

The dissolution of Germanic racial care by medieval Christianity

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In the following, we will not examine whether the church teachings to which the Germanic peoples were to be converted could still adequately represent the pure teachings of the Galilean Jesus. This original teaching, as scientific biblical criticism has shown, can hardly ever be adequately understood. In any case, Christianity came to the Germanic people as an essentially alien, oriental teaching. That it was intended as a teaching for orientals is perhaps already shown by Jesus' words that he had not come to abolish the Jewish law, and may also be indicated by words such as Matthew 10:5 and 6; 15:21; 15:26, which indicate that Jesus only wanted to address his preaching to the Jews. (The words 'Go and teach all nations' have been shown to be inauthentic, a later addition.) The question of the rapacious direction of Christianity can, however, remain undiscussed here, since we shall only consider how the church teachings—which are by no means the same as original Christianity—must have influenced the Germanic racial cultivation since the age of the Frankish wars of apostasy against the pagan Germanic people.

Since the zeal for conversion, which stands for a faith as an oriental phenomenon, eradicated as far as possible all evidence of the pagan past in contrast to the characteristically Nordic tolerance of the Indo-European form of faith, hardly any evidence has survived about the effect of the collision of church teachings with Germanic tradition on the Germanic racial cultivation. It is therefore necessary to attempt a fundamental comparison of both religious worlds with regard to this racial cultivation, a comparison which, in the interests of brevity, must be somewhat rough and schematic,

especially since the reality of human life can also combine ideas from contradictory spiritual worlds with one another to form the most diverse balances. In reality, the struggle between the spiritual worlds described continues to this day, and the Christianity of both major Christian denominations is no longer the Christianity of the early Middle Ages preached to the Germanic peoples and its adherents in the then 'racial chaos of the Mediterranean countries'.

Medieval Christianity initially opposed the barriers between peoples and avarice as being contrary to God: here there is neither Jew nor Greek, here there is neither slave nor free, as Paul said in Galatians 3:28. This was certainly said in relation to otherworldly values: towards God there is neither lord nor slave, neither free nor unfree. The New Testament is also indifferent to the slave question, and this is due to logical thinking, because all earthly circumstances are of no importance compared to otherworldly values, except that wealth can detract from otherworldly values. Furthermore, the slavery question and the class question could not gain any significance in an eschatological otherworldly belief, i.e. a belief in an imminent end to the world and the coming of the Kingdom of God. But when this end of the world did not occur, a worldly conclusion was drawn from such statements as Paul had expressed: the abolition of national and racial barriers, of the barriers between free and unfree. Paul taught the Athenians (Acts 17:26) that all people were created from one blood: *ex uno sanguine*, as the Vulgate translated, the wording of which became binding Holy Scripture for the Germanic peoples through the conversion in the West.

In Athens, this message of equality was not a new doctrine, for the late Hellenes, a confused, degenerate mixture, thought the same way for the most part. They were, at least in the cities, also mostly descendants of slaves of the earlier, now extinct Hellenes and descendants of the immigrated foreigners (Metoics), and such populations always tend towards the doctrine of equality, which is intended to justify or conceal their descent. Likewise, the Jews, from whose spiritual training Paul came, in Hellenistic and Roman times liked to spread doctrines of equality wherever they were opposed by a traditional consciousness of the other's species. Jews in particular were involved in the reinterpretation of a term of Indo-European origin such as *humanitas* from a goal concept of full humanity and success in a national sense to a catchphrase concept of a 'humanity idea' that abolished all differences in ancestry. However, the *ex uno sanguine* was now preached to the Germanic peoples who still lived entirely in the racial tradition of the Indo-Europeans, and indeed as a religious obligation written down in the Holy Scripture.

