

How a vague sighting easily becomes exaggerated as a convincing vision!

Lisa Bitel 2009 wrote regarding miracle photos at apparition sites, "The messages of photos are not obvious to outsiders or fixed, despite the established iconography that has become part of the worldwide culture of Marian apparitions..a triangular shape is the veiled Virgin - other blurs of light symbolize angels, doves, or the face of Jesus."

When the Knock apparition of 1879 to several people happened, the Church and the media set about making the story sound convincing even by altering and distributing lies and altered witness reports. The witnesses themselves allowed that to happen. However one witness Patrick Beirne made the following declaration before a priestly board of investigators of the apparition in 1932.

"I saw three figures on the gable surrounded by wonderful light. They appeared to be something like shadows or reflections cast on a wall on a moon-lit night. I approached nearer the gable and passed my hand along the wall to find there was no material substance there. The figures were towards the left hand side of the gable. The figures were those of the Blessed Virgin in the central position; to the right of the Blessed Virgin was St Joseph, and to the left was a figure suggested by a bystander to represent St John the Evangelist. To the right of the group, and at a higher level was a figure of a lamb in a reclining position and facing the figures. I spent between twenty minutes and a half an hour there when I returned home."

The Bitel quote is about photos and images. If it is so easy to see images in a photo that are really in your head then imagine how much easier it was for that to happen at Knock with shapes on the gable for a couple of hours and during a wet cold night.

MORAL: People have been proven to exaggerate vague visions and present them as clearer and more convincing than they actually were. The Coptic Orthodox Church is guilty of approving such visions. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFZfWWeAGiM>

The apparitions at Zeitoun in Egypt are interesting in that a white messy shape was interpreted by many viewers as the Virgin Mary thus proving how when people see something that might be supernatural to their minds that they can see what they want or expect to see. A shape that does not look like a woman at all can nevertheless be interpreted as a clear vision of Mary by the devout.

"A social scientist present at Zeitoun during one of the Virgin's appearances there reports that she did not see the Virgin, but did see a white light in the area where the people around her said they were seeing the Virgin (Nelson, 1973:6). From page 118, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary, Psychological Origins*, Michael P Carroll, Princeton, New Jersey, 1986).

Even more telling that most photos show a light and terribly few show anything that could be taken for a woman. And even then it is what you would expect from chance and from how people see shapes and people where there are in fact no real shapes or people. The brain sees patterns where there are no patterns. That is human nature.

Even in clearer apparition reports there is disagreement. At Fatima, when the children said they encountered Mary there were differences in what the witnesses said though they had a good look at her. Lucia saw Mary's earrings. The others saw nothing. Francisco and Jacinta differed regarding which arm the lady's rosary hung from. He was sure that it was the right arm and Jacinta doubted that. Lucia mentioned Mary's stockings and Jacinta said there were no stockings. People say they agreed on the main points. (ibid 127). But that depends on what you consider the main points to be. Remember the main points and less important ones all become become important when the children are looking at the entity for a length of time. If you talk to somebody for ten minutes and then tell somebody that they had makeup on when they had not then you are one strange person. You couldn't miss it. In the Fatima visions, it is claimed the children had different visions - one saw things the others didn't see.

Even in apparitions where the entity seems not that different from an ordinary person, there is the problem of witnesses seeing different things and hearing different messages from her at the one time.

This information can prove significant in relation to Knock! That is an example of an apparition that was exaggerated particularly by the media and the Church and of course the clergy in charge of the shrine!

At the alleged apparitions of San Damiano to Mama Rosa the Virgin Mary, "Now I will tell you a secret. I will inform you about who took the photograph in which my image appeared, despite the fact that you do not believe." May 30 1968.

So the virgin authenticates a clearly vague and probably altered photograph. She is referring to one of the images below



and I think it is the next one.



The fact that visionaries at Tilly in France did not object to the following obviously touched up photos of the vision is interesting. It shows that they just needed a vague shape to imagine they saw Mary.



l'apparition de Tilly



If people can take the following as an example of a true vision (Limerick 2016) and worship it then what more proof do you need that most visionaries could easily hallucinate their experiences and make them sound more coherent in the telling.



DORDOGNE 1889

A young child with psychological problems called Mary Magoutier saw a vision which bore a startling resemblance to the statue of Mary in the churches. She soon had other children join her who thought they saw the vision too. Soon other people began reporting it too. They all saw something that was largely the same but the details was where their credibility collapsed. Like Knock, they struggled with some matters. While some of the Dordogne witnesses saw Mary's veil others said she had no veil on. It is like how the Knock witnesses did not all see the cross. Like Knock, some saw flashing lights on the vision and others did not. By the 11 of August 1889, up to 1500 had seen the "vision". The Church put it all down to psychological causes and did not recognise or encourage the apparition claims. No paranormal student takes it seriously either.

FINALLY

People are prone to making too much of vague shapes. The media encourages much vision nonsense to get a story and the Church too often says nothing. If the photos are indeed really of the vision then it shows us that what Ivan said at Medjugorje could be the truth. "We see something". They are seeing a vague ghost and exaggerating. Some may take the photos as evidence that Marian apparitions are dealing with deceptive and occult forces.