

The Synagogue of Satan

Die Synagoge des Satan (1897); *Synagoga szatana* (1899 Polish edition)

There are two gods eternally opposed, two creators and two rulers without beginning and without end. The “good” god created the spirits, the pure beings and his world, the invisible world, the world of perfection that knows no suffering or pain. The “bad” god created the visible, the physical and the perishable. He created the flesh and its passions, the earth with its struggles, its torments and its doubts, the immense veil of tears. He created nature, that which only engenders pain, doubt and evil.

The “good” god is rule, law, humility and submission. He tells his children, “Be poor in spirit, only then will you attain to my kingdom! Be more childish than children, destroy your own will, follow after me! Do not search for beginnings or endings because I alone am all of the past and all of the future.”

The “bad” god is lawlessness, contrariness, visionary leaps into the future. He is the curiosity that seeks after the most hidden mysteries and the boundless titanic defiance that overthrows all laws and rules. He is the highest wisdom and the deepest depravity. He is the wildest pride and speechless humility, that is the only way man for man to thwart the rules. He sanctifies the high and daring, the zealous and calls it heroism. He teaches man that there is no crime except that of going against one’s own nature. He sanctifies curiosity and calls it science, He lets man investigate into his own origins and calls it philosophy. Without bounds he allows and teaches everything in the streambed of sexuality and calls it art.

Good is the “evil” god, a good father and a good way shower.

“You are sick, you want to be healthy? Look! My earth is abundant with all kinds of herbs that can heal you, abundant with dangerous poisons. But you can force them to serve as medicines.

You want to become rich, you search after hidden treasure? Oh, I have a thousand ways to entice your soul out of its hiding place so that it can reveal the precious veins of the earth. Your soul knows everything. It and I come from the same source.

You want to look into the future and unravel your destiny? Go, investigate the flight of the birds, listen to the sighing of the leaves, gaze at the stars, look into a crystalline mirror, decipher the lines on your palm. I have predestined your future in a thousand forms, but explore, seek, unravel, for my commandment is to become aware and to discern, to be circumspect, far-sighted and creatively curious.

You want your enemies destroyed without being taken by the law? Go! Learn to separate your soul from your body and I will carry you over thousands of miles, that you may invisibly

satisfy the desires of your heart. This is because your own well-being, your own development and future are your highest priority.

You are losing your wife to death? I have compassion for your love, because love, the propagation of your species is after my own heart. Go! I have a thousand ways, a thousand formulas to snatch your dearest back from death!

I promise you everything. You shall see and receive everything if you go my way. But my way is difficult because perfection is difficult.”

So spoke the “evil” god, so spoke the light bringer and Satan—as Paraclete. His greatest enemy, the youth from Nazareth, had not been born yet. And many went his way and over the long years of trials and torments they explored the secrets of the heavens and the earth, turned everything around so that all the poisons became medicines, so that the waters pointed them to the future, so that the volcanic vapors that streamed out of the earth revealed the secret essence of all things to them. And they pressed further and further along the way of their visions. They drew circles around themselves, spoke a sequence of vowels, one after the other, until a prayer, a hand movement, was enough to connect their soul to the entire cosmos. Every law of space and time lay suspended and the chains of cause and effect were stripped away to reveal the boundless reaches to the first beginning and the most distant future.

Up to this time Satan—as the antichrist, had not been born. The “evil” god was dual in nature. Satan—as father, Satan—as Samyâsa, Satan—as poet and philosopher, lived in the proud, all powerful and all-knowing caste of Magi. He lived in the silent mysteries of the Chaldean temples and his priests were the *hakamim* (physicians), the *khartumim* (magicians), the *kasdim* and *gazrim* (astrologers). This Satan lived in the doctrines of Mazdaism and its children, the Magi, were the great protectors of the sacred flame that came down to them from heaven. Satan also lived in Ahura-Mazda, the “good” god that taught Zarathustra the secrets of the Haoma-plant and in the Egyptian god, Thoth, Trimegistos, who wrote the secret knowledge down into 42 books and taught his chosen ones the important parts of the body. The terrible Hecate shared the gifts of magical visions and workings with her chosen ones as well as the gift of the invisible death stroke.

