



Hexentanz: The Sinister Masquerade of the Kaliyuga

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'When Ya'juj and Ma'juj are let loose (from their Barrier) and they swiftly swarm from every mound.'

The Holy Qur'an (Surah Al-Anbiya)

'Witches¹ are very pernicious; they make pacts with demons and by solemn profession of faith, become vassals of the demons...'

Abbot Johann Trithemius of Wurzburg,
(Liber Octo Quaestionum 1515)

The theophanic radiation of the Divine Principle, the self-disclosure of the 'Hidden Treasurehood' as it is termed in Islamic esoterism, must in accord with ontological necessity unfold the entire spectrum of the Possibilities of Infinitude throughout the cosmogonic manifestation of the 'Great Year' of Platonist doctrine. This plenary emanation of the Absolute in its infinite potentialities unfolds in conformity with cosmic law the qualitative categories of space and time through a descending arc or trajectory of hierarchic states in accord with the traditional idea of devolution – that is to say the most exalted and superior possibilities are actualised in the beginning, being closest to the Principle – this is reflected in ancient accounts of the nature of the Krita Yuga, the paradisaical 'Golden Age' described in all traditions. During the course of time, as the Manvantara proceeds, passing through the Treta and Dvapara Yugas the qualitative character of things gradually declines by degrees so that by the Kali Yuga, and most especially by the closing phases of this 'Age of Iron' there are only negative and inferior possibilities remaining left over which must perforce of necessity exhaust themselves in manifestation. Thus it is that the terminal phases of the cycle are characterised by the appearance and predominance of many inferior residual possibilities whose nature is strange, debased and chaotic precisely because they are far removed from the Principle and the Divine Order (*Rta*) and their complexion in Hindu terms can be said to be that of *Adharma* as we see in the descriptions of the nature of the final phases of the Kaliyuga in texts from the *Vishnu Purana* to the *Mahanirvanatantram*.

¹ Cornelius Agrippa Von Nettesheim in 'De Occulta Philosophia' Bk II, ch. xiv classifies witches among the 'twelve degrees of the damned, and of devils' in the 'infernal world' and equates them with the zodiacal sign of Capricorn in the 'scale of the number twelve', representing demonic influences corresponding in an inverse sense with the solstitial gate of midwinter in a satanic counterfeit or parody of the Janua Coeli.

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This cyclical involution is likewise mirrored in the traditional conception of the annual cycle of the year which always reflects the course of the Manvantara and the chronological passage of the Yugas. Thus it comes as no surprise that the end of the year in virtually all traditions is marked by irruptions of chaotic powers representing the necessary exhaustion of the lowest and most inferior possibilities at the end of time, as we see in the rituals of the Roman Saturnalia or the Celtic feast of Samonios – a period, often intercalendary and liminal, is defined in which these negative, malign and inferior possibilities are intentionally exhausted and discharged in an inversion of the normative order, a world turned upside-down which is manifested within a circumscribed period so as to safely delimit and exorcise influences which otherwise would overrun and bring dissolution to the universe. Such rituals have usually taken the forms of unruly and blasphemous masquerades, carnivals, charivaris and other enactments of the most grotesque nature from the medieval *Festum Fatuorum*² to the processions of such beings as Perchtl and actual demonic figures who epitomise in a very real sense the potencies which belong outside or without the Divine Order, denizens of the profane realm of the ‘outer darkness’. If such ambiguous festivities and masquerades were not viewed in an entirely favourable light in pre-modern times it can be stated categorically that they were nevertheless tolerated to the extent that they were perceived to circumscribe and effectively exhaust and discharge the most negative possibilities, inferior psychic residues and demonic influences’ left over’ from the cycle and thus served an apotropaic function preceding the cosmic renovation symbolised by the New Year, the renewal of time and the cosmos in its pristine purity (signifying also the emergence, after the reabsorption of the universe in the Mahapralaya, of the dawning Manvantara or ‘Day of Brahma’). René Guénon defines the context and import of these unruly and demonic irruptions in traditional civilizations, speaking of those ‘special periods when, for analogous reasons, “wandering influences” were allowed to manifest themselves freely, all due precautions having been taken. In the cosmic order, these influences naturally correspond to the lower psychism in the human being...’ (R. Guénon, ‘The Significance of Carnivals’ n.12 in ‘Symbols of Sacred Science’, p143-4) The unregenerate psyche is in Islamic esoterism the satanic domain of the *Nafs*, the fallen soul. ‘Like the Roman Saturnalia, celebrated during the winter solstice, those carnivals usually mark the passage from the old to a new cycle. It is a period of unrestrained revelry and licence, when the most inferior possibilities of the old cycle are released, in an obvious attempt to exhaust them. During those

