

CHAPTER THREE
THE EVILS OF DEMONIZING AN OPPONENT

“Woe to the vanquished!”
Pliny recording the Celt
leader Brennus’ price for
lifting his siege of Rome

Lucifer was the first being to be demonized, in a long list of unethical demonizing of those who oppose, think differently, have a biological variance, wish freedom or in some way are seen as the enemy. Demonizing uses the individual’s weakness or difference to mount a personal attack of unparalleled viciousness. The individual is portrayed as all-bad, unworthy of empathy or sympathy, irredeemable, and deserving of any action against that individual. Anything and everything is justified by the process of demonization. Even the all-too-human behavior of sadomasochism is justified, with either human being or heavenly being sacrificed on an altar of warped ethics. Important ethical concepts, particularly those of respect, history and memory are irrationally swept away by the coercion of demonization. I will argue that demonization is perhaps the worst of unethical acts. It is certainly one of the worst attacks against the standards of inductive reasoning (the learning program), representing an extreme of the fallacy called the argumentum ad hominem or the personal attack.

The concept of all-bad is the mirror image of the concept of all-good and derives from it. Not only does monotheism’s insistence on an omniscient, omnipotent and all-good god necessitate the posit of a being who is somewhat powerful and in opposition to that god, but one who is also all-bad since in opposition to the all-good. Without the concept of all-good, the opposing being might be correct and ethical on some opposition, a more nuanced description of ethics in the cosmos. There is considerable resistance to diminishing the ethical character of a monotheistic god, however, even with the evidence from the bible and other sources that the described deity may embrace evil as fully as good (1). Rather, the deity’s power or omniscience is preferably reduced. But this reduction does not redeem the being that is demonized, because that being’s opposition, although now stronger, is still all-bad. The only rational way to alleviate or remove

demonization is to understand the complexity of ethics and to conclude that no being has a high probability of being all-good. The alternative cognitive strategy of defining away evil or bad consequences in the cosmos may result in an opposing being who is neither good nor bad in human terms, as the deity is neither good nor bad in human terms. This move results in an ethical nihilism, since human beings can no longer determine what is good or bad, cannot know good or evil, and are returned to the primitive, nonhuman state of Adam and Eve in the garden -- amoral beings. Russell, for example, resists such a conceptual move, because he is not willing to deny the reality of suffering human beings in our world (2), but does not state strongly enough that such a move is the end of ethics. Pagel converts demonization into a sociopolitical act. This emphasizes the victimology concept of postmodernism but diminishes the cosmological and ethical importance of demonization (3).

Since Lucifer represents the first demonization, I want to outline the process in his story. The first step is the required opposition or difference exhibited by the being who is to be demonized. The content of that opposition or difference need not be a moral evil. It is hard, for example, to determine what the horrible "sin" was that cast Lucifer in this role, and the texts are inconsistent about it. Pride, freedom and even love have been described as Lucifer's motivation and the content of the "sin" (4). These are all either not generally considered as evil acts or insufficient to justify what follows. It is more likely that the process of opposing or the state of being different is the actual cause of judgment against Lucifer. The Nag Hammadi texts frequently use the word "arrogant", as in the Tripartite Tractate: ... "those who belong to the arrogant thought" (5). Simply opposing or disagreeing, or expressing a different nature, are sufficient to begin the demonizing process and all it entails. Difference in any form (and opposition is a form of difference) is not tolerated within the framework of demonization. Difference, however, is the catalyst in dynamic systems that results in new patterns and new equilibria. It advances the unfolding of the cosmos. If anything, difference is an important value, a critical value for systems functioning. Without it, we would not have the complexity of the cosmos and the mystery and awe that our scientific reasoning discovers in it. Yet difference is a virtue/value that remains its only reward.

The second step in the demonizing process requires a superior power to prevail over the opposer or the different being, at least partially. In conflicts, force must be greater on the side of the being imposing his command or will. As Milton and the old texts recognized, there is no moral superiority here, no moral highground (6,7,8). This is an argument from force, nothing else. In variance from a norm (difference of being), numbers must be on the side of those imposing the norm. The oppositional different must be in the minority on some scale of measure, though this may be a perceptual bias rather than a scientific description that is accurate. Lucifer was not as strong as the god he opposed, and was defeated in the initial conflict, if we view the texts as mythic or religious fundamentalism. If we follow medieval scholastics, not only was Lucifer not as strong, being a created being instead of self-created, but in separating himself from God's will and blessing, he chose to be different than the other heavenly beings (9). The tenth order, Lucifer their leader, and the Watcher angels who also fell all share one feature. They are different beings from the loyal heavenly beings, God knows their difference, and God does not tolerate their difference. This difference is variously expressed. It is often attributed to God's omniscience in knowing that these beings will fail and fall. It is visually expressed in describing the beings after the fall as losing their beauty and heavenly nature, becoming composed of the heavier and darker atmosphere, and, by ceasing to shine, becoming beings of darkness. It is sometimes expressed as their unnatural lust to mate with human beings, thus defiling themselves and producing monstrous offspring. Or it is attributed to unnatural creation and incapacity for understanding. Although still powerful, they have become different, and the different are damned.