But beside Satan—as Thoth and Satan—as Hecate, there lived on the earth Satan—as Satyr, Satan—as Pan, and Satan—as Phallus. He was the god of the instincts and carnal lust and was equally revered by the highest in spirit as well as the lowest. He was the inexhaustible source of life’s joy, the enthusiasm and the ecstasy. He taught women the arts of seduction and allowed men to double their sex drive and satisfy their lusts. He reveled in colors, invented the flute and

set the muscles into rhythmic motion until the holy ecstasy enveloped the heart and the sacred phallus inseminated the fertile womb with its abundance.

Pan was Apollo then and Aphrodite at the same time. He was the god of the home hearth as well as of the bordello. He was the author of schools of philosophy. He built museums and glorious temples. He taught medicine and mathematics while at the same time his temple in Astarteion was an immense bordello. The priestesses at Astarteion practiced the sexual arts and over the long years learned every imaginable means of sexual gratification.

Around this time, around the time of Tiberius, the great migration of the gods to Rome began. It was a time of the highest refinement and aristocratic enjoyment of life. The “good” god that had until now remained enthroned in his invisible kingdom of indolence and pleasure determined that the measure of sins had become too great and he sent his son to earth, that he might make clear to the brood of the “bad” god his dreary truth of the invisible.

And he came to earth, this son of the “good” god, and first revealed himself to the poor, the oppressed, the slaves and the day workers that had never tasted the holy joys of Pan.

Why trouble yourselves over your daily bread? Who dresses the lilies in the most beautiful colors compared to which scarlet and brocade are only empty rags? Who nourishes the birds that neither sow nor reap? Why do you strive after worldly things that will perish? What value is your pride when the highest on the earth will become the lowest in the kingdom of heaven? And what of your carnal desire, isn't it the gateway to hell?

Oh carnal desire, most especially carnal desire, the seat of all the passions, the inexhaustible source of life's joy, the will to eternal life. It must be destroyed so the kingdom of the invisible may take over the earth.

The Master says that a man has already defiled a woman when he looks upon her with lust—the disciple goes much further: St. Cyprian says of the girl that is created in such a way that she excites a sigh of love from a man—that she is shameless, and if she allows anyone to burn with lust for her—even unknowing—then she is no longer a “virgin”.

“Woman! What do you and I have in common with each other?” asks the Master. The disciples go far beyond the Master.

“Tu es diaboli janua,” writes Tertullian. (You are the portal to the devil)

“Tu es arboris illius resignatrix.” (You are the destroyer of the tree.)

“Tu es divinae legis prima desertrix.” (You are the first sinner against divine law.)

“Tu es, quae eum persuasisti, quem diabolus aggredi non voluit.” (You are the one that persuades those that do not wish to turn to the devil.)

“Omnia mala ex mulieribus,” moans St. Hieronymus. (Everything evil comes from woman.) Yes, he even proclaims that woman was not created in the image of God (*ad imaginem Dei*) because the Holy Book says nothing of the soul at the creation of the female.

The good god of the invisible hates earthly beauty. He hates everything holy that Satan—as Pan reveals and celebrates. He teaches the transitory nature of the world and what is right. The smallest revolt of the flesh is a sin that must be punished with long years of penance.

Tertullian raged with fanatical hatred against every purple ribbon that women sewed into their clothing. Lactantius cursed the poets and philosophers for pulling innocent souls into ruin. Paintings were destroyed, *“quod nascitur, opus dei est, ergo quod fingitur, diaboli negotium”*.

(That which grows naturally is the creation of God, everything manmade is the work of the devil.) Theater and the circus became "*diaboli figmenta*" (inventions of the devil).

Yes, the holy fathers themselves warned of the colors of the flowers with which the demon, the evil enemy, clothed himself in color and splendor.

Isaurius, the Iconoclast, competed with Gregory the Great in the destruction of artistic images. Theodosius II had every temple destroyed and crosses erected on top of them. They destroyed the most majestic poetic works with disastrous falsifications or annihilated them completely. The diabolist Cyprian taught that "*varia daemonia*" (various works of the demon) were hidden in poems.

