

# Persistant Fictions:

or

## Varieties of Religious Delusions:

**Ruminations on-Mytho-politics, Anti-Science,**

**Deceptive Ideologies and Totalism**

**(1996-2017)**

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**In Three Books**

**By Mark Koslow**



**“What a tailor can do”.**

By Francesco Goya,

(In an aquatint image that generalizes to all the religions, Goya shows people deluded into praying to a cloth god. The god is just a sheet, and draped over a broken tree, made by a tailor —it is Goya's comment on the tendency of people to fall prey to superstitions and delusions. It is a perfect image of religion which involves deceit, gullibility, props, fictions and fear.

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**Book I**  
**The Political Nature of the Religions**

**Introduction:**

**Roll Over, William James: Ruminations on Reactionary Religion and  
Why I am Writing about it**

“Religion “allows otherwise normal human  
beings to reap the fruits of madness and  
consider them holy” Sam Harris

“By simple common sense I don’t believe in god.”  
Charlie Chaplin

“I expect to live to see the evaporation of the  
powerful mystique of religion. I think that in  
about twenty-five years almost all religions will  
have evolved into very different phenomena, so  
much so that in most quarters religion will no  
longer command the awe it does today.” Daniel  
Dennett

**My Involvement in Religion**

One can only learn so much in one life, and as we have only one life,  
I thought it would be good to say some of the things I have learned about  
a certain range of subjects in this book. It is not everything that I have  
learned, but it is a large range. It is clear the world must change and  
those who run things now must be stopped so the changes can be made.



CEO's are ruining the world and must be removed or regulated out of existence, like the kings of old. What happened under global capitalism is that the rich destroyed most of the middle class jobs by shipping them over seas, causing suffering all over the world. This made everyone but the corporate rich angry, understandably. But the result was that the rich offered a solution in hurting the poor even further, creating "persistent fiction" blaming the problem on immigrants instead of CEO's who actually did the harm. So the rich start blaming races and the poor, the EPA, a good health care system that serves patients more than administrators, taxes on the rich and the government itself. They want to abolish all unions and hurt freedom of inquiry, destroy the public education of critical thinkers, deny enlightenment values and turn journalism into 'alternative' lies. So this is the right wing world that follows upon global corporate rape of nature and the world's markets.<sup>1</sup> The far right relies on religion to do this, obviously, but they also rely on Classical economic ideology, which is another toxic belief system. Locke's idea of making an insured form of investment beyond change was a great help to the slave trade.

So the persistent fiction of giving more money for the rich because of their "merit", while stealing from the poor and middle classes is ridiculous. There is no "merit" in being a 'money expert' who makes wealth out of producing nothing and steals from the real workers to feed the unreal rich. How has the wealth of the wealthy become more important than the existence of earth threatened under climate change? How has the obscene wealth of the very few, become more important than health care for all, education, good government for everyone, democracy in the humanitarian sense, the environment, nature, art or the alleviation of poverty. In short the world is heading in a very bad way towards a sort of

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Trump is only one such far right ideologue that promises to destroy our world even more than globalizers have done. There is Marine Le Pen in France, as well as far right parties in Hungary, Finland, Sweden and many other places. Some call this a rise of a neo fascism. There is some truth to that.

psychopathic greed and classism, as well as more war--- that one saw happening in Germany in the 1920's. Good government, education, care for nature, democracy, are all good things. Yet the far right is against what is good and favor tax breaks for those who harm the U.S. and the world.

Democratic care of nature, the arts, humanities and education are far more important than the egotistic greed of some unnecessary CEO's, generals or Presidents. It is clear that the so called "leaders" of our world are often insane psychopaths and we should ignore them out of office. We must simply not obey their laws and go on as if they are not there, or at least vote them out, or shout all at once how worthless and self-serving they really are. In their denial of care and science about our world they have committed themselves to hurting their own grandchildren and their future as well as harming most beings on earth. Children, democracy, health care and nature matter more than Kings or CEOs. CEO's like Trump hide behind the persistent fiction of a hypocritical Christianity, and claims a right to steal from the poor to give to the rich. They are the Sheriff of Nottingham, not Robin Hood. So these books side with Robin Hood and try to bring the far right into question.

But there are simpler motives for doing these books too. One of my favorite series of books I have read to my young children, both scholars who love science, is The Magic School Bus. In that wonderful series, the main character, Ms. Frizzle, tells her students, very wisely, "Get Messy. Make mistakes". I have made a lot of mistakes and this book is partly an effort to assess and correct them. Others might differ with me, even oppose what I say, but this is what I have learned so far about ultimate questions and actual things and people, systems and ideologies. I am, of course, responsible for these mistakes, as I am for mistakes in these books, and have spent years trying to correct both, with difficulty and so; this remains a work in progress and one that I might not ever really finish.

These three books are asking deep questions. What are the origins of religion and why does it have such a close relationship with politics? Why did it all go so wrong, not just for me personally, but for the earth at large? Religion in our society is not so much a public affair, as it was in Rome or Medieval France, when religion and politics were inseparable. It is clear that the roots of current cruelty to animals and hatred of the environment reach back to Egypt, Rome and Greece.<sup>2</sup>, and indeed, go back before to the agricultural societies of Harappa or early China. It is clear that abuse of animals begins with “civilization”. Gone is the near worship of animals one sees in Paleolithic caves and early art of many kinds. If indeed, it was worship, since it cannot be ruled out that those ancient images are the beginning of our problems. My way of thinking is wide and ongoing, and I never seem to come to a really final understanding, so these books cover many things and my conclusions are always provisional, even if I struggle towards certainties.

However, by now, religion has become a private and personal or subjective matter. But politics in America is also subjective. Cults, superstitions and private consciences are delicate areas and religion in modern life lives there, in the closets and private lives of most people in our society. We are free only in our delusions while the rich take from everyone and give little back, stealing our treasure and putting it in offshore banks where they pay no taxes.

To really question religion one must burrow down into the subjectivity of writers and people over long periods. I have to make surmises that may not be correct or based on too little evidence. The motives at the basis of religion have to do with political opportunism, sexism and even deeper into the realm of human psycho-social dynamics. Examining this

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<sup>2</sup> Book 2 of Herodotus’ History is clear about how animals were regularly abused for religious rites, bloody sacrifices and the origins of speciesism are obvious there, in early centuries, 2400 BP. He wrote very poor history, often more myth than history, but he is clear on this.

will no doubt offend some, but this is where I have lived too, and to do this is unavoidable and inevitable.

I write out of my actual experience in these books. Most academic works on religion strive for the impersonal, as if religion were an objective or real thing. But there is little that is objective in religion. The pose of impersonality is not always superior. Religious books rarely grapple with real questions, but merely pass along fictions as if they were real. This is why so little good work has been critical of religion in the domains where it actually lives, in Churches, Mosques, religious studies or, most importantly, in the intimacies of people's lives. Since religion in our time is a private affair one must question the personal domains of various people to explain it. That is difficult and hard to do. Yet at the same time religion is a public phenomenon too and so one must grapple with the very public history of religion and the history of evolution.

Public and private became confused areas in religion in the modern world. Israel and Iran pretend to have an impersonal theocracy, but actually these are very subjective and romantic states, which have hitched themselves to old delusional systems of belief as part of a political program. Islam says, for instance, that any Muslim who questions Islam is an apostate and should be killed. Like the Koran the Bible also threatens Hell for unbelievers. Psychological blackmail is standard in most religions and promotes persistent fictions. This is hardly the behavior of evolution, but rather of religious thuggery. Using fear like this makes religion an imposition on every person. What is offensive in Islam is this very public effort to control everyone's private lives. The Inquisition is famous for torturing anyone who questioned Christianity. Even now questioning religion is kept at bay by the questionable authority of the First Amendment, which many use to protect the domain of delusions. The purpose of the ideology of immortality is to make sure that humans are the one species that is exceptional, who has a "soul" and lives forever. This ideology is false and

a lie, but it is protected. Why?

The right to be deluded shall not be infringed. This is good news for advertising executives who want to delude everyone. Political parties pander to the wealthy classes mostly, while pretending they are ‘populist’. Today, corporations often act with impunity and few question their power to do so. Humans are animals but deny that they have any relation to other animals, making themselves the one species that is unlike any other, and only humans are accorded rights, nearly all others can be killed with impunity. This too happens because of legal fictions created by corporations and judges, which falsely allow the corporation to be an immortal “person”, actually a sort of god. Indeed, the idea of personhood was applied to the Sikh holy books, Rivers, Hindu deities and Moslem Mosques.

Questioning these fictions takes some courage, and I do my best here to have this courage.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of the first amendment is not to “protect religion” as the religious like to maintain. The purpose of the first amendment is to force delusions out of the public realm and to allow religion and other delusions only in the strictly private realm.

So, this is and is not a personal book. I explore personal matters when that is necessary and break the rule that persons are off limits in intellectual work.<sup>4</sup> The impersonal can be an affectation and thus a

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<sup>3</sup> The Whanganui River in New Zealand was granted personhood status in 2012 and Ecuador has given special status to its forests, lakes and rivers too. This makes some sense, whereas giving it to holy books or gods or corporations does not. However, it is not necessary to call a river a person, to grant it equal status. The notion that “person” is a superior category to which rights must be accorded is highly questionable. Oceans should have rights, the atmosphere, elephants, and ecologies all deserve status. To define things as persons still is to define humans as superior to rivers or ecologies, when they are not. We need to avoid this sort of speciesism. Nature’s rights does not require the concept of persons to be effective. Beings and physical aspects or processes of nature like climate or ecologies deserve protections as do species of all kinds. The problem is here the notion of persons, not the notion that nature too deserves equal status, as indeed, why should it not?

<sup>4</sup> The “impersonal truths” of religion are neither truths nor really impersonal but actually subjective projections, or psycho-social constructions. The tension between the impersonal and the personal is unavoidable as truly impersonal forces, such as evolution, physics or forces,

cloak for power motives that are all too personal. The Mafioso is famous for saying “it is not personal, it’s just business”, when they kill someone. Actually, killing persons is as personal as one can get. Impersonal government and business agencies also use the impersonal as a cloak to harm or fleece others. Impersonal inquiry is only good when it does not serve hidden power agendas and merely acquires the facts. Bird ID books are impersonal in this way and very useful. However each bird observation is personal, between the one who saw the bird or behavior and the animals itself. These are books about actual experiences, with an effort to be objective. This is not to say that I have achieved the impersonal truth of ID books. I lived a thoughtful life up to now and see no reason to hide the facts about it. I studied people like the poet Jack Hirschman, Schuon or the work of Chomsky with close attention to their persons in relation to their work, as much as possible. These are three ideologues and I will talk a lot about them. I will talk about what I learned and not cover up anything.

But this is only marginally a book about me. I only explore my own person insofar as it relates to specific concerns of my thesis. I have been very faithful to the main thesis of these books and followed the inner logic of the ideas central here as best I could. My effort here is to question the private realm of delusions and experience, and compare them with the public realm of tested and evidentiary science. So strictly speaking this is and is not an intellectual autobiography. It is mostly a

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or chemical facts are so much part of our lives, yet we live within our minds and have a self. Or at least we do so long as we are in health. I learned from my mother’s Alzheimer’s that one can lose oneself. When she first came down with the disease and could still use language she often said, “I am lost” or “I am losing myself”. And later, when she was largely gone, she had sudden moments of lucidity and one day, late in her illness, she woke out of it and I saw this and said, “I miss you so much” and she said, “I know you do honey”, to which I replied, “I wish you could come back, I long to talk to you.” And she said in a matter of fact way. “It is too late”. And she closed down again and said nothing even remotely cogent after that. Though she expressed love for me and my wife and child with her eyes and hands, often. I knew she was still there, and one day I even told her she can die if she wants to and I love her and wish her no pain. She died a few weeks after that. The “self” is a fragile thing, and is nested in physical facts.

study of mythic fictions, ideas and religion. It only uses my biography insofar as it relates to religion and ideology, as an example of someone who has studied in order to change himself. So while these books discuss personal matters, at the same time, this is an impersonal study of religion and ideology in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Thus, this is a limited intellectual autobiography in some ways, dealing my struggle with people and ideologies. It tries to tell what I have learned and explores questions I have asked. It is personal in this respect only. Anything worthwhile is to some degree personal. But at the same time I am pursuing this inquiry in quite a detached way, when I can. So both the personal and the impersonal points of view is also explored as well as questioned. If this is confusing, well, read on and you will see what I mean. I mean to imitate actual life and mix the personal and the impersonal closely.

I have always been of a philosophical bent, which means I have been in a battle with myself and the times I live in, trying to understand myself and what the world is about. I used to think philosophy was a search for wisdom, but have found this uneducated idealism is not really true. Is anyone really wise? Certainly not those who claim wisdom. As I get older I find no one really knows the whole truth about anything. Many pretend to and gain followers. I have no followers. A good deal of world philosophy over the millennia is really about power structures in the places and times such philosophies were developed. I will be discussing this fact in many places, about thinkers as diverse as Aquinas, Plato, Confucius and many others. Rare is someone like Bertrand Russell who said that philosophy is not much good at having answers, but “ has at least the power of asking questions which increase the interest of the world, and show the strangeness and wonder lying just below the surface even in the commonest things of daily life.” This emphasis on daily life is very accurate.

Some people maintain that philosophy is dead. It will never be dead because no one really knows much about the world we live on, turning in space. It is only a little over a hundred years since we learned about galaxies and that we live in one. It would be preposterous to say one knows it all. We have not even understood our planet as yet, even while we are destroying whole parts of it. Certainly academic philosophy is prone to esoteric and arcane sleepiness. But thinking about the world is a good thing, and is best done one's whole life long. Those who favor business above all else want to eliminate philosophy from universities. But this undermines critical thinking, which is essential to education and more important now than ever. The young need to learn how to think, feel and question. The best philosophies are close to science, thoughtful excursions into the facts of things. This might occur in people who are not philosophers at all, such as Darwin or Thoreau, though both men were really doing biological philosophy.<sup>5</sup> One must think through things with facts, and keep in mind philosophy is not science.

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<sup>5</sup> A good discussion of the harm done by academic philosophy as compared to philosophy done on the basis of or in conjunction with science is this by Ricard Carrier. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLvWz9GQ3PQ>

<sup>6</sup> Richard Carrier defines this well

“Philosophy needs to be rigorously demarcated from pseudo-philosophy, and philosophical error needs to be more consistently ferreted out. Just as science is from pseudo-science, and just as science tries to find and fix its mistakes. Not all philosophy is pseudo-philosophy, or in error, but there is no easy way to tell (it's all published in the same journals and academic presses, and presented at the same conferences, and wins the same professorships).

Error is just error: like in science, identifying and eliminating it is a form of progress.

What is pseudo-philosophy?

Philosophy that relies on fallacious arguments to a conclusion, and/or relies on factually false or undemonstrated premises. And isn't corrected when discovered.



Efforts to improve life on earth for all species is certainly important and philosophy in our time is partly about thinking this through. In our time philosophy is not about dogmas or elaborate intellectual constructions, but about evidence, facts and arguments made in support of these. Some philosophy is quite objectionable and some should be opposed and I will discuss this too. To some extent these books are the story of what I have rejected, though by implication it also tells about what I have embraced, as learning involves both knowing what you love and knowing what is not lovable.

For me, philosophy is partly an anxious, worried and somewhat neurotic response to life being difficult and rather threatening. Capitalism and its close partner communism have the entire world of nature under attack.<sup>7</sup> One seeks answers because life is so problematical and equilibrium so hard to find and nature is full of beauty, surprise and creative freshness but also violent and terrible.

Philosophy is partly born of these conflicts, and partly of joy at existing. I have struggled daily with the world I live in and thought about everything I have encountered, though not without error on occasion. My philosophy has grown organically out of the process of making mistakes and recovering from that. I find things that I thought even a year or two ago need going over and correcting. I try to learn from my mistakes, and these books are partly an effort to show this learning. For a time I

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All supernaturalist religion is pseudo-philosophy. Religious philosophy is to philosophy what "creation science" is to science."

<http://www.richardcarrier.info/philosophy.html>

<sup>7</sup> Communism has become a subset of capitalism. The United States now socializes or 'bails out' destructive corporations at the same time as communist nations (China, Vietnam) are made into workhorses to create wealth for the same corporations, with state enforced bad labor laws and lack of environmental regulation. This is hugely destructive both to the local workers and to the environment, helping cause global warming.

accepted the greats of philosophy as authoritative, but I outgrew that. The so called Great Books should indeed be questioned, and if necessary, denied, even if they are ‘great literature’

Evidence matters more than authority.<sup>8</sup> I certainly do not believe there is some extra-earthly “Platonic” or Taoist or Wittgensteinian wisdom that only amazing and elect philosophers can tap into, beyond time and space. I have found that those who claim this, are pretenders and in many cases con-men and women. But I have lived reflectively, as well as seeking refuge in the concrete and nature in opposition to this very reflectivity. So while I might philosophize, I am not a philosopher, and sometimes I will even oppose philosophy, if actualities and evidence dictates a different conclusion. The freedom of thought this gives me is enormous and worth protecting. I began with my own existence, as well as the existence of things and beings around me, and unlike Descartes I see no reason to doubt this.

The intellect<sup>9</sup> is in some ways a defensive faculty. Some people have made illusory mountains out of metaphysics that are not even there. Philosophy easily becomes a crutch, an escape or a bulwark against life. There is more to life than thinking, though reason plays an important

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<sup>8</sup> I have often thought of late how absurd the hierarchies are that I see around me. CEO’s are worshipped in this society and way over compensated, when, actually they do little and act as a drain on decent people who actually do the work for companies. Workers who do the bulk of work are way underpaid. This is obvious in nursing homes, hospitals and factories. But it is also true in banks, insurance companies and wall street speculators among many others who profit from the corporate system. Universities have been taken over by corporate marketers and overpaid administrators and they should be gotten rid of. Teachers should organize and get rid of all administrators who bloat costs and gouge students and their families and over pay themselves. Teachers can run universities for little. Universities should not exist to profit administrators but to teach students in the best and freest way. Other ways should be found to run companies that are fairer to workers, mandatory profit sharing, as well as restrict and regulate profiteers. I am not sure rule by committee is all that good as an alternative, but it is worth thinking about.

