

OCCULT OVERTONES IN THE APPARITIONS OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES 1858

Source: Bernadette of Lourdes, Her Life, Death and Visions, Therese Taylor, Continuum, London, 2008

Lourdes is in France. It nestles among the Pyrenees. In 1858, a destitute asthmatic child of thirteen, Bernadette Soubirous, claimed she saw the Virgin Mary in a grotto or cave at the dump of Massabielle eighteen times between the 11th of February and July 18th. Today Lourdes is renowned for its miraculous healings.

QUESTION: Was it the Virgin Mary?

Bernarde Casterot testified that Bernadette did not know who the lady was until the lady stated that she was the Immaculate Conception on March 25 1858 (page 69). The Immaculate Conception refers to the Catholic doctrine that Mary was conceived without original sin and thus lived a sinless life.

While Bernadette told the Cure of Vic that she saw the Blessed Virgin, the majority of the time she was careful to say it was that thing, the apparition, the vision or the Lady (page 154). She told the story a lot . Even years later when she was in the Convent of St Gildard in Nevers she told the story referring to seeing the Lady rather than Our Lady (page 155).

In 1860, Bernadette was still calling the apparition that thing - aquero (page 155). She did this during an interview by Azun de Bernetas. She told him that the presence of aquero took up all her attention during visions that she could barely tell him anything about what happened during the visions and what she did (page 155).

Of extreme significance is what she said to the Jesuit Pere Langlade in 1863. He asked her if she had seen the Blessed Virgin . Her reply was that she did not say she seen the Blessed Virgin but she seen the apparition.

It is doubtful that it really was the Blessed Virgin she saw. Typically if an apparition is not really who it says it is and is not just a pack of lies then the apparition is put down perhaps to some occult force.

QUESTION: The Church does not even consider thinking about the claims of a visionary who is copying somebody else. Did Bernadette copy anybody?

Yes. In 1500 a young poor shepherdess saw Mary and the vision asked for a chapel to be built and a holy spring was blessed by the Virgin. Thus the shrine of Our Lady of Garaison began. Like Bernadette, she even ate black bread. See page 26 and 27.

Bernadette had been a shepherdess at Bartres. Every major detail of the Garaison apparition was replicated at Lourdes.

Not far from Lourdes, in the same diocese, three girls reported seeing Mary who appeared by a spring of water and wanted the ruined chapel nearby restored.

Bernadette visited apparition sites before her own apparitions (page 49).

From another book, The Cult of the Virgin Mary, Psychological Origins, Michael P Carroll, Princeton, New Jersey, 1986, we learn on page 135 that in 1857 Bernadette probably knew of a priest who compared her to the visionaries of Mary at La Salette. In the same book, page 160 we read that the apparition at Lourdes wore a costume Bernadette would have been familiar with. The vision and members of the Children of Mary, a devotional group for promoting the lies and delusions of the Miraculous Medal apparition, wore the same outfit. That Mary would connect herself with such nonsense is grounds for suspicion. Don't forget that a liar is best to lie about what he or she knows best.

QUESTION: What is the link between the vision and the occult?

Caves were popularly believed to house fairies and wraiths (page 23).

Oral tradition may have stated that there were human sacrifices offered at the grotto (page 23).

Some who sheltered at the grotto said they heard screams and cries and it was haunted (page 24).

There was a tradition where dames blanches (white female fairies) were honoured in the Lourdes area. These were mature

spirits and men dressed up as women and called themselves demoiselles to revere them (page 25).

Bernadette's friends who were there at the first apparition said she saw a demoiselle (page 26). Bernadette herself has said that she saw a dama or demaisela or demoiselle which meant one of the hadas - hadas was fairies (page 65). She used the term les dames blanches as well as verified by the early sources (page 65).

Her apparition was small and very young just like those fairy ladies (page 65). This indicates that suggestion had a role in her vision experience.

Her companions during the first vision found her staring at the niche in the grotto and she was so rigid and pale her sister Toinette thought she was dead (page 60).

She called the entity she saw aquero which means that thing. She was not sure what it was but said it was a white thing in the shape of a lady (page 60).

The local gossips said that it was a lady dressed in white wearing a blue sash carrying rosary beads (page 60). It seems Bernadette chose later to describe what she saw according to what they thought she should have seen.

She told the priest the next day that she saw something white that might have been a lady (page 62).

Bernadette's trance during the second vision was "frightening" (page 63).