The third step in the process is to show the weakness of those to be demonized and to reaffirm the power of those about to do the demonizing. Here, the visuals of chains, bonds, keys to imprisonment, throwing down, falling from great heights, lying on lakes of molten rock, being scarred or made physically hideous, weeping while hanging in the dark, being forced to do what the more powerful demand, being continuously tortured as punishment for the great evil done are all used to convey the defeat and humiliation of those beings. The very oldest texts do not elaborate on these visuals in a rampantly sadistic way, but simply describe them in a general fashion. It is later texts produced

when the demonizing has gained momentum that glory in the sadistic details. What we know from the early texts is that Lucifer has lost and fallen from his previous position in the cosmos, that he has been somehow damaged in the defeat, and that others have some power over him, including the power to imprison or immobilize him. Those texts are beginning to elaborate that he is the enemy of man, wishes his place in the cosmos back, and uses evil means to try and achieve that in his struggles. He is beginning to be portrayed as a deceiver and someone who uses the progress of civilization (music, tool making, art, territorial fights, freedom, philosophy and science) to ensnare human beings (10). He is even described as the ruler of Earth and the lord over man; because of the events in the Garden of Eden, someone who has a legitimate claim to this planet and its people. In the old texts, it will take something more powerful to break his hold over human beings, a human-god deadly and bloody sacrifice.

There is, in fact, a close comparison between this son-of-god sacrifice and Lucifer's life history whose full implication has not been well-developed, although the texts follow the parallels very closely. Lucifer himself could be seen as a heavenly-being sacrifice, an angel sacrifice. God constructs Lucifer to value freedom and a dynamic cosmos, and then orders him to reject both. Since he cannot reject his internal values, his being, he is forced into opposition with God. He is destined to be defeated, bound, and thrown from his place in the heavens, as Jesus is destined to be defeated, bound with rope and nails, and removed from the Earth. In a mirror image, Jesus follows God's will as God knows he must and is sacrificed, while Lucifer opposes God's will as God knows he must and is sacrificed. One is sacrificed to maintain the static order; one is sacrificed to create the dynamic order. Jesus is deified while Lucifer is demonized. But it is not clear, except for following a command and submitting to greater power, which deserves either fate. Nor is the common human/heavenly being sacrifice understandable in terms of human ethics. Why should either a blood or light sacrifice be seen as ethical?

The later texts pick up the details of punishment and difference and run riot with them. The details tend to be culture and time specific, difficult to bear visualizing or even conceiving, and degrading in many ways to those doing the demonizing as well as to those demonized. The list of disgusting and horrific portrayals is long: bestiality images of hairy lower bodies, huge scrotums, horns, misplaced body parts, deformed limbs,

animal penises, subhuman facies, and finally substitute animal bodies (dehumanizing); chains and instruments of torture applied in dank and burning environments to the demons and their human allies, with the instruments including all the old Roman torture apparatus of the Fourth Book of the Maccabees (11) and the medieval refinements (12), with a bit of the Acts of St. George thrown in (13); forcing Lucifer to wallow in excrement and private functions of the corporeal (14); whipping up hate for the fallen angels and predicting their cause to be hopeless (15); constructing scenes of humiliation and powerlessness for Lucifer and heaping him with ridicule (16); and insisting on the enjoyment of watching his eternal suffering and damnation (17).

The fourth step in the demonizing process is to remove all virtues from the being to be demonized and replace them with disgusting vices. There can be no allowance for any possibility of empathy or sympathy for the demonized individual, so any expression of virtue or ethical thinking must be denied him. Those doing the demonization must resist any show of kindness toward the individual, any mercy, and must insist that justice demands eternal and infinite cruelty toward that individual. This runs counter to human nature, and can only be maintained if the being to be demonized can be re-pictured as an object which is all evil, a personified malevolence that has no iota of goodness (18). While Russell feels the need to personify evil in this way, such personification may actually express the evil nature of human beings and contribute not to the ethical but to the unethical. The being must be made unnatural and completely unethical, so alien that no relating or membership in the ethical community is possible or conceivable. The being must become an “it” toward which any act is permissible. Demonizing gives free rein, then, to the most horrible and dark of human thoughts and actions, to the worst in our nature, and for that reason it is an act against us as well as an act against the demonized being. It structures us to be evil, under the guise of ethics. It attacks our humanity.

All of this has been done to Lucifer and the tenth order, as well as to many human beings throughout history. The essential cruelty of demonizing is unethical enough. But there is worse. In allowing us to remove individuals from membership in the ethical community, demonizing narrows ethics and makes it irrelevant to the really important questions. It encourages scapegoats. It necessitates the objectifying of sentient and rational human or other beings. It frames the means vs. ends problem in ethics in a way

that allows the end to justify any and all means. It forces the horrible abuse of ethics. It creates sameness and totalitarian control, the total society (19).

The fifth and final step in demonizing is to destroy the individual and/or to revel in that individual's suffering -- by any means necessary. In the Lucifer myths, we have not yet come to that step, only the foretelling of it (20). On the human sphere, we have frequently reached that step. The means/ends problem predicts that if we label the end as highly ethical, justifying, and virtuous, and the opposer of that end as all-bad, we will end up doing tragic deeds that are shameful in their evil. The shame and evil will be hidden from our view, however, because we will feel justified in using any means necessary. We will not look at the close interaction between means and ends, nor realize that the means we pick partly determine the end we will achieve. We will also not look at the ethical character of the means themselves, or consider that some means may be so unethical that no end can serve as an excuse for using them. Demonizing allows us to bracket all these ethical questions and concepts, to disregard them. It allows us to be evil, to be insensitive to that evil, and to even feel good about that evil. And it is something that human beings do over and over again, without learning from the mistake, in fact denying that it is a mistake.