The priestesses of Aphrodite became whores that anyone could pelt with filth—and love—love became God's love! "*amor si vincitur, diabolus vincitur!*" (Vanquish love, vanquish the devil!) Everything of nature was forbidden, especially the healing powers of nature. God had sent illness into the world as a way to allow man to atone for a portion of his sins while still here on earth. It was a sin to frustrate this decree of God. At best exorcisms were still allowed, not to heal a disease, but instead only to demonstrate the triumphant power of good over evil.

"*Ubique daemon!*" (The demon is everywhere!) According to Hieronymus even the air is full of trembling demons that scream and wail over the death of the gods. The demon is hidden in every flower, in every tree, that brings joy, fertility, wealth and beauty. He brings the day as Lucifer and closes it as Venus who brings voluptuous lewd dreams.

The first century only knew one religion, the battle against the demon.

But that battle was not easy. In its fanatical lunacy the church threw itself against the deepest and most sacred bonds that united man to the cosmic. It forcefully tore man loose from nature, isolated him, and hung him between heaven and earth. The mysterious rapport that the naked soul of man had with the soul of ALL became completely independent from the brain and was declared Satanic, a deception of Satan.

Ancient man stood in an intimate relationship with nature. They lived directly in and with nature. They were a part of it, were one of nature's nerves that sounded at the smallest change in the environment. And if all the inventions of the human spirit were only organic projections, then the power of every polytheistic cult to bless and destroy was an organic projection as well. Just as the soul was a mechanism of the body that looked out from the inside of it and projected out into the world, nature revealed itself to the heathen cults in powerful symbols.

In a confused battle the church bit by bit destroyed the veins through which the blood of the earth flowed in man. It destroyed the unconscious natural selection process of nature that expressed itself in external beauty, strength and nobility. It defended everything that nature wanted to eliminate, that was so powerfully repulsive, filth, ugliness, disease, the crippled and

the castrated. The church would have loved it if everyone was castrated, the light extinguished, and the entire earth allowed to be consumed with acid rain. Its only desire, its burning request, was the ardent wish that the recently promised day of judgment would finally come at last.

But the nerves, the veins of blood would not allow themselves to be torn out so easily. Especially in the country folk, those still rooted solidly in the earth. They used every smallest opportunity to return back to their beloved earth gods.

The Christian death rage was directed against the heathen in blood thirsty laws, but the demon, the earth, nature, was indestructible. He went into the forests, hid himself in inaccessible grottos, collected his believers and celebrated crude bacchanals.

But the strongest death rage was the hatred that was directed against Satan—as magician and Satan—as healer.

Be poor in spirit and meek. Be obedient, be a follower, don't think! That was the highest law of religion for the imbecile masses. But the magician was proud despite all laws. He rose into the air against the law of gravity and did not sink in the water. If you wanted you could throw him into the fire and he would come out healthy. The magician was too proud to be a follower. If he wanted to he could even become as good of a god as Christ.

“Christ is not able to do any more than I can, through virtue I also can become divine,” said Theodorus of Mopsuesta.

The magician despised poverty of spirit, broke open all things secret and unraveled all mysteries. He determined the successor to the Emperor from the stars and knew the fates of all the nations. The magician was that which Christ himself was, a defiant criminal of all the laws, a knowledgeable seer. He was a god, but much prouder than Christ.

Christ made his teachings available to the plebeians, formed his ancient band of conspirators out of child-like farmers and servants. The magician planted his teachings in only the proudest and strongest of souls.

The Christian wrath, the hatred of the plebian and the poor in spirit, the devotees of the law and those that could not do anything other than “follow” was directed against these defiant titans.

The law of Constantine had already placed heavy penalties upon the practice of magic. Now one law followed another and each new one was more severe than the last until under Emperor Valens all the philosophers were driven out. Even the brilliant Iamblichus took poison after being imprisoned. Having a book of philosophy was enough to put your life at risk. In order to avoid this fate all the folk gathered their books together and burned them.

This was the beginning of the terrible martyrdom of the proud children of Satan, against which the Christian persecutions of Nero seemed like a charming game.