<sup>9</sup> I mean the ordinary reasoning mind, here, of the sort that carpenters use to solve building problems or cooks use to plan a good meal. I do not mean the medieval, Aquinian and Platonic construct of the “Intellect”, which is a fiction and harmful fabrication, as I will explain in the course of this book. Generally, I will use the capitalized “Intellect” to specify this medieval fabrication used often by the Traditionalists. The lower case ‘intellect’ merely refers to the reasoning mind--

role in living too and may be one of the rare aspects of the human mind that is born of evolution. But way too much is claimed for evolution.

Thinking things through has many positive benefits. Since my father died when I was young, I sought out many teachers. I have learned from many good ones. But I found myself rejecting some of these teachers, at a certain point, when I realized they too do not understand life as well as I imagined, have clay feet, or are just plain wrong on the very things I once thought they were so right about. There are no saints or elect men, and those who claim that are charlatans. Everyone makes mistakes. Teachers can only teach so much and at a certain point one either leaves them gracefully, and remain friends, or, if they are of a very narrow and fanatical bent, one leaves them with disappointment or acrimony. A student should surpass a teacher at a certain point, but occasionally one will have a teacher who is utterly mistaken, immoral or one has to reject utterly. Such teachers harm their profession. I have only had a few of those. I have often had to be my own teacher and I have been wrong lots of times too, learning from my own mistakes.

These three books are probably wrong in various ways too. I apologize for this at the beginning, though I do not know yet how it is wrong, or why. My teachers used to tell me to never begin with an apology. But these three books are in some ways an accounting of mistakes I have made, so I do begin by apologizing. These are books about being mistaken, and accepting the consequences of that and seeking to think through and amend my mistakes. Of course, these books may be more right than even I know, in other respects. But such is the world, full of promise and hopes dashed, truths held out and then proved to be mistaken, or vice versa.

Mistakes can lead to real discoveries, and new points of view never seen before. Science is nothing if not an endless process of self-correction, and this self-correction is necessary in the personal domain as well. The scientific attitude should even infuse the personal domain.

In the end, it is the process that matters. We make small improvements over the last generation of failed, but well-meant attempts. The world does not get better all at once; but what is valuable in reading history is that you can see some things are markedly better than they were a hundred years ago. You will find in this book that I have taken Darwin seriously, and reaffirmed parts of his thought that have been neglected for an over a century and a half. I do not pretend he is perfect. I have raised animals and nature to equal status with humans. This has many implications, as you will see. I see great value in Darwin's ideas, but I do not see the theory of evolution as a panacea, merely a great aid in thinking about the planet and all that lives on it. It accords with evidence, that is all. Reading Darwin's evidence is itself a joy, even when he is mistaken, as he was regarding the causes of the raising of the South American land mass, or, when he is right, as in the sad plight of the Tortises of the Galpagos Islands. <sup>10</sup>There is so much we do not know about so many things. If there is one thing that needs to be questioned everywhere on earth it is the arrogance of human supremacy.

Being of an inquiring and open mind, I was willing to try nearly anything in my youth. I had the notion in my teens that knowledge was like a tree and I would follow out all the branches I could, come what may. This is a fruitful procedure, if somewhat dangerous. There were lots of blind alleys and groping in the dark. I made mistakes, and suffered from it, and made discoveries too and wrote about, drew or painted both the mistakes and the days of discovery. There are those who will blame me whatever I do, and to them, I only ask to see evidence, but they rarely have any.

I was aware of the wonder and mystery of things, and already loved science from an early age, nature and biology in particular. I wanted

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<sup>10</sup> Darwin writes about the plight of these animals and noticed their abuse by both sailors and islanders. 3 or 4 of the 14 species are extinct due to this abuse as well as the presence on the island of rats, cats and pigs, animals brought there by humans..

badly to know what the world was about. So, I studied everything I could, even things beyond me at the time, like the philosophy of math, logic, physics or the life of Da Vinci. I knew Marx, Freud and Darwin had questioned religion for good reasons. My father had been Catholic and my mother was more skeptical of religion, and the stronger part of me<sup>11</sup> came from my mother. I was curious about the other side, however, being curious by nature. So I explored religion: to my sorrow. But it is better to know than not to know. I needed to know what it was.

When I consider why young women in London join an Islamic cult or why people join other fanatical groups, it is partly because something in our society fails them. Religion supplies an alternative and this alternative might seem like a good thing to one who is young and uninformed. It might even be a way to get free of parents and rebel, as happened to three London girls recently who left their families and joined the Islamic militia cult called Isis. A very foolish thing to do, but no different than those who join any cult. Corporate capitalism is indeed an authoritarian system that lauds the greedy and rewards those who abuse the planet and their workers. It wants people to join capitalism as much as any religion. It is a grotesque fact that our society rewards the greedy

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<sup>11</sup> My grandmother on my father's side, Gertrude, was very Catholic and often went to Mass every day. Her husband worked for American Can Co. and got pretty high in that company. But he was bitter, as he felt he should have gotten higher yet. He was not a very nice man and was unfaithful to her. Her religion was an escape from reality for her and gave her a sense of illusory permanence. She hated the world she lived in and the changes wrought by the 1960's. The conservative politics of her class more or less dictated her views and so she favored a Latin Mass and its pretense of eternity and permanence. Her son had died in the war in 1944 and was shot down in a B-24 by the Germans. She never got over that. I remember driving into New York City with her one day and she was so upset by the appearances of change in the city that she demanded going to a church in Manhattan, and I went with her. Her rosary was a way of staving off her anxieties. Religion for her was both a political and psychological tool that gave her security but also cloaked the reality of her life from her, so she lived in a dream world. This made her anxieties worse. She once told me she and her husband went of the Queen Mary 23 times, but whether that is true or not, the world she knew was gone. The last time I saw her was at my sister's wedding, which was not traditional, and Grandma was in a tizzy over it, suffering deep and relentless anxiety. "Who are these people, what are they doing, I don't belong here" she kept saying.

corporate psychopath who hates others and punishes the good man who helps others. A hero like Ralph Nadar is smeared and slandered while a neo-fascist psychopath like Donald Trump is loved and lionized. It is not surprising many do not like it. I reject it too and longed for a better, more equitable system that does not exploit and marginalize the natural world. But few, as yet, grasp the religious roots of corporate injustice that I will outline in these books. So tracing the roots of these systems, corporate and religious, will be one of the primary purposes of these books.

The roots of religion in America was partly about seeking alternatives, even creating one's own way of seeing and living, and partly about wealth generation, often at others expense. Religion is granted a sort of inquiry-exempt status in America, because to the idea of 'freedom from' and 'freedom of' religion enshrined in the first amendment of the US Constitution, as I was saying earlier. In many quarters, this cannot be questioned. This is a rather outmoded nod to a the religious age of the 1700's, when freedom from the Inquisition and Catholic suppression was dearly sought, and rightly so.

The argument between originalists (Scalia) and constructionists is really an argument about unjust power. The originalist position is absurd and retrograde and helps corporations stay in unjust power, as corporations are anti-democratic, neo-aristocratic entities which should be denied status, their rights removed by charter. Originalism is just Platonism in disguise, a belief in the immutable constitution, fixed in the 1780's like the Mosaic Tablets of The Law. Jefferson's view that government is fair and must change periodically is the right one. The long term changes of laws reflects the will and experience of generations. I have not seen a good history of law, but my own reading of legal history shows that law has largely served the wealthy classes and only in the last 200 years has this been seriously brought into question.<sup>12</sup> English law

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<sup>12</sup> I have looked for but have not been able to find a good history of the law that looks at it as a

largely served the estate owners, Enclosure, kings and merchants, and it was not till the abolition of the slave trade that human rights became an important consideration. In England the king and his 'lords' owned most animals and rights to hunt. America advocated for greater largesse in the right to kill animals and own guns. The U.S. Constitution enshrines many absurdities, but over time these have been brought into question in different ways. Originally the “right to bear arms” was merely the right of militias to fight the English during the Revolutionary war. The right to bear arms does not mean the right for everyone to own guns, it only applies to militias owning guns. But it has been changed to the right of corporate gun sellers to sell automatic guns to whoever wants to buy one, resulting in large profits for gun sellers but paid for with constant and horrible killings, more than any other nation. <sup>13</sup> The government is unwilling to consider the absurdity of their own legislation.

President's keep starting wars ( War Powers Act) without permission of congress, yet this gets justified and the constitution corrupted: Vietnam, Korea, Iraq and other wars were never declared and were illegal and criminal, created by a corrupt executive branch and presidents. The effort of the legislature to destroy unions is another obvious anti-democratic move and that should be stopped too. The history of efforts to stop exploitation goes back before the Plaques in the 1300's. We need a major change of our patrician government which has been corrupted by corporations. The Executive branch is corrupted by power. The

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social history from the point of view of civil justice. Hammurabi's code supports slavery, as does other legal systems up till 1807 when Wilberforce helped stop it in Britain ( abolition did not go fully into effect until 1833). Labor history is not well examined. Too much history is the history of elite men and the military. The study of the treatment of women in the law is very interesting with many backwards laws still on the books today in many countries. Greek and Roman Law were very misogynist. Islamic law started out better than other notions of the time but has since degenerated in many places, like Saudi Arabia, where women's behavior is still closely monitored by men.

<sup>13</sup> Is the NRA a terrorist organization? Yes. It promotes the use of automatic weapons and these have been sued to kill people in mass, as in the Killings in Orlando, Florida and Reno Nevada, In June 2016. And 2107

Presidency is just short of the Kings of old and could be removed. The leader should be easily deposed,. We might even try a government that has no leader at all, as Jefferson perhaps though in lucid moments. Those who hold office should be also restricted to short terms and not allowed to work for lobbies in or out of office.

So the law is easily corrupted and laws meant for one thing have turned into something else entirely. Laws are heavily human centered. Religious delusions are given rights while nature and animals have none and can be killed at will. Our highways are covered with their corpses. No one cares. This makes no sense at all. Protecting delusions while destroying mountains, climate, species and oceans makes no sense. In this respect the first amendment seems merely a perverse anticipation of ‘separate but equal’ doctrine,<sup>14</sup> as it sanctifies delusions, and makes them free to thrive, while denying rights to beings in places that really matter. The separate but equal doctrine kept racism alive and made African Americans unable to prosper. The free speech doctrine now is used to insure only corporations have speech and all else can wallow in

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<sup>14</sup> The separation of religion and the state was a progressive thing when it begins in earnest in Holland in the 1600’s. Before that religion and politics are really one thing. My contention in this book is that they were formed as part of the same impulse or causation, born of an abuse of evolutionary tendencies which allows an abuse of children’s gullibility and the need of social organization. Dawkins idea that children and many others he does not say this but I include slaves, cult victims the poor, widows, followers, workers etc) are duped is correct. The separation of Church and state is a cultural change. It occurred in reaction to the excesses and war mongering of Spanish Catholics against the Low countries. The separation of religion and the state is partly an effort to get free of the war mongering of religious states and partly a fact of nascent capitalism. There is no problem with keeping religion separate from the state. Religious states are invariably toxic. The problem in the U.S. arises when religion is allowed to freely prosper in any environment outside the state and this lets a thousand cults thrive as capitalist institutions akin to and often in alliance with corporations, Scientology being one of the worst of these. But there are thousands of churches, cults, corporate entities and religions.

The ‘separate but equal’ racial doctrine of Jim Crow had also to do with capitalism but in this case was about preventing African Americans from getting economic footing and thus keeping them in a quasi-slavery. Keeping religion separate from the state also had a discriminating intention, but in this case it was to prevent the abuses that occurred when the Catholic church had power over princes. Now it is little more than permission to support corporate rule and lies in advertising and for cults and delusions to proliferate wildly.



the delusion of their “choice”. Congress, now in thrall to coproate corruption, no longer ensures the freedom and equality of all, but acts on behalf of the few, giving the ultra rich majority power, when in fact they are an extreme minority.. The first amendment, as well as the 14<sup>th</sup>, set up to protect former slaves, have been perverted to protect corporate personhood and corporate greed. This is not an accident. Money is defined falsely as “speech”. State support of delusional thinking becomes a kind of symbol of a false freedom to be deluded, which is not freedom at all. Scholastic hair spitting, misusing language and perverting justice has become the main legal strategy of corporate law.<sup>15</sup>

The first amendment had its day when Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson advocated for freedom against the cult leader and protestant authoritarian John Winthrop. But now that even corporations are basically cults, and CEOs are cult leaders, delusions are promoted everywhere as advertising and money is declared to be political speech, so only the rich have a say.--- So, it is logical to ask if religious freedom a good thing anymore? After all, cult leaders are little more than arbitrary dictators, and that is what CEOs are too. Corporations have become the money and tax haven churches of our world, the de facto real ‘individuals of the United States, holding superior rights of all kinds. Congress does little or nothing to limit the “free exercise” of the corporations and their rule of Congress and the state. We live under a coproate state and not a democracy. Corporations are a belief system corruptly enshrined by law and thus they break the other part of the first amendment which says congress shall not make laws establishing religion. So the Corporate State forms an alliance with far right religion, and the the freedom of religious

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<sup>15</sup> A critical history fo the law would show I think that law over the centruies has had absurd shifts and twists that reflect upper lass and corporate abuse of justice. Coproate CEO’s and the police are rarely indicted, but the poor suffer the burden of police and courts, for instance. The Law, under “Jim Crow” insured a semi-slave state in the American south from 1865 to the Civil Rights act on 1965. But these injustices, I am sure, could be traced back to England and Rome. The hugely inflated compensation packages of CEO’s is the result of corrupt corporate law. A critical history fo the law shoud go back this far, as well as trace the injustices of the present.

lying and corrupt corporations shall not be infringed. A delusional state controls us, or tries to. The current government in the US is a farcial corruption of the constitution, rewritten to serve corporate and religious motives.

The original impetus of the French, English and American revolutions was to be free of kings arbitrary dictators.<sup>16</sup> We are not free yet. Bosses continue their arbitrary rule of what will enrich them, no matter who they fire or hurt. The corporate workplace is still a medieval or Inquisitorial institution. The first amendment is good in that it removes religion from central authority, yet it is not good it makes it sacrosanct and untouchable in the private realm of delusions. Anything is preachable.<sup>17</sup> Because of this bizarre political construction, America is the world's leader of the most diverse panoply of bizarre beliefs, irrational

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<sup>16</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein discusses this in his books. See also Ferenc Feher, On the French Revolution. He writes that “the French Revolution did not change France very much. It did change the world-system very much. The world-scale institutional legacy of the French Revolution was ambiguous in its effects. The post-1968 questioning of this legacy requires a new reading of the meaning of the popular thrusts that crystallized as the French revolutionary turmoil.” He also notes that “we still remain within the world of 1789, and with the problems posed during that celebrated year by an Assembly that had been convoked for other purposes, but which still speaks to us today as if it were only yesterday. But he merely discusses the humanist revolutions and has nothing to say about nature and animals, as if they did not matter. Global warming and the high rate of extinctions changes the emphasis on humanity to all of life. They do matter, now more than ever.

<http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft2h4nb1h9&chunk.id=d0e4819&toc.dept h=1&toc.id=d0e4819&brand=ucpress>

<sup>17</sup> In Waco Texas a dangerous cult that stockpiled weapons was attacked by the U.S. government with the predictable result that the cult leader had the whole place burned in an act of defiant suicide. Over 80 people were killed, 28 children. I thought this was horrendous at the time and do not support government persecution of groups of this kind. But nor did I support the Koresh cult, which was horrible, and brought this disaster on itself. Right wingers who try to make Waco into a victimized cult are also wrong. Two power systems collided with fatal results. Other things could have been done, but weren't. A lot is known about cult leaders and other things could have been done rather than a military style action. A similar event happened in Jonestown where 900 people were killed by the cult leader. Cults and corporate structures have a great deal I common and both tend toward unethical self-deification.

cults and arbitrary spirituality, advertisements and public relations lies and fabrications, corporate “persons” and arbitrary dictatorships, CEOs and cult leaders. While this is preferable to theocracy, it still allows irrationality a great deal of power. Indeed, the arbitrary dictatorship of the CEO is a sacrosanct illusion. This needs to be questioned in law. Business exploits nature without consequences to itself, nature suffers, and organizing against the powerful is nearly impossible. Unions are actively lied about and destroyed. Illusions are allowed to reign, but only big business prospers and the middle class pays most taxes. The earth is being destroyed, animals, birds and insects are going extinct, and the “conservation” movement is clearly a failure. Nature too is taxed and no one counts the damages or the corpses. These abuses follow from abuses to the Bill of Rights, as well as the insufficiency of it.

America started in one narrative, with the Puritans. They were a toxic cult who liked to punish those who were not religious enough with torture, stocks, or banishment. Nathaniel Hawthorne showed this in his book, The Scarlet Letter and Arthur Miller in his great play the Crucible. But even they only scratched the surface of the harm done. Cults have been supported ever since Salem created the nightmare of the state murdering so called “witches”. State supported delusions go back to the beginning of U.S. history. One would not want all beliefs other than official ones to be punished, as they tend to be in Saudi Arabia, Israel or Iran. Fundamentalist Christians hate Moslems, Mormons, Buddhists, Hindus, gay people and anyone that does not fit their narrow minded religious fictions. Obviously freedom of thought is important. But freedom of thought is not the same as freedom of religion. The state should not be involved in sanctioning delusions.

Freedom of religion in America has become freedom of corporations to exploit the whole world, take from the poor and give to the rich, hurt workers and endanger species and the planet itself. While the pose of

freedom of beliefs makes for a seeming diversity, actually the economic sphere is still controlled by unjust business elites who restrict real diversity in economic arrangements, suppress unions and move jobs overseas to avoid dealing with real demands from real people suffering economic hardships here. Trade laws are written to service corporate elites and exploit local populations. This should stop. A diversity of delusion is allowed in excess in America while real fairness is avoided.

The easiest way to deal with all the problems created by the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment, is to change the amendment. All it needs to say is that 'Congress shall make no law establishing belief systems'. This would include establishing corporations as persons, since they are clearly not persons. Corporate personhood should be abolished in politics and law. We would be well rid of the phrase, that congress shall not "prohibit the free exercise" of religion. This socially sanctions delusion. We do not need an amendment that allows people to be deluded, this will happen in any case. Socially sanctioning delusions is a mistake. This is unnecessary and merely gives religion an excuse not to pay taxes. It also allows dangerous cults and businesses to thrive, when they need to follow the same laws everyone else does.