The grave finds may well give the impression of a rapid racial cross-breeding; but, as always in such cases, the tradition of a certain racial separation, only gradually fading away, probably continued for several centuries, even though church doctrines rejected such a separation. First of all, the occurrence of non-Nordic forms in the graves could only indicate an equally careful burial of the free and the unfree classes, whereas previously only the free had been buried more carefully in the row graves. Gölder also suspects such a process before the actual racial cross-breeding: With the introduction of Christianity, a change of this kind began in all graves in Germany, which can only be explained by the fact that the brachycephalic (short-headed) people, who had long existed alongside the non-Germanic type as serfs and servants, were gradually no longer buried separately. In pre-Christian times, unfree people and foreigners were buried separately.

The church often made serfs into clergy, thereby raising them to the status of free men. Some bishops appear to have admitted serfs into the clergy precisely because of their greater docility. B. Hölder refers to chapter 119 of the decisions of the Synod of Aachen in 816-17 to support this assumption. In the Frankish Empire: priests were mainly taken from the serf class, because a free man could not become a priest without the king's permission. In the 11th and 12th centuries, however, celibacy among the lower clergy became the norm, which again inhibited the reproduction of the families raised to the status of free men.

In many areas of Sweden and Norway the racial barrier between free and unfree fell much later than in southern Germania, because Christianity penetrated there much later. In Sweden there were many unfree servants who had been imported from Finland, from areas of predominantly non-Nordic race. Sweden seems to have had the largest number of unfree people around 1200, although by then many people had already been freed under southern Christian influence. But there were still many unfree people in Sweden up until the 14th century, most of them probably in Uppland, the region opposite the Finnish coast, where the need for servants was greater due to the seat of the kingdom and the estates of the powerful large farmers. In some areas of Uppland there are today relatively many short-headed people with broad faces, pronounced cheekbones and features of the Baltic race, which are more common in Finland. When the serfs in Sweden became free around 1200 and later, these people moved to the undeveloped and inhospitable areas, as there was still enough cultivated land. In many cases, the names of settlements and villages indicate that such places were cleared and founded by freedmen. But in these areas, the people are mostly darker in skin, hair and eyes than other Swedes, and at the same time more shy, simple, distrustful and religious in their souls, and not as open and frank as other Swedes. Thus, according to research by Rihtén, despite some later mixing of the populations, there is still a racial difference between the descendants of former freemen and those of former serfs.

Another abolition of the idea of ancestry and ethnic origin was brought about by the idea of redemption—this idea itself was such a characteristic idea of the Near Eastern racial soul that Claus combined the spiritual traits of the people of the Near Eastern race to form the image of the ‘redemptive man’. The redemption taught by the church should, however—and this is the essential difference compared to the traditional racial cultivation of Germanic culture—at the same time bring about a liberation and rejection of species, tribe, language and people, which here appeared as something restrictive and degrading. The ‘Revelation of John’ (5:9) taught that God had redeemed people through his blood from every tribe, every language and every people (*ex omni tribu et lingua et populo et natione*).

A Jew of the Hellenistic-Roman era could, under certain circumstances, see his nationality as something repulsive and something to be discarded. There were many at that time who detested the Jewish people; there were also some Jews who saw their people as inferior to the Hellenes and Romans. Josephus, for example, the Jewish historian on the side of the Romans besieging Jerusalem, felt this way as a citizen of the world with a Hellenistic education. But now the Germanic peoples were supposed to see their tribe, their language and their way of life as something from which they had to be redeemed. Through priestly instruction, the spirit of the East now influenced the West.