During this time the magicians became priests and assembled the pagans around them. The old ways became the practice of magic. The symbols were lost and their content. No one knew what

the signs or symbols meant anymore, but the magician helped them. He conferred mystical meanings upon them which by and by through the power of suggestion began to exert enormous influence. The words that no one knew anymore became a powerful means to help the magician establish a rapport between his Master and his soul.

The church perceived that it could not accomplish its goal with punishment and torture. It used its ability to imitate, only to imitate, and grasped onto "the magical link", the "choc en retour", that plays such a large role in magic. Incantations along with magical signs became replaced with Holy Water and the sign of the cross. Magical evocations were thwarted through the Mass and Holy Water was used to drive out Satan. The magician might conjure up a thunder storm in the name of Satan, but Christ could disperse it with the cross.

Still, the longer the battle went on, the more the church had to yield. It became forced to absorb the pagan cults into itself. The bacchanalia at the festivals of Ceres Libera were combined with the processions of the festival of St. Mary and celebrated with greater exuberance than ever before. Up until the 13th century the folk and the priests celebrated lascivious and orgiastic festivals together such as the festival of the ass and the festival of fools (fatuorum).

Remnants of the phallus cults crept into the church. The capitals of the columns thronged with obscene figures. A favorite subject depicted in churches was Noah and how he slept with his daughters. But the images were especially about hell! God, how magnificent!

The paltry brains of the church fathers and doctors that were so airy, naïve and spacey had no need to exert themselves when they could plagiarize. Hades made the greatest impression on the good Eusebius. Well, even the demon himself could have a good revelation now and then, but it was simply astounding how much the pagans knew about hell. Rabanus Maurus in his description of hell does not once forget to mention the rivers Phlegeton, Cocytos and Styx and throughout the entire Middle Ages the boat of Charon was seen as the boat of the devil.

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The demon was everywhere! Satan triumphed over Christ, first as a means to frighten people in order to solidify the dominion of Christ. He became an almighty Lord which the world feared and sought to appease. You scarcely dared to breathe because it might let the evil spirit into your body.

In the fourth century the horrible Messalinian sect appeared. They believed the devil was trying to possess them and were constantly seen beating themselves, screaming, spitting and twisting themselves in horrible convolutions in attempts to ward off the evil one whose name was "Legion".

Satan multiplied himself a thousand fold. He became a theologian, went into the desert wastes and tortured the Holy fathers with awkward questions. He sowed thousands of doubts and thoughts into their souls. He went into the cloisters and inflamed the troubled brains of the monks with lewd images. He visited the pious women by night, took away their wills and understanding, forced them into shameful lewdness. He entered into the brains of thousands and thousands of believers and made them scream out the most confused curses and blasphemies.

The church was scarcely able to defend itself any more from Satan. Exorcism took an increasingly important role in the liturgy. No mass was ever enveloped with more pomp than that of the exorcism. You scarcely dared to partake in any religious ceremony without first exorcising every single corner of the church. Yes, under the reign of Sirtus they even exorcised an Egyptian obelisk before it was allowed to be set up in Rome.

But no matter how furiously the church battled the stronger Satan became. Possession took the upper hand. Satan scorned God through the bellowing voices of the possessed. He performed miracles in front of crowds of believers. He told the priests their secret sins. He prophesied things that really came true. He raised the bodies of the possessed up into the air and then smashed them back down onto the ground without them suffering the smallest amount of pain.

The Church grasped at doubtful means. In the assumption that every strong human passion predisposed one to possession by the devil they forbid even the simplest expression of emotion. Every passion had a demon. If the passion was killed the demon would be killed as well.

The world despaired. How could they protect themselves against Satan and his temptations? How could anyone protect themselves against the eternal stream of lewd hallucinations that rose

up by the hour, the thousands of scorning, laughing voices that Satan raised against God? And even thought was a sin! The virgin, who without even knowing, allowed young boys to lust after her “sinned”, had already lost her virginity according to the proclamation of St. Cyprian. The woman that was beautiful sinned without knowing it, when through her beauty she became the scythe with which Satan mowed his harvest. (Anselmus) The monk, who the demon stole from the cross, sinned when he didn’t have enough strength to resist. The husband sinned because he had more interest in begetting children than in the love of God. The nun that washed herself more than twice a month sinned.