² The symbolism of the ass whose ears adorn the fool’s head-gear and which was taken into the church in the sacrilegious procession of the ‘boy-bishop’ at Christmas in the Middle Ages clearly recalls the malevolent potencies of Set-Typhon, the Satanic power of the Adversary. The *Festum Fatuorum* was a tenebrous and parodistic reflex in the profane realm of the Feast of the Circumcision/Feast of the Holy Name. René Guénon remarks upon the use of monstrous masks in these dramas, carnivals and rites – these repulsively ugly masks which ‘evoke animal or demonic forms...are like a figurative “materialization” of those lower – we might even say “infernal” – tendencies...’ (The Significance of Carnivals’ in ‘Symbols of Sacred Science’ p. 143) and are worn to actualise via a ‘soul-revealing’ function all ‘the lowest possibilities of the being’ which are normally concealed. The 7th century ‘Liber Poenitentialis’ of Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury describes ‘devilish’ animal-masked rites involving ‘putting on the heads of beasts’ which took place at the ‘kalends of January’. The masked *Chhaam* drama or exorcistic ‘devil-dance’ performed upon the eve of Losar, the Tibetan New Year, presents an Indo-Tibetan parallel.

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*days of the ending cycle, a controlled, ritual chaos replaces the existing social order, the normal hierarchy turning upside-down.'*³

René Guénon has commented upon the traditional significance of carnivals in this light (whilst discountenancing the mistaken notion that they represented a 'return to the Golden Age) and he furthermore makes the extremely perceptive observation that after the Middle Ages when these events began to decline and fell into disuse, there occurred a great proliferation of sorcery and witchcraft, of witches sabbats which in themselves actualise, although in an uncircumscribed and pernicious way, the very malevolent and inferior possibilities and residues remaining over at the close of the cycle and thus the witches sabbats were primarily characterised by evil parodies, subversions and inversions of sacred symbolism and rites in a grotesque nocturnal carnival which manifested the most negative infra-psychic influences - influences which, furthermore, now ran riot beneath the surface of post-medieval society in a destructive and toxic outbreak whose dangers were apparent to all. This bursting forth of infra-psychic 'wandering influences' and infernal cacodemonic potencies was a very real consequence of the waning of the spiritual civilization of the High Middle Ages and the abandonment of the traditional measures and safeguards which had prevailed therein.

Thus folk-lore recounts that the end of the year-cycle, marked in the Celtic tradition by the festival of Samonios (this term from the ancient calendar of Coligny is the usage recorded in Gaul where the 'three nights' of the New Year were *trinuxtion samonii*, which in Gaelic countries was called Samhain), is associated with witches, ghosts, demons and satanic agencies loosed abroad upon the world. An old Scottish rhyme states: '*Hey ho for Halloween, all the witches to be seen. Some in black and some in green, hey ho for Halloween*' and all across the British Isles, (the ancient land of Albion or Logres which was in a former time a secondary centre imaging the 'White Land', the supreme Centre), protective customs were observed and spiritual wards were set, such as the 'Tinley Fires' of old Lancashire, to keep these dangerous and malign influences at bay and to neutralise them.⁴ However such folkloric customs represented but an etiolated and superstitious vestige of the archaic carnivals which in former times deliberately exhausted the worst, most inferior possibilities and negative psychic residues and thus efficaciously purified the world of malign forces. The weakening of medieval European civilization with its integral spiritual order and inherent safeguards was thus characterised by recurring sinister outbreaks of

³ Mircea Tamas, 'The Everlasting Sacred Kernel', ch.5.

