were always condemned to be cannibals who eat human flesh. Witches were claimed to have strangled children, removed their corpses from their graves after burial, and then cooked and ate them at their synagogues or sabbats.¹³⁷ According to *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*, the cannibals were depicted to be old women not until the late 16th century.¹³⁸ Thus, these werewolves were not only accused of murder but also of

¹³⁵ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 227.

¹³⁶ *A True Discourse* 1590, 13-14.

¹³⁷ Golden(ed.) 2006, 162.

¹³⁸ Golden(ed.) 2006, 163.

cannibalism as some of them were said to be at Satan's command or to have attended at sabbat.

Bodin stressed that these damnable witches should be sentenced to death since "it is a vile belief the Devil puts into the hearts of men in order to make them kill and devour each other, and destroy the human race".¹³⁹ Nichole Jacques-Levéfre also quoted the words of a French gentleman, Lord Beauvois de Chauvincourt written in 1599 showing the terrifying image of werewolf.

[T]hey are men so denatured, that they have made bastards of their first origin, leaving this divine form, and transforming themselves into such an impure, cruel, and savage beast.¹⁴⁰

The fear of werewolves expressed in the words of Lord Beauvois de Chauvincourt since they were thought to have left the "divine form" – the human nature and transformed into a cruel beast which lusted for flesh.

However, Stuart Clark argued that "witchcraft meant to most ordinary people, after all, was that it caused misfortune" and "the importance of witchcraft was the harm it could do to themselves, their livelihoods and their families and communities".¹⁴¹ Unlike the witches who practiced black magic to raise storms to destroy crops or make someone ill, werewolves were accused of the practice of witchcraft for the metamorphosis as discussed in the first chapter. Cases noted in these trials were all about missing persons, kids and the loss of livestock. It was found in the trial at Angers that "people talked of wolves; others shook their heads and whispered of something worse than wolves".¹⁴² The inhabitants in the area of Bedburg, Cperadt and Cologne were also noted that they were desperate to see a missing person alive.¹⁴³ Some of the hopeless people were said to pray to God that "it would please them from the danger of this greedy wolf".¹⁴⁴

Similar concerns raised towards the missing people were also found outside the area where these werewolves were said to have appeared. At the end of *A True Discourse*, there is another dweller called Master Tice Artine in London. As he "is neare kinsman to this childe" whom had almost been killed by Stubbe Peeter was

¹³⁹ Bodin 1580, in Kors and Peters(ed.), 293.

¹⁴⁰ Jacques- Lefevre 2002, 182.

¹⁴¹ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 114.

¹⁴² Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 231.

¹⁴³ *A True Discourse* 1590, 12-13.

¹⁴⁴ *A True Discourse* 1590. 14-15.

saved, he was also said to have discuss the issue with his friends in letters.¹⁴⁵

Richard Kieckhefer talked about the issue in his essay, *Avenging the Blood of Children: Anxiety over Chil Victims and the Origins of the European Witch Trials*, that losing children which was common to the early modern people.¹⁴⁶ Due to the high rate of infant death and the plague in the earlier centuries, survived children were probably treasured by their families. Although the early modern people might have gone through the pain of losing babies and children, they probably suffered from the shadow of losing them again. Therefore, it is reasonable to the inhabitants in the villages or hamlets worrying about the series of murder and the missing children. Perhaps the image of werewolf was used as a warning to children as the werewolves were always said to have prey on them as well.¹⁴⁷

The werewolves were said to have involved in series of murders in the rural areas. Some of them did it for joy, while some were following the command of the Devil or preying on food. They were usually depicted to have sharp teeth and paw which help to kill children easily in the woods or vineyard. Because of the preference of prey, they could also be treated as cannibals who were condemned by the learnt men in the early modern period. These series of murders worried the people in the rural areas and turned to God and local elites for help. This led to the trials and further discussion on the interrogation in the early modern France and the Holy Roman Empire.

2.2 Interrogation and confession

Werewolves were depicted as damnable sorcerers who had renounced God and religion. The theological crimes – making a pact with Devil, attending to sabbat and acting incestuously – were condemned by the learnt men in the early modern period. The crime of witchcraft gradually became a secular crime tried in the secular court, which was partly because the authority of the Church started to decline since the 15th century. Early European states like the Holy Roman Empire, England and Scotland passed the law specifically against witchcraft,¹⁴⁸ which marked the rise of the secular courts during the period of witch-hunt.