Moving from mythic discussion to historical discussion, demonizing is an old and ongoing historical process. I want to look at some of the instances in history that have been created by the error of demonizing the Lucifer myth. Lucifer's demonization is the cause and template for multiple historical demonizations of human beings.

That connection was made clear to me when I read the quotation from Ezekiel just before the Prologue of James Kirby Martin's sensitive book on Benedict Arnold: *Benedict Arnold Revolutionary Hero: An American Warrior Reconsidered* (21). The quote is the New International Version of the bible describing the fall of Lucifer, Bright Son of the Morning, making the connection clear. Martin also quotes the popular cry after Arnold's treason was discovered: "Treason! Treason! Treason! Black as Hell." He describes in detail the demonization of Arnold, and ends with the tragic scene at the historic Saratoga battlefield where Arnold so distinguished himself in spite of restraints from his superiors that would have defeated a lesser man, and where Arnold had to bravely fight not only the British under "Gentleman" John Burgoyne, but his own

commanding general, Horatio Gates. Gates was far from the field of battle, encased in his officer's tent and safety, while his field general, Arnold, secured the victory and suffered a disabling wound to his leg already damaged in another fight for American independence. At the historic site, a monument was first erected in 1887 showing simply an officer's left-footed boot. The inscription says: "In memory of the 'most brilliant soldier' of the Continental army, who was desperately wounded on this spot, the sally port of Burgoyne's 'Great Western Redoubt', 7th October 1777, winning for his countrymen the Decisive Battle of the American Revolution..." (22). The soldier was, of course, Benedict Arnold, one of the greatest fighting generals of the Revolution, who sacrificed personal finances, pride, family and body for the revolution, but refused to sacrifice honor, since he believed honor was not something a man should be asked to give up. When it appeared that the politicians would be requesting his honor as well, Arnold decided he could no longer support the revolution, and rejoined the British Empire.

Martin shows how history and educational institutions then demonized Arnold, trying to deny his real contributions to the success of the American Revolution; his unquestioned bravery at Quebec, Lake Champlain (where he partly succeeded in copying the Athenian strategy and victory at Salamis) and Saratoga; and his complex and virtuous nature. He was relegated to the depths of Judas. Yet the historical record remained intact, and Arnold was a Revolutionary Hero, as well as finally a traitor to what he saw as the corruption of the American Revolution. Historians may know that, but the American public, if given the name Benedict Arnold, will equate it was treason or traitor. Martin still talks about Arnold's "descent into villainy," but it is hard to read his book and share that judgment. Instead, it seems that the good man was politically and professionally defeated, while the inferior men took the glory and value.

Demonization does that all too often. Arnold's demonization follows the process. Arnold was different, lacking the aristocratic background of some of his enemies or competitors. He was also different in his passion for freedom and his genuine belief in the philosophic values of the revolution. And he did not play the game. He was not defeated in battle, but badly wounded twice, which allowed others to claim the benefit that should have been his. Winning on the field of battle, he had to be carried off the field

as others came from safety to claim the victory Arnold had won. He was defeated in the political games played in the Continental Congress, his reputation put at risk, and his honor fouled. A campaign of rumors about his vices circulated: hot-headed, a drinker, too short in stature to be a leader, too proud. Engaged in wilderness battles and in the field much of the time, Arnold could not protect himself against his attackers. He did not have the strength of powerful networks of aristocracy and politics, although George Washington tried to assist him. He could be punished by loss of command, demotion, threats of court martial, demands for accounting. When he finally did commit treason, he was then stripped of any virtue he might have had, any competence, any previous patriotism. His name would not appear on the Saratoga memorial, only the boot that had encased his shattered leg. There was no attempt to understand his actions and reasons. Arnold was courageous enough, allowing himself to be used by the British knowingly. He fought with British forces on American soil and could have been captured. He knew that if he were captured, he would be hung for treason. Despite that, he continued to put his life at risk. Americans considered him the handiwork of Satan; the British aristocracy excluded him from a successful army career. When his health broke down and he died in great pain, most Americans, awash in the demonizing process, would have wished for more suffering.

But Arnold's criticisms of the Congress and the American establishment were actually well-founded and shared by many other officers and revolutionaries. As the ideals of the revolution gave way to power politics, it turned out that Arnold's idealism and honor represented the ethical approach, not the traitorous approach. He was simply too ethical.

Another example of demonization involves an entire people, the Celtic Gauls of Julius Caesar's time. Although Caesar replaced the stereotype of nomadic, cruel, treacherous, disorganized, drunken, greedy and undisciplined warriors described by Polybius, he instituted his own demonization in order to eliminate Gaelic unity against the Roman empire-builders (23). The Gauls' religious and juridical tradition depended heavily on their priesthood, the Druids. The Druids might have been capable of uniting the disparate Gaelic chiefs into an effective political and fighting unit. Roman imperial policy had been to allow conquered peoples their own religious systems, but an exception was made against the Druids, who were systematically wiped out. In order to justify this, since

Roman culture required a “just war,” Caesar focused on descriptions of the horrible human sacrifices carried out by the Druids. He used both second-hand and personal observations of the sacrificial rituals that Romans understood as typical of barbarians and that justified military action against them.