It might be useful to digress briefly on the subject of religious tax exemption:

The "free exercise" of religion clause in the Constitution does not mean that religions should be tax exempt. The free exercise clause had to do with preventing bigotry among dissenting Christian enclaves. ( as Washington said) It was never about supporting religion itself financially by giving them money through tax exemptions. Of course, if one believes there is no god, supporting tax exemption of any kind for religious sects is hypocritical, since it means supporting delusions. The best and clearest example of an anti tax exempt point of view is the government of France which states that:

France

Article 2 of the 1905 law states that the: “Republic does not recognize, does not pay, and does not subsidize any worship”.

And then there is the Netherlands, who did what the US should do:

“The traditional obligations of the State relating to the salaries and the pensions of religious ministers was abolished in 1983, when the Parliament voted a law to end the financial relations between the State and the Church. No form of government funding is permitted to religious communities. However, they can benefit from indirect funding such as: public donations which are tax deductible; religious structures are maintained by the State, the provinces and the communities; many social activities organized by the religious communities, are financed by the State or local communities.”

This also is a rather enlightened view

Italy and Spain support the Catholic church with tax money, and the UK like the US does also through Tax exemption. This is hypocritical. But how this support of religion grew up is itself a history of corruption, not of enlightenment. “Non-profit, non-political charitable groups which advance religion for the public benefit qualify for privileges afforded by governments in the UK, including tax-exempt status.” This is true of the US. Too. It is a violation of the US Constitution which does say that congress “shall make no law ..concerning the establishment of religion”. Giving Tax exemptions helps establish religion.

The US should thus be more like France, where the “ Republic does not recognize, does not pay, and does not subsidize any worship” The fact that on May 3 2017 the NYT stated that “Trump Is Expected to Relax Tax Rules on Churches Endorsing Political Candidates” shows how arbitrary and political all this really is. Trump is doing this because religion tends to support far right candidates. For an athiest group to accept money this way is to accept a corrupting influence and to be unable to participate as a group in our democracy by direct action, endorsement of candidates as so on. Tax exemption is clearly a way for the government to support religion indirectly, and to do so dangerously. The government gives money to Scientology, Jehovah’s Witnesses, or other dangerous cults, or far that matter, far right churches, Baptists, fundamentalists, as well as giving corporations more rights than they already have. The idea of the “corporate person” is a religious mythology, and their declining tax rate of cororations is tax rates is part of the prejudicial and unfair systems of benefits that accrue to religious organizations, corporations and CEO’s.

Not only should religions be taxed but corporations should be taxed even for off shore hidden accounts and global trade. Only the rich have freedom in America, by design. Liberty has been stolen by them. The rich should be heavily taxed, “soaked” even. A billionaire should be taxed to 90% of his income, for instance. A billionaire toxed to that degree will still have 100 million dollars and that is already too much for anyone. In America, one is free to be as deluded as possible while the wealthy get rich and the poor and middle classes are kept poor paying high taxes. The poor are encouraged to explore all sorts of compensatory nonsense. The rich pay little tax and none if they can get away with it. The solution is to rewrite laws, stop “trickle down” economics which is is merely rape of the middle and lower classes, , get rid of the second clause of the first amendment, abolish the CEO and his prividges and bonuses, and dissolve the fiction of corporate personhood, which would give everyone

equal status.

Being honest about this is bound to bring charges of arrogance or atheistical conceit. The rich hate being brought to heel and will complain in just this way. The far right is largely an organization of liars who attack anyone who points out their corruption. If one opposes the accepted delusions that prevail in American life, they will seek your destruction. But as Mark Twain showed, a certain cynical disdain for the common ignorance is not out of place in America. Promoting delusions and ignorance is essential to American business, sales and politics and opposing this is hardly a new tendency. Corporate personhood and institutional delusions are everywhere promoted as electoral fact and rampant advertising. Business wants ignorant consumers, not literate citizens and thinkers who can use critical thinking skills. Education is therefore a threat to big business. "Positive thinking" is promoted as part of corporate propaganda. One cannot question them. Corporations make a religion of no religion and then set themselves up as gods of it.<sup>18</sup> Twain said rightly "'There are many humorous things in the world; among them, the white man's notion that he is less savage than the other savages."

There is no reason to give specific 'protection' to religion in the Constitution. The Constitution does not protect unions, eating, sex, money or marriage. Unions, sex and eating are far more important than

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<sup>18</sup> What could be done is corporations should be sued for violations of the First Amendment. Corporations are effectively "gods" who are theoretically immortal, since they do not die and do not get sick. As 'gods', corporations claim that they have special rights, as in the legal case called "Citizen's United" which gives them the false idea that "money is speech". This is false and shows that corporations have violated the separation of church and state by erecting their own godlike speech above those of ordinary people, subverting our democracy. Corporations have huge amounts of money and in a society where the fiction of god like 'corporate persons' rule, only they can talk effectively. If money is speech only the rich can vote and that destroys democracy. This violates the separation of church and state, since the state supports their right to "free speech" The state itself has violated the first amendment by allowing this monstrosity to exist. So there are really two violations here and both cases should be brought at the same time.

religion. Why protect delusional thinking? This ends in encouraging cults and corporations organizations which limit the freedom of others. I have met many people each of whom think that their little experience of superstitious mystery or religion is the true one, even though they are all totally contradictory and specious. Subjective freedom, which is largely a delusion, is reached for and fought for, while real freedoms go by the wayside. People have had all kinds of “experiences” in William James’ term, that convinced them of ghosts or that gods really talked to them or appeared in their hallway or their dreams. Or they thought their astrological chart did not lie or Jesus was really listening to them, or Jesus and Satan both lived equally in them or the Dalai Lama knows about the mystery of consciousness which is closely connected to quantum mechanics or brain science. No one questions that the myth of Satan is as much a myth as Christ and that both were inventions of long ago. Harry Potter and Elvis are alive and well and Jesus sits beside a couple in cowboy hats riding in their Chevy pick-up, with a gun set up across the back window.

The list of delusions promoted in America is nearly endless: past life regression, the myth of money, the presidency,, exceptionalism, Iridology, Tarot, I Ching, wall street laws governing the need to profit at expense of the earth, Reiki, Rolfing, Magnet Therapy, free market capitalism, chopped off Rabbit’s feet at Bingo games; presidents as alpha males, the flat tax, Sacred Geometry; pyramids and their secret powers, corporate persons, Nostradamus; telepathics and their trick spoons; crop circles; aliens at area 54 are real; Chinese medicine; Chiropracty and homeopathy, to name a few debunked frauds. Holism is a new religion, just as esoterism is supposed to be a real thing, and not just another fiction, which is what it really is. All this nonsense distracts from the fact the “Free Market” is itself a delusion, and corporations have taken our jobs and moved them overseas, the rich have tax breaks and the middle class has none and unions are actively prevented by government fiat



since the Taft Hartley Act of 1947. Religion flowers in the politics of social irresponsibility, the government takes care of the rich and hurts the middle class and the poor. Escape is one way out of this mess, many think, even though it gets them deeper in the muck of delusions. In America, one is required to be “positive” which means to not be critical or to think, but to approve the status quo and accept all the nonsense dished out in the interests of big business, which is ubiquitous.

Thus, an arrogant and often misguided Subjectivism reigns in private life in America. They want you to dream big dreams ignore that you are giving all your labor to the rich who exploit you. The world itself has become a global field of exploitation for the ultra-rich. Profits matter more than the entire planet. American workers are pitted against the Chinese and people from India and Bangladesh are pitted against Mexicans in a rush to pay the workers the lowest rate and enrich the rich beyond measure. People die, oceans and air are polluted and all so a few absurdly rich people can get richer. It is not good for them or us, they even know it, hiding their mansions behind gated communities. The cult of the CEO thrives largely unchecked.<sup>19</sup> William James’ idea of solipsistic religious experience is made paramount. Outside scientific

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<sup>19</sup> The CEO replaces kings as arbitrary dictators. They are the single most destructive element in the world now. It is not just the CEO of course, but the Boards that support them and the shareholders that profit from what they do and to whom they are legally obliged. This constitutes a kind of legal cult and one that has very destructive consequences. Profits matter more to them than the entire planet, animals and the poor, who are treated as an externality and on which they displace the harms of their schemes. They serve themselves, harm the environment, cause global warming, destroy nature, drive species to extinction, corrupt governments, create pollution, harm workers, and amass huge fortunes which perpetuate all the other harms they do. They play one group of poor people against another, turn nation against nation and worker against worker, exploiting whoever they can to make more money. They turn people into slaves, and deny healthcare, hurt the old, young and the sick. They have stolen the first amendment and made money seem like speech, when money is not speech. They need to be regulated out of existence, their off shore trillions seized or taxed and used for better purposes. Global warming needs to be stopped, extinctions of species stopped, corruption of governments stopped. Labor laws that support local control are needed. Global warming could be stopped if the CEO were downsized. As Naomi Klein has shown these monsters even make money out of disasters, they lie and cheat and take what is not theirs to take.. See her book [Shock Doctrine](#)

inquiry <sup>20</sup>random subjectivism, unfortunately equated with ‘freedom’, rules in cultural, literary and artistic circles.<sup>21</sup> Carefully cultivated delusions about the ‘freedom’ of the rich is stressed over the stability of the middle class and the health of the poor. <sup>22</sup> The delusions accompany the cultish reign of the CEO and many species and the planet itself are endangered by the greed and exploitation. CEOs are the new Jesus: both are myths based on the magnification of symbols. Art is also made to serve useless delusions. I will speak more of this arbitrary and illusory freedom and of William James shortly.

Why are so many attracted into this realm of make believe in an age where science prospers? Why has the far right prospered in a time when the injustice of class systems is well known? John Dewey told me at a young age that religion is all about insecurity and the need to feel secure. Indeed, Dewey’s analysis of things informed my whole enterprise of

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<sup>20</sup> This is reflected in the rise of science and the increasing tendency of mis-called “secular” themes in Netherlandish art, is in Vermeer and De Hooch. The latter is in some ways the father of the former and did some marvelous depictions of domesticity and women’s lives. Indeed as much as I admire Vermeer, I admire De Hooch more. The first three works in Vermeer’s work are probably not Vermeer’s at all, but may be art dealer scams. Vermeer is too eternal, whereas De Hooch is more domestic and real. But there are many interesting artists who reflect the rise of science, Gerard ter Borch, Da Vinci and Rembrandt among them.

<sup>21</sup> Since subjectivism is erased of any real socially meaningful content, one can see this reflected in corporate art, Corporate art is largely meaningless as you can see if you look through the major art magazines, Art Forum ,Art in America etc.. It is severely restricted and dogmatic to art made only about art itself or its materials and processes and is based on some artist’s random and, unusually unreadable subjectivity. The result is corporate abstractions which have no content, yet are used by corporations as symbols of rich investment and their individualistic freedom. An aesthetic of abstract meaninglessness becomes institutionalized. This is the heritage of Warhol, Reinhardt and Duchamp and is religious in the sense that it justifies the fiction of the corporate “individual”. The corporate individual is basically a ‘god’ a fiction that does not exist and who does not die. It is a modern religious construct which is also a political and legal fiction.

<sup>22</sup> These terms freedom and stability were used by an economist whose name I forget, in regard to comparing the US system devoted to freedom compared to the European system devoted to stability. This is basically the neo fascism of Ayn Rand who admires the state that “utterly represses **Equality** ... to the revitalization of individualism and **liberty**” This is a return to a virtual slave state, rather like what Plato wanted. The historian Charles Beard thought that this preference for prosperity of one class very extreme and opposed it, and I have to agree with him, seeing what harm it has done to so many people.

researching religion and thought from an early age. Sometimes consciously and other times unconsciously, I was pursuing inquiry as a scientific tool in order to understand the world I live in from as many perspectives as possible, primarily to see what was true and not true. What were the consequences of a given system of belief?. What did it actually mean?,: how was it used? Dewey taught me to think things through. Such thinking is not infallible. Indeed, over twenty years I have thought through aspects of arguments in these books and changed them and then changed them again when new facts came to my attention. I have taken on points of view, changed them and then again, all in an effort to be as clear and factual as possible. Am I still sometimes wrong? Certainly. But sometimes I am not, and hopefully, the preponderance of my arguments is largely correct.

Adults need make believe religions and superstitions<sup>23</sup> because they are ‘insecure’. In America where corporations rule by legal fiat, and lie in advertisements to keep their wealth, it makes total sense that delusions would be encouraged and irrationalism rules. To be deluded insures the status quo. Delusion is the child of despair and suffering, as well and the result of persuasion and propaganda advanced by interested parties. The rich need religion and delusions to keep the poor in line, keep wages down, and to allow as little “freedom” to the poor. Inequality

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<sup>23</sup> The origins of the word ‘superstition’ are interesting, It was originally used to describe excessive religious belief, or religious beliefs not one’s own, The Roman described the Druids as superstitious or the Christians said the Romans were superstitious. This culture centered view of it survives rather absurdly in the Catholic Church. But in the Enlightenment all religious belief came to be seen as superstition, which is correct. B.F Skinner did some interesting experiments that showed that animals are capable also of unreasonable rituals...., His experiment is described thusly”

“One pigeon was making turns in its cage, another would swing its head in a pendulum motion, while others also displayed a variety of other behaviours. Because these behaviours were all done ritualistically in an attempt to receive food from a dispenser, even though the dispenser had already been programmed to release food at set time intervals regardless of the pigeons' actions, Skinner believed that the pigeons were trying to influence their feeding schedule by performing these actions.

thus favors the rich and harms the poor though increased need of delusions to shield themselves against the suffering the rich cause to their lives. The rich need lies to dampen the will of the poor to rebel. This is not a Marxist view but merely an observation of facts in America: TV, religion, competitive games, computers, texting, standardized education, are just some of the means that keep the population ignorant and willing to toss away critical thinking which is necessary to democracy. .

“Free Market” ideology is itself a religious delusion. Parents teach children to rely on delusions like Santa Claus or the tooth Fairy, “fate”, Jesus, Muhammad or astrology. People have difficulty facing their own lives and they were taught this dependence on fictional delusions by their parents. This is not just in America. In England for instance, a Pakistani boy is likely to gravitate toward Islam as a matter of identity and there be exploited by Muslim fanatics and maybe even kill someone, as happened recently in London. Another man, in America blew up some Marathon runners, to push an Islamic grievance to its maximum. The Arabian desert is an extension of the Sahara, the worst desert in the world and it brought forth this patriarchal religion of brotherhood, authoritarian hate and hardship, self-sacrifice and misogyny. Religion and politics are flip sides of the same coin and to understand one is to look into the heart of the other. Unjust political and economic arrangements help foster religious ideology and fictions.

Dewey was the truest thing I read at 16. I struggled very hard to read his Experience and Nature, even though it was well over my head. It was a discipline that helped me learn to think. Early in my teens I rejected religion. Steven Pinker echoes Dewey when he writes that the “ubiquitous belief in spirits, souls, gods, angels, and so on, consists of our intuitive psychology running amok”. This appears to be quite true. Rather like Skinner’s ritualistic pigeons, who tried to influence a

machine to give more food by elaborate bows, humans posit agents, and pray to spirits or ghosts where there are none. They imagine causes that did not occur. But I was not prepared to understand only Dewey at 16, even though he was more truthful than others. I wanted to know all sides. I really knew nothing. I started reading William James and Aldous Huxley's books, two very opposite authors in many ways.<sup>24</sup> I started reading James very early, also when I was 16.<sup>25</sup> My search into the truth or falsehood about religion got more earnest in my late twenties. I spent time in monasteries. I visited and spent days in a Russian orthodox

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<sup>24</sup> William James's Varieties of Religious Experience and Aldous Huxley's the Perennial Philosophy. This book you are now reading, in part, is a refutation of the theses of these two books and similar ideologies.

James promotes the 'experience' of religion as if it were a real fact, rather than the subjective fiction it really is, and Huxley tries to explain all religion as having the same transcendental message, similar to Advaita Vedanta, Plotinus, Plato, Shankara, Eckhart, Kabir, Chang Tzu and the other usual suspects of total knowledge via total subjectivity. Huxley is a suburban promoter of subjectivist ecstasy in the form of a globalist mysticism. Huxley posits an Absolute Mind of an impersonal "ground"—and this is the means by which one undergoes mind control. To integrate your own mind with that of the Absolute Mind, you have to negate yourself, of course, the ordinary ego being the ultimate 'evil', according to this system. This effort to eliminate the "contingent" is the source of much that is destructive in all the religions. Huxley pushes an impersonal and universal notion of god as far as he can into delusion. This thesis too fails. The fact that all religions claim to give access to a "transcendent" state or being of some kind, hardly means such a being actually exists. Transcendence is really just inflated subjectivity. This can carry meanings about being human as in Beethoven's music, but when it starts trying to dictate reality as in religion, it ceases to appeal to truth. The contingent world is all that really matters, the "absolute" is a fiction that serves a social agenda.

<sup>25</sup> <sup>25</sup> I don't mean by the phrase "Roll over William James" in the sense of "roll over in his grave" as when John Lennon said "roll over Beethoven". I don't believe in after life. Also I rather doubt Beethoven would have been intimidated by the young John Lennon, as much as I admire the older Lennon, post-Beatle. I mean rather that I am literally rolling over James, in the sense that his theory of religion is clearly and easily left behind us, shown up to be not just inadequate but mistaken. It is too subjectivist and justified all sorts of nonsense. As I will show, James theory is the most important of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and presages the writers on religion, such as Huston Smith, Eliade, the traditionalists and others in the twentieth and twenty-first century who continue the service of the subjectivist program. Showing that James is wrong pretty much undoes the whole of religious studies from the 20<sup>th</sup> century onward. This not an arrogant pronouncement, as those who are religious or unaware might imagine, but merely a fact. Religious studies in more or less dead as an effective department in our universities, and survives merely as a hypertrophy.

monastery in Ohio, practicing their rituals.<sup>26</sup> I milked their cow and watched as they made beeswax candles and got up at 4:30 in the morning to say the Lauds prayers at 5, then other prayer times: Prime, Sext, Nones, Terce, Vespers and Compline, and sometimes Matins. I did this in a Trappist monastery in Iowa too, also staying some days, though I did not get to share the full day of the monks as I had in Ohio. <sup>27</sup> I worked at a convent as a handy man off and on for some years.

I looked into Zen in San Francisco and went to zendos in Berkeley and elsewhere and to the Vedanta retreat center in Olema. I did the Jesus prayer, which I learned from a Russian orthodox teacher in Santa Rosa. I practiced a Sufi form of Islam for two years, doing the five times a day prayers and the incessant prayer.. I visited Native American reservations and practiced various Native American rituals. I practiced Tibetan Buddhism for a time, as well as various Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox rites. I did not know then that prayer is utterly useless and gives people the false notion that they are doing something when they are not.

