

Antoine Gay - A Possession in Focus

Antoine Gay, 1790 – 1871, was French and an extremely devout Catholic. There is testimony to the effect that he was a victim of demonic possession. He was supposedly possessed by Isacaron the chief devil of impurity. There were two others - a demon of lying and one of avarice. Despite this testimony looking good - looking good is one thing but being good is another - no exorcism was ever arranged for him. Exorcism was refused despite his request for it. He had been committed to an asylum for being abusive to the public while he was working as a joiner in Lyons.

The information about the case comes from Evidence of Satan in the Modern World by Father Leon Cristiani. I am selecting pieces of his work on Gay and my comments are in **bold**.

Friar Burnoud wrote the following to the bishop, 'We have examined Master Gay of Lyons three times, each session lasting from one to two hours. We consider it very probable that this man is possessed by a devil. Our opinion is based on the following grounds: (1) he has disclosed several secret things which he had no means of knowing; (2) there were visible signs of discontent when we pronounced various formulae and prayers of the ritual in Latin. As it is undeniable that Gay does not know Latin, we can only attribute these contortions which, in view of the circumstances, had something preternatural about them, to the presence of a higher intelligence; (3) we questioned him several times in Latin and since the replies were made in French through the mouth of Master Gay, this seems to indicate a knowledge of Latin on the part of that higher intelligence; (4) the good faith, virtue and sincerity of Master Gay are vouched for in numerous testimonials delivered to him by worthy and reliable persons. If these testimonies are true, Gay is not playing tricks: in that case, he must be possessed.'

'I saw Fr. Burnoud, when he was priest-in-charge of Vinay: he told me that after having examined M. Gay very carefully, was convinced that he was truly possessed.'

It is not often that anybody's possession is checked out to that extent. Usually there is no paperwork to justify the diagnosis. Or if there is, it is locked away. This is an utter disgrace. It is an even bigger disgrace that religious people praise a religion that acts so underhand and irresponsibly. Nothing ever goes to peer or even theological journals! The possessed are in fact victims of drama kings who want to believe the devil or one of his minions is possessing them.

The doctor had something to say about Gay too.

Dr. Pictet, on 12th November 1843:

'We, the undersigned, doctor of medicine, residing at the Croix Rousse, certify that Master Gay was presented to us for examination by the Abbe Collet and by M. Nicod, vicar of the town, in accordance with the instructions of Mgr. the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons, that he should be put under medical observation. Having therefore observed M. Gay scrupulously every day for four months, at all times and in all situations, such as at church, at mass, accompanying him whilst he made the Stations of the Cross, in public and personal conversation, at table, on walks, etc., we have not been able to discover the least sign of moral or physical weakness. On the contrary, he enjoys perfect health of body and mind, an uncommon strength of judgment and reasoning, which never shows the least deterioration, not even in the extraordinary crises which occur so frequently and so unexpectedly under the influence of some occult power, which we are naturally unable to detect by medical means, and which activates his body and speaks through his mouth, independently of his will. 'We certify further that having by prayer and by a total abnegation of ourselves, our science and our own reason made common cause with M. Gay to implore the assistance of the Holy Spirit, we remain convinced that his extraordinary state can only be attributed to possession. This conviction is reinforced by the fact that during our first interview with M. Gay, that extraordinary thing which speaks through his mouth revealed the inmost secrets of our heart, told us the story of our life from the age of twelve onwards, giving details that are known only to God, our confessor, and ourselves. And we have seen the same thing happen with other persons, many of whom have been converted.'

So Gay seems sinless. A better explanation is that it is easy to be sinless when you can be bad occasionally and blame a demon for it. The dark side of human nature will always find an outlet and it is there no matter how good the person acts. Human nature does not like goodness very much. It prefers goodness as it wants to understand it. Humanity wants a distortion of goodness, an impure goodness, and prefers it to goodness as it really is. It wants to decide what is good even if it is not really good but it must however look reasonably good. The person needs to be seen as good and to fit in his or her community. If a person seems very good you can be sure they have some outlet for their evil side. Sometimes very good people are in evil religions because they want the religion to mislead and

hurt people for them and do the dirty work for them. They may not command the evil directly but they feel they share in it from a distance and that is enough.

Interestingly even Jesus Christ was never able to give people detailed information about the skeletons in their closet. **Gay reportedly was! It certainly shows that demons have the knowledge to manipulate evidence. The lesson is that if the doctor is right we cannot really trust anything or anybody.**

If Gay was a fraud, he proves the lengths people can go to to make themselves interesting. And he did it for that reason only. There is no evidence that he benefited otherwise from his possession.