¹⁴⁵ *A True Discourse* 1590, 14.

¹⁴⁶ Kieckhefer 1998, 98-99.

¹⁴⁷ Jacques- Lefevre 2002, 181.

¹⁴⁸ Levack 2006, 90-91.

What worried the locals most was probably the series of murder which threatened their lives and property. They might look for the help of local elites for protection. Without the help of the peasants, it was hard for the elites to locate the murderers or witches. As these werewolves were treated as sorcerers, the discussion of the trials will be analysed the same as other witch trials in the early modern Europe. The process of interrogation will be taken into account of analysing the werewolf trials.

First of all, all five cases were a small-scaled one in terms of the size of the trial. According to Levack, a small scale trial usually involved in up to three victims, while the medium-sized hunts was claimed between five and ten victims and the large ones consisted of more than ten people.¹⁴⁹ Associated with Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun was a third werewolf named Philibert Montot in the trial.¹⁵⁰ Jacques Roulet was also said to have his brother Jean and a cousin Julien vagabonded as his companion.¹⁵¹ Stubbe Beell and Katherine Trompin were also found guilty because of assisting Stubbe Peeter for the evil practice.¹⁵² Jean Grenier also accused of his father for assisting to murder, although his father was finally released due to the lack of evidence.¹⁵³ Only Gilles Grenier was charged alone, so it could be treated as an individual prosecution. Anyway, it is reasonable to see all these cases as small-scaled witch trials in the early modern society.

Geographically, the werewolf trials distributed along the border between France and the Holy Roman Empire. Monter suggested that the most active witch-trial zone was found along the 'Lotharingian Corridor' which extended southwards from the Rhein delta to the Alps and had formed between the kingdoms of France and Germany when Charlemagne's empire was divided in 843.¹⁵⁴ Bedburg is a small town near Cologne, where is also on the Rhein. The other French werewolf trials, however, were also found closely to the border.

Then, we should move on to the discussion of the legal process in the early modern Europe. According to *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*, the most salient procedural differences separated those courts that followed accusatorial procedure from those

¹⁴⁹ Levack 2006, 188-190.

¹⁵⁰ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 225.

¹⁵¹ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 230-231.

¹⁵² *A True Discourse* 1590, 17.

¹⁵³ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 66-67.

¹⁵⁴ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 34.

that adhered to inquisitorial procedure.¹⁵⁵ The accusatorial procedure consisted of prosecution undertaken by accusers acting either in a private capacity or as representatives of the community, while the court officials controlled the entire prosecution, from initiation to sentencing, according to the inquisitorial procedure. The former was followed in England, the Scandinavian countries, and to a lesser extent in Scotland, parts of the Holy Roman Empire, and Hungary. The latter, however, became the norm in most continental European countries after 1500 and in all ecclesiastical courts.¹⁵⁶

Before the thirteen century, the accusatorial system had been adopted. As mentioned before, the criminal action was both initiated and prosecuted by a private person. Levack noted it in his book that

[i]f the accused admitted his guilt, or if the private accuser could provide certain proof, then the judge would decide against the defendant. If there was any doubt, the court would appeal to God to prove some sign of the accused person's guilt or innocence. The most common way of doing this was the ordeal, a test that the accused party would have to take to gain acquittal.¹⁵⁷

“Swimming a witch”, for example, proved the accused to be innocent only if one sank to the bottom. King James VI discussed it in his *The Swimming and Pricking of Witches* (1597) that “the water shall refuse to receive them (witches) in her bosom that have shaken off them the sacred water of baptism, and willfully refused the benefit thereof”.¹⁵⁸ The test sounds ridiculous in the modern view, since it can be explained scientifically and the test simply puts the life of suspect at risk. Thus, Levack commented as “non-rational process” and “not prove to be particularly successful in prosecuting crime” because of the divine intervention into human affairs.¹⁵⁹

However, the inquisitorial system emphasized the evidence and investigation to judge whether the suspect was guilty or not. Jean Bodin talked about the evidence required to prove the crime of witchcraft that three elements were essential.

¹⁵⁵ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1133.

¹⁵⁶ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1133.

¹⁵⁷ Levack 2006, 75.

¹⁵⁸ James VI, 1597, in Levack(ed.) 2004, 143.

¹⁵⁹ Levack 2006, 75-76.

