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BRAM STOKER, AN 1885 SKETCH.



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## Editorial

Welcome to the latest issue of the Journal of Vampirology. Featured in this issue will be a critical analysis of Bram Stoker's Dracula within the context of the Revelation of St. John and a complementary article discussing the paranormal abilities that are evinced by both saint and vampire alike. Essentially, then, this issue is devoted to the theological implications of vampirism.

Back issue situation. Issues #2-#4 are currently out of print. Issue #1 is still available at \$2.00. In order to cut expenses I've decided to limit my print runs in the future to 10 issues over the amount set aside for subscribers. This means that each successive issue of the JOV will be sold out by the time the next issue appears. Nor do I envision republishing any out-of-print issues in the near future. If I do, gone will be the parchment covers and any issues which contain the Murder Exchange will be reprinted lacking this supplement. Consequently, I suggest keeping one's subscription current or subscribing on a yearly basis.

Next issue will be devoted to the extraterrestrial origins of vampirism. Although I remain a skeptic in the matter, this line of inquiry should make for provocative reading. Other features will showcase such radical interpretations as that of Jack the Ripper and viscera suckers being alien visitants. This issue should be available in late February.

I would like to wish each of you personally a belated holiday greetings and trust that the coming new year will be a satisfying one in every respect.

See you next time.



Dracula As Anti-Christ: A Reinterpretation Of Bram Stoker's Dracula  
Within The Context Of The Revelations Of St. John

The Apocalypse.

Inherent to this word are a multitude of meanings. For many Christians this event signifies the coming of the Anti-Christ, the end of the world as we know it, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, judgement day, etc. For Bram Stoker it meant a useful literary device with which to base his classic tale of vampirism. As will be clearly demonstrated in the following article, Dracula represents a conscious reworking of certain themes contained within the Book of Revelations by St. John.

During the past decade, coinciding with a dramatic resurgence of interest in vampirism, Stoker's classic tale of horror has undergone intense *critical analysis*. No more is it looked upon as a shuddersome adventure story or a simple Christian allegory of the forces of good triumphing over the powers of darkness. Rather, for one such as Dr. Leonard Wolf, Stoker's Dracula, when viewed within the light of contemporary standards, reads more like a textbook on clinical psychology than anything else. The good doctor enumerates the following themes implicit to the novel: "(T)he meaning of human energy; the concept of sanity; the nature of identity; and most intensively the awful powers of sexual repression and evasion." (1) Nor was Stoker aware of this infusion of psychological elements as he wrote. For, according to Dr. Wolf, the Irishman was primarily an "unconscious" writer.

An unfortunate choice of words, in my opinion. It makes it seem as though Stoker were some type of trance medium who relied on automatic writing to conceive his novels. Admittedly, Stoker may have been a sexually troubled individual whose eventual death from syphilis undoubtedly reflected this personal turmoil in life. His posthumous novel, The Lair of the White Worm (1911), certainly lacks Stoker's customary structure and seems rife with sexual ambiguities. Yet I believe that at the time he wrote Dracula (1897), Stoker was in full possession of his faculties and penned the book with conscious deliberation. Actually, Stoker's novel is so profoundly symbolic in its use of Biblical parallels that it soon becomes obvious as to what the author's real intent is. Incredibly, few critics have grasped the true nature of the book. Most seem content to analyze the novel as if it were some patient suffering from some undiagnosed neurosis. Physician heal thyself, I say. Let us now turn our attention to the basic theme of this article.

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven: and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." (Rev. 12: 3)

Thus does St. John describe the appearance of the Anti-Christ. (2) Etymologically, the name "Dracula" is derived from the Slavic word, "drakul," which translates into English as "dragon." As this same word is often used colloquially as a synonym for the Devil, the name Dracula can therefore be loosely translated into English as "the son of the Devil," in contrast to Christ, the son of God. (3) According to Raymond McNally and Radu Florescu in their discussion of Vlad Tepes on whom Stoker bases his fictional Count: "Dracula is a diminutive of Dracul, which means devil in Romanian, and was the name given to Dracula's father, Vlad Dracul, after the latter was invested with the order of the Dragon in 1431. At that time the whole family adopted the insignia of that crusading order -- a dragon serpent hanging on a double cross. This insignia was worn by Dracul, sewn on his cape, and also appeared on his coins. The symbol of the dragon (the word comes from Draco meaning a serpent) was also the sign of the devil in popular mythology and has a sound relationship with the Romanian for devil -- hence the confusion between the two.

"There was initially no evil associated with the word Dracul -- a crusader could hardly be in league with the devil. Since the order of the Dragon was hereditary, when Dracul's sons were born there was an attempt to distinguish between Dracul the younger and Dracul the elder. Thus chroniclers began to use the diminutive "Dracula" for both sons. Most contemporary authors, however, use Dracula specifically to describe Vlad, the eldest son ... He seems to have adopted the sobriquet of Dracula and signed letters under that name at the end of his career -- thus proving that there was no evil connotation to the name at the time." (4)

It's difficult to say how much biographical material on Vlad Tepes was available to Stoker during the time he wrote his novel, but it does appear as though he was well aware of the double meaning inherent to the name Dracula. It should be further noted that the English rendering of "dragon" in the Book of Revelation is a translation of the Hebraic word, "tan," which signifies any dangerous creature with a poisonous bite, as a venomous snake. (5) Vampires, too?

