Menu

• Administrative issues
  – Books
  – Info-sheets

• “Our” vampire
  – Habitat
  – Identity & appearance
  – Activities
  – Enemies
  – Objects & associations

• “Their” vampires
  – Where to find them?
  – How to become one?
  – Appearance & activities
  – Means of protection
  – How to destroy?

• Screening: documentary on the sources of the vampire myth in history and folklore
“Our” Vampire: Habitat

- Transylvania, “land beyond the forest,” Romania/Hungary
- Mountain land, difficult to access/penetrate
  - Land outside of civilization, rustic, populated by illiterate peasantry, superstitions
- Old, sinister castle high in the mountains
“Our” Vampire: Identity, Appearance

- Count of ancient origin
- Haughty, proud, aloof
- Tall, lean, pale, bloodshot eyes, red lips, fangs
- Dressed with style: costume/tuxedo, cape, high collar
- Colors: black and red
- Demeanor suggests gravity, brutality, sexual voraciousness
“Our” Vampire: Activities & Abilities

- Bloodsucking as both nutrition and propagation
  - Sleeps during day, feeds @ night
  - Presides over wolves & other vampires
    - Exceptional mobility
    - Powers of transformation
“Our” Vampire: Antagonists

- Men armed with knowledge of the supernatural
Objects & Associations

• Objects inimical to vamps: garlic, crusifix, stake, mirror (also silver bullets, different religious items), light, rooster

• Objects & beings assoc. w/ vamps: Gothic castle, coffin (crypt), bats, wolves (dogs)
“Our” Vampire: Other

- Master/slave relationship b/w vampire & his converts, mirrored in the master/disciple couple of the vampire hunters
- Females seduced by the V. (“dark” sexual appeal)
- Vampirism portrayed as a local disease threatening to become a universal epidemic
  - Links w/ the animal kingdom
The Motherland of Vampires:

Eastern and Central Europe: Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Ukraine & S. Russia, Belarus, Slovenia, Slovakia, Moravia, Bohemia (today in the Czech Republic), Austria, Poland, etc.

Names: vampir, upyr, vrykolakas, strigoi, Nachzehrer, etc.
Group Work

1. Who becomes a vampire and why? (pp. 29-38)
2. Appearance and activities of the revenants (pp. 39-45 +)
3. Means of protection (pp. 46-65)
4. How to kill/destroy a vampire (pp. 66-81)
Who Becomes a V. and Why?

- By predisposition (people outside the common order): outlaws, sorcerers, witches, sinners, suicides, those w/ unsocial behavior, etc.
- By predestination: people of illegitimate or unusual birth; people w/ physical defects
- By “accident”: bite of a V., corpse reflected in a mirror, jumped over by an animal, “stolen” shadow, first victim of epidemic, death @ childbirth, any unexplicable or sudden death, contagion
- By “mismanagement”: unattended bodies, retained connection w/ “this” world
Appearance & Activities

- Swollen body, dark or ruddy complexion, new skin, growth of nails, hair, presence of extra blood, altered position in the grave (vamps buried initially face-down)
- Haunts living humans (first, family members), but also animals. Bloodsucking only one form of torment: nocturnal visits, loud noises, arson, suffocation, terror
- Can be invisible once out of the grave
Apotropaics

- Propitiation: provision of food, objects of need (money, candles, etc.)
- Obstruction: face-down burial, seeds, knots, sharp objects, thorns, stakes, physical constraint, mutilation, burial in distant location (crossroads, boundaries), “disorienting” the dead
- Protection: strong-smelling substances (garlic, feces), blood of a revenant, sharp objects, crosses
Detection

Strewing ashes, salt, leading a horse around graveyard (ridden by a virgin), condition of the grave (sunken, freshly dug-up earth, hole, etc.), howling of dogs, blue fire (glow)
Destruction

- Stake through the heart (made of “special” wood: hawthorn, ash, aspen) only one, not always effective, way of killing the V.
- Excoriation (removal of heart)
- Decapitation (Greece)
- Disposal of the body in a distant, desolate area or in water (Russia)
- Cremation
- Methods often used in clusters
- Killing=bestowing peace on the dead