The first is the truth of the acknowledged and concrete fact. The second is the voluntary confession of the one who is charged and convicted of the crime. The third is the testimony of several sound witnesses.¹⁶⁰

The truth of the acknowledged and the concrete fact refer to the evidence found, such as poisons and spells. If one sees a witch killing a child, it will also be taken into account as a reliable proof of the crime. The others were clearly stated by Bodin that the evidence helped to prove the crime of witchcraft.

With reference to the features of the inquisitorial procedure, all five trials were handled with the newly introduced law system in early modern Europe. First of all, initiation is suggested to be the beginning of the trial. The legal process starts with the arrest and formal charging of the witch. The process of initiation was more open-ended than the accusatorial one, “since witches could be accused by their neighbours (including other witches), denounced by local officials or clergy, or arrested by the authority of the judge (*ex officio*) on the basis of ill fame or rumor”.¹⁶¹

To a certain extent, the image of werewolf did play a role here since most of trials initiated from the rumours. As we have seen in chapter 2.1, villagers, peasants or other inhabitants talked about the series of murder and were devastated with the missing children and people. The importance of the help from below should be noted here that there would not have been so many trials reported without their help. The terrifying image of werewolf might raise villagers’ attentions, and they might turn to local elites for help. The rumours of the series of murders were probably circulating within the community. Reporting the issue to local elites could be seen as the initiation in the interrogation process.

William Monter stressed on the impulse to hunt witches coming from beneath, from prominent people in local villages.¹⁶² The loss of children and livestock and the missing persons probably worried the community, as they were one the most important properties to the people in the rural area. Such local agendas, added by Monter, were easily and willingly accommodated by local courts, but not by regional governments.¹⁶³ Thus, there was an urgent need to locate the witches or sorcerers in order to safeguard their lives and property.

¹⁶⁰ Bodin 1580, in Levack(ed.) 2004, 131.

¹⁶¹ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1133.

¹⁶² Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 9.

¹⁶³ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 9.

Levack added that common people usually tended to report the case to the local elites, when the common people had decided that the witch should be executed.¹⁶⁴ These local elites, who were a social group between the peasant and aristocrats, were responsible for the arrest and initial interrogation of the accused.¹⁶⁵ In Stubbe Peeter's case, there was a group of hunters who were said to have discovered that Stubbe Peeter was the accused person. The background of this group of hunters is not given in the pamphlet but was drawn on the cover.



Figure 6. Stubbe Peeter under arrest (Enlarged)

In the first picture of Figure 6, there were several hunters chasing Stubbe Peeter (the wolf with the girdle in the middle). One of them was drawn to ride a horse to catch him. The second picture showed Stubbe Peeter eventually arrested when he returned to his human form. When we take a closer look to the clothing of the hunters, they were illustrated to dress quite well. All three of them were wearing a hat and a shirt with ruff, one of the important elements of the clothing in the early modern period. It hints that these “hunters” were actually the local elites.

In Jean Grenier's case, most of the features of initiation could be found. A girl called Marguerite Poirier was said to have complaint about the unusual behaviour of Jean Grenier to her parents. They did not pay attention to her complaints until she was attacked by the creature.

The statement of the child (Marguerite Poirier) produced general consternation in the parish. It was well known that several little girls had vanished in a most mysterious way of late, and the parents of these little ones were thrown into an agony of terror lest their

¹⁶⁴ Levack 2006, 186-187.

¹⁶⁵ Levack 2006, 187.

children had become the prey of the wretched boy accused by Marguerite Poirier. The case was now taken up by the authorities and brought before the parliament of Bordeaux.¹⁶⁶

The trial started with the complaint of Marguerite Poirier, which circulated in the parish. Then the local authorities took action against Jean Grenier and began the interrogation. The case of Jean Grenier was probably the best one illustrating the inquisitorial procedures in the early modern court.

Similar description can also be found in other cases, although the identity of the men who caught the suspects was always unknown. They might not be the local elites or officials but ordinary people. Michel Verdun was told to be discovered by a traveler who wounded the animal. By following the trail, the gentle man came to a hut where he found Verdun, who had resumed his human form.¹⁶⁷ Some other armed men were said to chase when they had discovered a nude body of boy in a remote area near Caude. Then they found the werewolf Jacques Roulet and brought him to the magistrate.¹⁶⁸ Another example from Gilles Garnier's case was that several men tried to save a boy, when Gilles Garnier was strangling him.¹⁶⁹ Although the boy had already found dead, Gilles Garnier was eventually under arrest. These examples showed the initiations made by the local people, which finally led to trials.