Sins—Sins were everywhere. Eternal damnation was everywhere. With one thought, one wrong deed man lost the right to paradise and succumbed to Satan. Once one succumbed they would be refused salvation. The Saints themselves admitted that many devils ignored exorcism and didn’t fear it at all.

In this time of mass lunacy infectious hysteria spread with racing rapidity over the earth and convulsed the people in thousands of various ways. It was the time when people were always and eternally awaiting the end of the earth and lived in wildest despair for the coming Day of Judgment. They awaited the Paraclete, the triune Satan, the Antichrist, because the time for his dominion was very near.

“In brevi tempore saeviet”, said Cyprian. (He shall rage for a short time.)

Lactanius said, “The time is already here.”

They envisioned the most curious things about this Antichrist. He would be a man of sins, a son of the corrupt, the lawless, the adversary and a criminal. He would be begotten from the union of a pope and a succubus, or else, “immundissima meretrice et crudelissimo neblulone” (by a filthy whore and a good for nothing.). Sin was his element. He would be great in sin, greater even than Christ was in virtue. Everything that Christ taught would be overthrown, every sin raised to a virtue. Christ had humbled himself, but he would raise himself to the heavens, make his entry into the “temple” and proclaim himself as God.

He would cut down Christ’s servants and with an insolent proud mouth cry out, “Your blood covers us and our children!” He would perform miracles that were even greater than those that God’s son had performed and his power would be like that prophesied in the book of Job: 43.

“Upon the earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholds all high things: he is a king over the children of pride.”

And Satan's revenge came. He burrowed himself deeply into the earth until it became possessed. Around the year one thousand the people began to despair of God. Signs and wonders were happening all over the earth. The army of Otto the great saw the sun go out and return as a pale saffron yellow. In Rome the devil visited Pope Sylvester V in person. The seasons of the year appeared to turn themselves around. It snowed in summer and heavy thunderstorms broke out in the middle of deepest winter. "Holy Fire" ate the flesh of the people until it fell from their bones in gangrenous tatters.

The earth was delirious and the people became beasts. Starvation was a problem over the entire world and at home the people began to devour the corpses of the dead. The craving for human flesh became a mania. People despised animal flesh, did not even consider it. Humans were supposed to devour humans. Thus Satan got the revenge that he desired.

[Translator's note: This section refers to the writing of monk historian Ralph Glaber who documented these times and the mass hysteria that surrounded the turn of the millennium. Here is an excerpt taken from the medieval sourcebook online. One must consider that due to volcanic eruptions at the time many parts of the world were plunged into a miniature ice age. Perhaps these were the end of days foretold in the book of Revelations and Christ has ruled the new Christianized earth for the last one thousand years. Perhaps his time has come and gone.]

For, in the seventh year before that date, Mount Vesuvius (which is also called Vulcan's Caldron) gaped far more often than his wont and belched forth a multitude of vast stones mingled with sulphurous flames which fell even to a distance of three miles around; and thus by the stench of his breath he began to make all the surrounding province uninhabitable. . . . It befell meanwhile that almost all the cities of Italy and Gaul were ravaged by flames of fire, and that the greater part even of the city of Rome was devoured by a conflagration. During which fire, the flames caught the beams of St Peter's church, beginning to-creep under the bronze tiles and lick the carpenters' work. When this became known to the whole multitude that stood by, then, finding no possible device for averting this disaster, they turned with one accord and, crying with a terrible voice, hastened to the Confession [Coulton note: The part of the choir in which the celebrant makes his confession before saying mass. See Dom Martene, *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus*, lib. i, c. iv, art. 2, *ad fin*. At St Peter's of Rome, this is the space eastward of the Saint's tomb]. even of the

