



Eliphas Levi on Eugene Vintras

Eliphas Levi says of Vintras and his followers:

...they celebrated in their private chapel, which they termed the upper chamber, sacrilegious masses, at which the elect assisted in a state of complete nudity. At a given moment all present fell into a paroxysm, and with tears and cries of "Love, Love," they cast themselves into each other's arms; the rest we may be permitted to suppress. It was like the orgies of the old Gnostics, but without even taking the precaution to extinguish the lights. Alexandre Geoffroi testifies that Vintras initiated him into a kind of prayer which consisted in the monstrous act of Onan, committed at the foot of the altar, but here the accuser is too odious to be believed on his own word. Abbe Chavoz, to whom we mentioned these infamous impeachments, explained that they must be attributed to the hatred of two men who had been expelled from the association for having been guilty on their own part of the acts which they attributed to Vintras. However it may be, moral disorders engender naturally those of a physical kind, and abnormal excitements of the nervous system produce almost invariably eccentric irregularities in morals; if therefore Vintras is innocent, he might have been and may yet be guilty. His sect was condemned formally by [Pope] Gregory XVI in his brief, dated November 8, 1843.

(Eliphas Levi, THE HISTORY OF MAGIC, p. 335)