The interrogation was said to have done at the local courts. In these trials, the accused were sent to the court and the court officials were said to have controlled of the whole legal process. For example, Pierre Burgot and Michel were tried before Maître Jean Boin, Prior of the Dominican convent at Poligny and Inquisitor General for the diocese of Besançon.¹⁷⁰ In Gilles Granier's case, Henry Camus, a doctor of law, was another appointed to be Procurer-General and Public Prosecutor.¹⁷¹ Jacques Roulet, the werewolf mentioned in the trial at Angers, was said to have confessed to Maître Pierre Hérault who was the lieutenant of général et criminel. On the cover of *A True Discourse*, Stubbe Peeter is said to be sent to the local court in Bedburg showed below.

¹⁶⁶ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 65.

¹⁶⁷ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 225.

¹⁶⁸ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 230.

¹⁶⁹ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 227.

¹⁷⁰ Case of Pierre Burgot, in Summers 2003, 223.

¹⁷¹ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 226.



Figure 7. Stubbe Peeter at the Court (Enlarged)

He was brought to the magistrates (the one who was sitting under the curtains) after he was arrested. The scene was probably the court because it was well decorated with a curtain and marble on the floor. The judge was sitting on a chair which was covered by a piece of cloth. According to the text, he was brought to the local court in the town of Bedburg,¹⁷² which also indicated that it was the court shown in Figure 7. These examples illustrate the features of the inquisitorial procedure.

The whole process of interrogation took place at the secular court, but not at the ecclesiastical one. It was probably due to the decline of the influence of the Church, but the Church was also active in condemning the pact with the Devil and other heretical crimes. The secular court, in fact, held the power to execute witches after the 16th century.

Central to all witchcraft trials was the interrogation of the accused, and its goal was to secure a confession.¹⁷³ According to Bodin, there were two types of confession, namely the voluntary and the forced ones.

Both may be given in court or outside of court. The one given outside of court may be in the presence of many people or just one, [.....] All these circumstances are to be taken into account [.....] most people conceal in public what they confess in private, either from shame or fear, as is often seen with thieves who reveal to their confessor what they would never say in court.¹⁷⁴

In Bodin's view, these confessions were important to prove the crime of witchcraft.

¹⁷² *A True Discourse* 1590, 18.

¹⁷³ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1134.

¹⁷⁴ Bodin 1580, in Levack(ed.) 2004, 133.

He also thought that all confessions the accused made in both ways should be counted to make the evidence more reliable.

The confession was often made under torture which was thought to produce confessions.¹⁷⁵ Bodin stressed on the effect of torture “against the one accused of witchcraft who will not answer anything”.¹⁷⁶ Among the cases we have discussed, only *A True Discourse* talked about the use of torture.

[B]ut fear of the torture, he (Stubbe Peeter) volluntarilye confessed his whole life, and made knowen the villanies which he had committed for the space of XXV yeeres, also he confessed how by Sorcery he procured of the Deuill a Girdle [.....] ¹⁷⁷

Although there were no details of torture found in the text, the purpose of the use of torture has proved to be securing a confession. Levack suggested that the functions of torture facilitated the formulation and the dissemination of the cumulative concept of witchcraft. Also, it greatly increased the chances of witches being convicted. Moreover, it helped to acquire the names witches’ accomplices,¹⁷⁸ which usually led to a larger scale trial in the early modern period.

Without the information of torturing the accused in other cases, however, does not mean that no confessions were made. On the contrary, the other werewolves were also said to have confessed that they had committed the crimes of witchcraft and murder by other means such as being questioned by the authorities. The confession of Jean Grenier, for instance, was retold to be questioned by the local parliament of Bordeaux.¹⁷⁹ The use of torture was probably one of the most common ways to secure a confession, but it does not mean it has to be used in an interrogation.

Traditionally, a testimony of one eyewitness or the accumulation of circumstantial evidence was required in the interrogation. Almost all witchcraft trials involved the examination of witnesses and the recoding of their testimony,¹⁸⁰ even though they might not be mentioned in the text explicitly. These testimonies were the clear and certain proof made by several sound witnesses, suggested by Bodin.¹⁸¹ If there are several versions of testimony in one case, the officials will compare the

¹⁷⁵ Levack 2006, 81.