In my work *Piety of a Nordic Kind* (1934) I tried to show why the idea of redemption in all its interpretations and effects must have seemed completely alien to Germanic culture at first: redemption from what evil and to what other life? Midgard, the world of sensible order, the cultivated homeland, was his evil, was in fact something divine, and Utgard, the power of the anti-divine, was to be fought on the side of the god. There could not be a better life than the combative life on this earth and in friendship with God. It was precisely as a pious person that the Germanic people possessed the security described above and, as a nobleman and descendant of select aristocratic peasant families, the certainty of good nature. Now Midgard was to become for him a scene of original sin and frailty in need of redemption, his very nature bound to the disgusting ‘flesh’ that leads to sin, something sinful from which a soul separated from the body must strive for an afterlife. All human nature was corrupted in its infancy, ‘evil from birth’ (Genesis 8:2) and created from ‘sinful seed’ (Psalm 51:7). According to this doctrine, it was no longer possible, as it seemed to the Indo-Europeans, that something divine could manifest itself in human races; rather, everything human was inherited, unworthy before God and therefore dependent on redemption, redemption through a blood-stained head.

For the reasons stated above, no evidence has survived of the effect such teachings had on the Germanic mind. This mind probably opposed them with a similar resistance to that felt by Goethe, who rebelled against the doctrine of original sin and wanted to see certain phenomena recognized as an ‘inherited virtue.’ We also know of Goethe’s indignation at Kant’s idea of ‘radical evil’ in man—Goethe was certainly too good a connoisseur of reality to overlook the fact that the majority of his contemporaries could probably provide examples of something ‘radical evil.’ but he refused, out of what one might call an Indo-European feeling, to understand this ‘sad evil’ as something necessary and essential to the human species and to all types of people, and believed that Kant had introduced this view into his teachings in order to attract Christians to his philosophy as well, as he wrote in his letter to Herder on June 7, 1793.

The Germanic peoples may have felt something like this in relation to the medieval church teachings. An idea such as that expressed by Luther in his baptismal book (1526), that the child before baptism is possessed by the devil and a child of the devil; further an idea such as that expressed by the Augsburg Confession (*Confessio Augustana*) and the Formula of Concordia (*Formula Concordiae*), the obligatory foundations of the Germanic Church, that a person conceived and born of the devil cannot have a true faith in God by nature; that there is nothing found and uncorrupted in the body and soul of man and that he is therefore not only unwilling but completely incapable of doing good and that his whole nature, person and being is completely corrupted by original sin. Such ideas, in contrast to Germanic-Indo-Germanic thinking, can only have entered the minds of the descendants of converted Germanic peoples after centuries of appropriate interpretation. Individual Germanic tribes have certainly tried to interpret the church teachings in a native sense; one such attempt, which may have seemed strange enough to most Germanic tribes of the time, is represented by the Old Saxon *Geltand-Bichtung* of the 9th century. The sober-minded among the Germanic noble farmers—and sober thinking was always widespread among the farmers of predominantly Nordic origins—may have initially perceived the church teachings somewhat in the same way as Frederick the Great did according to his living will of 1768.

The church’s devaluation of all earthly life extends to all parts of the meaningful order. Sexual life was desecrated because it now belonged to the respected ‘flesh’. The woman, the mistress of the house as guardian of the racial heritage, became an object that could ignite carnal desires. This dissolved the order of procreation described above. Those who had become circumcised for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven were considered particularly pious (Matthew 19:127). Origen, the great teacher of the Church, had castrated himself. The degradation of the body, which was so contrary to the Indo-European veneration of the body, went so far that Athanasius (born around 297 in Alexandria) praised the Egyptian Antonius, a saint, because he no longer washed his feet, and Saint Agnes (in the 4th century) so disrespected her body for the sake of her soul striving for the afterlife that she no longer took a bath. The Indo-Europeans had always valued physical and mental health as a great asset. Wholeness, health and joy of life were wished for in the greeting: *Heil* (in English whole, entirely ‘vale’ or ‘chaire’). Saint Steronymus (340-420) taught: ‘One should conquer the flesh! A face radiant with health is the sign of a defiled soul. Health should be a danger to the soul, physical beauty, an expression of refined nature, a work of the devil to incite the flesh to fornication’.