The Druids were practicing human sacrifice in fact, frequently and bloodily. This was only one way in which they were different from the Romans. Druids were sorcerers who did not believe in writing down their culture and its mysteries. They preferred the oral tradition, which required a stable Druidic order operating within a free Gaelic society. They met all the stereotypical descriptions of barbarians and they could create resistance to Roman rule. Their people would follow them in resisting and thus create a problem for Rome. Nor did they meet Caesar’s demand for submission to him. Caesar could be merciful if applicants pleaded with him, but he would not tolerate pride or opposition. The Druids, however, would not even be allowed to plead, since Caesar saw them as a danger to be eliminated. His campaign against them was total, and once the tellers of the oral tradition had been destroyed, the tradition itself was effectively gone. The elimination of these barbarian sorcerers was justified because of their practice of human sacrifice and their barbarism. The Gauls could not protect their priesthood which the Romans reviled, and the punishment of the Druids was justified because of the sacrificial atrocities.

The other functions of the Druids within Gaelic society were ignored, though these may have been the real reason for the elimination of this class. Druids were deprived of any virtue or goodness, and killing them was a permissible means to the end of eliminating human sacrifices. That this also eliminated Gaelic development of law and statehood and prevented a unified force against the Romans was lost in the description of Druid atrocities. Caesar need not be merciful to Druids, because they had been demonized, and it was just for Rome to destroy them for the same reason. Actually, the Romans were right to reject human sacrifice as highly unethical (though later games in the Coliseum might make that seem hypocritical), but identifying it as a “war atrocity” makes it propaganda to be used in the fight, not careful ethics. Calling it an atrocity in the middle of a fighting campaign is a demonizing process for a specific Roman military end, and it calls into question the accuracy of the descriptions or their comparative ranking

with other wartime activities. At the same time, it does not rationally justify doing whatever the Romans wished to the Druids, but that is easily forgotten in the language of war atrocities.

Other barbarians had different versions of the demonizing process imposed on them. Even successful barbarian leaders could suffer from demonizing, as, for example, Attila the Hun. Attila is not demonized in Hungary, where boys are routinely named after him. In the successors of the Western Roman Empire, however, he is. The Huns were part of the long Indo-European/Mongolian waves of migration that came from central Eurasia into the Roman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire. Attila had some understanding of Rome, although his people were peripheral to the empire. Aetius, who went on to become a famous Roman general with his own private army of Hun warriors, was an aristocratic Roman who had been sent to the Hun king as a hostage. Attila and Aetius were not that different, then, both being raised in the Hun camp. But Attila was perceived as different, as barbarian, although an excellent war chief. His men were frequently mercenaries in the Roman army, and involved in various games of power politics. The first step in demonizing, making different, was present from the beginning, despite the international flavor of the weakening Western Roman Empire (24).

Attila played power politics very well and probably also benefited from Aetius' need for a Hun base for his power. He generally won rather than lost battles, and was kept from marching on Rome and Ravenna only by infectious diseases that broke out in camp. He acquired Scythia and Germany, invaded Persia, defeated the Romans on the Utus, at Marcianopolis and in Thrace, invaded Europe and threatened both Eastern and Western Roman Empires. He even claimed, through promise of betrothal to Honoria, the sister of Emperor Valentinian III, half the Western Roman Empire. However, he miscalculated in crossing the Rhine, invading Gaul and besieging Orleans. Aetius and Theodoric, the Gothic king, lifted the siege of Orleans and defeated Attila on the Cattalaunian fields. That loss forced Attila's retreat, and while he again threatened the Western Empire, his power base eroded.

Following the loss, Attila continued to be described as physically unattractive, as meeting the barbarian stereotype of drunken behavior and disorganized warfare, of nomadic existence and lack of civilization. Punishment was not possible because of his

sufficient military strength, but stories of Hun war atrocities circulated. Gradually, Attila lost any virtue in the eyes of the empire, and became the leader of one more cavalry intent on plunder and the destruction of the remnants of the empire. He died of natural causes in his tent, after a drunken wedding night which fueled more demonization. That he maintained his people's freedom in difficult times, that he succeeded at the game of power politics and foreign policy, that he was on speaking terms with Aetius, the "last Roman," and that he challenged the imperial powers of both East and West were put to one side in the demonizing process. After his death, his leaderless peoples fell on hard times, and it was easier to overlook his virtues and focus on his vices exclusively. He became a symbol for cruel barbarism and for the destruction of classic civilization. Although it had not been possible to destroy him during his lifetime, demonization increased after his death, despite his powerful influence on history and without placing him in the context of his times. Again, demonization does not allow for an accurate understanding of the individual being demonized, and it distorts the person into a personification of evil. It also makes it more difficult to understand the events of the period, in its search for "the good guys" and "the bad guys." It focuses on exaggerated atrocities or atrocities typical of both or many sides in conflicts. It leaves us more ignorant. It also leaves us more unethical, because it would justify any means to destroy a person like Attila.

The other noted barbarian (by arbitrary definition but with some justification) was the leader of another group of steppe people who rode down from Eurasia, Ghengis Khan and his Mongols of the nine horsetails (25). Ghengis again fit the assumption of ugliness that accompanies the different and the opposing. He was described as having a flat face with nose flattened, short and squat, making a bestial noise far different from ordinary languages. Like Attila, he also remained undefeated, and at one point could have ridden his cavalry to the Atlantic Ocean. His generals had defeated all the armies that stood in the way. There is no doubt that Ghengis was a ruthless fighter, and his generals were highly skilled. His army destroyed many of the ancient cities of the Caucasus and he sent millions of people into slavery. In Europe, he was known as the "scourge of God," and he accepted that name.. He may have been the most barbarous of the various steppe peoples, but he was also highly organized and astute. His people were nomadic and bent on

plunder, uncomfortable with cities and agriculture. He committed all the typical war atrocities: killing women and children, raping, burning, destroying religious buildings and icons, taking slaves, filling the streets with blood, exacting tribute, killing men and boys of fighting age, taking cities that resisted apart stone by stone, taking the ears of dead enemies as trophies.