¹⁷⁶ Bodin 1580, in Levack(ed.) 2004, 133.

¹⁷⁷ *A True Discourse* 1590, 16-17.

¹⁷⁸ Levack 2006, 87-88.

¹⁷⁹ Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 65.

¹⁸⁰ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1134.

¹⁸¹ Bodin 1580, in Levack(ed.) 2004, 131-132.

information brought by the witnesses and lead to the final agreement for the sentences.

In some of the werewolf trials, witnesses provided the information against the accused. Gilles Garnier was told to be in his human form when he was stopped to eat the boy by the men who tried to save the boy. Other hunters and travelers found in cases of Pierre Verdun, Stubbe Peeter and Jacque Roulet could also be seen as witnesses. Marguerite Poirier was said to be the only witness and to have seen the metamorphosis in Jean Grenier's case.¹⁸²

Apart from the testimony made by witnesses, certain kinds of proofs were found to lead to the verdict. After Stubbe Peeter was said to have confessed, the magistrates sent the officials to look for the girdle.¹⁸³ Although the girdle was not found, the investigation and search of evidence showed the main features of the inquisitorial system. The whole inquisition procedure was done on the basis of rules of evidence.¹⁸⁴

These features of the inquisitorial procedures were commented by Ankarloo as a "judicial revolution" starting from the beginning of 16th century.¹⁸⁵ The rise of inquisitorial procedures gradually replaced to the accusatorial ones. The inquisitorial procedures were now more rational and systemized even in the case of witchcraft. It can be seen as a milestone in the development of the modern legal system.

2.3 Appellate tradition and sentences

After the interrogation, the court would determine whether the suspect was guilty or not. Once the verdict had reached, it would be followed by the sentences towards the accused. However, there were possibilities to make reviews or sentences and appeals in both countries.

Scholars have been arguing that the difference in the courts between France and the Holy Roman Empire resulted in the number of witch hunts. Monter pointed out that France had a thoroughly centralized court system while the court in the Holy

¹⁸² Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 67.

¹⁸³ *A True Discourse 1590*, 17.

¹⁸⁴ Levack 2006, 76-77.

¹⁸⁵ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 64.

Roman Empire was extremely decentralized.¹⁸⁶

In terms of the werewolf trials, however, it was not the case since there were more cases reported in France. It was probably due to the interests of learnt men towards the issue in their surrounding area. We are not going to discuss the reason why there were more werewolf trials in France. Rather, we should focus on the differences between the two court systems, which we can find from the trials.

Based on the proof, confessions and the testimonies, the weighting of the writing evidence was undertaken either by a judge or a panel of judges. In these jurisdictions the accused was entitled to legal counsel.¹⁸⁷ However, the accused were always too poor to afford this kind of legal service and the witchcraft cases were probably the least lucrative to lawyers.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, we cannot find any information in all five trials about the accused seeking legal counsel.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*, local courts were required to seek legal advice regarding the handling of witchcraft cases from the law faculties of universities, which was written in the Imperial Code – the *Carolina*.¹⁸⁹ No hints of seeking legal advice from university were found in Stubbe Peeter's case which was probably due to the small-scaled of trial.

When the sentences were given in the trials, the higher court for review was sometimes needed. It could be found in the trials of Gilles Garnier, Jacques Roulet and Jean Grenier. The legal process of determination of guilt, sentencing and the request for a death sentence was written thoroughly in Garnier's case.

Wherefore this Most High and Honourable Court having carefully considered the plea of the Prosecutor, and having made full inquisition into all depositions and interrogatories touching this present case as well as duly weighing the full and free confessions of the accused, not affirmed and deposed once only but many times unambiguously reiterated, acknowledged and avowed, doth now proceed to deliver sentence, requiring the person of the accused to be handed over to the Master Executioner of High Justice, and directing that he, the said Gilles Garnier, shall be drawn upon a hurdle from this very place unto the customary place of execution, and that there by the aforesaid Master Executioner he shall

¹⁸⁶ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 9.

¹⁸⁷ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1134.

¹⁸⁸ Levack 2006, 195.

¹⁸⁹ Behring 2004, 86; Golden 2006, 1134.

be burned quick and his body reduced to ashes.¹⁹⁰

The review of the death sentence was first sent to the higher court at Dole. After weighting the depositions and the interrogatories, the Master Executioner of High Justice came to the conclusion that Gilles Garnier should be burnt. Here, we can see the approval of the death sentence made by the higher court after the review.