I concluded about monasteries that they radically distort and deform the minds of those who stay there for long periods of time. They are systems of indoctrination, not unlike military boot camps. Meals are

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<sup>26</sup> I liked the fact that Orthodox priests could marry. In monasteries where I stayed, I could see how the catholic monks were deformed by their celibacy. No amount of praying stopped their desires. Among the Catholics this is clearly a part of the tendency to abuse children. I was myself abused by a priest in Pittsburg when I was 12 or 13 and my mother had been abused by one in the 1930's when she was quite young. I came by my repugnance for religious people abusing children quite honestly, it goes back several generations. My mother, I think would be proud I wrote his book, as she never wanted much to do with the Catholic Church.

<sup>27</sup> I was interested in that because of Thomas Merton and Ernesto Cardenal, two Trappists who had a big influence on the Liberation Theology movement. They opposed American wars of aggression in Vietnam and Nicaragua. My interest in them in the early 1980's was political more than religious and indeed, now that many years have passed they both seem more political than religious figures. Their religion is almost irrelevant. Or rather, one should say that religion is really politics by another name. One can be religious and still have a decent politics, but it is rare. The religion itself is not the cause of a politics based on fairness.

done with minimal talking, usually a reading from Bibles or Patristic fathers, and times of day are rigorously supervised and dominated. Sexual abstinence causes all sorts of problems. No stray thoughts are encouraged. While this might have made sense in 9<sup>th</sup> century Ireland, when monastic communities were the only virtual colleges, and one of the few places where knowledge was encouraged, these are very repressive institutions and deform people to serve a doctrine. When monasticism is considered worldwide, there are many corruptions in Tibetan monastic life of a sexual kind, for instance. In India it is the same. Boys and girls often being given to monasteries as children and they are sometimes abused. Drugs are particularly a problem in India's temples and among the sadhus use of Ganga. Monasticism has had a certain parasitic relationship to societies and it is increasingly hard to justify in our age. In my own case, I was attracted to monasteries for various reasons. One was simple curiosity. But there was also a large element of nostalgia for the Middle Ages and the escape that monastic life provided, partly nurtured by Pre Raphaelite painting probably. The romantic attraction also had roots in Hugo's Notre Dame and Thomas Merton who I admired at one point. Many monks and nuns think that it will help their sexual frustrations, thinking, wrongly that sexual tensions could be relieved by total abstinence. In the case of nuns, escape from the world of men has its attractions as does the sentimental addiction to religious images, baby Jesus or Krishna or the love of an imaginary Christ. These fill the voids of loneliness and lost love, offering an escape from life. I found a similar escape psychology among men on the ships I worked on and evidently people who want to hide from life and disappointment find the occupations that serve this desire.

Thus I have had plenty of direct experience in religion. These books are a sort of over view or catalogue of the delusional individuals, ideas and practices of religions. Sandwiched into this catalogue are searches into evolutionary theory, science and a theory of religion, as well as

philosophic reflections and observations, speculations on myth and literature and history and excursions into adjacent and personal concerns. I knew from an early age religion was make believe and false, but I wanted to try it. Maybe something in it was true? Maybe I was wrong to reject it in my teens? Was Jesus real, and did the “holy spirit” talk through people in tongues??, was there really a “wisdom of the east”? What was at the basis of Hinduism’s wild and prolix religious imagination? Why did Rumi write so many wild analogies into his poetry?, or rather, was it really interesting or was it a Sufi scam? What is poetry and who does it serve and why? Emerson seemed to think there was an “oversoul”, was there? Was Plato really a spiritual genius, as I was told in college class, or a man on a mission to create a fascist state? What is government and who does it really serve, and what are corporations and who is really destroying our earth? I pursued the questions and religion in depth to try to figure these things out. Most of the answers turned out to be ‘no’, indeed, few, if any, of the claims of religion and ideologies turn out to be true. Once the falsehood of religion and corporate structures is understood, then begins the process of trying to figure out why human beings need these delusions and what social function they serve.

I did not know what to make of writers like Aldous Huxley who despise the “world of appearances” and imagine a fictional and Platonistic “divine ground”, as he called it, which satisfies their rather precious and effete rejection of, or need to escape, the actual world.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Huxley mentions Coomaraswamy and Guenon in his book, written in 1945, but only very superficially. It is clear that the idea of a ‘ur-religion’- or ‘super religion’ was a common one then as the religions were all beginning to fade into oblivion and resurrecting them as a sort of common “divine ground” might give them a last leg up. But reading Huxley’s book now shows me how wrong this idea was, as there is no common ground or “esoterism” and his need to escape into Platonic other worlds now seems, well, escapist and absurd. The world is not “slime”, as he and an ancient system of thought imply. What is slimy is the offering of fictional metaphysical panaceas, when in fact there is nothing there at all. Huxley’s book is Huxley’s personal and quotable bible of illusions. Now it seems to me a sort of dictionary of the delusions of the world religions. That was not his intent, but it is the inescapable fact of the matter..



But I wanted to understand it and indeed, set myself to do so when I read this book in Marietta college in 1975, a very young man, trying to figure out a world I did not grasp at all. My father had just died not too long before. I was so full of questions I could hardly sleep at night.

My religion period was not very long. I can date it more or less to a 7 or 8 year period and only 4-6 of those years had intense involvement. 1985-91, more or less. But the stage was set for this over a longer period of time. I was led to it by reading James, Huxley, Jung and even such novels as Thomas Mann's Dr., Faustus or Joseph and his Brothers, Joyce's Finnegan's Wake and Ulysses, the former so much like Jung, as well as others from Rilke to Kafka. I was devoted to both Rilke and Jung in my early 20's.<sup>29</sup>

The Faust myth had a huge effect on me in my teens. Marlowe's play and Mann's book provoked a long term interest in the Faust Myth and a desire to unwrite it.<sup>30</sup> Indeed. I think my interest in the Faust myth was partly an effort to get religious mythology out of my life. I was a Faust myself, interested in science but held back by religion. I did not know it then but I was reacting to my studies in the subject. The Faust

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<sup>29</sup> I wish I could reproduce my youthful devotion to these authors who now seem so absurd to me. In 1979, in San Francisco, I carried Rilke's books around with me like little bibles. The Duino Elegies in particular—and Malte and Letters to a young Poet too. Even earlier, Jung led me into many artistic lacunae, and inspired my art of those years (1976-78). Both authors seem rather childish to me now, and indeed, I was 20 to 22 when they had sway over me.. It would be interesting to try to show exactly what it was that dilated and made me ecstatic in these authors. I recall the deepest emotions, especially in Rilke. In the end that is what these authors are: creators of inward illusions, masters of mental mirage. I enjoyed their mirages for a time, drank their verbal elixirs, but in the end it was false in more ways it was true.

<sup>30</sup> I wrote a little book called Deconstructing Faust, in 1980, which turned into several notebooks and essays, some more cohesive than others. In some ways this effort thinks through the mythic and reduces it nothing and begins to face what is actual in life, and thus is really an early version of this book. It also explores the bankruptcy of modernist art, which I rejected. One refraining line is "everything is possible and nothing can be done", which sums up what the art world did to art: It made it a replay of its own death over and over again. I overcame this eventually and brought art back into health again, dealing with the reality of my life, far from the art world. I will speak of this in a later chapter.. The logical question is why the modern world needed to destroy art. I will try to answer this in a later chapter on art.

myth is really a condemnation of youthful curiosity and exploration. The myth put me into a quandary since as a young man I was nothing if not curious. Faust has to suffer forever because he made a few youthful mistakes. Is this to be my fate? I took the myth very personally. So when I came to write about it I found myself deconstructing the whole myth and slowly I wrote myself out of it, as I would eventually do for religion in general. Indeed, my will to write myself out of central and controlling myths was very strong. I was attracted to them and felt them deeply, but at the same time wished to subvert them. I saw them, rightly, I think, as suffocating and constraining mechanisms meant to undermine the very aspects of my person that were best in me. I wanted freedom of inquiry and the Faust story is a myth constructed the late medieval period effort to undermine that. Indeed the whole traditionalist and religious project is already present in the Faust story: sexual repression, control, religion as a politic of power dynamics.

I think the Faust myth is really a reactionary myth of the Dark Ages thrust into the modern world as a sort of guilt trip, an effort to control young people minds and make them behave. Faust was an early effort to damn science. The rise of curiosity at the time of Leonardo and then into the Enlightenment is huge and can be measured in the rise of museums, collections of natural objects and explorations. In Marlowe's version of Faust (1600) he is still trying to thrust us back into the guilt tripping of the medieval mind. In Goethe's version (1800) there is still a strong medieval flavor in the early pages, which is slowly undone by his later enlightenment neoclassicism as Goethe ages. Goethe is a sort of educated New Ager, at odds with himself and caught between the medieval and science.

But in Thomas Mann's book the old medieval obsessions take hold again,--- I think because Mann was early on a very conservative man, in some ways a Nietzschean. His Faust is based on Nietzsche's biography. Faust in Mann is a post-modernist musician as it were, an anti- hero

who is very much a conservative revolutionary, a “post-modernist” we would say now, rewriting Schoenberg’s modernist music as medieval version of Michelangelo’s Last Judgment seen through the reactionary eyes of a Savonarola. . Nietzsche of course, prefigures the traditionalists in some ways too, inventing a super-religion or a sort of “esoterism” which he calls Zarathustra. I was charmed by Nietzsche at one point, his mad poetry in particular--- but outgrew that too. But I will discuss Nietzsche in a later chapter.

My desire to unwrite the Faust myth was really a desire to shake off the gothic and Catholic guilt, anti-science, and loathing for life and sex which was so central to this myth. I was awash in the myths still circulating in our age, left over from bygone ages. I wanted to find my way through the thicket and the “wasteland”<sup>31</sup> of it all: Durer’s Melancholia, Kafka’s Trial and the Mythic Hero. I also wished to get rid of the modernist failure of art and the post-modernist tendency to inauthentic pastiche. Rejecting Faust was really a good thing, part and parcel of rejecting romanticism and modernist spirituality. Goethe’s Faust was the best in many ways. It seemed to say: ‘be curious, takes safe risks, fall in love, make mistakes, get a little dirty, look the stars, and try to do what is in your heart. If you can’t then try something else.” Damnation is yet another religious delusion, I finally figured out. The Faust myth is a bit of cultural baggage that is well thrown overboard. It was just a blackmailing bit of medieval Catholicism meant to undermine youthful curiosity and the inquiries of science and cast it as a guilty light.

In my teens and twenties I very much saw myself as a Faust, and

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<sup>31</sup> The Wasteland of Eliot was an important poem to me, as it seemed to indicate a way out of the modernist angst I felt so much in my youth. It was in fact a far right poem advocating for the way Eliot himself went deeper into a traditionalist aesthetic that contained at its core Eliot’s own very repressive and imprisoning spiritual fascism. It is a rejection of science and a backwards leaning piece of anti-enlightenment repression, closer to De Maistre than Darwin. It took me many years to see this.

felt guilty about that, as one is supposed to. That is the whole point of the myth, even in Goethe, though he tries to redeem Faust. . I was a Faust and wanted to be unashamed of it. Faust it turned out was just a human being, no one special, but very special too, like everyone, like me. It was everyone that religion seemed to want to condemn, casting them into fictional hells. Faust was a myth that had to be undone if I were to survive as myself. But in the end I decided the Faust story had to go and I ceased identify myself with it, seeing it as a moral tale advocating a morality I know longer find cogent or meaningful. The “Faustian” tendency of modern science which the traditionalists love to condemn, is what is good about science, the refusal of authority and dogma, the open-minded embrace of nature and curiosity, the search into nature

So there were many influences on me in my youth and I was trying to negotiate a way in the world, and overcome the heavy weight of culture upon me. I was led to it by the Beatles too, especially George Harrison, though John Lennon would teach me to question religion around the same time.<sup>32</sup> The Hippie movement, from Ram Das’s “Be Here Now” to Stephen’s Farm ( I read one of his books about the Farm in the 1970’s) had a large influence on many of my generation and taught us to question authority and injustices like the Vietnam war.. There was a good deal of rebellion against my father who was a ‘no nonsense’, steel engineer and salesman, not unlike Willie Loman, and rather prone to reactionary views about art and life. My mother, who was better educated, who got a Wellesley scholarship and was summa cum laude, understood more than my father did about what was at stake. She also was against the Vietnam war and was a progressive democrat, unlike my father, who saw too late that Martin Luther King was right, the problem is capitalism.

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<sup>32</sup> Lennon’s song “Imagine” holds up whereas almost nothing by Harrison does, except maybe “here comes the sun”

So my inquiry into art and literature, which followed more my mother's interests, was inevitable, given the distantly Oedipal nature of my relation to my parents. One could reduce my ideas to simple Freudian constructs I suppose, but the reality of life is not so simple. My parents were from different religions, my mother was nominally Protestant, but really had no religion and my father was Catholic and conservative. It was only because my dad's Catholic mother forced my mother to sign an agreement to bring us up Catholic that I was brought up Catholic till I was 11 and then was free to do as I wished. My mother told me many years after she opposed our going to the Church but had to give in to my Grandma to please my father. Both my mother and I had been abused or molested by priests. This brought us closer, as she had no real respect for priests as "intermediaries" and neither did I. So my house was like Ireland and divided against Protestant and Catholic. My mother was very bright and well educated and loved learning and books, politics and thinking through things. None of these tendencies are Catholic virtues, where you are told to accept everything as dogma and not be curious.

In art, my great loves were Rembrandt and Van Gogh. I was waylaid by Kandinsky and Duchamp for a brief time, who did a lot of harm to me. Both of them tried to subvert the love of objective beauty, nature and craft, which were some of my deepest inclinations. Their notion of 'non-objective' reality was a fiction that was basically religious or "spiritual"<sup>33</sup>. I was influenced by them in art school and that took me some years to get over. I will discuss the negative influence of spirituality on art in a later chapter. They still have a very toxic effect on the art

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<sup>33</sup> It would be interesting to isolate when the "spiritual" and the religious separated. This is itself one of the tendencies that developed out of Protestant objections to Catholicism. In America one often hears someone say they are spiritual but not religious and this shows how much the Jamesian supermarket of religions has become internalized. A fluffy emotional and vague mysticism is allowed, but a rigorous dogmatism is looked down on. Questioning both tendencies is rather rare.

world to this day. So, were it not for William James, a professor in Marietta college, Jung, Kandinsky, Rilke and Ananda Coomaraswamy I probably would have stayed away from religion.

So my exploration of religion was really quite deliberate and conscious. I was systematic about it too. Early on, when I was 15 or 16<sup>34</sup> I was influenced by Coleridge's idea of the Imagination, which was also held by Blake. His notion, stated in his Biographia Literaria, was that imagination is "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM". He says that perception is imagination. For him it was, since he was addicted to opiates, and lived in a dream state. This is a Platonist idea, though I did not understand Platonism when I was 15 or 16. Plato says in his Theaetetus, as I found out some years later, that perception is knowledge. This is wrong too and results in the very human centered philosophy of Plato, which will help destroy so much of the earth by our time. But of Plato I will speak of more later. Here, all I want the reader to grasp is that I was young and trusted writers who really had not explored their own thought very well. I was led by then into embracing subjectivity as the source of knowledge and truth. The world is vast and the inner life of human is really a small fraction of it. The subject is not everything, not even close to a tiny fraction of everything. So I was led into seeing the so called created world as an effect of the imagination. This was mistaken, but it would take me years and a great deal of experience to see why. To see why, I would have to question religion to its roots.

I did a painting in 2012 of the E.P. Dutton, 1908 edition of this book I bought in 1972. The dead bird's skull on it, done from a real skull I found in the woods recently, perhaps a mourning dove, is there to brood over the ephemeral nature of Platonic and metaphysical speculations of

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<sup>34</sup> I bought a copy of his Biographia Literaria when I was 16 in

all kinds.



I moved through Coleridge, Blake, Keats and many others, tracing the roots of romanticism. My original interest in Coleridge had unconsciously led me into the depth of modern Platonism and its influence on romantic thought. Getting through this was no small matter, and still retaining some measure of sanity. I had no guides really and the ones I found actually did me more harm than good. I tried reading Kant too, but he was way over my head at 16, though I wrote about his ideas on the imagination anyway, trying to grasp what they were all talking about,

I could actually make a chart of these influences, I was so systematic about this study. Poe-(1971), Baudelaire, 72-74, Coleridge, 72-73, Kant, Thoreau, Russell and Dewey, 73, Eliot and the metaphysical poets, 75, Yeats and Joyce, 72-76, Aldous Huxley, 75, Jung, 76, Rimbaud- 77, Hirschman 77-80, Hiedegger, 80, Plato 81, and so on. There was a counter exploration too, which is why I include Dewey, I studied his logic at 16 oand 17, among others things, and I should include Leonardo too, as well as Russell and Feyerabend, as well as the French Realist artists.



From 1980 to 91 I was involved so much study I will not try to chart that here. But it was clear by 1991 what I had done. I was no longer in the Romantic school.

But it took a long time to work myself out of romanticism, or even to see the need to do so. My concern was to try to understand “the mystery of existence”, as I called it then. Or rather I called it “the sense of existence”, a phrase I still like. This was especially acute both before and after my dad died in 1973. I was only 17 and had a hard time understanding something so awful as his death. Why did I exist and where would I go and what would I do?<sup>35</sup> I was in the midst of the adolescent dilemma that was very real and concrete. Could religion or poetry deal with this, as they claimed. I was right that there is indeed a mystery, but the question was, how to deal with it and examine it. These three books are, in many ways, my deepest answer to that inquiry which began when I was 15. I rejected the bulk of romanticism even if I still sometimes enjoy reading Joyce or Yeats<sup>36</sup>.

I was very attracted to the effort of science to understand the mystery of the ‘nature of things’ too. But the answers of religion did seem far-fetched, but how could I be sure? I had no precedent, other than my intellectual uncle, who had died of epilepsy and whose books I had inherited, including William James Varieties of Religious Experience. So I read James, Dewey and others. I was studying Delacroix’s paintings on

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<sup>35</sup> My daughter has asked me a number of times why she is here, and what it all means. She was only eight when she started to ask such questions. They are entirely natural and logical. I asked the same questions at that age. The question is how they are answered. Religions abuse this natural wonderment at existence. The main thing is to nurture this love of why we are here and let it develop naturally, as it really is not a “spiritual” question at all, but a natural one which connects us to all nature. Existence is marvelous and tragic and this life is really all that matters. This is not to deny its horrors, which certainly exist too, but the struggle to make life better for all beings is why we are alive. One of the great delights of existing is having children and I was brought to that by the delight of watching animals and birds have babies, which charmed me into a deeper love of reality than anything else on earth.

