

## PREFACE

I first met Daniel Bellingradt during an espresso break in the Hilgenfeld Café on the campus of Erfurt University in 2014. When he heard of my interest in the study of magic, he mentioned a strange book trade catalogue that he had encountered during his doctoral studies. He emailed me images of the four pages on the same day, and we loosely agreed to write a journal article on the catalogue. The project gathered speed about 1 year later, when I discovered that the collection advertised in the catalogue survives until this day in Leipzig University Library. We have since then worked on our ‘article’, which eventually grew into the present book.

‘Interdisciplinarity’ is an often-evoked buzzword in modern academia, but only seldom brought to its full potential in the humanities. In fact, scholars in the humanities, particularly historians, tend to remain solitaires, focused on their niche areas, and published by their lonesome. Against this backdrop, the collaboration with Daniel was rewarding and inspiring, as we both come from completely different areas, had to learn the other’s language and thinking, and also cope with all sorts of disagreements which forced us to think ‘outside of our box’ and adjust our own interpretations. In our view, interdisciplinarity only gets off the ground when one is forced to compose texts together and thereby engage in a two-angled analysis of the same material, whereby each of the two angles enriches the other. The findings presented here are the result of this form of collaboration, and neither of us would have been able to present similar findings without the aid and mind of the other.

The order of authors given on the title page does therefore not indicate lead authorship or intellectual priority but is purely alphabetical. Yet, the content analysis of the manuscripts (in Appendix A), which provides the basis for much of the book, was done by myself only.

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