Of course, such teachings never took hold of the entire Germanic people, as they were too deeply rooted in the aristocratic peasant nature and the everyday life of the peasant warrior. Only a few people completely fell for the church teachings, which always proclaimed a monastic life rather than a truly Christian life. But these teachings did dissolve the high-minded and ultimately ignoble beliefs of the Germanic people, so that some of the Germanic customs could only continue to exist as a tolerated secular tradition, while this customs before the conversion were actually an expression of Germanic piety. Nowadays, much of the tradition was considered ‘pagan and reprehensible’ and

gradually dissolved in the course of the medieval centuries or became a class tradition of the nobility alone, which increasingly lost its original, biological meaning based on the laws of life.

The Midgard concept, which included the order of procreation that was so significant in terms of life law and race, and all the noble peasant values described by Neckel, was bound to be quickly disintegrated by the church teachings; the security of the world was bound to dissolve. This disintegration extended to the value of home, which was at the core of the Midgard idea. In his book *Usketische Heimatlosigkeit* (1930), Campenhausen described the church value of *xeniteia*, the turning away from home and the holy emigration to foreign lands, which was opposed to the idea of home, the peregrinatio, as this turning away from home was called in the West. The value of homelessness as a means of healing the soul emerged above all in Irish-Anglo-Saxon Christianity. In the rest of the West this teaching later faded into the background, but peregrinatio was still practiced and practiced as a particularly sanctifying form of feudal conduct in the High Middle Ages. But the church's devaluation of the homeland struck the heart of the Midgard concept. The monk Otfried von Weisenburg (in Elfass) wrote his *Gbangelienbuch* in 868, in which he explains (I, 18) that our homeland is paradise, that we humans live on this earth like outcasts in a foreign land because of our sins, and that only through repentance and turning away from the world can we regain our true homeland.

This was the exact opposite of Germanic belief—aversion to home and clan had become a sign of the greatest piety. For the Germanic people, maintaining clan ties was the safeguarding of peace that created prosperity. The word peace originally meant the prosperity of all growth in clan settlements through clan order. The most sinister thing for the Germanic people was clan division. Grönbech has convincingly demonstrated this. Therefore, even with the most appropriate interpretation, a word from Jesus such as that recorded in Matthew 10:35 must have seemed outrageous to the Germanic people, who still thought in terms of clanship: I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be his own household. For the church, such a word was confirmation of the spiritual value of turning away from the world. However, such a turning away from the world also meant a turning away from the idea of ancestry and clan care.

The idea of descent from noble peasant ancestors of one's own tribe was further opposed as church teaching by the idea of a connection, at least of the souls, to the ancestors of the Jewish people. In Paul's letter to the Galatians (3:27) it was taught: 'But if you are Christ's, you are Abraham's seed. The Jews were now to be regarded as the chosen people from whom salvation comes' (John 4:22), as the people chosen by God, because Old Testament terms such as Elohim or Jahn (ehoba), terms for the special god of the Hebrew tribes, were translated by the Holy Scripture, the Vulgata, as *dominus* or *deus*, as 'lord' or 'god', thus no longer with the designation as a special god, but as a one and only god and all-god who encompasses all peoples and obliges all to his commandments. It is precisely in this tacit equation of Hebrew names for gods with names for the all-god himself that the 'great deception' that was disastrous in the history of faith and to which Delitzsch has pointed out emphatically is touched upon.

For the racial cultivation of the Germanic peoples, the medieval church teachings not only abolished the barrier of oppression between free and unfree, but above all degraded marriage, which had represented something particularly venerable within the divine order of Indo-European culture. According to Paul (1 Corinthians 7:2), marriage was there to help avoid the souring of people; but more sacred than married life was celibacy and mortification of the senses (1 Corinthians 7:1). This degradation of marriage can be traced from the early medieval church fathers through the entire Middle Ages. The rites of monks and nuns were considered the highest morality, and a doctrine of the 'immaculate conception'—even if this doctrine was not as easy to interpret as the layman thought it would be—could mean nothing other than that, conversely, every conception by a woman of his