Stoker's conception of Dracula as Anti-Christ is repeatedly reinforced throughout the novel by the manic ramblings of Renfield, an inmate of Dr. Seward's sanatorium and bondslave of the Count. Witness the following quote: "I am here to do Your bidding, Master. I am Your slave, and You will reward me, for I shall be faithful. I have worshipped You long and afar off. Now that You are near, I await Your commands, and You will not pass me by, will You, dear Master, in Your distribution of good things?" (6) Note that the "y" in "You" and "Your" and the "m" in "Master" are all uppercase. This unusual practice is maintained throughout the novel whenever Renfield refers to his vampire benefactor.

Even more revealing is Renfield's occasional allusions to Biblical events or direct use of quotations in describing his relationship to Dracula. For instance, early in the novel, the crazed unfortunate recites a passage from the Old Testament to describe his anticipation of the evil Count's arrival: "The bride-maidens rejoice the eyes that wait the coming of the bride; but when the bride draweth nigh, then the maidens shine not to the eyes that are filled." (7) Or later in the book, in a conversation with Dr. Seward: "Oh no! Far be it from me to arrogate to myself the attributes of the Deity. I am not even concerned in His especially spiritual doings. If I may state my intellectual position I am, so far as concerns things purely terrestrial, somewhat in the position which Enoch occupied spiritually!" (Seward): "And why with Enoch?" (Renfield, again): "Because he walked with God!" (8)

In a later passage in the book, Dracula confronts Renfield and acts out a diabolic parody of the temptation of Christ by Satan: "Then he (Dracula) began to whisper: 'Rats, rats, rats! Hundreds, thousands, millions of them, and everyone a life ... All red blood, with years of life in (them); and not merely buzzing flies!' ... He beckoned me to the window. I got up and looked out, and He raised his hands, and seemed to call out without using words. A dark mass spread over the grass, coming like the shape of a flame of fire; and then He moved the mist to the right and left, and I could see that there were thousands of rats with their eyes blazing red -- like His, only smaller. He help up his hand, and they all stopped; and I thought He seemed to be saying: 'All these lives will I give you, aye, and many more and greater, through countless ages, if you will fall down and worship me!'" (9)

It is further worth noting that Dr. Seward is persuaded to diagnose Renfield's mental disorder as "religious mania." The compassionate doctor's prognosis is a despairing one, however, as he himself admits that there is little a doctor can do professionally for a patient who insists he's in communion with the "Real Presence." In truth, Renfield is the Anti-John the Baptist, the Great Beast, the one who precedes and heralds the coming of the Anti-Christ or, in this case, His embodiment, Dracula. (10) It is Renfield as well who

first senses the true nature of the evil which has come to England, long before anyone else, including Van Helsing, is aware of the Count's presence. And it is once again *Renfield's recurrent paroxysms of mania*, "an index of the coming and going of the Count," which help provide Van Helsing the information necessary to thwart the vampire's nefarious machinations. (11)

"And before the throne was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night ..." (Rev. 4: 6-8)

It might be stretching the point to suggest that the four young men of Stoker's novel (i.e., Jonathan Harker, Quincey Morris, Arthur Godalming and Dr. John Seward) are analogous to these "personal ministers of the divine government" which sit beside the throne of God. Yet so they are. For instance, William Biederwolf, in his The Second Coming Bible, enumerates the symbolic characteristics of each of these divine beasts: "Of course the forms they assume are symbolic, -- the lion for courage, boldness and victorious strength; the ox (or calf) for patience, industry, endurance and sacrifice; the man for human sympathy, and the eagle for soaring aspiration, contemplation and striving after the ideal." (12) Jonathan Harker, whose boldness and courage are almost his undoing, is symbolic of the lion; Quincey Morris, the indefatigable, good-natured Texan, who sacrifices his life so the others might succeed, is the ox (or calf); Arthur Godalming, the bereaved lover of dead Lucy, is the man of sympathy, while Dr. John Seward, humanist and doctor, who seeks to create a better world in which others might live, is the eagle. (13)

Over them all looms the presence of Dr. Abraham Van Helsing, learned philosopher and metaphysician, "one of the most advanced scientists of his day," the novel's mediator of God's will on earth, whose personal magnitude and practiced experience succeed in combining and harnessing the diverse abilities of the four men in thwarting the diabolic schemes of Dracula. (14) In his own words, he and the four other men are: "(M)inisters of God's own wish; that the world, and men for whom His Son dies, will not be given over to monsters, whose very existence would defame Him. He have allowed us to redeem one soul already, and we go out as the old knights of the Cross to redeem more. Like them we shall travel towards the sunrise; and like them, if we fall, we fall in good cause." (15) In short, then, their assigned roles are no different from the prescribed functions that the four angelic beasts fulfill. Indeed, they are the "personal ministers of divine government."