⁴ In old Yorkshire folklore the last night of April was called 'Mischief Night' and was the night upon which all the powers of darkness and devils of hell were unleashed to roam and hold sway the world: this corresponds to the Walpurgisnacht revels of witches and demons on April 30th in Germanic folklore corresponding to the close of the winter half of the Celtic year-cycle, the terminal phase of a sub-cycle within the greater cycle. See also Mircea A. Tamas' 'The Everlasting Sacred Kernel', ch.5 'Shakespeare at Midnight' which presents a profound exploration of the metaphysical and esoteric symbolism surrounding midsummer solstice, the Janua Inferni, in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' by William Shakespeare, noting the traditional association of St John's Eve with witches' Sabbaths: '*...the witches' festivals, "the Sabbats," are held about the time of Christians' festivals in evil mockery, a very important one being held at summer solstice (Eve of St. John the Baptist). The ass, a medieval emblem of the malefic forces, is worshipped in the church. Finally, we should mention the important role played by the mask during carnivals, the masks (including the ass head) representing here mainly psychical, inferior influences and evil entities, exposed in order to be purified.*'

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witchcraft, black magic and sorcery, intertwined with and infected with heterodoxy, which threatened to poison the entire society and against which sternest measures were of necessity implemented.

That the mythos of witchcraft in early modern Europe exhibits traits that appear distinctly shamanistic and would seem to belong to such an archaic spiritual horizon has been noted in the studies of contemporary historians such as Carlo Ginzburg; however as René Guénon has noted, shamanism more often than not displays the symptoms of an advanced degeneration and in such cases it is undeniable that although traces of symbolism which once belonged to a high spiritual order are sometimes visible, the phenomenon as a whole has decayed to the extent that its spiritual element has withdrawn, leaving it to be invaded and taken over ‘from below’ by infra-psychic agencies and to become possessed by demonic forces, consequently exerting a dissolving and malign effect of an infernal complexion. René Guénon has examined these questions and analysed such deteriorated vestiges of shamanism: ‘...as soon as it becomes clear that the “shaman” directs his activity particularly toward the most inferior traditional sciences, such as magic and divination, a very real degeneration must be suspected, such as may sometimes amount to a real deviation...’ (‘The Reign of Quantity’, ch.27, p.183) and expounds upon such disquieting phenomena as lycanthropy and sorcery in this context, illustrating his discourse with mention of African leopard societies⁵. Even though the aerial transvections and soul-flights of witches may retain echoes of ancient mysteries of a shamanistic type⁶ from Celtic, Slavic and Germanic antiquity there can be no doubt that these vestiges, long dislocated and cut off from any superior spiritual domain, had since descended into the most degraded state and had even become a vehicle or support for malign subtle influences that could justifiably be termed satanic⁷ as we

⁵ Guénon’s negative appraisal of these African religio-magical phenomena in connection with malign sorcery and inferior psychic influences might plausibly be extended to such syncretic Afro-diasporic manifestations as Voudou, Santeria, Kimbando, Palo Mayombe and suchlike deviated residues which exert a baleful influence in parts of the contemporary world. The parallels between such cults and medieval witchcraft and sorcery are undeniable.