people was to be regarded as tainted. An exception in the evaluation of marriage is Clement of Alexandria (died around 220), who, for the first time after the spread of Christianity, again established marriage as a duty towards the people and state, as it was among the peoples of the Indo-European language, and who even saw the purpose of marriage as the procreation of well-behaved children, the *entekechia*. But here, and partly in Tertullian's views on marriage, Indo-European thought still comes to the fore in an indirect and weakened form, the Hellenic and Hellenistic spirit of the Stoa and the writings of the Hellenic Plutarch, who was still essentially Indo-European in his views.

The degradation of marriage was logically linked to the degradation of women. It has often been claimed in the past that Christianity was the first to teach the Germanic peoples respect for women. In 1913, the church historian Boehmer attributed things to the Germanic peoples such as various kinds of fornication, respect and enslavement of the female sex and other shameful acts—all of which were traits of human behavior that were demonstrably only introduced into Germania from the south and east. An expert on the Germanic world such as Neckel was right to reject such opinions as untenable in his work *Love and Marriage among the Pre-Christian Germanic Peoples* (1934). In fact, medieval Christianity caused a wave of denigration of the female sex, while the woman as mistress of the house (*déspoina, domina, matrona*) had occupied a low position among all Indo-Europeans, as long as the Nordic racial soul was dominant in their peoples, in the reality of everyday life a much more respected position than the various legal records of the peoples of the Indo-European language would suggest. Among the Germanic peoples there was also the view that women had 'something sacred and prescient' (Tacitus: *aliquid sanctum et providum*). 'They do not disdain their nature and pay attention to their answers,' is how Tacitus (*Germania*, 8) describes the respect that Germanic men had for women.

In church doctrine, this is opposed by the *mulier tacent in ecclesin* (1 Corinthians 14:34/35) and the duty of women to cover their heads during church services, because otherwise they could arouse lust (1 Corinthians 11:5 and 6). For both church fathers, woman, to whom Paul (1 Timothy 2:14) had ascribed the origin of sin, appears as a *templum aedificatum super oloacum*, as the 'mother of sin' and 'source of sin', and the Council of Macon, which was held in the 7th century under the Merovingian Frankish kings, discussed whether woman should be regarded as a human being at all. How much abomination the counterhammer, judging according to medieval church doctrine, ascribes to the female sex can be read in this legal document.

The innate veneration of women by the descendants of the Germanic tribes of the early Middle Ages was able to have an impact in the High Middle Ages in the veneration of the Virgin Mary, and from such expressions of the veneration of women it found its way into lovemaking and into that *dolce stil nuovo*, of which Dante's poem *Vita Nuova* may be the finest example. Here the blonde Dante sang of the blonde Beatrice out of a characteristically Nordic feeling of love. The veneration of women that broke through again could now hardly be expressed as simply and grandly as it had been among the Germanic tribes, but rather took on a more or less affected character or experienced a certain romantic exaggeration; but above all: this veneration of women was on the edge of an abyss, the aroused feeling of sin, the fear of the air of the flesh, which for church teachings constituted the essential aspect of the relationship between the sexes. Hence, among the minnesingers, who in their youth had sung of the joy of 'this world' and of love between the sexes, so often in all of them the fearful change to the rejection of 'Lady World'. In church art, 'Lady World' was represented as a woman, alluring from the front, tempting to sin, and full of noble animals behind. When the world (for the Germanic people Midgard, the cultivated homeland, the field of all the nurturing industriousness of man and of all the national struggle with the god against Utgard, the epitome of everything anti-divine) as the world understood by the Germanic people as Midgard, was represented by the church as this 'Lady World', when Luther also saw in nature only a devilish power that seduces and mocks man, a 'woman of honor who may bark against her god', the source of that feeling of life from which the Germanic racial cultivation had sprung.