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." (Rev. 12: 1-2)

"And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.' And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus ..." (Rev. 17: 3-6)

Lucy Westenra, the betrothed of Lord Godalming, is the symbolic representation of the Great Whore of Babylon and thus the negative counterpart to Mina, "the woman

clothed in the sun." Lucy, having fallen an early victim (= convert) to Dracula, in turn becomes a vampire herself, whence she terrorizes London as the "blooper lady," praying upon young innocents, seeking their blood. Ultimately, she is traced back to her resting place and dispatched in traditional vampire fashion: a stake driven through the heart and her head removed from the body. (16) Note, too, that there exists a certain vampirish tone to St. John's description of the Scarlet Woman: "And I saw the woman drunken with blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus ..."

While Lucy never fully lives up to her symbolic counterpart as "the Mother of Harlots and Abominations," Mina fulfills her symbolic role more extensively. The wife of Jonathan Harker, Mina falls a subsequent victim to Dracula, yet does not entirely succumb to the vampiric state. It is she who provides the focal point for the activities which take place in the latter portion of the novel, as the efforts of the five men are combined to save her from the dreaded state of vampirism. As in the Book of Revelation as well, both women are persecuted incessantly by the Evil One and both face the unpleasant prospect of falling victim in time. As in both the novel and the Biblical tale, both women's lives are preserved in the end, each consummating their trials and tribulations with the birth of a child, a male issue in both instances.

"And he (the Great Beast) causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive the mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number (666) of his name." (Rev. 13: 16-17)

Stoker works this feature into his novel rather ingeniously. Dracula obtains his "mark" early in the book when Jonathan Harker, in an aborted attempt, tried to kill the Count as he lies in his coffin slumbering: "A terrible desire came upon me to rid the world of such a monster. There was no lethal weapon at hand, but I seized a shovel which the workmen had been using to fill the cases, and lifting it high, struck, with the edge downward, at the hateful face. But as I did so the head turned, and the eyes fell full upon me, with all their blaze of basilisk horror. The sight seemed to paralyse me, and the shovel turned in my hand and glanced from the face, merely making a deep gash above forehead." (17)

When Dracula stealthily enters the bedchamber of the Harkers' later in the novel, Mina, shamming sleep, is startled to perceive "the red scar on his forehead where Jonathan had struck him." (18) The others, too, bear witness to this feature: "His face was turned from us, but the instant we saw we all recognised the Count -- in every way, even to the scar on his forehead." (19)

Mina obtains her "mark" in yet another fashion. Having by this time fallen under the sinister spell of the Count, Mina is approached by Van Helsing with a fragment of the Sacred Wafer (i.e., Holy Eucharist) in his hand: "'Now let me guard yourself. On your forehead I touch this piece of Sacred Wafer in the name of the Father, the Son, and ---.' There was a fearful scream which almost froze our hearts to hear. As he placed the Wafer on Mina's forehead, it had seared it -- had burned into the flesh as though it had been a piece of white-hot metal." (20) Mina's hysterical response to this is most revealing: "Unclean! Unclean! Even the Almighty shuns my polluted flesh! I must bear this mark of shame upon my forehead until the Judgment Day." (21)

"And I beheld another beast coming out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh

fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles which he has power to do in the sight of the beast ... Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six." (Rev. 13: 11-14, 18)

Thus the Great Beast, the earthly emissary of the Anti-Christ. Dracula, too, can perform "great wonders" and seeming miracles, the product of his vampire heritage. According to Van Helsing (in his bastardized English): "The nosferatu do not die like the bee when he sting once. He is only stronger; and being stronger, have yet more power to work evil. This vampire which is amongst us is of himself so strong in person as twenty men; he is of cunning more than mortal, for his cunning be the growth of ages; he have still the aids of necromancy, which is, as his etymology imply, the divination by the dead, and all the dead that he can come night to are for him at command; he is brute, and more than brute; he is devil in callous, and the heart of him is not; he can, within limitations, appear at will when, and where, and in any the forms that are to him; he can, within his range, direct the elements; the storm, the fog, the thunder; he can command all the meaner things: the rat, and the owl, and the bat -- the moth, and the fox, and the wolf; he can grow and become small; and he can at times vanish and come unknown." (22)

Equally as important, can the name "Dracula" be broken down numerically to 666, the number of the Great Beast? With the assistance of a Rabbinical student, an effort was made to break down the Count's name using the Hebraic alphabet, as each letter in Hebrew has a specific numerical value ascribed to it. However, the results proved negligible, as neither Dracula (or Vlad Tepes) computed to 666. The use of the ancient Greek alphabet, of which neither of us were knowledgable, might have yielded different results, as the Book of Revelation may have originally been written in Greek.

Regardless, I still maintain Dracula represents, in part, the characteristics of the Great Beast. For instance, the Great Beast of the Apocalypse, as many theologians believe, is a metaphor for false prophetism and belief. Dracula, too, embodies these aspects, for he is the Messiah of Vampirism, the Anti-Religion. Jonathan Harker, on learning the true nature of his host early in the novel, intuits correctly the horrid implications of the Count's grand design: "This was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless." (23)

The cruel irony of vampirism is that it represents nothing more than a dark parody of Christianity itself. Both promise eternal life and the physical resurrection of the corpus. Yet it appears vampirism has a diabolic edge over Christianity, as there is no long wait to Judgment Day in the fulfillment of its promises.