⁶ The caricature of spiritual miracles of levitation and spiritual flight attested to in great masters from Milarepa to St Francis of Assisi is evident in these sinister contexts: the nocturnal flight of the witches is a demonic counterfeit of ‘mastery over air’ which characterises the attainment of the Greater Mysteries. The ancient Eurasian theme of shamanic ascent through the ‘smoke-hole’ situated under the pole-star is echoed in a distorted form in the sorceresses’ passage astride the broomstick up the chimney which we see in old paintings such as Teniers’ ‘Departure for the Sabbat’, through the ‘owl’s-hole’ as it was called in Low German thatched cottages. Here we encounter an infernal parody or degeneration whose original meaning was analogous to Indo-Tibetan yogic process of the ‘straight-upward path’ via the central channel in the yoga of the ‘Secret Path of Consciousness-Transference’, the pole-star *Dhruva* corresponding with the ‘Gate of Brahma’ (Brahmarandhra) at the cranial-suture.

⁷ The early tales of ‘night-travellers’ and ‘Good Ladies’ who flew through the silence of the night mounted upon animals and staves in the retinue of the goddess Diana, Hera or Dame Habounde is undoubtedly an ancient shamanistic mythologem attested to in the ‘Pseudo-Decretals’ of Regino of Prum, attributed to the 6th century Council of Ancyra hence becoming part of medieval Canon Episcopi and discussed by Giacopo Passavanta in the 1300s. Again an eroded, devitalised relic of archaic shamanistic mysteries had eventually become a support for tenebrous and sinister powers and a focus for infra-psychic ‘wandering influences’ by which individuals were ‘seduced by the illusions and phantasms of demons’ and was thus condemned during the Middle Ages as a demonic illusion. In ‘The Romance of the Rose’ it is asserted that ‘many people are so foolish as to imagine that they become sorcerers at night and go roaming with

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see in the furtive witchcraft which flared up in sporadic epidemics throughout Europe from the close of the Middle Ages to the close of the 17th century. The close of the Middle Ages without doubt witnessed a great eruption of organised and intertwined *maleficium*, witchcraft, heretical manifestations, demonolatry and sorcery, contagions which threatened to infect, poison and destroy the foundations of European society and whose persistent recrudescences are very tangible in the contemporary world under many guises.

According to traditional eschatological doctrines a marked sign of the terminal phase of the Kaliyuga and of the end of time is the appearance of fissures and cracks in the 'Great Wall' which encloses and defends the sacred order and separates it from the 'outer darkness'⁸: through these 'cracks in the great wall' as René Guénon has described the maleficent forces of Gog and Magog will invade the world, negative and infra-psychic influences seeping from below, from the infernal regions, into the universe. A hadith of the Prophet recorded by Zainab Ibn Zahash in Bukhari tells us:

'Once the Prophet awoke from such a sleep that his face was red and these words were on his tongue: "There is none worthy of worship but Allah. Destruction is upon the Arabs on account of that evil which has come close to them. Today a hole as big as this has opened in the wall of Ya'juj and Ma'juj. (The Prophet indicated the size of the hole with his finger and thumb.)'

This sacred enclosure or wall that surrounds the cosmos and which holds back the incursions of demonic forces becomes damaged toward the closing phase of the cycle. The Judaeo-Christian tradition concerning this eventuality is described in the Apocalypse of St John ch.20:v.7-8 :

'And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.'

What is of special interest in the context of what have called the 'infernal hexentanz' at the end of time is that the medieval conception of witches was precisely that of malevolent beings and demonic influences which traversed the symbolic wall, fence or hedge and this is sufficient to identify them with the entities and agencies which invade our world in the closing phases of the cycle. The symbolic order of the universe in a traditional civilization is mirrored in such structures as the house, village and city which were invariably walled enclosures, the 'Great Wall' which defends cosmos from chaos, dividing the sacred realm from the 'outer darkness' of the profane and infernal forces of disorder and dissolution. In this sense the sacrificial foundation of a house, town or city is always a cosmogony, a symbolic renewal and realisation of the Sacred Centre imaged by the Divine City (Brahmapura) just as the Indo-Iranian doctrines assert that *Airyanam vaejah* is the 'centre and heart of the world' as Mircea Eliade writes in his essay 'The

Lady Abundance' and this is criticized as a false vision or delusion, indeed one which was expiated by penances in early medieval ecclesiastical codes.