Chief of the Apostles, crying upon him with curses that, if he watched not over his own, nor showed himself a very present defender of his church, many throughout the world would fall away from their profession of faith. Whereupon the devouring flames straightway left those beams of pine and, died away. . . . At this same time a horrible plague raged among men, namely a hidden fire which, upon whatsoever limb it toned, consumed it and severed it from the body [Coulton note: this is St Anthony's fire, one of the curses of the Middle Ages, which modern medicine has traced to poisons generated in corrupt rye-bread.] Many were consumed even in the space of a single night by these devouring flames. . . . Moreover, about the same time, a most mighty famine raged for five years throughout the Roman world, so that no region could be beard of which was not hunger stricken for lack of bread, and many of the people were starved to death. In those days also, in many regions, the terrible famine compelled men to make their food not only of unclean beasts and creeping things, but even of men's, women's, and children's flesh, without regard even of kindred; for so fierce waxed this hunger that grown-up sons devoured their mothers, and mothers, forgetting their maternal love ate their babes. [Coulton note: The chronicler then goes on to speak of two heresies which arose in France and Italy, of the piety of King Robert of France, etc., etc.]

The vengeance seeking Satan first wanted the people to eat the flesh of children, then those that fell on the wayside, until at last it was dared to openly sell human flesh in public. Countless packs of wolves came out of the woods and devoured any others that still remained living. A great fear dominated that the world would become depopulated. The prelates and city officials gathered together and devised ways so that at least the strongest could stay alive and the world not die out.

The people sought in vain to reconcile themselves with God. In vain they swore the “*Treuga Dei*” (peace of God) with their bitterest enemies. In vain the kings, clothed with crowns and scepters, said the most despairing prayers along with the choir boys—it was all for nothing.

If God would not help, then Satan must! The people began to make fun of God. They trampled the consecrated host, his body, into the dirt and dung, spit on his holiest symbols. Satan began to reap his harvest. For a long time he had mockingly and scornfully whispered to the despairing, “Behold how good your God is! Don’t you see that he has damned you already and wants nothing more to do with you?”

If we are all damned, then there is no help for us. Alas! We might as well give ourselves entirely over to Satan. Christ shed his blood for the salvation of mankind. Heh! Salvation? What kind of salvation is this, that people have to eat each other, that the earth burns under our feet like a red hot iron and pestilence causes the flesh to fall from our bones?

Scorn, threefold scorn on this salvation! We spit on the salvation that is supposed to come after this earthly hell. This future salvation is only a lie like everything else. What about the promises of salvation here on earth? Look, the church, Christ’s holy bride, has become a whore that sells herself with the most frightful haggling.

During this time it was considered a disgrace for any gentleman to be without lands. The land was not for purchase. It was indivisible like a person and had to remain undivided. It got passed on to the eldest son.

The church was happily finished with nature. The hypocritical priest was torn away from his wife and began to perpetrate unmentionable sexual obscenities. His marriage was dissolved and now he began to rape and put horns on his male sheep. But, as previously mentioned, celibacy became the standard practice over all.

Now the church had to deal with logic and reason. Earlier man had been forbidden to seek after the nature of God. Now man was forbidden above all else to seek after the physical application of logic and reason.

“Every word corresponds to an idea and every idea is the essence of reality. Thus it follows that grammar is logic and logic is the true science.”

With that logic and reason was settled. If an idea was the essence of reality, then man didn't need to see physical things at all, didn't need to learn about them, didn't need to observe them. Man perceived the world through his thoughts in the same way he perceived truth and reality. Everything was in his mind. Ideas were the ultimate reality.

Man gave up thinking about the physical world and with enthusiasm turned to some fragments of Aristotle that Harun al Rashid had translated into Arabic. Now man commented on poor Aristotle, wrote long commentaries on the commentaries. They mutilated the fragments, made the pagan into a Christian, and showed how he proved the divinity of Christ and his martyrdom by splitting hairs. The entire structure of Christian doctrine was found to originate from Aristotle and based on his philosophy.

An airhead from Avicenna became the prince of thinkers and both great church doctors became sterile mules. Thomas Aquinas brooded over the psychology of the angels and Duns Scotus discovered the marvelous “machine cogitationis” (thinking machine). If existence is a dream, then words are things! Beautiful! Yet even more: every combination of words represents combinations of things and their realities. Setting words together in certain sequences is called perception of reality. This logical sequence of associated words gives us the thinking machine, gives thought without thinking. Thus concluded the church.