Dracula himself seems quite aware of this mock parallel. In the scene in which he compells Mina to drink of his blood after taking sup of hers, there are overtones of the Last Supper wherein Christ requested His disciples to eat of His body and drink of His blood in the form of bread and wine: "'And you, their best beloved one, are now to me, flesh of my flesh; blood of my blood; kin of my kin; bountiful wine-press for a while; and shall be later on my companion and my helper. You shall be avenged in turn; for not one of them but shall minister to your needs ...' With that he pulled open his shirt, and with his long sharp nails opened a vein in his breast. When the blood began to spurt out, he took my hands in one of his, holding them tight, and with the other seized

my neck and pressed my mouth to the wound, so that I must either suffocate or swallow some of the -- Oh, my God! my God! what have I done?" (24) In this way Mina is initiated into the dark underbelly of Christianity.

It is to Stoker's credit that he readily perceived the parallels that exist between vampirism and organized religion, and exploited these similarities to lend an added dimension to his novel. That *Dracula* was meant to symbolize the Anti-Christ was, in my opinion, intentional on Stoker's part. That the Irishman consciously used the Book of Revelation as a working framework with which to base his novel is, in my belief, borne out by the many examples cited in this article. That this aspect has gone largely ignored until recently seems inexplicable. It could be that literary critics of Stoker's day found these similarities either too uncomfortable or too distasteful to warrant mention and thus avoided discussing the book's allegorical implications. Unfortunately, with few exceptions, this critical neglect has continued to this present day. I hope this article will redress this wrong and renew interest in Stoker's classic tale of apocalyptic horror.

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1. Leonard Wolf, *A Dream of Dracula*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1972, p. 181. (For an excellent synopsis of *Dracula*, see chapter six of this book.)
  2. All quotations of the Book of Revelation are taken from the King James Version.
  3. It was a belief common to the Middle Ages of Europe that the Anti-Christ would be born of a union between the Devil and a mortal woman. *Dracula*, in describing his proud heritage with Jonathan Harker, mentions that he is a direct descendent of Attila the Hun. This infamous warrior-king, known as "the scourge of God," was commonly thought to be the hybrid issue of just such a miscegenous relationship and thus was looked upon as the Anti-Christ.
  4. Raymond McNally and Radu Florescu, *The Essential Dracula*, New York, Mayflower Books, 1979, p. 49, n. 3.
  5. Ernest Ingersoll, *Dragons and Dragon Lore*, New York, Payson & Clarke, 1928, pp. 132-133.
  6. Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, New York, Grosset & Dunlap, 1897, p. 96.
  7. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
  8. *Ibid.*, pp. 250-251.
  9. *Ibid.*, pp. 246-247.
  10. On at least this one point Dr. Wolf and I are in perfect agreement: "Stoker unabashedly lets Renfield play the role of a sort of anti-John the Baptist to *Dracula's* anti-Christ." Wolf, *op. cit.*, p. 219. The consumption of flies and spiders by Renfield is reminiscent of St. John the Baptist's unusual diet of honey and locusts. Indeed, the latter was deemed equally as mad by the Pharisees in his day.

11. "All these outbreaks were in some way linked with the proximity of the Count. What then does this absolute content mean? Can it be that his instinct is satisfied as to the vampire's ultimate triumph?" Dr. Seward on Renfield, Stoker, op. cit., p. 252.
12. William E. Biederwolf, The Second Coming Bible, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1972, p. 621.
13. Other parallels come to mind, such as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse and the four archangels of heaven.
14. Van Helsing's first name, Abraham, may have some significance. It was from the seed of Abraham, the Biblical patriarch of the Old Testament, that the tribe of Israel initially arose. Note, too, that Bram Stoker's given name was Abraham.
15. Stoker, op. cit., p. 299.
16. "Arthur took the stake and the hammer, and when once his mind was set on action his hands never trembled nor even quivered. Van Helsing opened his missal and began to read, and Quincey and I followed as well as we could. Arthur placed the point over the heart, and as I looked I could see its dint in the white flesh. Then he struck with all his might. The thing in the coffin writhed ... But Arthur never faltered. He looked like a figure of Thor as his untrembling arm rose and fell, driving deeper and deeper the mercy-bearing stake, whilst the blood from the pierced heart welled and spurted up around it ... Arthur bent and kissed her, and then we sent him and Quincey out of the tomb; the Professor and I sawed the top off the stake, leaving the point in the body. Then we cut off the head and filled the mouth with garlic." Ibid., pp. 201-203.
17. Ibid., p. 49.
18. Ibid., p. 267.
19. Ibid., p. 262.
20. Ibid., p. 275.
21. Ibid., p. 276.
22. Ibid., p. 221.
23. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
24. Much has been made of Mina's "baptism" of blood. Rather, as Dracula correctly inferred, this exchange of blood represents a communion of sorts, albeit, an unholy one. Actually, this mutual bloodletting is an ancient and widespread practice, variously used for sealing contracts or solidifying lifelong relationships. But see H. Clay Trumbull, The Blood Covenant, Philadelphia, John D. Wattles, 1898. Nor should one forget those primitive blood transfusions given poor Lucy by Van Helsing. Of special interest as well is that Mina, after consuming the Count's blood, becomes tainted with the vampire strain, even though she has yet to attain the undead state. Again, this might indicate that vampirism actually represents some type of viral infection, much in the same manner as AIDs or hepatitis.