⁸ According to Qur'anic tradition (*Surah Al-Kahf*) the Great Wall of copper and iron is built by Iskhandar Dh'ul-Qarnayn to defend the world from the barbaric and demonic forces of Gog and Magog and prevent them from overrunning the ordered universe.

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World, the City, the House' where furthermore he says: '*The Iranian king was called "Axis of the World", or the "World's Pole". Seated on the throne, in the middle of his palace, the king was symbolically situated at the centre of the cosmic town, the Uranopolis.*' By homology this royal seat of the Chakravartin, the 'wheel-turning monarch', mirrors the locus of the Divine Principle within the Heart-intellect in the microcosm. As with the legendary foundation of Rome the ploughing of the sacred boundary, the *sulcus primigenius*, marks the foundation of the city walls and this ploughing of the sacred cutting or wall-boundary was enacted as the rite of founding of the ancient city, around the omphalos or axial Centre-point which marks the 'Pole', the immutable *axis mundi*. As with the Holy City, Jerusalem, every ancient city was an image of the Sacred Centre and thus an *imago mundi*: the same symbolism underlies the establishment and foundation of a town, village, settlement or house which always ritually re-enacted the creation of the universe.⁹

The archaic European village well into the Middle Ages remained 'walled', fenced or more often surrounded by an impassable hedge, symbolic of the 'Great Wall' surrounding and defending the sacred realm and the Centre.¹⁰ It was the medieval custom to weave apotropaic and protective herbs such as juniper into fences to expel and ward away demons, witches and malign forces. The conception of the witch in the European Middle Ages was thus one of a dangerous, malevolent being who traversed the hedge, which implied fissure and liminal passage through the sacred barrier, thus resuming the concept of holes, of 'cracks in the great wall' allowing the ingress of inferior demonic and infra-psychic 'wandering influences' which have a dissolving and negative effect upon the world. The medieval etymologies of the witch-figure all allude to these cosmological, metaphysical and eschatological themes: the term *hexe* meaning 'witch' derives from the Old High German *hagazussa* or *haegtesse* in Anglo-Saxon denoting 'the one riding on the hedge', in common with Old Norse *tunridur* – 'fence-rider' and Old German *walriderske* – 'wall-rider'. All these terms denote the idea of the breaching of the spiritual barrier, of a dissolution of the boundary as we find mention of in the 12th century legal code of Västgötaland where the laws against witchcraft refer to the practitioner thereof as one 'riding on a fence-switch' just as the Eddas make mention of 'hedge-riders fleeing aloft'. Witchcraft and black magic are seen to involve illicit breaching of the boundary, inviting the penetration of the sacred barrier by malefic, chaotic and demonic forces, acts essentially tantamount to the destructive undermining and damaging of the Divine Order which sustains the microcosm and macrocosm. The passage of inferior forces through the sacred boundary-barrier is thus synonymous with the incursion of demonic hosts through the 'great wall' at the end of the cycle, the increasing proliferation of such apertures, cracks and fissures allowing the agencies of non-being and dissolution to invade, undermine and destroy the hallowed enclosure of being, the invasion of our

⁹ The traditional distinction of cosmos and chaos is reflected in various traditions including the concept of *Darb al-Islam*, the realm of submission to the Heavenly Will as contrasted with *Al-Jahiliyyah*, the state of ignorance, profanity and wildness and in Nordic lore the idea of Old Norse *Midgardh* or Anglo-Saxon *Middengeard* as the ordered world of the Sacred Centre as distinct from *Utgardh*, the outer domain of unenlightened and chaotic forces.

¹⁰ Cf. Mircea A. Tamas, 'The Everlasting Sacred Kernel', ch 5. : '*...the "cutting," vallum or fossa, represents not only a protection against the evil forces or an obstacle against ignorance, but also a frame to sustain and order the elements of the enclosure. Any alteration of the sacred frame would shatter the harmony, the balance, and the peace, leading to chaos and demonic invasion.*'

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universe from 'below' which is symptomatic of the terminal period of the Kaliyuga according to traditional metaphysics.