Because he was so well-organized and ruled with sole authority, he achieved solid victories from Mongolia to Poland and Hungary and kept Russia under servitude. Western Europe was saved only by his death (he fell off his horse at his capital, a tented city). On news of his death, his generals returned to Mongolia for further instructions. As with Attila, demonization occurred primarily after his death, because his power prevented it before. The Mongol hordes became synonymous with cruelty and evil, and there is no literature on any personal virtues, although Ghengis was an unusual man. Nor was he as unattractive as demonization has developed, nor as different as was assumed by the process. His behavior was no different, though more successful, than the leaders of many groups of steppe people moving into the Near East and Europe. However, because of demonization, even as strong a leader as Ghengis Khan has gone down in history as the symbol for the cruel and destroying barbarian, and little more. One of the dreadful consequences of demonizing is that it follows a person's name through history, destroying past, present and future.

Not only barbarians could be demonized. Even some caesars fell into this process. The classic example is Emperor Nero, whose demonizing followed the standard process of his time. Nero's reign was difficult and the court intrigues surrounding the Julio-Claudian family were extreme. In the first flowering of imperial rule, Octavius and his descendants reinforced concepts of divine descent as well as divine right of rulers. Inbreeding to maintain that purity of divine descent was not uncommon, and led to entangled family alliances and indications that Nero had practiced incest with his mother before having her killed. "Neroism" was the term used to describe his combination of political views and aesthetic ideals. It included, as far as Rome's literary writers were concerned, all the trapping of a tyrant: a monster who killed his half-brother, had his wife and tutor eliminated, married one of his freedmen, attempted acting and chariot racing, managed to burn down Rome, and was generally the enemy of the human race, according to Pliny the

Elder. Although some recognized Nero's poetic talent and his serious pursuit of culture, his project to rebuild Rome, and his attempt to institute universal peace, those aspects of the man were submerged when demonizing began in earnest (26,27).

Nero was young when he assumed the empire, and there were always conspiracies against him, as in any imperial court. Those conspiracies grew as his reign was seen as a threat to the Roman Empire. The governors of many provinces began serious plans to depose Nero, who was in fact different from most Roman emperors and likely in danger of losing the empire. Although Vindex's uprising in Gaul was crushed by loyalist troops, Germania, Africa, Lusitania, Baetica, and finally the praetorian guard in Rome gave support to another man, Galba. Nero was declared a public enemy by the Senate, and left alone except for four servants, he committed suicide just before his arrest. His death escalated the demonizing process, since his weaknesses could now be safely displayed. The standard demonizing steps are all present. Nero was different and in opposition to the general method of ruling the Roman Empire, and presented a threat to the infrastructure of that rule. His differences included incest and matricide, along with bisexuality. Those aspects of the man would be stressed, and others forgotten. Removing all goodness from Nero was effectively done by Christian and Jewish writers who linked him to the Apocalypse, some interpreting him as the beast of Revelation, others as the actual Antichrist (28,29). Nero had achieved the heights of demonization. The Antichrist characterization was taken very seriously, some arguing that Nero had not died of his head wound, but was alive and plotting the battle against Christ and Michael.

Still, being described as the Antichrist has some dignity and purpose, some strength of character to it. It took more modern times to fully destroy Nero, making him both pathetic and pathological. That new step in demonization is a particularly virulent one and creates an abuse of psychiatric science as well as ethics (30). For Nero was now psychologically examined and destroyed. What pathology would cause a young man to sleep with his mother, the most strict of all incest taboos? What pathology would produce matricide? We no longer give Nero the evil of an Antichrist. Instead, we drag him through psychological filth as Lucifer was dragged through bodily excrement, and portray him as mentally diseased. Perhaps he was, but we can never know that. No practitioner of psychiatric science can meet clinically with Nero, nor take at face value

the contemporary descriptions of him generated by his political enemies. Making a psychiatric diagnosis under such circumstances violates medical ethics in a major way, but that has not stopped professionals from doing it, nor have they felt the need to break their silence when others do it. So Nero has become an example of a modern addition to the demonizing process, one that fully degrades and destroys without hope of restitution.

That modern addition was still absent when the Knights of the Temple became an object for demonization and destruction. Instead, religion was abused as a way for the French king to appropriate the Templars' economic resources for his own use and increase his position of power vis a vis the Catholic Church. The Templars were different, being a fighting military order (monk-knights), and represented an independent power base with an international banking system, a navy, and their own fiefdom (31). Because of their base in Palestine and their interaction with the Saracens, they had picked up some exotic characteristics that set them apart as well. So they differed and they opposed. At the height of their strength during the Crusades, they could not have been easily demonized, though there was always some discomfort in church and lay circles surrounding them (32). The chance for demonization came after the loss of the Holy Lands and no further crusades. All the military orders were at risk (the Knights Hospitallers, the Teutonic Knights), but the Templars were the richest and most powerful and the best prize. Their end came swiftly, with the French king ordering a surprise raid on their commanderies and the arrest of their Grand Master. At that point, the authority of the Inquisition and the demonizing process used for heretics, Muslims and Jews went into effect. Under torture, the knights confessed to all sorts of religious atrocities and to homosexuality. In their weakened condition, it was easy to claim their defiling of the cross, their homosexual initiation rites, their heresy.