## The Physical Phenomena Of Vampirism

In the annals of Western mysticism many saintly individuals, in achieving their oneness with God, have inadvertently been gifted with a variety of miraculous properties. Of these the stigmata, actual flesh wounds simulating the crucifixion wounds of Christ, are the most obvious that come to mind. Montague Summers, in his Physical Phenomena of Mysticism, lists numerous others: ecstasies, raptures and trances; levitation; bilocation; luminous irradiance; inedia; absence of a need for sleep; prophetic dreams; telekinesis; vision through opaque objects; infused knowledge; discernment of spirits; the gift of tongues and healing; supernatural empery over nature; incendium amoris; mystical unions or marriages; and incorruptibility. To this can be added: transverberation of organs; mysterious effusions of blood; bodily elongation; multiplication of food; clairvoyance and clairaudience; immunity to fire; discernment of real and fraudulent religious tokens, etc. (1)

Satan, too, had his "miracle" workers. Medieval witches possessed many of these same abilities or, more commonly, perverted these potentially benefic qualities to their own ends. Rather than cure the infirm, they caused sickness and death among both man and beast. God's command to be fruitful and multiply only encouraged these bel-dames to sow barrenness and sterility among men and women alike. Their mastery over the elements enabled them to send hail or rainstorms to devastate the farmer's crop. They were capable of flight, with or without physical aid, and were adept at changing into a diversity of animal forms, most notably rabid wolves, which allowed them to savage innocents unto death. So convinced were civil and church authorities of the dangers inherent to witchcraft that both parties either separately or in concert with one another unmercilessly persecuted any and all suspected of its practices for centuries. (2) Millions met their death, either at the gibbet or stake, in this way. Ironically, as the witch mania gradually waned in Western Europe, there arose new intimations of a far greater evil emanating from Eastern Europe and Greece.

The frequency at which outbreaks of vampirism occurred reached epidemic proportions in the latter part of the 17th and early 18th centuries. Like their Medieval predecessors in crime, vampires, too, seemingly possessed extraordinary powers. Not the least of these was that of incorruptibility, or the ability to transcend the physical ravishments of death indefinitely. Ironically, among both Catholic and Orthodox faiths, incorruption had long been looked upon as proof-positive of an individual's inherent sanctity during life. Even today, when an individual is being considered for sainthood, church authorities still exhume the deceased's gravesite to look for signs of any lasting incorruption. Over 100 individuals have been reported in the past of having bodily survived the test of time. (3) A prominent example is St. Rita of Cascia, the Saint of Impossible and Desperate Causes, who died in 1490. Her slightly desiccated remains are still on display in a glass coffin nearly 500 years after her death. St. Bernadette of Lourdes, who died in 1870, is a more recent example of this inexplicable state of preservation.

As alluded to in the previous article, both Christianity and vampirism hold out the same promise of physical resurrection and eternal life, yet the latter appears to be more expedient in realizing these promises. According to Dr. Stephen Kaplan, most vampires "allegedly" attain their undead status within 24 hours after death. (4) Theologians were well aware of this uncomfortable parallel which might explain why such prominent theologians of their day, as Augustin Calmet and Giuseppe Davanzati, tried to dismiss vampirism as due to mass hysteria and village superstition. (5) On the other hand, those religious prelates who had direct knowledge of its existence, as Leone

Allacci and François Richard possessed, were not as ready to denounce such reports outright. (6)

Even the Catholic Church was of two minds. Although they officially condemned vampirism as mere superstition, they also saw in this phenomenon a means by which they could discredit the Orthodox faith. For, among the latter, incorruptibility was not only a characteristic of those who had died in the odor of sanctity but also of those who had died unrepentant, particularly excommunicates. When therefore someone died under such circumstances, the body remained whole and entire in its grave. Consequently, the soul was prevented from leaving its corpus and thus denied final absolution. The peasantry feared this prospect, as this sometimes compelled the deceased to return as a discontented spirit or worse, a vampire, in which guise it would attempt to kill off its surviving relations. Therefore, the Catholic Church seized upon this indiscriminate use of excommunication by the Orthodox faith and touted it as the reason behind the vampire epidemic. At the same time they claimed no Catholics ever became vampires and that only schismatics were thus susceptible. (7) This religious conflict in Eastern Europe undoubtedly helped fan the flames of the vampire epidemic and will be the subject of a more detailed article in a future edition of the Journal.

Yet the fact remained that vampires were neither simple bogies or unsubstantial phantoms, their major distinction being that they retained their corporeal form after death. Those theologians who did not dismiss vampirism as superstition were thus hard-pressed to explain this phenomenon without concluding that it represented some unfathomable plan of divine providence. Most of them, then, in contrast to peasant belief, held that it was the devil and not the deceased soul who was the main culprit behind vampirism. It was he, or some other foul demon under his command, who reanimated the corpse in order to cast doubt and dissension among God's faithful. According to the learned demonologist Del Rio, the devil was able "to perform the most marvellous things with regard dead bodies, and to bring to pass such extraordinary happenings that it would seem as if the very corpses were alive again and informed by intellect and soul ... (H)e can also cause dead bodies to remain whole and entire without corruption (and) this incorruption is often effected by the mysterious power of the demon." (8) Latter-day researchers, for the most part, attribute the vampire's incorrupt state to either soil conditions or premature burial.