<sup>36</sup> I read Yeats’s A Vision, in my teens and early twenties and thought it rather silly. Poet’s efforts to deal with death are not convincing. Thought sometimes, if they stay factual, they do offer a certain awareness of reality which I like.



the same day I was reading Dewey's Logic. Later I was reading Ayer or Wittgenstein on the same day I was looking at Genet or Sartre. So there was no way to find out other than to seek into myself and do it as completely as I could. Early poems show that I was doubtful about religions fictions very early at age 20, for instance. One poem even offers the idea that Jesus is a fiction too. My exploration of religion was from the beginning based in doubt before it was based in belief. I wanted real proof, by which I meant direct evidence that I could understand, that religion was false. I think I found that in plenty, but it took a lot of seeking, time and research.

So in those 7 years between 84 and 91, I practiced Christian, Islamic, Hindu, Zen, Tibetan Buddhist, Native American and other religions, including some of my own making. I even made my own partly ironic "Bible" at one point, in 1978.<sup>37</sup> . But I should add, my 'Bible' was partly satire and tongue in cheek. Making up your own religion is condemned by every religion, yet they all did that precisely, and instinctively I knew this and made up my own synthetic combinations, typical American that I was. I was as conflicted in myself, as the society I lived in and these conflicts, were reflected in my studies as well as my private life.

In terms of actual practices I made up, one had to do with facing the four directions and thanking the earth, a harmless activity that is really about landscape and partly derived from Native American practice. I did this for some years, wherever I went and whenever I was alone. It was a simple acknowledgement of existence and of wonder at the aroundness of things and our planet. I think I enjoyed this practice more than any other I did from any religion, as all of them seemed foreign forced and false and

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<sup>37</sup> I developed a mystical relation to creativity and did so partly beginning in my teens with Coleridge's and Blake's idea of the imagination. I even wrote a sort of tongue in cheek parody of the idea of perception being imagination in a book called the Creation Cycle, which plays elaborate games between Leonardo on the one hand and Duchamp on the other. Finding my way through these thickets consumed much of my time and study. Trying to explain what I was doing was practically impossible, however. This remains a hidden and solitary endeavor to this day.

ideological on some level, and here I am speaking of the Tibetan Chod, the Eucharistic rite or Islamic prayers all of which I did often, some of them at the same time.

But, to tell a long story short, after a great deal of searching, questioning and pain, over a twenty year period, I ultimately rejected religion. I also rejected James and Huxley, Rilke, Schuon, Muhammad, Christ, Buddha and many other writers on religion or myths as having any real relation to the truth or to actuality. By age 35 I was done with myth and religion<sup>38</sup>, completely.

Someone wrote me and suggested that I rejected religion because I rejected traditionalism, a subject I explored for some years. Wrong. I rejected traditionalism because I had had enough of all the religions, and all systematic mythic structures of any kind, many of which I had learned about and participated in. Traditionalism was merely the straw that broke the camel's back. It was not just traditionalism that was a lie. Plato, Aquinas, St. Francis, Buddhism, Hinduism, power systems, and ideologies in general--- I began to see through the lot of them. I rejected aspects of literature too, which, since Dante, has been closely allied to religion. I had run the gamut of religions and had been quite promiscuous in my pursuit of any one that offered what seemed to be a truth. I visited a Hari Krishna temple that was no less unknown to me and interesting than a Russian orthodox monastery, which was

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<sup>38</sup> This includes fiction to a degree. But I still like some fiction, it depends on what it is and how close to reality it is. There are fictions that are good stories even if they are in some way repulsive, like the Lord of the Rings, by Tolkien, which really pushes a version of the European Feudal system of caste. Its view of nature is false and its heavy indulgence in superstition. The Star Wars concept was used heavily as a metaphor for destructive political posturing by Ronald Reagan. But it is clear that people need stories. Dickens is often good, and other writers. But America's addiction to sex and violence is very vapid. English stories tend to be better thought out and reflective of real social concerns and their actors are usually better. Defining what fiction is and what are good uses of it might be a task for the future. But it is heavily abused, and little that is promoted now is very good and some does real harm. This is true of art too which I will discuss in the third book of this series..

fascinating. I memorized the Tibetan Chod ceremony and did Native American prayers. I could say, as is the fashion currently, that these religions are based “counterintuitive concepts” but that is just another fancy academic way of saying religions are delusional.<sup>39</sup> What matters to me is reality, not different ways of looking at it. Some ways of looking at it are more truthful than others. What I learned in my experiences of religion is that these ways are not ways of knowing but are rather ways of deluding oneself and others. For a while I even exulted in the embrace of delusions, I wanted to know about all of them.

In the contemporary world proximity of travel and the spread of populations made mental migrations from one religion to another quite easy. I was able to move from one to another in short space of time and without any unease or guilt. When I lived in Point Reyes I even tried making my own religion up out of various elements derived from native American, Buddhist and Christian traditions. I was myself deluded in precisely the ways I am discussing here, so I know whereof I speak. Indeed, what becomes evident after much study is that the religions are

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<sup>39</sup> For instance Stephen Atran follows Pascal Boyer in writing that ideas about gods or magical beings are

“counterintuitive concepts and beliefs, as long as they come in small doses, [which] help people remember and presumably retransmit the intuitive statements, as well as the underlying knowledge that can be inferred from them. Thus, we hypothesize that cultural evolutionary processes, driven by competition among groups, have exploited aspects of our evolved psychology, including certain cognitive by-products, to gradually assemble packages of supernatural beliefs, devotions, and rituals that were increasingly effective at instilling deep commitment, galvanizing internal solidarity, and sustaining larger-scale cooperation.”

Atran is imagining evolution somehow served to create religions. I doubt this is accurate. I differ from him in that I think religions were/are a tool of power and used delusions to obtain power for certain in groups. This does not mean it was necessarily created by evolution, or that it religions increased survival possibilities. I doubt it did. Rather, certain parts of human cognitive faculties were misused to allow some groups to prosper at the expense of others. It is not clear at all that this had any benefit, indeed, the contrary might be true. Religion did harm to human evolution. I prefer to say this outright rather than hide it behind academic nomenclature. “Counterintuitive” is a fancy academic word that really means superstitious or delusional. I prefer Darwin to Atran who does not make these kinds of sidestepping excuses for religion.

systems of delusion and changing from one to another is merely a matter of learning the codes and lexicon of the make believe. Religions are above all systems of language, myth and images meant to control behavior and thoughts. They are amazing as created entities, systems of stories and symbols, created by humans, of course, however toxic they might be otherwise..

What follows is only intermittently personal, mostly I am questioning the ideas that are the basis of fictional systems of belief---- but I do my best to face up to what religion really is, in my experience. I am not opposed to subjectivity as a means of understanding reality. William James held that it to be factual that people “Feel themselves to be related.. to higher powers” and wrongly deduced that these powers might therefore be real. Experience can lie. But if one consciously strives to be accurate and avoid delusion and double check facts, something like the truth can be approximated by telling ones experiences. I agree with John Dewey that experience is a determining factor in art, science and education Dewey<sup>40</sup> writes that

...An experience is a product, one might almost say by-product, of continuous and cumulative interaction of an organic self with the world. There is no other foundation upon which esthetic theory and criticism can build.[\[3\]](#)

I am an artist, devoted to realism and Dewey’s comments ring true to me. Of course there are degrees of verisimilitude. From outright delusion to pin point accuracy and measured perceptions there are degrees of perspicacity or keenness of perception. El Greco pictures

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<sup>40</sup> Dewey’s notion of experience is very different than that of William James in his Varieties. James is subjectivist—almost solipsistic-- in his theory whereas Dewey is trying his best to hold on the objective and the outside world. He does not deify subjective experience and try to make it a “fact” as does James.

Spanish mystical fictions which he wrongly thought were real, whereas Ter Borch pictures 17th century Dutch middle class perceptions accurately. El Greco is closer to cartoons and Ter Borch is closer to actuality. I can take Ter Borch seriously, whereas El Greco is merely mystical Church propaganda. El Greco must be bracketed and reduced to the transcendent delusions that served him socially, whereas this need not be done for Ter Borch. I loved El Greco at one point and saw a huge show of his work in Toledo, Ohio, but in the end, his distortions are delusional and say more about the horror of Spanish politics in the age of the conquistadores and inquisitors than anything else.<sup>41</sup>

Creating paintings is an engagement with reality, and give and take between oneself and nature. What I love about art is just this reciprocity with reality, the closer the better, as it enables one to inquire deeply into the nature of the world. Art is an inquiry and engagement with small things, apples, sunlight coming through a peeled orange, children's faces, learning the violin, coffee pots, strawberries, a book, baby bottles, dilapidated old houses, light on a human knee, a dying old woman, a bird washing itself. These are what matters. Religion in contrast is experience of things that are not real. James was wrong, personal experience does matter, religious experience does not. Religion is the politics of unrealities, fictions that seem true only because one has not tested them against the real. I have shed these unrealities.

On the personal side of my story what follows is a tale about what I have learned. I agree with the women of the 1970's who said that the "personal is political", by which they meant, I think, that the personal is not the marginal and the irrelevant, but has a status that approaches science and fact, while not being either science or fact, but which strives for accuracy. An artist must be honest and self-questioning. In other words reality is not defined by hierarchical elites but by actualities,

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<sup>41</sup> Sept. or Oct. 1982.

experience and everyone who has a true story to tell. Deliberate experience, in Dewey or Thoreau's sense, is thus key. I consider my experience with religion to have been deliberate, systematic and thorough and believe it universalizes across many domains, Occasionally I speak in personal terms about religion, but otherwise the personal story is there by implication. It is a tale of abandonment and loss and critical insight into things many held onto without any really good evidence or reason. It is also an example of one who learns from his mistakes has turned from religious delusions toward the earth, nature, art, science and facts. "Eternity" is an abstraction and a fiction promised by religion and is thus an empty category. What matters is actuality or our daily life on earth. Those who find ordinary reality trivial or meaningless need to learn how to see small things, as the 'small' is the majority.<sup>42</sup>

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I've thought about these things for many years. This is not a quickly written series of books book at all. I chewed and chewed each paragraph. If these three books begin with a mention of garbage, it also starts off with uncharismatic animals. Some of my favorite animals are ruminants. Contrary to stereotypes, the big predators--- Lions. Tigers Eagles and others--- are a rather effete and delicate bunch, and survive only with difficulty and high maintenance. They have my sympathy, of course, since all of them are in danger these days, murdered by hunters, poachers or dealers in Chinese or Indian "traditional medicine", a bogus category of knowledge that is superstitious and destructive to the animal world. But, Red Tail Hawks, Peregrine Falcons. Snow Leopards and Grizzly Bears are all highly specialized animals who depend on a certain

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<sup>42</sup> See the Smaller Majority, by Piotr (Peter) Naskrecki, an amazing book that tries to show the importance of small insects, spiders, ants and other overlooked being in our world. Much is to be learned from the very small and the study of insect orders is endlessly fascinating and frees one from the prejudices of so many humans toward to unknown world we live in.  
<http://www.insectphotography.com/>

population of prey. They are not "noble" at all. The notion that animals are "aristocratic" is a projection of human class systems on nature. The caste of aristocrats was unjust and brutal in maintaining their undeserved elitism. The "noble" animals are falsely presented to be such by nostalgic aristocrats, Social Darwinists, or the Disney corporation. These animals are predators and they kill in brutal ways, but not in excess or for pleasure so much as for necessity. This is not to say they do not have their rights to exist and thrive too. Human hunters are far worse than any animal and they have decimated many of these species, since hunters are sadists who want to kill beings for pleasure, who they wrongly fantasize are like themselves.

So I admire all animals but I stress ungulates, or ruminants here. The calm Elk munching grass in the mists of the seaside cliffs or a family of Deer in the forests or Pronghorn on the prairie are peaceful animals and I love them. I have been a vegetarian for over 10 years and I no longer see such animals as meat. It amazes me how much eating meat conditions how people think or don't think. Meat eaters see much of the world in terms of their bad habits, and do not generally realize it. A great deal of killing of other species on earth is done because meat eaters feel it is their right to kill anything that moves. Ruminants or ungulates are placid beings and I admire them for living their lives so well, but this also makes them easy targets. Elephants are not ruminants exactly, but they are like them in that they have fit into their world without harm and live long and thoughtful lives if unmolested by humans, their only enemy.<sup>43</sup> I like Okapi and Giraffes on the savannah for similar reasons. I like their steady thoughtfulness, their long winded stride, chewing the cud as they rest on the hillside or looking out over the plain at twilight. In any case,

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<sup>43</sup> The taxonomy of ungulates has undergone a lot of changes. The category has largely dissolved. Elephants, which were once classified with them are now in a suborder. DNA has suggested they are related to Hippos and Sea Cows, as well as the small Hyrax.

this book is full of ideas long chewed on. I will talk about how religions affect the treatment of animals in this book too.

I've written this book like an ungulate<sup>44</sup>, taking my time, chewing it over, not in a rush about it at all, not even writing it for a current audience in particular. Indeed, I wrote this book over a long period of time, off and on for nearly two decades. So it is long and thought out. Indeed, sometimes it seemed I would never finish it, and perhaps never be entirely happy with it. Traditionalists have already shown hatred for early versions of this book, which is expected and not surprising. It is hardly written for them, indeed, I expose many repulsive and repugnant things about these groups. There are die-hards who still believe in religious nonsense. I don't write for them either. I am not Richard Dawkins who seems to get something out of responding to religious cranks. I see no point in trying to convince them. They live in their dream worlds. I even find people like Noam Chomsky, who is supposed to be very smart, confused and arrogant.

Some academic religious studies professors see this book as a threat to their eager need to promote falsehoods in view of making careers for themselves. It is not written for them, though they would be nice if they could look at religion as an object of disinterested and scientific study instead of a creed to promote. Some New Agers who have seen this too have been horrified by it and wish I had not written it. New Agers should be called Dark Agers, since what they want is really backwards not forwards. To me their dislike of my thesis adds to the credibility of these books. I don't expect much of an audience in the near future. My purpose is to record the search for truth as I have lived it and let history

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<sup>44</sup> African ungulates are particularly interesting. The ones that eat the thorny acacia tree for instance are the Dik Dik, the Impala, the Gerenuk and the Giraffe. The Elephant can knock it down and eat, though it appears not to be directly related to the others.



be my judge. I think I am on to something here. Some will call it crazy, but that hardly matters. Delusions die hard.

I came to the conclusion that religion is a kind of mental virus or system of delusions after years of studying it. The idea of mental virus is just an analogy, of course. I will discuss this more in a chapter on Dawkins and a later chapter on Totalism. But I bring it up here to show that my point of view on religion is one born of scientific skepticism and disbelief. Historians have obligations. There is a lot of history in these books. I am not attempting a history of the religion, though there is plenty of that in this book. I have my theories. Since my main concern is human and nature's rights in relationship to science, that is my "point of view", and I maintain, the only reasonable one. To study religions from the point of view of religions or *a* religion is ridiculous. It is like trying to understand disease by being that disease or trying to overcome mental illness by becoming schizophrenic. Various writers on religion I will look at in this book, like Arthur Versluis, Mark Sedgwick as well as the traditionalists write histories of religion from religion's point of view. This is literally crazy. Mark Sedgwick says in his book that he is writing about of Traditionalists from "from their point of view". Corporate histories written by the corporation itself are usually pretty bad too. Writing a history of the mafia from the mafia's point of view is a rather a waste of time, except if you are in the mafia and wish to please the mafia Don and write a book for them. But the book will have little or no journalistic value at all. I am not at all interested in writing a history of traditionalism from the point of view of the traditionalists. There are several of those already and they are bad histories, written by cult members who are generous in their lies and myth making. Nor do I wish to write history of religion from the point of view of the religions. To do this is to be a servile and "embedded" journalist: a sort of proselytizer by

default.<sup>45</sup>

There are points of view that a decent historian should avoid. Writing history from the point of view of the Nazis or Slave-owners, is possible for instance, but should one do it? Obviously not. One could do a critical assessment of such things I suppose. Writing history from the point of view of a cult is likewise questionable. Many cults, including the Schuon cult or the Catholic Church have many books and publications that have no objectivity at all but are pure advertising and promotional PR. <sup>46</sup> A proselytizing journalist is a very poor journalist. I am a skeptic not a proselytizer. On the subject of traditional religion I wish to create critical insight and doubt, not belief.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> On his website Mark Sedgwick sets himself up as a sort of pope of Sufism. But really Sedgwick is merely another religious proselytizer. He writes all sorts of nonsense. One example from his website he writes that “In Sufi terms, then, the Maryamiyya is probably “valid” to the extent that Schuon’s vision of the Virgin Mary in 1965 was “valid.”” . His vision was a fiction of a disturbed mind. Schuon’s visions were legion and had whenever he needed one to justify himself, which is also true of Muhammad. What Sedgwick leaves out is that all “tariqahs” religions or cults are invalid. These and all systems of make believe. The “validity” of any cult is always in question and to claim that any religion or cult is “valid” is done on the basis of reams of phony criteria. Many Moslems sects trace back to how a given school of Sufis relates back to Muhammad, who was himself a very questionable character and who appears, like Christ, to have a dubious historical existence, and is very likely an invention or fabrication. The historical person, if there was one, is utterly eclipsed in myth and make believe of later followers, Sufism is really just the aggregate name for these collections of elite believers in these fairy tales. Sedgwick’s is a scholar who devotes his life to the make believers. This is hardly a good thing to do and no doubt misleads and perhaps harms some students.

<sup>46</sup> For a few years I watched Schuon write articles for his books and could see in each article he wrote that they were largely autobiographical. His true intentions were hidden behind high metaphysical rhetoric. His tone as impersonal Guru was a fraud, a fiction and was designed to make him seem larger than life, a prophet. This are highly constructed works. His works were fiercely edited by wives who had the same inflated purposes in view. Religious texts offer a presence erected on a lie at their core and thus are really a literary productions, often made over several generations. This is what the Bible, Koran or the Bhagavad Gita are. They were carefully constructed texts made by priests and propagandists of the time. I will discuss how this was done later.