In the letter from M. Houzelot to M. Blanc, mentioned above, we find the following lines:

'I have seen priests ask the devil very difficult questions. He resolved them immediately, as they themselves have admitted.... I have seen the devil weeping as he was forced to admit the truths of the Christian religion, or to give good advice, or proofs of possession. "The greatest suffering that God can inflict on me," he would say, "is to be obliged to destroy my own work." '

The demon preaches Catholic theology. He is forced to do it he says. Now would God have the right even to degrade a demon that way? Traditional Christian doctrine forbids vengeance but says it is God's job to take revenge and he does so in Hell. So the Christian answer should be yes. Today though under humanistic influences, most Christians would say no. They are not sure enough of their faith being true to go that far. Gay's demon was named Isacaron.

Whilst Fr. Chiron was in this woman's house, he was shown another unfortunate woman, nicknamed Chiquette, but whose real name was the Catalan for Francoise. Chiquette, who was thirty-six, was dumb, but she was possessed by a devil called Madeste, who was far from dumb. A dispute of extreme violence immediately arose between Madeste and Isacaron, the devil who inhabited Gay. Fr. Chiron has related the story himself:

'No sooner had he encountered the presence of Isacaron than a remarkably violent dialogue arose between the two fallen angels. The two devils sounded like mad dogs. They spoke a totally unknown language, very softly and we understood nothing. I was later informed by Isacaron, who translated the dispute for me, that it was on a question of precedence, as to which was the greater of the two. They insulted and poured scorn on each other. I was often obliged to stand between them to prevent their coming to blows.

'The two possessed, it is needless to say, had never met each other, but the devils in possession knew each other well. Six times during the following days there occurred the same violent disputes, in the same unknown language, and in the presence of several witnesses.'

Why would two demons use a tongue that nobody understands and then talk low? Sceptics would say that they were making it up and the reason for the low tone was when they were talking in French. Guy and this lady could have been communicating information to each other to make it sound like that it was two demons meeting up who knew each other.

And possessed people are super strong at times so why is it so easy for the priest to keep the two "possessed" people apart?

The episode is scary for those who don't want people to do evil and blame demons for doing it. It opens the door to that excuse.

And it stands to reason that Satan even if he is the most powerful devil should not be able to control all the demons. And as hell, the dwelling place of demons, is said to be a place of hate it is natural to suppose that demons hate each other and only co-operate when they agree on what mischief to get up to.

Now let the devout Isacaron speak!

Homage to Mary from a devil

O Mary, Mary, masterpiece of God's handiwork: God has made nothing greater than thee! Incomparable creation, admiration of all the heavenly host! All honour thee, all obey thee and acknowledge thee as Mother of the Creator. Thou art raised above the angels and above all the court of Heaven: thou art seated near to God, thou art the Temple of Deity, thou hast carried in thy womb all that is strongest and greatest and most powerful and most loving! ...

Mary, thou hast received in thy virginal womb Him who created thee, thou art Virgin and Mother, there is none to be

compared with thee. After God, thou art the greatest; thou art the Strong Woman, there is more glory to God in thee than in the heavenly host

In thee there has been no stain, Anathema be they that deny that thou art Virgin and Mother; thou wast conceived without sin, thou art immaculate ...!

I praise thee, O Mary, but all my praises of thee ascend unto God, the author of all good. After the Sacred Heart of Jesus there is no heart to be compared with thine. O loving heart! O tender heart! Thou wilt not abandon even the most thankless or the most guilty of mortals. Thy heart is overflowing with kindness, even to the unfortunate who merit chastisement alone, yet thou obtainest for them grace and compassion: the worst of sinners is converted by thee!

O, if all the inhabitants of the earth should know thee! If they could understand thy tenderness, thy power, thy goodness, not one of them should perish! All that turn to thee in trust and hope and pray to thee continually, whatever their state may be, thou wilt save them, thou wilt bless them eternally.... I am compelled to humble myself at thy feet and implore thy pardon for all the outrages I inflict on the one I possess!

I confess today, one of the most solemn feasts of the whole year, that thy divine Son compels me to say that it is the most solemn of all the feasts.

Thus spoke Isacaron, the devil of impurity, through the mouth of Antoine Gay, and the words were noted by M. Houzelot, who has handed them down. After this enforced confession, we understand more clearly why Mary, five years later, should have answered Bernadette's plea to reveal her name, by saying: 'I am the Immaculate Conception!'

The Abbe Toccanier, assistant to the saintly Cure d'Ars, was present when this memorable panegyric to the Blessed Virgin was pronounced by Isacaron.

It occurred to M. Houzelot to ask Isacaron to dictate more slowly all that he had said, so that he could write it down, and the devil complied.

But what is astonishing, and almost unparalleled in previous records, is the admission of the devil himself that he had been given a mission, which he must fulfil whether he liked it or not. This was no single assertion, but one made ten times a day: 'I am compelled to praise thee, O sovereign Lord,' he cried. 'All creatures are compelled to acknowledge thee, to acknowledge thy power, thy goodness and also thy terrible justice!'