In the other two cases, the reviews were disapproved by the higher court. In Jean Grenier's case, the inquiry was relegated to the *Parlement* of Bordeaux. The sentence was pronounced by President Dassis on 6th September, 1603.¹⁹¹

The tender age of the boy must be taken into consideration, and the utter neglect of his education and moral development. The court sentenced Grenier to perpetual imprisonment within the walls of a monastery at Bordeaux, where he might be instructed in his Christian and moral obligations, but any attempt to escape would be punished with death.¹⁹²

The sentence was reviewed by the higher court, the *Parlement* of Bordeaux, although it was not a death sentence to Jean Grenier. As a sorcerer and a murderer, Jean Grenier should be sentenced to death. However, the president considered his background for the sentence, and he believed that the Christian and moral obligation helped to purify Jean Grenier's soul. Therefore, it also showed the importance of the review as it was carefully handled case by case.

The notorious reputation of Jacques Roulet was "justly condemned to death, but for some inexplicable reason the *Parlement* of Paris decided that he should be rather confined in the hospital of Saint Germain des-Prés".¹⁹³ It was not clearly stated in the text what the "inexplicable reason" were, but it was probably due to the lack of evidence that they Parliament of Paris did not approve the death sentence.

Here, the importance of the *Parlement* of Paris should be discussed. The judges Paris handled the king's judicial business under the reign of Philip the Fair (1285-1314). Hollister added it was a judicial court, but it was not an advisory assembly like the English parliament.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 227.

¹⁹¹ Case of Jean Grenier, in Summers 2003, 234.

¹⁹² Baring-Gould 1603, in Otten 1986, 67.

¹⁹³ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 231.

¹⁹⁴ Hollister 2006, 285.

During 17th century, the obligatory of reconsideration of witchcraft convictions was most common in France, where death sentences for witchcraft were routinely referred to one of the nine provincial *parlements*.¹⁹⁵ The most important of these *parlements*, and the one that handled the largest number of witchcraft cases, was the *Parlement* of Paris. Between 1588 and 1624 the *Parlement* of Paris gradually established its authority over the local tribunals, requiring that all capital sentences of witches be appealed to them.¹⁹⁶ For example, the Paris judges took action in 1588 to quash illegal witch-hunting methods in northern France; the judges intervened twice in local tribunals and finally ordered that all condemnations for witchcraft should be appealed to Paris.¹⁹⁷ The appellate process was thought to play a role in moderating witch-hunting since the appeal became in effect a second trial rather than a continuation of the original proceeding.¹⁹⁸

In the trial of Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun, we cannot see the review of the sentence. The werewolves were burnt in 1521, which was some sixty years before the *Parlement* of Paris reinforced its power. Perhaps it was not common to send the review to a higher court in the early 16th century. Another way was probably due to the hideous crimes and sorceries which were enough to sentence the accused to death. The trial took place in Poligny where is in Franche-Comte and near Besançon. The rank of the judge Maître Jean Boin, the Inquisitor General for the diocese of Besançon was probably high enough to give the death sentences.

Compared to the centralized legal system in France, historians believe that local courts enjoyed more freedom to execute witches due to the loose administration system in the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁹⁹ Monter argued, however, the appellate justice could also be found in the Holy Roman Empire. The *Reichskammergericht* was mostly sitting by Speyer since 1495, which insisted on clearer standards of proof than those used by local witch-hunters, and it invariably opposed abuses of torture.²⁰⁰ Although there were no witches executed in Speyer, Monter pointed out that the greatest weaknesses of *Reichskammergericht* were distant, expensive and cumbersome for non-experts. In the trial of Stubbe Peeter, we do not see the local court in Bedburg requested for the review of the death sentence. Instead, he was quickly burnt with his daughter and his gossip few days after he had been arrested.

¹⁹⁵ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1134.

¹⁹⁶ Levack 2006, 98.

¹⁹⁷ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 41.

¹⁹⁸ Golden(ed.) 2006, 1135.

¹⁹⁹ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 22-23.

²⁰⁰ Ankarloo and Clark 2002, 32.

Therefore, the appellate tradition shows the difference of the legal system in both countries.

Apart from the difference in the appellate tradition, the meaning of sentences in could also be interpreted in two different ways. While execution could be seen as an elimination of witches, imprisonment at monastery was another way to correct the accused's mind.