<sup>47</sup> I write out of my actual experiences with religion. I learned many things about the Schuon cult no one else knows, even older members still in the cult. So I can write with some factual authority. But believers who write to justify the brand of belief as it were fact are a very different story. History written by the religious is a biased history that seeks to further the interests of religious academics or Churches. Catholic self-histories are a good example, as are military

I also supply a philosophical overview of religions and some of their metaphysical justifications. Metaphysics is the history of human delusions about the facts of reality. I saw this back in early 1990's and I "turned around" in a reverse "metanoia", ---rejecting the transcendental and the immanent--- and turned toward science from then on. Can I still be wrong now, in other ways? Certainly. It is quite likely I am mistaken in various ways, I just don't know what they are yet.

So these books have few fans in the spirituality camp, thank goodness. Those who already realize religion is a failure or who are interested science and history have rightly seen this book as an addition to history and a thorough critical analysis of right wing thought in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a look at the lethal nature of conservative thinking over many centuries. I am writing from a science friendly point of view which tacitly assumes that human rights and nature's rights matter. But such people who understand these things probably don't need to read this book. This book is an inquiry into transcendental delusions, cults and bogus spirituality, all of which they have already discounted, wisely. I am not writing for scientists either, since they already know or intuit much of what I say here. So why do this book at all? Hardly anyone would be interested. The simple answer to this is I did it because I had to. They are books that I needed to write, not just for myself, but because no one else has. Thinking through matters like this might be unnecessary at the moment, but in the future I think there will be some value in it.

So partly, it is a meditation on my intellectual searches and

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histories. I maintain that spiritual academics belong in religious schools not in universities. They should be in such places as the Temenos Academy, Iranian schools, Catholic colleges, Esalen<sup>47</sup> or Naropa, for instance, these latter are two questionable left leaning examples of biased and partly bogus schools that push a spiritual point of view. If such things are to be taught in universities then they should be in sociology literature or anthropology. The latter at least has some scientific standards so that one must have evidence to push a point of view. If they are in literature than they can only teach fictions, which is appropriate. I'll speak more of this in the chapter on Arthur Versluis..

inquiries. The “unexamined life is not worth living” as Thoreau liked to quote Socrates. Partly, I am writing a meditation on failed religions as a way of reflecting on right wing movements of many kinds as well as conservative religious systems or institutions of the far past. I cannot stress enough that traditionalism is not an important movement. It exists primarily to keep a small contingent of right wing religiophiles alive, who act as a justifying mechanism for right wing governments and mythical thinking. I use traditionalism as a series of examples to address the larger failure of religion in general. I write using my own experience as a test case and I follow the evidence of my own searches and inquiries into further fields or inquiry.

When I was young I thought so much was before me, but now that I am getting old and being young seems like yesterday, I realize that these meditations really cover very little of life. All I can write is what I know and I know that all that I have thought is little of what life actually is. I knew I could be very wrong about things. Correcting what I thought then became a major effort in my life. I left my study of religion on its own terms in 1991 and returned to college, where I spent 5 years studying from a more objective point of view. I wanted to look hard at how things really are. I began the critique of the Great Books then. I began the inquiry for these books you are reading in 1996. Then in 1997 I was very sick, and on the hospital bed I saw myself on the train to Auschwitz, --- It was my body telling me I had better stop dreaming and look at what really matters in life. I nearly died and this made me turn towards a scientific study of nature, which resulted in a lot of paintings, among other things. I studied the lives of individual birds and animals intensely for a number of years. Then my mother got very sick and that took some years, taking care of her. I had my own children then, partly inspired by watching bird and animals mothers and fathers take care of their young. Animals and birds had become as much a part of my life as my mother and wife and children. After a few years of not being able to study and

research very much, because I was so busy caring for my mother and children, I began again to study and paint paintings. I worked on these books off and on since 2006. I began my studies again in California and when we moved back to Ohio, I continued working on this when I could. So I have never really stopped studying, just slowed down to serve life's demands.

So in these books I write about theories about religion, the religions themselves and use the little known movement called traditionalism as a way to talk about world religions, ideology and mythic fictions. The days of religion as a real force are done, but religions continues as an escape and a social organizing force that is reactionary and fanatical. In many places now, religions act as “vestigial states”<sup>48</sup> within secular nations and there help support reactionary entanglements in the state itself. A few still hold onto traditionalist myopia, limping into a diminished future. Traditionalism decays into ruin and dreams of what it might have been, a few old stragglers clinging to it as if to Guenon's corpse, buried in Egypt.<sup>49</sup> I merely use traditionalism as a way to approach all the religion, it does not interest me in itself.

The second book here is about Guenon's delusions, mostly. I write about this hoping to add to the growing critique of myth and religion in general, in view of leaving a record of a battle against delusional systems of knowledge. I like Guenon very little, and this is probably obvious. But studying him closely allowed me into the psychology of an entire movement and this was important. The third book deals with misuses of ideology and how some of the ideas I discussed in the first two books play out in specific domains, first in abuses of science itself, then in Chomsky's rather odd Cartesian and speciesist rationalism and lastly in

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<sup>48</sup> See Naomi Goldenberg's work

<sup>49</sup> Mark Sedgwick had an adoring picture of Guenon's grave on his website for a while, I don't know if it is still there. I'm told a statue of Schuon's sexualized Virgin Mary hovers over his grave in Bloomington. I do not know if that is true either.

misuses of ideology in art history. So this is indeed a book for history. Eventually, I think religion will fall away, or at least become rare. The delusional make believe of its fictions will become better known. This is a long mediation on why it failed.

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## **William James' Theory of Religion**

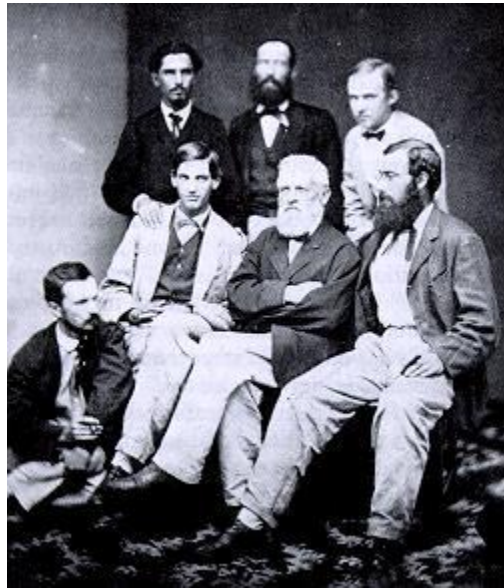
*( note: this short essay sets up a sort of liet-motif that carries through all the books. It is about subjectivism and anti-science)*

The title of this book, Varieties of Religious Delusions and Fictions, derives partly from inverting the title of a famous book by the American philosopher William James: Varieties of Religious Experience . I mean to undo what James did. It continues to surprise me he is taken seriously at all. This is certainly do to the common promotion of delusions in America, so accustomed is the population to the falsehoods of corporate advertising and churches. James was a closet-case spiritualist, not that far from Madame Blavatsky in some ways, of the very sort that Harry Houdini, the great escape artist,<sup>50</sup> was intent on debunking when he

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<sup>50</sup> Houdini is a very interesting man. He became an expert “séance buster” and exposed many fakes and charlatans, some of them very well known. He even incorporated some of their tricks into his stage act. He once said “I have always wanted to believe. It would have meant life to me.” Which is a testament to the sincerity of his searching. I understand his desire and felt that way myself for many years, until I finally grasped that religion really is make believe. Spiritualism supplied the delusion of a life beyond death that had no hell and which also avoided facing the fact that there is no life after death. Alexander graham Bell tried to make phone calls to the spiritual world, but failed to contact his dead brother. Michael Faraday exposed the table moving fraud of séances too. He created a brilliant box with glass rods in it that showed if a table was being pressured horizontally. Faraday was a Christian and did not questioned his own religion, unfortunately. Of course there is a lot more evidence now that Christianity is also a fraud and its gospels and founder probably fictional creations.

debunked “table tappers” and other spiritualist con-artists who exploited those who grieve for the dead. James’ father was a Swedenborgian, and by all accounts, very far into the purple dawn of early spiritual awakening of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or what I might call Symbolist and New Ageism now. William studied with the largely discredited creationist Louis Agassiz, an enemy of Darwin, and even went on an expedition with him to Brazil in 1865. I will have occasion to speak of Agassiz in the final chapter on Science.



James is lower left with cigar,  
literally sitting at the feet of the confident ‘master’

James’ Varieties of Religious Experience pretends to present religion in a quasi-scientific, anthropological manner, but actually his application of science to religion is a caricature. He proposes to study literary sources of religion, which turn out to be ‘geniuses’ and says: “I must confine myself to those more developed subjective phenomena recorded in literature produced by articulate and fully self-conscious men in works of piety and autobiography” (Pg. 4)<sup>51</sup> In short he was studying

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<sup>51</sup> James, William Varieties of Religious Experience, New York. 1902 Modern Library. I use the same edition my uncle gave me

people like his father, or like himself. He specifically excludes ordinary people, who are really the bulk of religions and says of ordinary man that “his religion has been made for him by others, communicated to him by tradition, determined to him by fixed forms by imitation, and retained by habit..” So religion for James is about the subjective delusions of geniuses, basically, and “tradition” is merely a flophouse for these more august delusions made palatable to the masses. But James does not call them delusions, he is seduced by the chimera.

Unfortunately, James had a huge influence on me when I was 16. I was very attracted to him and his writing and poured over them at home and in the high school library. I was given my dear uncle Jack’s copy of the book, among many other of his books, by my grandma. It was this and other books from my uncle that helped me further into philosophy and cultural studies. Within a few years, by my early 30’s., I have explored many proliferating beliefs and practices of the Sufi, Vedantic, Jewish, Holy Roller, Tibetan, Native American, Catholic, Byzantine, esoteric, Hare Krishna, monastic and new age, among others. This was the Jamesian universe self-multiplying into a Herman Hessian magic theatre of delusions.





Self Portrait by William James 1866<sup>52</sup>

James states that

The religious phenomenon, studied as an inner fact, and apart from ecclesiastical or theological complications, has shown itself to consist everywhere, and in all its stages, in the consciousness which individuals have of an intercourse between themselves and higher powers with which they feel themselves to be related. [p 465)

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<sup>52</sup> James was early on an artist, according to his brother Henry in his autobiography. James gave it up, even though he had real promise,-- as this really fine self-portrait shows-- and took up medicine. He studied with William Morris Hunt. Too bad, he would have been a far more interesting artist than philosopher.

The problem with James begins with this concept of the “inner fact”. The ‘inner fact’ of religions is not a fact at all, but merely a thought like thinking of pink elephants. It hardly means they actually exist. “Feel themselves to be related” is the operative phrase, as there is no actual relationship, because the higher powers do not exist. What James does is try to assert that religion is based on subjectivism, and anything subjective is ‘real’ simply because we experience it in our heads or minds. Religions therefore are ‘real’, he says.<sup>53</sup> There is nothing factual about the inner fact, other than that someone is thinking something. The content of what is thought is most likely fallacious, if one is thinking religion.

This fallacy is the bedrock of James’ theory of religion. He does not account for the fact that our belief-producing faculties are not reliable. Indeed, largely disconnected from nature and living in cities where human language distorts everything in accord with the interests of power and wealth, human are strongly prone to delusional beliefs created out of language or thin air. Multi-cultural subjectivism thrives, encrusted with dreams and falsehoods. If one lives say, in New York City, there is hardly a square inch in one’s life that has not been designed by a con-man or a designer. Everything one sees is planned with profit in view. It is one of the most anti-natural and controlled environments on earth. It is a human bubble of self-reflecting profiteering and sensory exploitation, typified by Times Square. James tries to make a virtue of this tragic fact of poor social planning and bad education. Americans will believe almost

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<sup>53</sup> This fallacy connects him with Kant, F. H. Bradley, Afrikans Spir, and Hans Vaihinger, among others, in that it depends on a notion of subjective impression, rather than demonstrable truth. This rather idealist philosophy was largely anti—empiricist and anti-science. In Spir’s case he absurdly denies reality to things altogether. Something is true it has a benefit, to someone. This theory is really about preserving religion by letting it back in the back door. Vaihinger wants to say we construct reality out of our minds, and we do not really know reality. But anyone who has had children knows reality is out there and must be cared for and quickly. Other species are there, and the world itself is not merely a sense impression. Woodpeckers and squirrels know trees fall in the woods when no people are there.

anything and are encouraged to do so. Telepathy, Pyramids, telekinesis, cosmic consciousness, the holy spirit, astrology, divination, amulets, homeopathy, Tarot, Crop circles, life after death. It is all part of the great William James market of promotable delusions.

James sadly endorses the same solipsistic transcendentalism one finds in Guenon and Schuon too. Following Agassiz, James is one of the fathers of the spiritual supermarket.<sup>54</sup> He thinks that whatever the mind thinks is real, is real, and therefore religious fictions are real because the mind thinks they are real. A pink elephant is the same as a god in the mind. If you believe in pink elephants will cure you of cancer, well that is a good belief for you, never mind that it is not true. I believe because I believe and that is that, "the heart has reasons". Pascal famously said.

But James is mistaken to think that his theory this has anything to do with truth. While it is true that humans tend to live in imaginary worlds, it is necessary that we try to stop doing that. The real world is suffering under our delusions and we are destroying the planet with our make-believe systems. Religions are magnified delusions, no matter how many millions think the content of religion are real. The delusion is real, in the sense that someone has them and the delusions often have horribly and tangible effects on the world. In this James is right. But these figments of imagination remain figments, not realities. There are no pink elephants, in fact.

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<sup>54</sup> This notion of individual consciousness as paramount and supreme, is at the basis of a lot of spiritual ideology. It was Whitall Perry's main idea, as he told me himself, following Schuon's similar idea. It is the origin of most anti-science ideology too as the individual is seen and the summit and objective truth is negated--- or so they imagine. Ayn Rand's neo-fascist ideas also put forward the supreme individual as the ultimately conscious one. Olavo De Carvalho write on his website that "the most solid shelter for individual consciousness against alienation and reification can be found in widely varying degrees in the ancient spiritual traditions." This is spiritual fascism in a net shell. Here the self is a supreme fiction, promoted as spirituality, and the world be damned. What is really protected in religion and what William James sought to protect was the right to believe subjectivist delusions.

James says he wants to “reduce religion to its lowest admissible terms” . These terms turn out to be that god, gods and other “hallucinations” “faith states” and all these are the contents of the “subconscious self” James says.<sup>55</sup> They don’t exist of course, but James’ problem is to resurrect what does not exist and to honor the subjective. The historian Yuval Harari does this too, when he posits that myths matter and the “common imagination” is to be honored as real. The natural world is not our construction. It is hard to see how this is a good idea. The natural world is not our construction. Making the world over in the image of humans is a mistake. Species are going extinct and the climate of the earth is faltering due to these delusions. A genetically modified earth made serviceable only to humans is a gross and untenable thing which involves huge injustices against nature to pursue. Violating natural species for human gain is unethical.

. James is trying to prove that these hallucinatory faith states are products of the imagination, or ‘useful delusions’, to paraphrase. The fiction is that the “higher self” is a ‘doorway into the subject”, and James does not mind that this is a denial of scientific reality.<sup>56</sup> Religion becomes

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<sup>55</sup> William James prefigures the post-modernist pan-subjectivism that is popular now in New Age circles. David Fideler calls this pan-subjectivism “epistemological pluralism”, by which he means that everything is part of knowing the universe. He thinks that utterly bogus systems of knowledge like Orphic or Pythagorean numerology and cosmology have something to tell us about reality. ( His book Jesus Christ, Sun of God relies heavily on numerological fantasy, gematria, so called “sacred geometry”, temple architecture, musical harmonics, Platonic solids, as well as linguistic conceits such as names of Jesus and gods as aspects of representation of the universal Logos( the “sun”. This is all quaint analogies about symbolism and gods who never existed. “All modalities of knowledge contribute to our understanding of the whole.” He writes. This of course is a make believe philosophy that tries to make crack pot ideologies somehow equal to biology or chemistry. The Platonistic holism of the sort Fideler advocates has many problems. I have no sympathy for this point of view. As it demands equality between science and myth or science and spiritual fictions. Darwin cannot be squared with creationism any more than physics or math can be squared with the myth of the new age Jesus that Fideler tries to sell us.

<sup>56</sup> James announces his belief in the fiction of the subjective ‘truth’ of religion, the idea of “useful delusions” in the last chapter of Varieties of Religious Experience, ( 1902 edition) pgs. 475-509

an affirmation of what he calls the “hidden mind”, which is not the mind at all, but rather the individual or collective delusions created by extreme emotional states and religious fancy. Buddhism posits just such an imaginary “mind” as a ‘void’. These states might be real to those who experience them, but they are not real in fact.

This does not mean that all perceptions or emotions are delusional, but only that imagination is not reality and one must be careful to distinguish between the two. Myths are ideological constructions and not reality. They are useful fictions to those who have power, but should be opposed by those who have fairness and justice as their goal. Seeing actual beings, say Salamanders or Prometheus Moths is one thing, they are real. But the abstract idea “Beyond Being” is a fiction and no one knows anything about it, as far as its actual meaning is concerned. “Beyond Being” is a magnified delusion. The idea of Beyond Being or Gods are the invention of metaphysical, literary imaginations of the very sort that James lauds. For James the actual religious experiences of individuals are reality, even though they are delusional. The fact that such experiences have some features in common is not at all surprising, humans being one species, but it hardly follows that religions treats of reality. James writes about the religion of elitist and subjective delusions, as does Guenon, Schuon and many others.

James exalts subjective delusions as real. Giving reality to the unreal is the very nature of American advertising and religion and the two are often the same, both protected by a poorly written constitution. James was thus one of the fathers of the idea that in America one could buy any brand of religion in the metaphysical supermarket and they are all valid. For James, religion is an affair not of public existence but of the market of private fantasy. In this he is indeed a ‘prophet’, as there is a growing arena of marketed delusions rampant in capitalist societies. Managing

perceptions is now part of big business, indeed, it is one of the departments in most corporations, where they manufacture illusions, do PR, create ‘brand recognition’ and defend illusory property rights falsely defined as ‘intellectual property’. This is the world James helped make, a world where one can take a ‘Course of Miracles’, Channel Ramtha, or ‘be here now’, without being responsible for anything.

James was trying to create, as were Guenon and Schuon, a transcendental unity of delusions. He was sure that his beliefs were real like facts. He thought his subjectivity was truth merely because it exists in his mind. He thought that subjective delusion was as important and may be more important than science. The ‘Will to Believe’ is the will to accept these delusions, in short. For James, this means that delusions and fictions are real, even if they are not.