Levitation is the suspension of the human body above ground in seeming defiance of the laws of gravity. Although reported of some trance mediums, most prominently Daniel Home, and certain Indian yogis, numerous saints were also gifted with this remarkable ability. Of these, two prominent examples come to mind. St. Joseph of Copertino (d. 1734) experienced numerous acts of levitation during his lifetime. According to an early biographer: "The flights and levitations of Joseph did not always occur inside buildings, but sometimes out of doors. For instance, it is recorded that one day a priest, Antonio Chiarello, who was walking with him in the kitchen-garden, remarked how beautiful was the heaven which God had made. Thereupon Joseph, as if these words were an invitation to him from above, uttered a shriek, sprang from the ground and flew into the air, only coming to rest on the top of an olive tree where he remained in a kneeling position for half an hour." (9) On another occasion, "(i)n the Church of Santa Chiara in Copertino a festival was once held in honour of the clothing of some novitiates. Joseph was present, and was on his knees in a corner of the church, when the words *Veni Sponsa Christi* (Come, Bride of Christ) were being intoned. Giving his accustomed cry, he ran towards the convent's father confessor and, seizing him, grasped him by the hand and ... finally both rose in the air in an ecstasy, the one borne aloft by Joseph and the other by God Himself, both being sons of St. Francis, the one being beside himself with fear but the other with sanctity." (10) Another such example is St. Peter de Alcantara (d. 1562) who, it is stated by his biographers, "that in choir he was sometimes seen raised fifteen feet or more above the

floor until his head touched the roof. On other occasions he soared like a bird to the top of the trees, or was projected through narrow doorways like an arrow from a bow, or again flew up with arms outspread to embrace a crucifix on a high eminence." (11) That vampires, too, are capable of levitation, if not actual flight, is well attested in ancient literature and ethnographic accounts. This might be due to the belief that vampires were often said to transform themselves into creatures of flight, such as bats, butterflies, owls and glowing will-o-wisps. However, like witches, they were equally as capable of flight in their own form, sometimes using their ears as wings to achieve this feat. Oddly enough, this ability is strangely lacking in accounts of vampires during the 16th and 17th centuries. This doesn't mean, however, that they were incapable of transporting themselves over long distances in a short period of time like their ancient or non-Western counterparts. In truth, they chose alternate forms of locomotion, as our next category will show.

Bilocation, or the ability to be two places at once, is an extraordinary ability evidenced by only a handful of saintly individuals. The most famous example of this is that of St. Anthony of Padua (d. 1231) who, according to accounts of this event, "was preaching in the Church of St. Pierre du Queyroix at Limoges on Holy Thursday in 1226 when he remembered that he was obligated to conduct some services at a monastery on the other side of town. He knelt down and prayed, while his audience waited with due reverence. Meanwhile, across town, the monks at the monastery saw Anthony step forward from his stall, read the proper services, and retreat back into the shadows of the chapel. He thereupon arose from his prayers at Limoges and finished his sermon." (12) It was said of Blessed Maria Coronel de Agreda (d. 1665), the noted author-ess of The Mystical City of God, that "while praying in her convent cell, she would suddenly be transported to Mexico, where she would find herself instructing the local natives in the Catholic faith." (13) The much maligned (in my belief) 19th century English mystic, Teresa Helena Higginson also experienced similar bilocations, in which she was periodically transported to the wilds of Africa where she instructed a tribe in the rudiments of Christianity. (14) It has also been claimed that Padre Pio, the noted 20th century Italian stigmatist, nightly made visits throughout the world to comfort and cure the despondent and sick. In considering these examples, I'm still not certain whether we're dealing with an actual physical halving of the individual, or whether bilocation (in some instances) is simply a misunderstood expression of astral projection. Resolving this conflict is crucial to an understanding of traditional vampirism.

For instance, how does the vampire leave the confines of both his coffin and grave? Certainly bilocation would provide one such solution, although I have serious reservations about accepting this explanation. The peasantry of that time, however, had no such doubts. They believed that vampires were capable of dematerializing their physical bodies to a permeative state the likeness of mist (ectoplasm?) and thus filter through minute interstices to the surface. Once free, they then regrouped their atoms and materialized in their prior form. Therefore, when a vampire was suspected of ravaging a village, the peasantry would sometimes scour the cemetery in search of tiny air holes or passages on graves, the vampire's mode of exit. If detected, the corpse would be exhumed and dispatched in traditional manner. Another, more plausible, explanation, first proposed by 19th century spiritualists, was that the vampire never actually left his grave but instead sent out its astral form (or etheric double) to do its nefarious bidding. According to Z.T. Pierart, a French spiritualist, "(t)he ethereal form can go where it pleases, and as long as it does not break the link connecting it with the body can wander visible or invisible and feed on its victims. It then transmits the results of the suction by some mysterious invisible cord of connexion to the body, thus aiding it to perpetuate the state of catalepsy." (15) Adolphe D'Assier, in his Posthu-Humanity, presents a slightly different view: "All the blood swallowed by the spectre passes instantly into the organs of the corpse which it has just left, and to which it returns as soon as its poaching work is finished. The constant arrival of this vivify-

ing liquid, which at once disseminates itself through the circulation, prevents putrefaction, preserves in the limbs their natural suppleness, and in the flesh its fresh and reddish tint." (16) Regardless of this slight difference in opinion, the spiritualist theory concerning vampirism seems quite attractive. Unfortunately, I have some serious doubts about this surrogate doppelganger. If one is to assume the vampire's ethereal double is essentially of a phantasmic nature, then how does it physically assault its victims and drain them of their blood with astral fangs? The peasantry certainly knew the difference between a ghost and a vampire. Or did they? It's possible that the spiritualist theory is partly right, that traditional vampires are more like psychic leeches subsisting off human energy than active blood-drinkers. Still in all, how the vampire exits and returns to his coffin without as much disturbing the topsoil of his grave yet remains the most troublesome aspect of its various abilities. I hope to show in a future article how diet, indigestion and nightmares can explain some of these insolubles away.