In the Templars' case, however, the demonizing did not work as well as intended. It was sufficient for the king to appropriate some of their resources, but the king and the pope were at cross purposes, and the kings of other countries did not wish to prosecute or persecute the Templars. The Templar program simply went under new names or underground, although the organization never regained its political power and gradually faded into esoterica. Demonization is not always successful.

Demonization was much more successful for an individual Teutonic Knight and member of the Order of the Dragon, however (33). The Bassarab line of princes had a difficult task. Their country was a borderland for the conflict between Muslims and Christians in the Balkans, and kind of closed gate to Western Europe. The Bassarabs had to keep their people from being slaughtered by the superior armies of the Turks, while remaining loyal to the Polish, German and Hungarian armies that could not adequately protect them from the Turks. In this Transylvanian country that became Romania, Vlad II of the Bassarabs was inducted into the Order of the Dragon at a ceremony in the castle of the Teutonic Knights, and became Vlad Dracul. The Hungarian king, Sigismund, had reinstated the Order and it became a protector of the Christian faith, although the Order (the Dragovitsa) had historic ties to the Bogomil heresy that spread throughout Europe. To illustrate how difficult this power politics game was to play, Vlad's sons, Radu and Vlad III, were sent as hostages to the sultan's court. Not to be outdone, when it was Vlad III's turn at this game, the Hungarian king had him imprisoned in Budapest.

Vlad III, son of Dracul, or Dracula, was a skillful leader and military strategist, and by necessity a hard man for a hard situation. He practiced the Turkish and Persian style of impaling enemies and prisoners of war, and used fear as a method of ruling and holding off the Muslim armies. He was initially known as the savior of Christianity for his success at blocking the Muslims from entering Europe, a success sometimes achieved by impaling thousands of prisoners as a warning to invading armies, a warning that worked. Even the pope recognized his achievements as a defender of the faith, however. The peasants adored him; the town burghers did not. The Teutonic Knights and the Hungarians had their own agendas, so the alliances were not always strong. Prince Vlad survived in this delicate balance until a defeat in a battle against the Muslims. Supposedly, he was killed and his head taken to the sultan, although his wife and children fled to the monastery at Snagov, where they were greeted and cared for by Vlad the Monk (a disguise Vlad III had sometimes used to get information about his principality).

Again, Vlad III was different and opposing to many sides in this complex struggle, although his credentials as a defender of the faith and savior of Christianity, and his membership in the Knights and the Order of the Dragon should have carried weight. After his "death" on the battlefield, the Germans began a demonizing campaign against

him with pamphlets detailing his war atrocities, his eating of human flesh, and his drinking of human blood. Forests of impaled prisoners were depicted. His reign of absolute power was described as a reign of terror and arbitrary cruelty. Since only the Germans carried forward his history, and since the history of the Order of the Dragon within the Teutonic Knights is cloaked, we are left with the unsubstantiated charges made by enemies. Vlad also becomes described as physically ugly, despite the portraits of him still extant, since the caricatures in the German pamphlets show a bestial person eating under the poles of impaled and dying men. He begins to be seen as all-evil, even though his history is complex and contains both good and evil.

The final demonization of Vlad is interesting, however, because it changes an historical, real person into a mythical being, an immortal monster. Vlad III is the basis for Bram Stoker's tale of Dracula, a refinement of vampire legends that converts the primitive animal-like vampiric forces of old legends into clever and evil rational beings superficially looking like ordinary humans (34). These beings are killers associated with the forces of darkness, so that the human demonization of Vlad III has progressed to the final distortion of making him a form of the personification of evil, the devil. Vlad III Dracula joins Antichrist Nero in the ultimate conversion which takes away all goodness from the individual, destroys the individual's humanity, and suggests an eternal torture/punishment. The enormously sadistic nature of demonization could not be better illustrated.

I have started this analysis of historical demonization with the distant past for a reason. There is too much resistance to seeing modern demonization for what it is to start with contemporary individuals. It is also dangerous for the ethical analyst to even suggest that some demonized figures might be complex human beings with good and bad characteristics, rather than inhuman devils whose nature can justify any sadistic punishment or attitude toward them. Demonizing is so effective that it is intellectually and socially dangerous to oppose it, yet it is a terribly unethical act in itself. All I have to do is read a current role call to make this point: Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic, Timothy McVeigh. Just saying these names generates anger and the wish to cause pain. It is probably safest to look at the case of Saddam Hussein, and it is probably

impossible, perhaps for all time, to rationally look at Adolf Hitler (it is not even legally allowed in some countries).

Saddam Hussein has had to lead his country while standing up to pervasive demonization by the West. War atrocities against the Kurds have been charged, suggesting the use of some poison gas, although the atrocities committed by Turkey against the Kurds or by Iran have been downplayed or not mentioned at all. If anything, the Kurds were better treated in Iraq than in those other two countries until the Iraq/Iran War. When the Kurds, who wish their own country created out of parts of Turkey, Iraq and Iran and who were falsely promised a Kurdistan by the United Nations, decided to take advantage of this war and break away from Iraq and perhaps support Iranian forces, they played a very dangerous game of power politics that no country could allow. The use of poison gas is no worse than the use of napalm in Viet Nam, but because the United States is powerful, it has not been demonized for that use. War, as U.S. General Sherman said, is truly hell, and he proceeded to institute one of the first modern versions of Total War, later extended to the bombing of Dresden or the Russian bombing of Chechnya. Hussein was doing no more nor less than other leaders have done and still do.

