



Sorcery In Poitou: Two Satanic Essays: Gilles de Rais and Felicien Rops

Joris-Karl Huysmans

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The first notable literary advocate of the Satanist, alchemist and child-killer Gilles de Rais remains J-K Huysmans, famous for his novel *A Rebours* and its quintessential decadent, *Des Esseintes*. Huysmans' later novel *La-Bas* (1891), a virtual apology for Satanism, is threaded by a version of the de Rais story as narrated by the book's protagonist, Durtal. Punctuated by the author's own poetic interventions, this account depicts de Rais as an arch-decadent beset by demonic visions and ravening sexual manias - "the 15th century *Des Esseintes*". A most intriguing "sequel" to this examination of evil is now provided by the first ever English translation of Huysmans' pamphlet *SORCERY IN POITOU* (*La Sorcellerie En Poitou*, also known as *La Magie En Poitou*), published in 1897 in a limited edition for private circulation only. Described by Huysmans as a reductionist, non-fiction version of *La-Bas*, it demonstrates the ongoing fascination exerted by de Rais over the author. This special ebook edition of *SORCERY IN POITOU* also includes *Instrumentum Diaboli*, Huysmans' notorious essay on the Satanic artist Felicien Rops, whose work *The Sacrifice* is featured on the front cover.

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