The frightening thing about this view of religion, is that it makes delusions normal, and allows capitalism to prosper alongside the completely separate realm of private delusions. Indeed, the privatized delusions become utterly meaningless distractions and enabling devices to allow rapacious entrepreneurs who can then do their business unquestioned and unabated. The glory of the Jamesean era of subjective delusions is that private spirituality acts as a dumbing down mechanism so that they rich can continue to exploit with minimal criticism. Everyone revolves around the pivot of their private delusions, to which they are given a right by the Constitution in the ‘freedom of religion’ and meanwhile the economic freedom which alone would make them really free, is largely taken from them, given unjustly to corporations, whose ‘personhood’ is a delusional fiction in exactly the way religions are a delusional fiction. Indeed, the modern religion is the corporation itself and the major religions are all pawns now in the corporate game. Metaphysics has been enshrined as non-empirical private fantasy almost by definition. Spirituality and corporations collude in keeping society

complacent, unthinking and in line, so the real business of the rich getting richer can go on without too much criticism. .

Employing a really dumb “optimism” James tried to “redeem religion from unwholesome privacy”, in his own words. This wish to erect into social reality what in fact is only fiction is terribly problematic, to say the least. He wants to erect delusion as a public right. But in the age of Robber Barons, there were worse delusions promoted as for the good of Americans, and James as a professor at Harvard, appears to have made it easier for them to be Robber Barons. Keep the people deluded and it will help the rich. He wanted to erect religion on a scientific foundation and to do this he had to falsify religion and science, and I am sure that he failed, as others have since James time.<sup>57</sup>

James should have seen that religion is deceit and has economic ramifications. Religion encourages either an individual subject deceiving himself or an institutional promoting of delusions in the interests of class politics.. Private fantasy at home and public lying at large is the world James helped make. TV, computers and cell phones create an imaginary ‘cyber-space’ that rules most people’s lives. James does sometimes come close to admitting the falsity of all this, but then veers off. For instance he admits that “it may well prove that prayer is subjective exclusively”<sup>58</sup> which obviously, it truly is. But he can’t or won’t admit it. In another passage James admits that there are mystics and then notes that those who are sure of their visions might yet suffer from subjective illusions. He notes that besides mystics such as one finds in Christianity or Sufi orders, there is “the other half who have not accumulated traditions except those which the text books on insanity supply” He sees little difference between the great mystics and those suffering from “delusional insanity” He finds in one as the other:

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<sup>57</sup> James, William Varieties of Religious Experience, New York. 1902 Modern Library, page 423

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. pg. 455

“The same sense of ineffable importance in the smallest events, the same texts and words coming with new meanings, the same voices and visions and leadings and missions, the same controlling by extraneous powers;”<sup>59</sup>

Well , now he is getting somewhere. Indeed there is little difference between a Saint Teresa, canonized by a church and an ordinary women whose visions are not so useful, who languishes in a mental hospital alone. There is no real difference here in fact, though one gets canonized and the other dies in shame and despair, the only difference is an institution treats one as an advertisement and neglects the other to her death. Teresa, Francis, Lenin, Mao, or Jesus are all useful fictions or myths. Indeed, James’ book is itself an example of this: he extols the virtues of unusual mystics and eccentrics and tries to make Protestant saints out of them. Ordinary people, animals and nature are ignored.

George Santayana rightly criticized James fanciful notions about religion as having a “tendency to disintegrate the idea of truth, to recommend belief without reason and to encourage superstition.” Exactly right. Bertrand Russell comes to the same conclusions. He accuses James of being hopelessly “subjective”, and quotes James rather ridiculous statement that “an idea is true so long as to believe it is profitable to our lives”.<sup>60</sup> If it is useful to believe a delusion than go ahead and believe it, James thought. Santa Claus is useful, therefore I believe it is true that he exists. God is useful, therefore he must exist. Russell rightly shows this is an erroneous argument.

But much of the logic behind James’s Varieties of Religious Experience is of this kind. James’ book fails to prove his case, and indeed, ironically his book is a useful exercise in showing how religious

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<sup>59</sup> James

<sup>60</sup>Russell, Bertrand, quote in History of Philosophy see page 816-818



thought is a ‘useful delusion’. James was sure that his beliefs were real, like facts, simply because he wanted to believe things for which there were no evidence. This ‘pathological subjectivity’ is at the root of all the religions, its true “esoterism” as it were. In this book I will be showing various ways in which religious delusions are useful to various churches, religious institutions, cult leaders, social networks, academics, reactionary and national politics, and charlatans, in addition of course to ordinary people--- who also have multiple reasons to delude themselves. I do not exempt myself from this description and this book is itself a testament to the ways I was once deluded by religion, but I woke up out of that. This book is the opposite of James book and seeks to reverse the corrosive uses of spirituality that James sought to justify. ( this book is actually three books but here I refer to it as one thing, which it is too)

James does not question religion at its root. He mystifies the notion of experience, which is a very important notion. Our experience of life and the world is the basis of science. But in James this notion is torn from its roots in reality and made to serve fictional and delusional ideas. He is rather like a junkie trying to write objectively about the opium he is still addicted to. He tries to make up a “science of religion” but ends in showing how bankrupt religion really is. I am concerned here with viewing religion from a much further distance than James and with no admission that the realities it pretends to describe are real. I have much more extensive experience of the practice of religions than James ever had. I can show how they are bogus and why they are not true. There is nothing commensurate between religion’s ideas of god and the facts of evolution. Nor is or the truth of ordinary physics in any way the same thing as Buddhism or Hindu ideas, as I will show later.

In this book James’ the Will to Believe” has been negated, there is no reason to “believe “ anymore. The will to believe has been merely the will to ignore reality and dream fictions. Religious experience is misread and misinterpreted by the religious. The delusional nature of religion is

evident. What I have done here is to turn the “Varieties of Religious Experience” on its head and shown, I hope, that the notion of religious experience as having any truth in it is fallacious. I see no reason to negate truth as James does and celebrate religious delusions as a wonderful thing. Hence the title of this book.

The standard definition of religion in the Oxford Dictionary is “the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods”. But this so vague as to be useless. The etymology of the word is more helpful .

“English (originally in the sense ‘life under monastic vows’): from Old French, or from Latin *religio(n-)* ‘obligation, bond, reverence’, perhaps based on Latin *relegate* ‘to bind’”

This is better in that it implies social control, “obligation” is power relations and thus a ‘cult’ or an obligatory set of beliefs and social requirements and rules of some kind. The point of religion is the control and direction of subjectivity along lines that please an elite. This defines religion correctly as a form of politics conditioned by mythology. A more accurate definition of religion thus might be:

“a shared system of symbols and superstitions that is based on falsehoods, myths and fictions that tries to normalize relations between people in view of a power structure”.

Or to change this definition slightly:

‘a non-evolutionary but shared system of delusions and transcendental pretentions based on imaginary or symbolic data that has little or no basis in reality, and which is unfalsifiable and unverifiable, and which is used to separate groups of people and discriminate against an out-class on the basis of the fictional ideology of an in-class’.

Yes, these definitions capture the bifurcated, dysfunctional and split-minded schizophrenia of religion pretty well. Gods are unfalsifiable and unverifiable, since no evidence can be found for their existence, nor can

one say that they do not exist, also because of lack of evidence, other than vague feelings or false inferences of agency. People often say that god is evident because who else could have created nature, for instance, but actually there is no evidence at all that anyone “created” nature. This is the symbolist argument. People then say that they just “know” that god exists, when they do not know this at all. This is the subjective argument.

Religion occasionally does do good things, despite its firm grounding in delusions and make believe. It gives people a crutch to help them shoulder their losses. It occasionally helps the poor in soup kitchens of flop houses and helps the needy, all praiseworthy things, though it usually gives much more to the rich, and helps the poor stay poor. It comforts the widows, but only if they show signs of being willing to convert. It does wedding and funerals and this helps some people. Religion also creates a system of prejudices that people must follow, and punishments if they do not. But it remains is a form of social control, even in the current milieu where there is an obligatory non-denominational “spirituality” that requires an escapist, feel good, laissez faire openness which implicitly endorses the status quo and rarely questions authority.

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## **Darwin, Pascal Boyer and the Evolutionary Theory of Religion.**

*Note: Along with the essay on anti-science in the last book and the essay on Chomsky's linguistics, this essay deals mostly with science. It dissents from the theories of Boyer and Dennett, among others, and claims that religion is not an evolutionary development but merely one of cultural development, power and social control, and even then it is hardly necessary and can be done without quite easily and well.*

Is religion and adaptation and due to natural selection, or not?. I think not, and I will explain why. Much of religion derives from symbols imposed on nature or evoked by nature. This process of imposing artificial or cultural beliefs on the world goes way back, certainly, and appears to be motivated mostly by social needs. E.O Wilson thought religion was adaptationist because it involves “bonding”. But this tells us very little as bonding happens without religion, as anyone who has children knows. Religion is not necessary to bonding. Oxytocin is a hormone that helps a woman bond with their babies and does far more than religion could ever do. Killing children in times of famine or because of deformity was common. These were Darwinian reasons to do it since it helped others survive. Killing children out of malice is a very different thing and is denounced everywhere.<sup>61</sup> In actual fact men are awash with oxytocin when they have a child, just as the woman is and this is one of

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<sup>61</sup> Hating kids among old men is a curious phenomenon, apparently due to plain dried up grouchiness and probably comes from watching too much football, man caving, having too much beer, obsessing about the job, or other less obvious reasons. Men in many species are loners, thrive on being out for the kill and think children are women's business.

the most powerful feelings in human and animal nature. It is more common in women than men and certain men seem to have little oxytocin, but then, such a man would be a very bad choice as a mate. Having experienced the Oxytocin rush myself with both my kids, I well know it is one of the best experiences in human life. It makes one love one's kids with little expectation from them. Those who missed this have really missed something very important and which ties one to all of nature.. Those who are not matured by such experiences are likely to still not mind killing animals for meat. Once one starts understanding nature and relations between mothers, fathers and children in many species, it is quite easy to give up meat. It becomes nearly impossible to make stupid jokes about eating animals too. One learns to respect their lives and all that they give for their young.

Indeed, the Virgin Mary images exploits just this kind of closeness that mothers can feel for their babies. Is an exploitation an adaptation? I think not. A few years ago I did a painting of a mother and child and women in general loved it. They responded just as I have seen women respond to portraits of the Virgin Mary and there was nothing at all religious in my work. So the Church is indeed exploiting an evolutionary response to children, which it overlays with its own delusions. To say that religion is evolutionary in this case is false. What is created by evolution is the human response to images of children. Church images of the Virgin are a lie into which is projected a real emotion and feeling that goes with parenting and being a mother or father.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> A good example of this is an essay in the New York Times written by Michale Peppard. He tries to claim that an ordinary image of a woman done around 200-250 CE, and drawing water from a well, is actually the Virgin. Not only is his interpretation of this image bizarre and unwarranted, there is no evidence such a woman ever existed. She is a myth which Mr. Peppard, and the Times, is trying to pander. Religions arise out of just such erroneous speculations.



Painting of my Wife and Son, oil, 2011  
by author

Darwin thought religion is just an accident and not an adaptation. He writes that “It is... impossible, as we have seen, to maintain that this belief [in religious entities or gods] is innate or instinctive in man”. Darwin rightly maintains that various parts of human culture have an evolutionary basis. But he never says that all human behavior is evolutionary. Those who think this, and I have met some of these, are mistaken. Religion is not evolutionary, it is delusional, and depends on mistaken inferences. Jesus did not help anyone have a good day, find their keys, or hit a home run at a ball game. Such ideas are delusional. God does not watch the intimate thoughts or behavior of anyone, that too

is delusional.

Darwin thought many changes occurred in inherited characters and only a few became real adaptations. Religion was one such method of social organization, but it was not an adaptation.<sup>63</sup> Nature is full of possibilities and attempts and most are dead ends, or empty tries that did not work. One loves Mozart's music because it has a beauty of heart and this comes from the man himself. It hardly makes his music less because it is a product of people whose genes underwent adaptation. One loves it because it expresses something lovely and profound in humans and our world, just as science does. The fact that Mozart himself fell for myths of various kinds is beside the point. However, the Masonic myths he used in *The Magic Flute* are not adaptations, even if music itself is. Mozart's Masonic tendencies are merely mistakes of perception, social niceties and artificial constructions made up to keep an organization in thrall to the hierarchy, as well as to supply him with a story of hero worship. The roots of that may come from his authoritarian father, Leopold, and his reliance on aristocratic patrons, but that is not evolution, it is merely servitude for money.

Culture supports the artificial, symbolic constructions called religions as part of a social power system. They are not part of nature. While cooperative behavior does have adaptive value, religion is only one attenuated and extreme form of cooperative behavior and inessential. One could argue that it is not cooperative but more tribal, divisive and

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<sup>63</sup> I will discuss many writers who think that religion is adaptive, Dennett, Boyer and others. Another writer who I do discuss in a different context, anthorology, is Nicholas Wade, who wrote a book, The Faith Instinct . The subtitle shows this is an apologia for religion "How Religion Evolved and Why It Endures" claiming that religion is evolutionary or adaptive, which I will show, is not the case. Claiming religion is evolutionary is a conservative position that is primarily about trying to justify current wealth and power relations, rather than question them. His book A Troublesome Inheritance: Genes, Race and Human History, was iedely accused of racism and shoddy schoarship, and he only posiitve review of it was by the racist author of the Bell Curve, another racist book.

warlike. While the drive for power may be an adaptation, this hardly means that tyrannical governments or religious myths are. A common mistake in all religions is making up verbal or visual symbols for things that are not real. But is this mistake due to evolution or a misuse of language as a symbol making faculty? Is Raphael's Jesus in his paintings a delusion--- yes, I think it is. I doubt that the ability to believe in the reality of make believe, is an evolutionary step for humans. Indeed the contrary might be true. But let's back up a few steps.

Rather than use the word "counterintuitive", as Dennett and Boyer do, I choose to describe religion by a simpler word: delusion. A delusion is defined as "a belief held with strong conviction despite strong evidence to the contrary". One can believe that the moon is green cheese but that does not make it so. As I will show later, the existence of Muhammad and Jesus are probably delusions of a similar kind, and certainly, their miracles and divinity are delusions. It has long been clear that religion is partly an effort to fool people into thinking death is not a fact and existence persists after death. Is there an immortality instinct? I think not, it is clear that the concept of immortality is a lie told to make humans superior to all other species, when, in fact, we are not superior at all.

This effort to lie to people is usually done for people's benefit, it is believed. Some so ardently believe this lie, I have heard people say that would wish to die if they did not believe there was life after death. Life after death is a fiction, as there is yet not one shred of evidence anyone has ever come back, so this is a belief that is certainly delusional. Gods are delusions. Anti-science is delusional. Even the notion that religion is evolutionary or that it has good results are possibly but arguably delusional beliefs.. Beliefs against global warming or evolution as well as all sorts of magical thinking, superstitions, visions and other mental fabrications and fictions are delusional too, once one sees the evidence.



James was wrong: merely imagining something does not make it so. There are many kinds of delusions, many of them discussed in these books.

William James was wrong, religion is not true because it is useful, it is useful because it is a lie. The beauty in it is always stolen beauty and so is irrelevant in its truth or untruth. Deluding people is useful to those who want power or who need a crutch. George Lakoff contends that narratives become brain structures, or patterns of thinking. If something is repeated enough it become worn paths in the brain. Repeated often enough, delusions seem to become facts. But this is dubious. Gambling reiterates the point of addiction, but this hardly means gambling a good thing to do, or that gambling is an evolutionary adaptation. Thinking Buddha was enlightened under the Bodhi tree or Queen Mary assumed into heaven hardly means these things are real. These are fictions that became “true” though being repeated over and over, even though such things never happened. This process of repetitive memorization, gambling or prayer, is useful to those who need delusions for psychological reasons or who want power over others. For some, simple delusions are preferable to more nuanced or complex truths. But repeating falsehoods hardly makes them true. There is a lot of evidence for this, as I will discuss throughout these three books.

This book completes my investigation of the subject of religion and draws conclusions about it. There has been a reversal of my views from 25 years ago. These three books are the record of that reversal. I tried on the certainties of religion and discovered religion can only be approached with doubts, from a point of view that favors science and evolution. Daniel Dennett notes in his Breaking the Spell that “Only when we can frame a comprehensive view of the many aspects of religion can we formulate defensible policies for how to respond to religions in the future”. Pascal Boyer’s Religion Explained, Dennett’s Breaking the Spell

and Richard Dawkin's the God Delusion and other books, including this one<sup>64</sup>, begin comprehensive critique of religion based on science, but it still does not go far enough. Some of these books have some serious mistakes in them, which I will discuss. My point of view is not that of William James, however, as I do not grant religion reality.

William James tried to look at religion through science and failed miserably, as I will show. Dennett is certainly right that religion must be assessed from a Darwinian point of view, but exactly what this means is still an open question. I think he is mistaken in various ways. The problem with Dennett is that unlike Darwin he shows no real understanding of animals and denies we can know much about them, so he cannot be taken very seriously as a Darwinist.<sup>65</sup> E.O. Wilson also suggested such a study earlier. A proposal is one thing and actually doing it is another. This is not a new idea and has been started in Anthropology and Sociology to a limited degree. There are people in evolutionary psychology who have started looking at religion via the Darwinian model and that is a good, if questionable, thing. But, I do not find the current attempts to do that very satisfying and I will say why. I will ponder some of these proposals throughout these three books, in this long series of texts.

Some of these studies are so far disappointing, as they appear to tacitly endorse religion as a social construct, and even claim it is adaptationist, even while they appear to assess it from a non-religious

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<sup>64</sup> My book differs from the "four horsemen" in that there is more knowledge of the actualities of religions, since I practiced many of them myself. My book is weaker in that it is less focused on one way of looking at the subject and covers a very large range of subjects. This might confuse some people. But I mean to cast a wide net here. I did not approach religion as an academic and will not write about it just as an academic. I mean to appeal to ordinary seekers too as well as scholars of wide and eclectic learning. I have always been interested in philosophy, and this book is a philosophical text that is not based on academic study but on lived experience in the real world. It crosses the usual disciplinary boundaries and I do not apologize for that.