'I, Isacaron, prince of the devils of impurity, am compelled by Him who is everything, to see that all these many things are written down.'

At this time, in fact, the persons present, and particularly M. Houzelot, were constantly making notes of all that he said. And the voice continued:

'Must I then serve as an instrument for man's instruction, when my chief delight is in their destruction?'

'I am constrained to speak of things which seem to astonish even the wisest: I speak to the glory of the Almighty, to the shame and confusion of infernal spirits.'

'It is Heaven's will, which all must obey, that I, the devil Isacaron, possessing the body of Gay, should speak through his mouth, and through his limbs, make horrible grimaces, utter terrifying cries. I, who am forced by God to give daily proof of my presence in this man.'

'O great Master, how thou dost make me suffer. I am compelled to dismantle my ramparts, my strongholds. Cursed be the day when I entered this body. I should never have thought it possible that I should be thus forced to labour for the glory of the All-Highest, to labour for the conversion of souls!'

There is abundant proof that Isacaron wished to be relieved of his task, that he would have liked the exorcism to take place so that he could depart. One day, when someone was talking about Fr. de Ravignan, who had been appointed to succeed Lacordaire in charge of the Conferences de Notre-Dame, the devil called out through Gay's mouth: 'That is a man! That is a priest! You shall tell him to say a mass for the deliverance of the possessed, and to have my power over his body removed before his deliverance.'

Isacaron is forced to say prayers. He wants to be cast out. Why? Because God forced him into Gay's body to testify to the Catholic faith and to bring people to conversion. It is odd how Catholics are happy to worship a God who is more than just responsible for possessions but who is to blame for them. It is God who is to be exorcised. Whoever

says otherwise needs to look inside and see if they have a lack of empathy for those who endure torment at the hands of God.

God forces Isacaron to speak. Thus what he says is in fact the words God wants him to say. The revelations are claiming verbal inspiration. If they are verbally inspired then it is odd that the notion of verbal inspiration of the Bible is declining among Catholics.

A forced prayer is not a real prayer. So if God does force, the reason is that we will have the instructions in the prayer and be able to use it ourselves.

A sermon

The following scene was recorded by Brother Prime, of the Christian schools at Feurs (Loire).

Fr. Chiron, on his way from Lyons to Clermont-Ferrand with Antoine Gay, wrote to Prime that he would stop en route at Feurs, with a possessed man. When they arrived Brother Prime and the whole community stared at Fr. Chiron's travelling companion. What they saw was a very composed, obviously respectable and even affable man. The Brother could not believe his eyes. He whispered in Fr. Chiron's ear: 'Didn't you say you had a possessed man with you.'

But scarcely had the remark passed his lips when the expression of this obviously respectable man underwent a sudden change. 'Foaming at the mouth, his eyes bloodshot, his tone of voice made me blench,' wrote Brother Prime. "Don't you see me?" he asked. 'I believe,' added the Friar, 'that if Fr. Chiron had not supported me, I should have collapsed in terror.'

And it was always the same. Just when it was least expected poor Gay was suddenly involved in incredible contortions, throwing himself to the ground, or twirling on his heels without ever losing his balance. But although constitutionally a heavy man, he became endowed with extraordinary agility and suppleness. One day he aimed a kick with his left leg at the head of a very tall questioner, and recovered his stance as easily as an acrobat. Yet when scenes of fury were expected there was often another very sudden change. His eyes would fill with tears. The devil's voice became softer. From the same lips that had uttered such outrageous comments, there would issue a sermon, such as follows:

The evildoer is not happy. If one is full of oneself, one is full of a devilish spirit. We destroy men's souls through their senses. God makes use of men to test them. If you suffer affliction, receive it as an act of Grace. The Cross is preferable to all things. God carried the Cross for the salvation of men, and he makes those whom he loves carry it too.

The world believes that humility is weakness and incapacity: and I say that humility is power and grandeur. If you knew the misery of the reprobate, you would all be saints!

There is no language to describe the torments of the damned; there is no human mind able to comprehend them.

He who loves men more than God will not be loved by God. God allows misfortunes for the spiritual betterment of men; in order to bring them to himself and make them return to him. Never forget that crosses are better than honours.

We must understand that life is short and that we must endure our troubles in a spirit of penitence, as they came from God.

One cannot love God without loving one's neighbour. Happy are they who can leave all for God.

Ah, if only men could see how beautiful is a soul in a state of grace.

Happiness is not here below: he who possesses God possesses everything.

The rich should be the banker of the poor. God has put these riches into his hand to help his fellow men: he is God's business-man.