The interest and participation in the old medieval carnivals faded away in the early modern age and René Guénon has stated very truly that such events would in any case nowadays be completely pointless insofar as the entire world of late modernity, flowing inexorably netherwards in the sinister current of the Kaliyuga, is a 'perpetual sinister carnival' - we can likewise accurately perceive this age, in which these demonic powers of Gog and Magog surge from below through the cracks in the barrier, to be an 'infernal hexentanz' in which every aberration is given free rein in an abominable Saturnalia, (ruled by the malefic and afflicted Saturn of the fallen world of time and fatality who is none other than Satan) which must reify the lowest, strangest and most inferior possibilities, in which sacred symbols and vestiges of spiritual tradition are caricatured, undermined and perverted and a general inversion of primordial norms is actualised in a kind of vast 'witches sabbath' at the cosmic midnight of cyclical time: it is surely no exaggeration to say that modern man finds himself in a world turned upside-down, a hellish phantasmagoria presided over by the Adversary and manifested through the agencies of the Counter-Initiation and the 'Saints of Satan'¹¹, preparing the way for the veritable master of these unholy revelries, the Antichrist, Al-Dajjal.

'At the end of the Middle Ages, when the grotesque festivals mentioned were suppressed or fell into disuse, there occurred an expansion of sorcery completely out of proportion with what had been seen in previous centuries. These two facts are quite directly connected, although this connection is not generally noticed, which moreover is all the more surprising in that there are several quite striking resemblances between such festivals and the "witch's Sabbath", where everything is done "backwards".' (René Guénon, 'The Significance of Carnivals' n. 10 ibid p. 142) Just as the witches performed their mockeries of sacred rituals backwards in a sacrilegious travesty and devilish counterfeit so the reign of the Counter-Initiation is to be characterised by the emergence of the 'great parody' of 'inverted spirituality' and the systematic subversion and inversion of traditional spiritual symbolism. As René Guénon points out: *'... the cleverest and most dangerous subversion is...the one that deforms the meaning of symbols or reverses their import while making no change in their outward appearance. But the most diabolical trick of all is perhaps that which consists in attributing to the orthodox symbolism itself, as it exists in truly traditional organizations and more especially in initiatic organizations...the inverted interpretation that is specifically characteristic of the "counter-initiation".'* ('The Reign of Quantity', ch. 30 'The Inversion of Symbols' p.206-7). It is difficult not to associate the co-opting of seemingly Christian, Sufic or Hindu traditional symbolism in a subtly subverted, twisted or inverted sense such as we see in the contemporary riot of pseudo-esoterism, heterodoxy and

¹¹ The Yezidi legend of the '7 Towers of Shaitan', according to René Guénon, represents the tenebrous distortion or malign caricature of the 7 Poles (*Aqtab*) in Islamic esoterism, the 'Saints of Satan' embodying a devilish inversion and mimicry of the Sapta-Rishi of Vedic tradition or the 7 Apkallu in Mesopotamian lore who are associated with the constellation of Ursa Major – this infernal sense is conveyed in the connection of Set-Typhon with this constellation and from the seven tenebrous centres which are its terrestrial correlative the 'Saints of Satan' beam forth the sinister influences of the Counter-Initiation from their towers, manipulating, disorientating and controlling the minds of profane humankind with their malefic power, never more so than in our own benighted era.

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occultism¹² with Guénon's perceptive remarks about the traits of the Counter-Initiation and without doubt deeper connections, linkages and manipulations are active beneath the apparent surface of things.¹³ The devilish inversion of spiritual observances, prayers and rituals at the infernal Sabbath¹⁴ attests to this blasphemous degeneration and the bizarre dissimulations, perversions and counterfeits of the eucharist, sacraments of baptism and suchlike which were reported as being enacted by gnosticizing sects, heretics and witches alike evince this same 'inverted spirituality' which becomes rife in the present age of darkness. Who can confidently deny that in our own day and age we are surrounded by and immersed in just such a 'perpetual sinister carnival' of infernal disorder, actualising the 'lowest possibilities of the being' and presided over by the malefic power of the Adversary?