The odor of sanctity, as described in some detail in issue #3, is no mere metaphor. To quote myself: "Those who led a pure and holy life in Christ often gave off fragrant exudations perceived by many. Once again quoting Summers: 'S. Herman Joseph could be traced through the corridors of Steinfeld by the rare perfumes he scattered as he walked. The same was the case with that marvellous mystic S. Joseph of Cupertino. S. Thomas Aquinas smelt of male frankincense. Maria-Vittoria of Genoa, Ida of Louvain, S. Colette, S. Humiliana, were fragrant as sweet flowers,' etc. Such examples could be multiplied a hundredfold. It should be noted that such heavenly scents did not always manifest themselves during life but often only at death. Thus, in this area as in others, the vampire appears to represent a diabolic parody of sainthood." (17)

Yes, indeed. Account after account refers to the vampire's noisome stench which Summers equates to that of a "charnel house." One such dramatic example among many is herewith cited: "On another Time about Evening, when this Theologer was sitting with his wife and Children about him, exercising himself in Musick, according to his usual manner, a most grievous stink arose suddenly, which by degrees spread itself to every corner of the room. Here upon he commends himself and his family to God by Prayer. The smell nevertheless encreased, and became above all measure pestilently noisom, insomuch that he was forced to go up to his chamber. He and his wife had not been in a bed a quarter of an hour, but they find the same stink in the bed-chamber; of which, while they are complaining to one to another, out steps the Spectre from the Wall, and creeping to his bed-side, breathes upon him an exceeding cold breath, of so intolerable stinking and malignant a scent, as is beyond all imagination and expression. Here upon the Theologer, good soul, grew very ill, and was fain to keep his bed, his face, belly, and guts swelling as if he had been poisoned; whence he was also troubled with a difficulty of breathing, and with a putrid inflammation of his eyes, so that he could not well use them of a long time after." (18) Yet this odor of corruption brings in its putrid wake even greater tragedies than what one vampire's ravishments could ever hope to produce, "for when a Vampire revisits some unfortunate town or district his ravages are, owing to the appalling fetor of the corpse, in every case apparently followed by an outbreak of the plague." (19)

The supernatural empery over nature, as Summers describes it, is another feature common to both saints and vampires alike. Among the former they were capable of transmuting a variety of objects into different forms, of multiplying food in imitation of Christ to feed the hungry, of altering potentially severe weather conditions to produce more favorable results. In particular, many holy individuals were capable of asserting their wills over animals, from rabid wolves to whales. The best known example of this is St. Francis of Assisi (d. 1226) who is often depicted taming a wolf. Vampires as well shared this same ability, particularly over animals that were nocturnal by nature. For instance, Stoker constantly as Dracula display this skill throughout his novel

and gives the Count mastery over wolves and rats. It could be that vampires actually lacked this unusual ability, any confusion arising from the belief that they themselves were predominately nocturnal in their habits and chose to transform themselves into those same animals over which they had command.

Our last category is that of inedia, or the ability to survive indefinitely in the absence of food and water. According to Herbert Thurston, "(i)t is alleged that St. Lidwina (d. 1433) ate nothing for twenty-eight years; the Venerable Domenica dal Paradiso (d. 1553) for twenty years; Blessed Nicholas von Flüe (d. 1487) for nineteen years; Blessed Elizabeth von Reute (d. 1420) for fifteen years, and so on; while in modern times a twelve years' abstinence from food was observed in the case of both Domenica Lazari (d. 1848) and Louise Lateau (d. 1883)." (20) Therese Neumann (d. 1962), the German stigmatist, was said to have accomplished this feat for a period of over 36 years. In every instance, each testified they sustained themselves solely on the Holy Eucharist. In a way vampires manifest the same remarkable ability. Although dependent on the blood of others to maintain their incorrupt state, they nonetheless exist without food and water. Apart from its apparent preservative powers, blood also seems to possess for the vampire remarkable rejuvenative properties. According to D'Assier, "(blood) is seen to continue a sort of vegetative life which causes the hair and nails to grow, forms a new skin as the old one dries up, and, in certain cases, favours the formation of adipose tissue, as has been proved by the exhumation of certain vampires. Persons who had known them found them plump and fleshy to a degree far beyond that they had at the time of their decease." (21)