The Jewish-Christian world of faith thus attempted to separate the Germanic people from the context of the world order and relegated them to an afterlife in comparison to which ancestral 'earthly values' lost their meaning. Little by little, the whole attitude to life of the medieval West was thus reduced precisely in those who were capable of absorbing spiritual values and were willing to live according to these values. The coarser-minded people lived without deeper struggles of conscience in the various compromises between church doctrine and inherited nature that were possible and tolerated by the church. However, a decline in the overall attitude to life in the Middle Ages is undetectable and continues until, in the humanism of the Renaissance, the best of the Western peoples sensed the ancient Indo-European attitude to life again through the testimonies of Hellenic and Roman intellectual life, and until later, in the era of Winckelmann, Goethe, Schiller and Wilhelm von Humboldt, the Indo-European spirit was once again ignited by the great testimonies of the past, and until finally, with the Romantic era, native Germanic culture was rediscovered. But at the time of the revival, the Indo-Germanic and Germanic sense of what is humanly noble was no longer valid in the West, as a result of church teachings, no longer the focus on the noble, the will to improve life, to cultivate all growth values, but rather a tendency towards a stunted life prevailed in all spiritual expressions, precisely because a stunted life was a better preparation for the afterlife in this world of afflictions. According to such teachings, people should not feel at all secure in this world.



Jan Luyken's 1698 engraving of the quintessential subversive Jew, Paul, dictating his famous Letter to the Romans to his scribe (image and this footnote added by César Tort, editor of *The West's Darkest Hour*).

Baier also saw the price of poverty, which must have seemed to the hard-working German peasant the price of inability to work at a time when there was still enough free land to clear and cultivate. For him, poverty was the appropriate fate of the incapable, not the state in which a person was closer to the Kingdom of God. Baier is the price of the weak and sick, the suspicion found in appearance as a sign of spiritual contamination (see p. 377). In the Epistle to the Romans (12:16) Paul warns: Do not aim at high things, but lower yourselves to the lowly—this was the negation of Indo-Germanic values such as pride, the drive for power, the joy of owning land, of competing with all the forces of the region. The medieval pious person was led away from these Indo-Germanic values to values of courage, i.e. according to the root of the word (serve): of being a servile person, of being homeless, celibate and without possessions.

This transformation of values through the ecclesiastical teachings of the Middle Ages was characterized by one of the best experts on pagan Germanic culture, Andreas Heusler:

It is deeply unscriptural that one openly and joyfully admits to pride and the drive for power. Anyone who has what it takes should want to be the first in their region. The sentence that he who humbles himself finds no place in these hearts. The will to power has the affection of the narrator and the listener. With compassion one follows the self-confident man who is bowed down by fate. Something new in the Christian stories is the look of satisfaction that touches the fall of the powerful. To the extent that bias and malicious joy prevail in the sagas, it is directed less against the tyrant and oppressor than against the coward and the quiet, even against the upstart.

The teachings of the medieval church thus dissolved the Germanic focus on a human image of spiritual perfection and a noble lifestyle, and instead taught the characteristics of those who had been described by the Germanic people as *litilmenn*, as people with small souls. The new doctrine thus eliminated the original model of the volatile, noble and beautiful person. This had to have an effect over the centuries and, together with other historical forces, resulted in us Germans being racially and genetically different from the Germanic peoples.

The racial history of the Germanic people as such ends with the conversion of the Germanic people to Christianity. It begins with the period between the 9th and 11th centuries when the barrier between the free and the unfree, here earlier, there later, at the latest in Lower Saxony and in Scandinavia, there only completely in the 14th century, the mass history of the individual Germanic-speaking tribes, in Germany the racial history of the German people, fell. The German people of the later Middle Ages and the modern era already presents itself as a selection result of those centuries in which the racial breeding of the Germanic people, which had returned to Indo-Germanic roots of the Neolithic period, had been dissolved.