Satan—as philosopher, he who had created the most unfathomable philosophical systems of the orient, he who delighted in the poetic subtleties of Plato, he who split the most competent heads of the good God with his Manichean heresies, smiled evilly and was amused at this child's play.

“But how is it,” he asked with a sly wink of an eye to the church doctors, “How is it when a farmer pulls a swine to the market? What is doing the pulling? The farmer or the rope?”

An entire century painfully racked its brains over this question. Opinions were divided and the most competent athletes of lunacy could not resolve the question. The thinking machine had destroyed thought and the ability to think. The church exhaled in relief. But in that moment, just as the church thought it could proceed calmly and peacefully in its business of pulling the hide over the ears of the farmer, a fearful storm was raised.

Abelard dared utter a little, tiny thought. The idea is not real. Abstraction is not reality.

He was as beautiful and majestic as a god, according to the statement of a chronicler of the time. There was no woman in France that could resist him. He was extraordinarily learned for his time with a brilliant gift of eloquence. Abelard began to speak out as a man of men. He developed and popularized the most appalling jumble of church doctrines and came to surprising and new conclusions that threw the old doctrines of the church into the trash heap.

Anselmus had to believe in order to know. Now Abelard had to prove and understand before he could believe. The crime was not in the deed itself, but in the intention. Consequently there were no sins that came out of ignorance or habit. What was original sin? No sin at all, only a punishment. But what of the entire work of salvation? That was an act of love. God wanted to establish the law of love and for that reason he sent his son to earth.

That was a terrible heresy for the time, but Abelard’s philosophy spread with an unusual swiftness over entire Europe. The prime intelligencia of his time sat at his feet, from which later emerged two popes, twenty cardinals and fifty bishops. This new churchly philosophy penetrated into the populace. Abelard taught unceasingly that everyone had to interpret divinity according to their own understanding. With one stroke the spiritual power of the church was broken. All the people began to discuss sacred things. They began to form their own conclusions. Great and small, educated and uneducated, even little children violated the sacred sanctuary and the secrets of the church.

St. Bernard of Clairvoux lamented in his denunciation of Abelard, “Irredetur simplicium fides, eviscerantur arcana Dei, quaestiones de altissimis rebus temerarie ventilantur.” (The faith of the morally simple people is derided; the secrets of God eviscerated and questions concerning the highest things are frivolously discussed.)

Arnold of Brescia, Abelard’s most gifted student, leaned against the papacy. He wanted the church to return to the form of the first Christian congregations. With wild enthusiasm the people listened to his teachings, that the power of the church should only be spiritual, as Christ had wanted it and for the first time the unheard of battle cry resounded, “Rome must be free!” Pope Lucius II was killed and his successor, Eugene III had to flee in order to escape the vengeance of the people.

The kings of Castile had the entire works of Aristotle translated and in its wake came the Arabs and the Jews with the pantheism of Averroes and the subtleties of the kabbalah. Under the protection of Emperor Frederick II, Arabian doctors dared the unheard of—to cut open a human corpse. And Frederick II, debaucher and atheist, a witty and refined philosopher—with a big grin—asked the Muslims, “My dear Gentlemen, what do you think about God?”

A spirit of skepticism and unbelief seized all the people and the “I” was brought to the fore with drunken enthusiasm. To be able to prove everything and at the same time refute it, that was considered the highest philosophical art. Simon de Tournay suddenly cried out after brilliantly laying bare the essence of the Christian doctrines, “O petit Jésus, petit Jésus, comme j’ai élevé ta loi! Si je voulais, je pourrais encore mieux la rabaisser!” (O little Jesus, little Jesus. How I have fortified your teachings! If I wanted to, I could refute them even better!)

Richard the lionhearted declared himself a brother-in-arms with the Sultan Malek Adhal and offered him his sister for a wife. Henry II, king of England, threatened the pope that he would become Muslim and King John charmed everyone with the most beautiful jokes about his excommunication.

The people of the twelfth century paid no attention to God. They believed that Christ had ruled for a long enough time already and that it was finally time for the Holy Spirit to have its turn. One messiah after another stepped up. Countless sects began to form. The people no longer sought after an external God. He was inside them and spoke through their own mouths.