Jeanne Abadie stated that she looked to be dead and they cried at the sight of her (page 63).

Antoine Nicolau said that Bernadette looked beautiful during the trance but he admitted to feeling fear as a result of seeing her (page 63).

Bernadette admitted on that occasion that the vision vanished when Bernadette was poised to ask her if she came from God or Satan (page 63).

On that occasion, Nicolau tried to waken her up but she stayed in her trance and he carried her away to the Nicolau Mill. She was convinced she was still in the grotto seeing the vision some time after her arrival (page 63). Later in life she said that she couldn't remember if she continued to see the vision until she was taken to the mill and she stated she didn't remember being in the mill (page 269). Pere Simpe who questioned her wrote that she didn't deny that she was still seeing the lady when she was in the mill.

Witnesses said she came to herself in the mill but she seems to be saying this was not true. She must have remembered coming around in the mill. The shock of thinking she was at the grotto and then finding herself in the mill all confused would have stuck in her memory.

After Bernadette's visions, witnesses reported seeing a sinister white thing at the grotto (page 114). The book tells us the following. One male visionary said he could not tell what it was that he saw. Many said they saw a white thing - it didn't seem human. This reminds us of Bernadette saying she saw that thing or aquero. Others even during Bernadette's visions, saw frightening lights at the grotto.

Horrible stories about evil forces at the grotto were still appearing in the 1960's (page 115). Locals fled away from it at night after that apparition and this was still going on in the early 1900's (page 115).

Abbe Dezirat saw Bernadette's trance during the 27 February apparition and was initially impressed but then declared that he had the sense that she was could be seeing something other than the Holy Virgin (page 122).

Bernadette had to tell a lie over the first apparition. She had been at the grotto to gather wood. That was theft but she told the Police Commissioner that it was bones she was looking for (page 82).

The Church when it investigated the vision and the reports of miracles refused to examine reports of sinister miracles at the grotto (page 150). Miracles of harm being done to those who opposed or abused the vision site were excluded despite their huge popularity (page 150).

Bernadette was haunted on her sickbed by horrible dreams about the grotto (page 328). The book tells us how Sr Philomena heard Bernadette cry out in the night. She was in a bad way and said she dreamed she was at Massabielle. Philomena was stunned as she would have thought the place where Bernadette saw Our Lady appeared would have been a place of joy and peace for her. Bernadette said that in the dream a boy was firing stones into the stream but it is not known if she meant the

spring of water at the grotto or the river Gave.

Christian psychologists would see signs of occult or demonic obsession. This is a demonic force playing with the emotions and mental health of a person who has let such forces in by embracing a supernatural encounter with them.

Bernadette told Sister Gabrielle that the first time she saw the vision she thought it was the Devil (page 328). If the Church is correct that ecstasy is a state of joy and love for God, then clearly she was not in ecstasy during the first apparition at least. She was found in a trance that must be described as satanic in origin or pathological.

One man who was not insane said he saw Mary in the grotto but it was really a sinister male figure that he saw (page 60, Evidence for Satan in the Modern World). Some saw a scary shadow in a ball of light and were known for their honesty (ibid 58). The conclusion was that these were the Devil. The Devil would appear as the Virgin if he wanted to deceive. The devil would not manifest to make it look like he was mocking the apparitions for he would only mock visions that he made himself to get them taken for the real holy thing.

The Church uses holy water to frighten demons away. If the grotto had been blessed by the presence of God's mother how could Satan appear there?

The Bible says that a testimony should only be taken seriously when there are at least two witnesses. At Lourdes, there was only one witness meaning that if it was supernatural then the Devil was behind it.

A miracle is a supernatural event. It like God doing magic. Religionists who are on the quest to experience miracles open themselves wide to deception. St John of the Cross had plenty to say about that. Also, they evidently think their religion is so ridiculous that they need to see miracle or a sign from God before they can manage to believe.

Bernadette said the rosary when the entity appeared to her. The rosary calls on Mary to pray to God for us. If you really honour God and his will your only prayer will be, ""You know best O God and your will be done!". If you thought Mary was merely praying that you would not ask her to pray for you. There would be no point and no need. Asking her would imply that you don't want to pray this prayer. it would imply that you want her to manipulate and fool God for you. You are trying to get around his will and submission to his will. The rosary is intended to condition you to delude yourself that you really honour God. It is about the enjoyment and peace of the prayer not God.

The grotto was a place of dark magic according to legend. The story of the visions there seem to be in line with that reputation.