The rich man should despise himself and follow the teaching of our Saviour, who said: 'It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a man to enter the Kingdom of God when he is rich' (Mark X, 25).

But, strange to relate, Isacaron had no sooner pronounced these edifying remarks than he fell into a rage and began to blaspheme God, insult God's creatures, even insult himself. 'Woe to the proud,' he cried, 'Woe to me, Isacaron. It was pride, ingratitude, and disobedience that led to my rebellion and damnation.'

Again this is all orthodox Catholic belief. Isacaron then starts to blaspheme afterwards.

Notice he is honest enough to deny that God loves sinners and hates sins. God loving sinners as if they do not sin is an act of hate against those who do good. So God has to hate sinners in order to love the lovable.

Isacaron's reflections

Here are some further reflections by Isacaron on various subjects:

On Pilate: 'Pilate, as a judge, knew that he was condemning an innocent man, and yet the Devil drove him to condemn the sovereign Judge, the Judge of judges. Pilate, by washing his hands, soiled them.'

On Mary Magdalene (from whom, according to the Gospels, Our Lord drove out seven devils): 'Mary Magdalene is a very great saint, in whom one can put one's utmost trust. As soon as she had the good fortune to know God, her contrition was so great, her tears so abundant, that no devil could make her sin again. She is a model for all true penitents, who should make her their special advocate with God, for God grants great favour to those who invoke her aid.'

On meditation: 'If you meditate truly on the life of our Saviour and of his Blessed Mother, I defy you to commit the slightest sin against God.'

'Hunger, thirst, death, are nothing: only sin is to be feared.' On Christian perfection, replying to a lady who asked Isacaron to tell her the nature of Christian perfection, and the way to attain it, he said:

'To hold mortal sin in horror; not to commit even venial sins voluntarily; not to lose sight of the presence of God; to know how to humble oneself all the days of one's life, for pride is the worst of all vices; to set a good example and give good advice; to do penance, as the Forerunner demanded. And let him who is holy become still more holy.'

The demon teaches Christ's most hated and neglected doctrine that you must not care about dying or suffering but only about ruining your relationship with God. This is another way of saying love God with all your heart and soul and mind. Christ said this was the greatest commandment.

This commandment is evil for there is nothing wrong with a person who would die for their child but not for God. It could be ammunition for those who think that demons were behind the teachings and works of Christ.

Prayer to Mary

To conclude these aphorisms from so strange a source, here is a prayer to Mary, composed and dictated by the devil Isacaron.

Prayer

O divine Mary, I turn towards you In total trust, For you abandon no one. You who have at heart the salvation of man, to whom God refuses nothing that you ask him, take me under your powerful wing. If you deign to grant my humble prayers, all hell is harmless against me. You who are, in some way, the mistress of my fate, my fate is in your hands. If you abandon me I am lost without help! No, you are too good to neglect those who hope in you. Pray to the Holy Trinity for me and I am sure of my salvation! Ah, if I could make you known to all dwellers on earth, if I could proclaim your power everywhere! That which I cannot do myself I beg the Heavenly Hosts to do. Let even devils be obliged to proclaim that you are the masterpiece of God's works, that the power of God lies in your hands, that you are terrible to devils, and that all is subject to you. You are the incomparable, you alone are Virgin and Mother, you gave the world its Redeemer. You stand apart with St. Joseph. Thus you are more to be revered than all the angels and all the saints: You are truly divine. I trust in you, in the firm belief that the infernal powers cannot triumph over me. So be it! All the angels, all the saints bless you for ever! So be it!

Having made this prayer, we are told that the devil suddenly became jovial and, alluding to the fact that Antoine Gay had been shut up for three months as a madman at the Antiquaille in Lyons, remarked: 'They can go and look in all the asylums before they find a madman who can dictate a prayer like that!'

The demon says the prayer as if by force. Then when the force is lifted, he speaks for himself and refutes the notion that Gay is insane.

This is obviously orchestrated. If the demon hated Mary and would not pray to her for she helps people into Heaven he would not defend Gay's sanity. He would want people to think the prayer did not come from a demon but from a madman. If this was a real demon then the reason he was promoting Mary was because praying to her is praying to a demon in Hell and if it will not block your salvation it will certainly not help it. The New Testament gives no hint

that Mary was sinless. It implies she did terrible things and could be in Hell.

Conclusion: If you are going to deny that Gay is possessed then you have no reason to believe that anybody ever was. The episode however proves that faith in God is evil. But even if God's love is suspect does it follow that you should defy God? Many would say that he is the strong one so you have no choice but to follow him. He likes to be called love and he isn't but you still have to convince yourself that he is though you know he is not. This is the God of Gay. Is it the God of the Christians? You would need to see into every Christian heart to see. But it could be...

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