These tenebrous phenomenon of disorder, darkness, delusion and dissolution, manifesting in accord with ontological necessity the infinite possibilities actualised by the play of the Principle appearing to become 'other' (even to the limit of metaphysical absurdity or impossibility) than That which it Is, are what the Gospel calls the 'signs of the times'. We should accordingly be neither overly surprised, disturbed nor seduced by them but in this respect let us ever heed the

¹² As a distorted, infernal and inverted caricature of the true initiates (e.g. the *Ikhwan as Safa* or 'Friends of Loyalty' - Guenon remarks upon the recurring use of the elements denoting 'Purity' such as Arabic *Safa* or Greek *Katharos* in this initiatory context of esoterism such as *Tasawwuf* or *Sufiyya*) the counter-initiates and their minions, characterized by 'luciferian' and satanic revolt and inversion, constitute the 'Friends of Iblis', being those who in the terminology of the 'Rasa'il' of the Brethren of Purity are called the 'Brethren of Turbidity and Misfortune' (*Ikhwan al-Kadarwa 'l-Shaqa*).

¹³ The roots of the Counter-Initiation are to be traced back through mysterious channels of transmission across the ages to the distant epoch in which the fallen Watchers (Irin), the apostate angels of the Book of Enoch, descended to earth and intermingled with the 'daughters of men', giving birth to those antediluvian giants, the Nefilim and Gibborim, whose excesses in the Biblical account provoked the deluge. That witchcraft, sorcery and malign magic were part of the legacy of this 'luciferian' revolt should not surprise us. The Book of Enoch also relates explicitly that the antediluvian giants drank the blood of all living things: '*The giants...devoured mankind. And they began to sin...and to devour one anothers flesh, and drink the blood.*' (Book of Enoch, ch 7. v.4-5). The literal 'blood-thirstiness' of the giants inevitably identifies them, as co-identical with the revolted Kshatriya, with the demonic vampire whose name, the Slavonic *vampiru* derives from Old Bactrian *vyambara* meaning a devil, a minion of Ahriman, a *Druj*. Again the end of the year-cycle, the Dodekameron or 'Twelve Nights' at midwinter, is also a period traditionally associated with the roaming forth of vampires/ werewolves (*varcolaci* or *voukodlaki* who drink the blood of the moon during eclipses and whose name derives from terms, such as the Old Norse *vargr*, relating to the lycanthropic symbolism of wolf-skins, traits typifying warriorsodalities such as the Ulfedhnar who donned 'wolf-shirts' [*vargstakkar*] in the ancient Norse culture, putting one in mind of the titanic Fenris-wolf of the Eddas who breaks free at the end of the world, the apocalyptic 'wolf-age'. Olaus Magnus in 'Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus' [1555] describes the depredations of werewolves in Prussia, Livonia and Lithuania on Christmas night, the close of the year-cycle).

¹⁴ Montague Summers gives numerous examples of such profanations and mockeries from the '*wafer of sacramental bread, having the devil's name stamped thereon instead of Jesus Christ*' found in the chamber of Alice Kyteler at Kilkenny in 1324 to the account of Gentian le Clerc of Orleans in 1614 who '*had often seen the devil's priest elevate the host and chalice, of which both were black*'. 'Witchcraft and Black Magic', London 1946, p295. Summers identifies these sacrileges with so-called 'gnostic masses' from antiquity to the presentday, the subversion of Eucharistic rites in the pseudo-sacraments of contemporary neo-gnosticism being of the most marked relevance in this respect.

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teaching of Jesus: *‘Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!’*¹⁵

¹⁵ Matthew 18:6-7