It was also claimed that Hussein was a dictator, not a terribly shocking charge for many countries around the globe. His move to reclaim Iraqi land taken coercively when the Western Allies and the United Nations parceled out the Mideast was seen as invasive aggression, although it was really an attempt to take back a satrapy or puppet government set up to insure the oil supply for Europe. He was accused not only of brutal acts toward the Kurds, but of repression against the Shiite Muslims of southern Iraq. Finally, UN inspection teams were certain Hussein was hiding and still producing that slogan: “weapons of mass destruction,” although none were located. Hussein was punished by trade embargoes and having to submit to flyovers by hostile planes in his airspace. His weakness was paraded for the world. Nothing good is said about him, and the actions of the allies are orchestrated to attempt his overthrow.

His demonization was almost complete, and was finally completed when American psychiatrists began to diagnose him with a mental illness. Despite their own code of ethics which should prohibit such remote diagnosis and abuse of psychiatry for political goals, psychiatrists gave a diagnosis of Malignant Narcissistic Personality Disorder (35).

This is one of the most value-loaded diagnoses in the psychiatric classification scheme, and also one of the least scientifically validated. The term ‘malignant’ conveys that this is an ethical condemnation or demonic judgment, and the term ‘narcissistic’ removes Hussein from any normal empathy with other human beings. Of course, the very diagnosis of a mental illness, no matter what the specific diagnosis, weakens, degrades and reduces someone who opposes or differs. That person is now in a class of abnormal, unnatural, unhealthy beings who have no credibility, no stature, no respect -- at least, when psychiatry is abused in this way to demonize a person, that is the consequence for all psychiatric diagnoses and for all clinical patients. This is a particularly difficult attack to counter or resist. There is very little the individual can do, because once “mental health” is called into question it cannot be regained. Also, the standards for mental health or illness are ambiguous and not well-established scientifically. Psychiatric illness is often a value judgment, if we are talking about the personality disorders or even some of the Axis I diagnoses. A visualized brain disease can be established and the norms specified; a functional personality disorder too often reflects the cultural biases or political forces of its time and place. U.S. Mideast policy has too often made use of psychiatric long-distance diagnosis of Muslim leaders who oppose or differ with our policy goals. It is suggested that one may be bipolar depressive, one may have malignant narcissistic personality disorder, one may be impaired by Parkinson, etc.

In another area of the world connected with oil and energy requirements, Eastern Europe and particularly those countries where an oil pipeline from Caspian Sea oil might run, demonizing and demonizing with psychiatric diagnosis is now prevalent. The Bosnian Serb leaders received this latest political use of demonization, being accused on scanty or ambiguous evidence of war atrocities and genocide in the form of “ethnic cleansing.” It did not matter that all the groups in the region were engaged in ethnic segregation/cleansing and that all were fighting a very dirty civil war. The Bosnian Serbs were selected out for special attention, and their leaders demonized as practitioners of atrocities and genocide. The television media were filled with views of starved people in camps and dead bodies in piles, and a concerted effort was made to describe the situation in terms of World War II and Nazi concentration camps. Reporters assumed genocide rather than lack of food in camps or collateral damage from weapons. Serbs became the

contemporary version of Nazis. The use of television propaganda, the rush of anchormen from networks, the instant and unanalyzed visuals, the lies a television camera can tell while seeming to report the immediacy of truth, are all new developments in the demonizing process, making it much easier rather than harder to do.

From its success in Bosnia as an instrument for foreign policy, demonizing moved to the remainder of Yugoslavia and the Serbian/Kosovo conflict. Here, the target of demonization was the leader who aided the Bosnian Serbs and was President of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic. The economic, historical, religious and ethnic factors in Yugoslavia are very complicated. Albanian paramilitary had been trying for years to extend Albanian territory or control, moving into Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia, for example. Albania is simply not a viable geographic entity (36). Albanians had also helped the Germans in World War II (as had the Croats) find and destroy Serbian resistance fighters who opposed the Nazi take-over of their country. Serb resistance was heroic and costly in terms of lives of civilians punished by the Germans. Serbian nationalism was also a strong component, partially kept under check during the Communist regime. But U.S. foreign policy demanded that Milosevic give up his people's interests and needs and implement U.S. interests in his own country. As a nationalist, Milosevic chose not to sell out his people. He too opposed and differed. When he refused to sign an agreement dictated by the U.S., forces from the U.S., Britain and North Atlantic Treaty Organization units bombed Serbian forces in Kosovo and in Belgrade, including a hit on the Chinese Embassy. With the countryside of Kosovo being repeatedly bombed, the results were predictable. Refugees began moving toward the borders and piling up on the borders of Macedonia. These were primarily Albanians. The Serbian refugees fled toward Belgrade.

Again, U.S. television crews assembled at the refugee camps of Albanians, not at the camps of Serbians. Poignant interviews were done. War atrocities were told and retold for the cameras, by Albanians whose reports were not verified for truth content. Estimates of deaths, all guesses, soared for the reporters. The comparison with Hitler's Germans reappeared, although I doubt the Nazi airforce would have allowed the undisturbed movement toward the borders. Belgrade was bombed, but we were assured these were "smart bombs" that would not harm civilians. Only Serb weapons harmed

