

Spiegel des Papstes

Legend has it that this gilded silver-backed mirror was the first owned by a Pope (Gregory XVI, reign 1831-1846). Pope Gregory was an interesting fellow who probably would have been happier to be pope a century or two earlier; a large portion of his tenure involved dealing with the mid-19th Century's various technological and social innovations, typically with a highly jaundiced eye and disapproving mien (Gregory was not even particularly fond of things like railroads or gas lighting). He would probably be horrified to hear that today the *Spiegel des Papstes* is widely (for literally esoteric values of 'widely') considered to be a magical item; after all, from Gregory's point of view it was merely an item given miraculous powers by long exposure to the Vatican.

From almost everybody else's point of view it's an extremely reliable magical artifact that can detect even the most well-hidden demon possessing a victim; the *Spiegel des Papstes* is effectively unbreakable, seems to weaken demons casting reflections in it, and certainly assists a trained Catholic exorcist in casting out demons. Note 'Catholic' and 'his;' only an ordained priest can use the

Spiegel des Papstes. Certainly people have tried to get around that restriction, but nothing's worked so far.

These days, the *Spiegel des Papstes* is mostly used surreptitiously, by perhaps an inevitable secret order of priests, to keep demons out of the Vatican proper. It hasn't even ever left Vatican City since it was delivered to Pope Gregory in the late 1830s. Note, though, that the item was **not** conventionally enchanted; and while it does register as being magical, trying to get a 'feel' for the enchanter is doomed to failure.

Some occultists are even not entirely ready to dismiss the idea that, sure, it's an item given miraculous powers by long exposure to the Vatican. Despite the best efforts of a lot of researchers, the field of magic is still not entirely quantifiable. Weird things still happen.

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