Incredibly, there exist accounts of saints actually drinking blood! The following examples are so startling in their import that I've taken the liberty of quoting them in full: "The Seraphic Mother, St. Catherine of Siena, had a particular devotion to the Precious Blood. In fact she has been termed the Prophetess of the Precious Blood, and she singled out this devotion with a more than ordinary predilection. The mere thought of blood, as she remembered the Blood which stained the Cross on Cavalry, would throw her into a Divine Ecstasy. In all hagiography, in all the Lives of all the Saints there are few episodes more striking and none more profoundly moving than that when she comforted and was present at the execution of the young gallant of Perugia, Niccolò Tuldo -- the lad was only about eighteen -- who was cruelly and so unjustly condemned to death ... St. Catherine accompanied him to the scaffold. 'Stay with me, and leave me not,' he pleaded, 'Then all will be well with me, and I shall die content.' Whereupon, said the Saint, "I felt the sweet fragrance of his blood, and it was a fragrance blended with the odour of my own blood, which I have so often longed to shed for the sake of Jesus, my loved one, my spouse.' They prayed to the Madonna, and to the Virgin Martyr, St. Catherine of Alexandria. 'Remember, dear brother mine, the Blood of the Lamb,' she murmured. The axe fell ... In ecstasy she saw Christ her Spouse radiant as the golden sun. In her hands she held the youth's severed head. Her dress was saturated and soaked with his hot steaming blood. And so she passed on her way, still in Ecstasy. 'My soul,' she says, 'was so filled with gentle peace and a calm not of this world, so fragrant was the odour of blood, that I could not bear to wash off the blood which incardined my habit and crimsoned by hands.' In her Oratory, to which she retired, she fell into Ecstasy after Ecstasy. In some mysterious way she was bathed in the Blood of Christ, whose love so exhausted and refreshed her that she could only sigh: 'O Blood! O burning fire! O Love ineffable! O blood!'" (22)

Another Dominicaness, Blessed Osanna of Mantua, "fell into an Ecstasy at the sight of blood, so intense was her devotion to the Mystery of the Precious Blood, since anything which reminded her of the Blood of Christ threw the Beata into a trance of love, wherein her soul was utterly submerged and immersed ... She also beheld a vision of Christ, covered with wounds and carrying His Cross under the weight of which He tottered, about to fall prone, so faint and weary was He. The sight of His Blood, as it

were, intoxicated her, and pressing her lips to the Wound on His Side, where the lance had pierced, she drank and was inebriated with the Precious Blood." (23)

Vampirism and sainthood. What strange bedfellows they seemingly make. Yet when one probes ever deeper beyond the surface, exposing the parallels and inverse parallels that exist between the two, one finds the *disimilarities diminish as the similarities grow*. Indeed, what if vampirism represents a diabolical fifth column of sorts and succeeds someday in undermining the very fabric of human society? If and when this happens, one might envision a scenario in which human history is revised to accommodate the emergence of this once repressed race of beings. For instance, imagine a book similar to Fox's Book of Martyrs, in which the names of Bathory, Haigh and Kürten receive prominent mention. Or imagine Bram Stoker's Dracula rewritten with a new ending, in which the Count triumphs and kills his human tormentors. Or imagine churches and synagogues converted over to the worship of Hecate and Satan. Or imagine ...

Just kidding, of course.

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1. Montague Summers, The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism, London, Rider & Co., 1950.
  2. Latter-day witches would maintain the practice of witchcraft predated Christianity and represented a serious challenge to established church authority, thus the persecution.
  3. But see Joan Carroll Cruz, The Incorruptibles, Rockford, Il., Tan Books, 1977.
  4. Stephen Kaplan, Vampires Are, Palm Springs, Ca., ETC Pubs., 1984, p. 15.
  5. Authors of Traité sur les Apparitions des Esprits, et sur les Vampires, ou les Revenans de Hongrie, etc. (1746) and Dissertazione sopra i Vampiri (1789) respectively.
  6. Authors of De Graecorum hodie quorandum opinionibus (1645) and Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable a Sant-Erini Isle de l'Archipel (1657) respectively.
  7. But see chapter two of Gabriel Ronay, The Truth about Dracula, NY, Stein & Day, 1972, for a more detailed account of this religious conflict.
  8. Cited in Montague Summers, The Vampire in Europe, New Hyde Park, NY, University Books, 1961, p. 193.
  9. Cited in D. Scott Rogo, Miracles, NY, Dial Press, 1982, p. 24.
  10. Ibid., p. 85.
  11. Herbert Thurston, The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism, Chicago, Henry Regenery, 1952, p. 18.
  12. Rogo, op. cit., pp. 80-81.
  13. Ibid., p. 85.
  14. But see Cecil Kerr, Teresa Helena Higginson -- Servant of God, Rockford, Il., Tan Books, 1978.
  15. Cited in Montague Summers, The Vampire: His Kith and Kin, New Hyde Park, NY, University Books, 1960, p. 196.
  16. Adolphe D'Assier, Posthumous Humanity, San Diego, Wizards Bookshelf, 1981, p. 280.
  17. John Vellutini, "Odor of Corruption," Journal of Vampirology, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 14.
  18. Henry More, cited in Summers, The Vampire in Europe, p. 140.
  19. Ibid., p. 88.
  20. Thurston, op. cit., p. 341.
  21. D'Assier, op. cit., pp. 280-281.
  22. Summers, op. cit., pp. 99-100.
  23. Ibid., pp. 100-101.