civilians. Milosevic, for opposing U.S. interests, became a Nazi, a concentration camp commandant, a totally evil man who had no good reasons or purposes for his actions. He was a brutal dictator (who happened to have been elected) who carried out ethnic cleansing, and needed to be tried for “war crimes.” The network news anchors and the heavy coverage with great photo-ops of hungry children living in tents sealed the demonization of Milosevic, enlisting ethics as a propaganda tool for U.S. foreign policy. All that was left was to destroy Milosevic, body and mind. It was suggested that Milosevic had a history of depression, that there was a family history of suicide, and that he was likely to suffer from mental illness. Psychiatry had also been enlisted, without protest. Following an election in which all returns were not yet in, street crowds converged on public buildings in Belgrade. Reporters called this a democratic movement, not mob rule (because the leaders were willing to represent U.S. interests rather than nationalistic interests). The Milosevic government was overthrown by the street crowds who became representative of ethical democracy, and Milosevic retreated to his home. The U.S. then refused to agree to the release of rebuilding funds for Yugoslavia/Serbia unless Milosevic was arrested and turned over to a war crimes tribunal. Spurred by money, Yugoslavian leaders had Milosevic arrested and jailed, with reports circulating that he had considered shooting himself. We now have a mentally ill ethnic cleanser who will not likely get a fair trial, and demonization is almost complete. We all now “know” that Milosevic is the personification of evil. Such are the unethical uses of demonization.

Are there ever totally evil human beings? Serial killers and serial cannibal killers are sometimes described by psychiatrists who have interviewed them as evil, perhaps totally so. There are human predators. Some ethological work suggests that the physical circuits for predation and reproduction are extremely close together in the organism, suggesting that such circuits may get entwined in disastrous ways (37,38). There may be individuals with such an abnormality that only the cues of predation can result in sexual stimulation and response. These same individuals, however, may be married and good fathers to their children, while they are torturing, sexually abusing and killing other people’s children. Being in the presence of such an abnormality may suggest malevolence, or it may not, depending on the context. It is difficult to imagine a totally evil individual, as Milton discovered in “Paradise Lost” when he tried to make a character out of Lucifer (39). Even

in the less-developed plays of the Middle Ages, the demons are not always engaged in evil acts, and have some capacity to interact among themselves without full malevolence (40). A totally evil individual would have to be such an active destroying force that it would be a whirlwind of complete chaos and destruction in constant movement. Not even a rabid dog would meet that requirement.

What follows most tragically from demonization is the destruction of respect for beings and the obliteration of memory of membership in the ethical community. The loss of respect and memory makes ethics impossible. Sociopaths demonstrate how objectifying other human beings, seeing them as objects and furniture in the world, viewing them as things to be exploited and means to one's end make ethics nonfeasible. It is empathy with others, acknowledging shared and innate worth, loving in the general sense that create the ground of ethics for a social species. Without that, contracts, promises, legalisms, rights are all meaningless terms that are not warranted by anything. Demonization attacks the ground of ethics, and when it is finally realized, those who have accomplished it see no ethical constraints or responsibilities for the being who has been demonized, or for any other being they wish to demonize. But demonization has no boundaries. If Lucifer can be demonized, so can you or I, so can any being. All that is required is that some being differ or oppose, and we all find ourselves differing and opposing on something. There is no safety in sameness, because none of us can be completely the same. During the medieval witchhunts, that was made quite clear. Churchmen who opposed the hunting became themselves the targets, although their religious credibility had founded the inquisitions into sorcery, and the hunters often became the hunted (41). Everyone is at risk for demonization.

Destroying the memory that a being was once a member of our ethical community is equally terrible. It threatens the stability of membership of each of us. It does worse, however. Our humanities, our cultures and civilizations, are based on memories of members of our ethical community. If the capacity to have those memories is removed by engaging in the demonizing process, our humanities become hollow. All of us are disposable, and arbitrarily so.

Another unethical consequence of demonizing is its effect on the demonizers. Watching the morality play of Timothy McVeigh unfold, I am struck with the additional

damage to their humanity done to survivors and families of victims of the Oklahoma City bombing. The demand to be allowed to see McVeigh's execution is particularly disturbing. I can understand the feelings of need for vengeance, the normal response of loved ones to wish to kill with their bare hands the person who has killed the one dear to them. There is nothing degrading or abnormal about that very human response, taken privately and personally. Even carrying out that wish would not be such an unethical act that in compassion it could not be understood and forgiven. But the clamor to see McVeigh's execution is a different thing, a group thing, an orchestrated and public act that seems too close to watching Templars burn at the stake, or revolutionaries drawn and quartered, or hangings in the public square. It cannot give the loved ones what they so wish, relief from their awful loss, but it can turn them into worse avengers than McVeigh (who wished to avenge, it seems, the deaths at Waco and Ruby Ridge), because the apparatus of the state and the group/crowd cold choreography of a closed-television viewing appeal to a controlled, calculating vengeance that is the worst of humanity. The process of demonization turns more than the individual to be demonized into demons.

The personification of evil accomplishes no good in the world and results in an ethical nihilism, threatening all our human values. It is amazing that demonization has been tolerated across histories and societies. It has been successfully maintained because the process itself assumes that only the all-bad, the evil and malevolent, are demonized. Internally, demonization begs its own question and rationally fails, or becomes a mischievous tautology of error: only the all-bad are demonized because demonization only concerns the all-bad. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Demonization is also tolerated in the cosmos construction, with either dualism or monotheism. However, dynamic systems do not have that feature. Dynamic systems are neither all-good nor all-bad, and it is to the mythic explanation for the beginning of dynamic systems that I now turn, walking into the Garden of Eden.

“Light and darkness, life and death, right and left are brothers of one another. They are inseparable. Because of this neither are the good good, nor the evil evil, nor is life

**life, nor death death. For this reason each
one will dissolve into its original nature.”**

The Gospel of Philip, Nag Hammadi Library