Execution was found in several cases, and the sorcerers were usually said to be burnt. Pierre Burgot, Gilles Garnier and Stubbe Peeter were said to be executed after the interrogation. Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun was a third werewolf named Philibert Montot were only told to be executed. No further information about the method of execution could be found from Summers' book.

Another common execution was burning witches and sorcerers, which was found in the cases of Gilles Garnier and Stubbe Peeter. After the review of the sentence, the Master Executioner said Gilles Garnier "shall be burned quick and his body reduced to ashes".²⁰¹

The trial of Stubbe Peeter ended with the vivid description of the scene. In spite of the limitation of length, the punishment was written in detail in the last few pages of *A True Discourse* and drawn lively on the cover (see Figure 8).



Figure 8. Burning of Stubbe Peeter, Stubbe Beell and Katherine Trompin (Englarged)

Stubbe Peeter was said to be

[.....] judged first to have his body laide on a wheele, and with red hotte burning pincers in ten several places to have the flesh puld off from the bones, after that, his legges and

²⁰¹ Case of Gilles Garnier, in Summers 2003, 227.

arnes to be broken with a wooden axe or hatchet, afterward to have his head stuck from his body, then to have his carcasse burned to ashes.²⁰²

He was first laid on the wheel and his head had already been cut off before he was burnt. His daughter and gossip, Stubbe Beell and Katherine Trompin, were said to have burnt quickly after Stubbe Peeter.

However, witches and sorcerers were not always burned alive. In the last picture of Figure 8, Stubbe Beell and Katherine Trompin were probably burnt at stake while only the corpse of Stubbe Peeter was left on it. Burning as a punishment is seen to be a ritual of purification, and it also may have served as implicit substitute for the ordeal by fire.²⁰³

Burning witches and sorcerers was due to the hideous crimes they committed, and it probably reflected that it was hopeless to have their mind corrected. Unlike burning, sending the accused to hospital or monastery implied the possibility of the accused to change. Jacques Roulet was finally sent the hospital of Saint Germain des-Prés and “instructed in the faith and fear of God”.²⁰⁴ Jean Grenier was also sent to a monastery at Bordeaux and found dead after seven years. In both cases, the accused were believed to be instructed by the Christian faith and to become a better person. This could also been seen as an imprisonment, although the accused were not sent to prison.

The difference between hospitals and monasteries should be noted here. Monastery was a religious place where the accused could probably be taught to be a better person by the faith of Christ. In the early modern hospitals, however, doubts arise since it was highly prone to controversies and the genesis of rumors. Take the hospital in the Holy Roman Empire as example, it was a place housed the well-to-do elderly and served as poor houses at the same time.²⁰⁵ Even if the hospitals in France were built for other purposes, it is still reasonable to doubt that whether the accused could really be taught with the faith of Christ.

The punishment and sentences highlighted the appellate tradition at the French courts, which were less common in the Holy Roman Empire probably because of the loose authority. The review of death sentences and the rise of the *Parlement* of Paris

²⁰² *A True Discourse* 1590, 17-18.

²⁰³ Levack 2006, 94.

²⁰⁴ Case of Jacques Roulet, in Summers 2003, 231.

²⁰⁵ Dillinger 1999; Stokes(tr.) 2009, 83-84.

were seen to have moderated witch-hunts in France. The meaning of punishment also brings us the information of ritual of burning and the possible ways to correct the accused's mind by teaching them the Christian faith. The trials of werewolf between 16th and early 17th century thus mean much more than terrifying villagers and peasants.

Summary

The series of murder raised the awareness of the rural people towards the existence of werewolves. The missing children and livestock worried them because of variant reasons. Perhaps the missing children worried the parents and relatives most, as they might have lost children or infants. Moreover, the loss of livestock might mean the economic loss to the peasants. The rumours started circulating in villages and some people might also look for the help from local elites or agents.

These local elites tried to locate the suspects and bring them to local courts. Once the interrogation started, proofs, witnesses and confessions were needed in order to prove the crimes. From the process of interrogation, we have seen the changes in the legal systems in the early modern Europe. The accusatorial procedures were gradually replaced by the inquisitorial ones, since the latter emphasized on the concrete proof instead of making ordeals.

When the judges came to the determination and sentences, they might also need the review from the higher court. It became a custom in the French legal system since the late 16th century, while the appellate tradition was seldom found in courts in the Holy Roman Empire.

Sorcerers were said to be either executed or sent to hospital or monastery for mental instruction. In terms of execution, burning was mostly found in witch trials while the sorcerers and witches were seldom burnt alive. Others were thought to be taught by the Christian faith to correct their mind.

All in all, the fearful image of werewolf was shown in the series of murder, but they were not able to hide from the justice. These trials lead us to a better understanding towards the people from the rural area and the changing legal system in the early modern period.

Conclusion

After the discussion of the werewolf image, we have learnt more about the meaning of werewolf in the early modern Europe and what the trials tell us about the society from different aspects.

In the first chapter, we have dealt with the werewolf image as a sorcerer according to theological crimes they were said to have committed. In the early modern Europe, the voluntary werewolves were usually condemned as sorcerers, since they were thought to have made a pact with the Devil. By paying homage to Satan, the sorcerers were said to have sold their souls to him and worship him as God. The betrayal of God was heavily criticized by the scholars in the early modern Europe. With the aid from Satan, they received certain kinds of tools to transform themselves into different types of animals. It was quite common to men changing into werewolf, although “she-wolf” were also said to have existed.

Once the metamorphosis had completed, the werewolves turned into a violent and fearful creature. Since the image of werewolf was usually depicted to be a masculine creature, they were not only depicted to prey on young children, but also said to have committed incest or other crimes relating to sexual harassment. Stubbe Peeter was condemned to have incest with his daughter and his sister, while Pierre Burgot and Michel Verdun were criticized to have intercourse with other “she-wolves”. Another possibility was that the sexual harassment and incest threatened the stability of the society. The meaning of the werewolf image probably served as a mirror-image to the ordinary people that they should avoid behaving in such ways.

In the second chapter, the series of murder and the interrogation were the focus of the discussion. Depicted as a vile and ferocious werewolf, these sorcerers tended to prey on young children and lust for human flesh. It could be seen as the symbol of cannibalism found in other witch trials in the early modern Europe. The horrible image of werewolf was probably circulating among the villagers, which created an atmosphere of fear in the community.

Some of the hopeless villagers might then turn to the local elites and the local court started the investigation and interrogation. These could be seen as the initiation in the inquisitorial procedure. The court would look for the proof and available witnesses, and started the interrogation in order to secure a confession from the

accused. Sometimes, the use of torture was involved to avoid the suspect being silent. After the determination of weighting the proofs and confession, the judge would give sentences. Being accused of the crime of witchcraft, witches and sorcerers were usually sentenced to death. During the 16th and 17th century, the rise of the *Parlement* of Paris intervened in the issue of prosecuting witches and the review of the death sentence was required starting from the early 17th century. Although a high court, the *Reichskammergericht*, was also established in the Holy Roman Empire, it was not common to make a review due to the complicated process. The centralized authority probably highlighted the difference in the legal system in France and the Holy Roman Empire.

Execution was mostly found in the witch trials, while sending to hospital or monastery was another way to punish the sorcerers. Witches and sorcerers were usually said to be burnt quickly after the interrogation, and it could be seen as a ritual of purification. Sending to hospital or monastery could be seen as another way of imprisonment. However, the culprits were believed to be correctable by teaching them the faith of Christ. In cases of Jacques Roulet and Jean Grenier, we have already seen the sentences were made after the review. Thus, the effect of appellate tradition was found from the trials.

Further studies can be done with more werewolf trials in other parts of early modern Europe, since this thesis is only limited to the cases in France and Bedburg from 16th to early 17th centuries. Werewolf trials were not only reported in these countries but also in other parts of Europe, such as in the Scandinavian countries, in the early modern period. The meaning of werewolf image should be widely discussed as the werewolves were usually treated to be sorcerers and witches during the witch-hunt. They could be seen as a type of witches other than the old women. Also, a few women were thought to transform themselves into “she-wolf” which is not discussed in the thesis. It is possible to study the images of werewolves and she-wolves. Another type of werewolf, the involuntary one, is seldom discussed in the witchcraft studies. Perhaps scholars should pay more attention to the image of involuntary werewolves as well.

To conclude, the terrifying image of werewolf brings us the discussion in the learnt circle, the reaction of the people from below, the newly introduced inquisitorial procedures and difference between the legal systems in the early modern France and the Holy Roman Empire. This short thesis of the image of werewolf hopes to pave a new way in the witchcraft studies.

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