<sup>65</sup> See his essay *Animal Consciousness, what matters and why*. 1995  
[http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/dennett\\_anim\\_csness.html](http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/dennett_anim_csness.html)

Darwinian point of view.<sup>66</sup> Some of these researchers see religion as parasitic upon cognitive systems, a “by-product”, and that is probably not very accurate though the claim seems to be common. Religious concepts and norms are not exactly a “by-product” of evolution, but more likely a maladaptive by-product, perhaps.

Politics and religion are two sides of the same coin, both about social control—which generally means the preservation of power in an interested group. Is the will to power evolutionary? Since humans are now destroying large parts of earth’s beings and ecosystems it is hard to see most culture as adaptive. Language gave humans a symbolic means to magnify certain of its members over others and this had truly horrible as well as creative results. Normalizing or legitimizing power is the peculiar function of religion in political economies or even small human groups. Ideologies are systems of abstract thought, class concepts and myths are programs applied to public matters. How can any of this be said to be evolutionary or adaptive?

Language is another conceptual system that is political by its very nature. Once one sees just how such systems operate one is cured of them. Mythic or ideological constructions make their concepts central to religion and politics. Implicitly, every political, religious or economic tendency implies an ideology whether or not it is propounded as an explicit system of thought. The evolution of religious claims grows up as part of political strivings, behavioral control and the growth of ideologies. Christians claim a new world order, Buddhists claim to be able to save the world. All religions try to model behavior and force consequences on

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<sup>66</sup> For an example of this see the example of this see this essay by Scott Atran and Joseph Henrich “The Evolution of Religion: How Cognitive By-Products, Adaptive Learning Heuristics, Ritual Displays, and Group Competition Generate Deep Commitments to Prosocial Religions” On the other hand it appears that “group selection theory” which also tries to explain religion, will fail, as I will explore later.

others via linguistic and social dictates. The function of religion is to magnify the motives of leaders and make them seem more powerful than they are. Religion and politics are symbiotic and symbolic.

The destructive capacities of language use are as yet unanalyzed. Certainly male testosterone plays a part in this, as generally social hierarchies are made mostly by and for men. Male competitive drives produce all sorts of delusional products, bragging, insults, pejorative constructions, inequalities, clubs and governments. The earthquake in Haiti in 2010 showed that men tend to hoard food and try to sell it, whereas women tend to distribute food equally. Metaphysical systems are by and large, and with a few exceptions, male centered systems of ideology, which denigrate female qualities and tendencies, center power in male images and denigrate nature and ecologies as female. There is an essay about male centered metaphysical systems below. ( see: “Metaphysical Misogyny and Nature Hatred in Tantra, Buddhism, Christianity etc.”)

Moreover, notions of “eternity” and transcendence are designed to magnify motives, and they are used to give the patina or illusion of constancy and eternity upon a social class.<sup>67</sup> The claims of the religious

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<sup>67</sup> To be specific about this, look at the 1485 painting of Mary, Queen of Heaven, by The Master of St. Lucy, whose name is unknown. See here:

<http://www.nga.gov/collection/gallery/gg40/gg40-41595.html>

and compare this painting to this 1638 Van Dyck here:

<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/anthony-van-dyck-lord-john-stuart-and-his-brother-lord-bernard-stuart>

The fiction of the Virgin Mary presents her as a “Queen” who has transcended to ordinary world below and ascended into the musical heavens. The uses of “eternity” by the upper classes were many. Like the claim of the Mandate of heaven, the ideology of eternity is meant to ossify a social class into permanent rule. The Van Dyck presents a pair of young Lords, whose “transcendence” is more secular but who have also ascended bodily in the sense that they are extraordinarily tall and overdressed in Satins or silk. The one painting glorifies a symbol of religion that is also a symbol of monarchy and the other glorifies two young men of the Aristocratic class who would later be killed in the English Civil War of the 1640’s. The Stuarts, of course, were on the side of Charles 1 and the idea of Divine Right. Both paintings are political

are that they are 'beyond time' and this allows them to pretend superiority. They take on a patina of immortality or timelessness, as if reality required them. This is delusional. mortality has resulted in the killing off of billions of animals, forcing extinctions and spoiling most of the earth. This is not adaptive, indeed, immortality is an anti-evolutionary ideology. It is also an essentially political claim, based on specious and symbolic magnifications. Spirituality can be defined as sublimated politics . Once one understands how ideas of transcendence are used socially, one begins to grasp the need to transcend transcendence. Even the claim to be beyond politics is a political claim, since such a claim functions as a claim to superior power or to be beyond ideology. I will spend a lot of time showing how such magnified claims operate in various chapters in these three books.

It appears that the idea of "group selection" <sup>68</sup> is probably false, as there is no evidence for this. E.O. Wilson supports this, mysteriously. Groups do not evolve, only sexual families and species evolve and change. This is because evolution is an affair of genes and individual couplings over time. Bat wings change because individuals bats who use them do better over time, if the design is effective. But religion is a social

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and both are intended to glorify a certain class. Religious symbolism is thick in the first one but is sublimated in the second.

I find Van Dyck rather a repulsive painter because he seeks in most of his works to glorify the aristocratic classes using the same sort of distortions, elongations and propagandistic malformations as one sees in El Greco or in a different way in Michelangelo. In all these cases transcendence is basically a political concept that is adapted to 'spirituality' when necessary. Spirituality can be defined as sublimated politics. Transcendence, to "stand out from" is a political construction that implies superiority. The same is true of the concept "eternity". The purpose of eternity being to make a given class or deity permanent and thus to claim superior status to ordinary people who grow sick and die. Today's corporations make claims to be nearly divine persons too, as if they were beyond death and beyond the law. These all make believe fictions.

<sup>68</sup> see also David Sloan Wilson's "Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion and the Nature of Society" in which an evolutionary theory is coopted. The notion that religion is an "adaptation" is not any more accurate than to say the Darwin created a "cathedral".

and psychological phenomena, not a genetic one, and even if it falsely appears to be driven by biological aspects of the human mind. At the moment the Darwinian assessment of religion is rather sketchy and vague, but still promising in ways 'group selection' is not. Religion according to Darwin was not adaptive, and those who think it is, have to prove it, and they have not.

Dennett mentions the work of Pascal Boyer and Scott Atran.<sup>69</sup> I will be exploring some of the ideas of Boyer in this work but not Atran. Dennett endorses Atran in his book, and likes his approach and one can see why, as it is mentalist and offers some promise as an academic study. But since neither Boyer or Dennett know much about nature or animals it is very hard to take them seriously. Most people who have abused Darwin are deeply resentful of his notion that animals matter and we are animals. Religious studies is largely 'mentalist', in the sense

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<sup>69</sup> Atran's work seems very flawed. Atran claims, mistakenly, in my view, that "religion is basically a neutral vessel", as if delusional superstition, outright falsehood and delusional fabrication could be neutral. There is nothing neutral about religion, indeed, politics and religion are flip sides of one coin. Religion does not reflect the nature of the human mind so much as it spells out ways to use and abuse various human tendencies and capacities. Atran's work appears to be almost an apology for religion and in some ways a justification. He writes for instance in an essay *How religion Creates Moral Society*, that "De Tocqueville surmised, correctly it seems, that religion in America would give its democracy greater endurance, cooperative power and competitive force than any strictly authoritarian regime or unbridled democracy." This is nearly a republican view of manifest destiny and I find it repulsive. His book *In Gods we Trust* has a similar point of view and tries to marry religion and science is a stew that embraces religions a political brew. Atran appears to be a true believer and even writes in his book that "lying and deception...which endanger the moral order, also provide the hope and promise of eternal and open ended solutions via representations of counter-intuitive worlds." (pg. 268) He is saying that the deceptions lies and delusions of religion give people great hope and sustain the moral order. In some ways this makes him like the Grand Inquisitor, who held something close to the same point of view, in Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*. It is good to lie to people because they are stupid and only want bread and circuses. Lies are good because they give people hope. Delusions are good because people need them, since they are stupid sheep and not much worth educating. I think this combination of religious deception and politics is exactly what needs to be dismantled and what the present book seeks to dismantle.

that it tries to explain abstract delusions without judging them, and thus assume human superiority and isolation. Religious studies is based on an assumed belief in the subjective superiority of humans. But there is no evidence at all that human subjective superiority is a real thing, it is merely a false, self-serving supposition, an ideological construct.

Actually, religion is closely akin to politics and if there is any ‘genetic’ aspect to religion that is found, it will be closely allied to the genetic factors that suggest human political arrangements or the creation of money systems or other useful fictions.<sup>70</sup> “Useful fictions” are of course useful to a given class. I doubt religion is itself genetically based, just as money is a social creation. Language appears to be largely this too. While all living processes are ultimately evolutionary, this tells us very little. I see no direct correlation between evolution and religion, as there appears to be between music and evolution, for instance, where sexual selection is probably important, though there too, music is not essential to mating and the raising of young, as it is with birds.

According to Pinker, for something to be evolutionary, it must have a “complex design for some function, and the absence of alternative processes capable of explaining such complexity.” Money<sup>71</sup> and religion are not directly created by evolution but are artificial social creations,

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<sup>70</sup> If there is any politics suggested by genetics it is the bottom up political system implied by embryology. The fetus does not develop by a top down blueprint, but by a bottom up shuffling of genes. Dawkins discusses this in his Greatest Show on Earth, at some length, (pg. 211-250). Nature too appears to be organized around a model of creative anarchy, with each species trying to survive on its own terms relative to the survival of other species, who are also trying to do what they can on their own terms. It is not an authoritarian or hierarchical relationship. Social Darwinism is incorrect and serves a corporate agenda, but that is not how nature works. Predators are actually the “bottom” of the “food chain”, and only survive if the plants and small animals do well. CEO culture is not at all a natural phenomenon, but basically an unfair and arbitrary dictatorship that should be jettisoned from politics, and human life, as well, as it is destroying evolved beings at a rapid rate.

<sup>71</sup> Money is easily dispensed with, like religion. The times that I have used the barter system of trade, where no cash changed hands were very pleasurable and involved getting to know people well and spending time with them. I’ve done this trading fine carpets and art objects. I could easily see that the barter system has real advantages compared to capitalist greed, gouging, discrimination against the poor and centralization of money in monopolies.

like political systems, that serves class or clan preferences or parental fictions told to children. Some music appears to be this too, particularly that which serves powers.<sup>72</sup> The “Star Spangled Banner” is not a song that has to do with evolution; it is a song that celebrates America's killing of its own kids in political battles. Religion serves no inherent biological function. Money does not either. Both are human centered class and cultural creations. The excess incomes of the upper classes need not be awarded to them, indeed, it harms everyone that excess money is given to the rich. The financial system in America is largely in the hands of large investors who use computers to maximize stock market trades. It has little or nothing to do with “free trade” and lots to do with control of markets for the ultra rich. There is no biological imperative in this, it is merely greed for its own sake and technology run amok. The rich should be taxed heavily, and the fact that they are not is proof that their control of the governmental system is a burden and increases the danger the rich present to our continued well being and existence. It is easier to see the social function of music in its use in courtship and dance, or social gatherings, than it is to see the evolutionary function of wealth. Indeed, wealth, like religion, is an anti-evolutionary fact..

Religions are political organizations and ironically trace back to group dynamics in Chimp or Bonobo societies.<sup>73</sup> Jane Goodall claims human

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<sup>72</sup> Donald Stout records in his History of Music (pg. 4) that Aristotle wrote

“ Let the young practice even such music as we have prescribed, only until there are able to feel delight in noble melodies and rhythms, and not merely the common art of music in which every slave or child and even some animals find pleasure”.

Sounds in which animals, slaves and common folk find pleasure are music too, and indeed, might even be better music than that of the elite, in some cases. But notice how he defines music as a class phenomenon. A good deal of culture is just this sort of class pretension.

<sup>73</sup> That religion is a ‘by product’ theory is useful in many ways. But it is not well worked out yet, and I doubt it will be. For instance, there has been as yet no real investigation into the animal basis of wonder. Jane Goodall shows marvelous footage of a chimp watching a waterfall struck with amazement and wonder at it, and this is clearly an antecedent to those emotions of reverence and wonder, devotion and rapt mystical attention that religion exploits so effectively. Darwin speaks of the evolutionary functions of wonder and beauty in his Chapter 3 of *Descent of Man*, a



societies are just more complex examples of similar tendencies. Religion is a speciesist derivative of misunderstood Chimp social dynamics, perhaps. She says humans are a mixture of Bonobo and Chimp genetics and we can choose either path, socially. We can be more matriarchal like Bonobos or more conflict driven and war like, like Chimps. Obviously, the more Chimp like way is killing us and the earth and has to be slowed down and discouraged.

In either case, religion appears to be a secondary phenomenon that grows out of service to ruling classes or clans. Power systems that support the uber-rich are no longer useful. Through religion the magnifying and hyperbolic nature of language creates fictional abstractions to exalt a given class or clan.<sup>74</sup> This means that religion is not a “by-product” really, as that term is more or less meaningless. Religion is merely a secondary mistake loosely derived from political misunderstandings and hyperbolic language use.

So while humans evolved means to communicate and create social orders, religion was not necessary to this. While one could say that political organizations are derived from the need to organize groups, religion is only indirectly a result of these needs, not directly related. This secondary and ad hoc nature of religions explains their widely diverse expressions as well as the fact that humans do fine without it at all. It is not an evolutionary need, it is a result of cultural conditioning. We do not need fictions like Santa, Christ or Zeus, and the creation of them is artificial and secondary, like comic books or money. Religion happened rather as an accident of our linguistic, sexual and mental make-up rather than as a genetic predisposition. Myth and religion have their

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chapter I will refer to many times in this book. But while the capacity for wonder is evolutionary, the exploitation of wonder by a religion is clearly a social construction.

<sup>74</sup> To some degree music often serves ruling classes too, as does some, even most, art. In reading a History of Music recently I noticed that the author credits Christians with having destroyed nearly all record of Greek and Roman music notations.

origins in dreams, visions and delusions which combine with social power in irrational and unpredictable ways. While having night dreams is certainly a genetic predisposition in all humans and animals, assuming dreams to be real is a culturally conditioned thing. Dreaming is a genetic tendency but what is dreamed is not.<sup>75</sup> The immoral love of violence which characterizes most myth and religion is itself a kind of irrational dreaming, however testosterone based it might be. While dreaming is certainly an occurrence founded in us by evolution, religion is a secondary or even tertiary phenomenon that is not needed at all. It is easily dispensed with, like all the dreams we have, forgotten in the morning.

The same is true of money, which is not an inevitability at all, but a fiction created by banks, nations and interested parties. While sex, language and mental predispositions are instinctual or genetic in some sense, religion, money and politics are not. They are all highly malleable products of brains, sex or language—in short of social networks and thus serve power relations. So I will also explore the close relationship of religion and politics throughout this book, which I think might be a more fruitful approach. I see Boyer's approach to religion as the most interesting and thought provoking, even if mistaken, and so I will be looking at that too.

War, for instance, is grossly magnified by religion, which functions to escalate cruelty far beyond what chimps are capable of doing. Killing off up to 30% of neighboring tribes seems to have been a regular feature of ancient human and chimp tribes. But Chimp tribes are small and humans can kill millions and often do. While testosterone drives war for

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<sup>75</sup> It has been shown that human sleep patterns are very similar to animals and even Bearded Dragons, a lizard. From this it follows that we are very close to animals of all kinds, and our dreams are not special or indicate some divine election. The products of sleep patterns are based on memory acquisition and not evolution. Once again, the supposition that dreams, visions or myths have some sort of factual basis is false. They are mistakes of interpretation, and thus are fictions.

both chimps and humans, human war is escalated by mind control techniques applied in boot camp and religious justifications that stigmatize the enemy as inhuman and “evil”. Language here shows its magnifying function to create deceptive, abstract concepts.

This is partly why I recommend religious studies be abolished as a department, and subsumed under a more scientific overview.<sup>76</sup> I question the purely academic study of religion in a few essays in this work. The scientific study of religion should not be directed by those who wish to propagandize for religion, as there is little or no objective merit to most religion and it can be very harmful if allied with nationalisms as it inevitably is. Science is opposed to religion because of religion’s irrational and “counter-intuitive” values, in addition to science being intrinsically opposed to the “transcendental” of all kinds. The ‘transcendent’ is itself a political fiction, a way of magnifying the motives of individuals and institutions. Much more work needs to be done to spell out how the bloody performance of these cultural ideologies have their basis in physical, bodily genes and structures. This has not been proven as yet and may not ever be. Since religion magnifies human tendencies and socializes them to be useful to certain people to the exclusion of others, it is clearly a form of exploitation and not a genetic disposition or adaptation. While there is evidence that aggression and group dynamics have a genetic basis, there is no evidence that religion does. Religion appears to be an irrational phenomena that grows from delusional

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<sup>76</sup> Atran writes that "Science can help us understand religion just as much as it can help us understand the genome or the structure of the universe," This is perfectly true, but when it comes to dealing with harder issues, like the role of religion in history and contemporary conflicts Atran tries to minimize the role of religion and takes a “balanced” approach” which strikes me as facile and false, Atran’s idea is that religion and ‘sacred values’ inspire achievement of great virtue and great vice, in spiriting folk to glory or forcing them under the will to power is way of looking at religion that does not question it and really is not science. This neutral way of looking at religion without judgment is false and implicitly denies the empirical falsity of religion. Atran’s writings tend to sound like apologetics for religion. Atran is an apologist for the irrational and says that the ours is a “fundamentally irrational world”. He wants to meet the irrational with the irrational, which is a post-modernist point of view that unfortunately infects some anthropology these days.

thinking and myth, and gets adopted by political entities as a way of social control.

The “meme” theory, created by Dawkins, in 1976, has some interesting features. Dennett likes this approach too. But I have not used it in this book as I saw no reason to. It did not help to analyze the data I am exploring in this book, which is far too complex. Meme theory is artificial in many ways, and tries to impose the idea of evolution on ideas and information, where they do not really fit, as ideas are diffuse and not specific and transmission of them is not precise or even traceable in many cases. The meme theory is based on analogies. This is interesting and brings out some features about how ideas “evolve”. But one is dealing with things that are sometimes fictions and sometimes not and meme theory throws the idea of “truth” out the window. <sup>77</sup> Religious delusions are stubborn and do not die easy deaths. True believers are willing to go through fire rather than give up their favorite delusion. There is some truth to meme theory in the sense that people cling to their ideologies, and ideologies propagate by apparently “evolving” transformations, but this is not a Darwinian evolution. It is merely “influence”, as in Van Gogh was influenced by Jules Breton, for example. Indeed, Meme theory might just be an aesthetic theory or sorts, a way of judging relationships and transformations in preferences. But how this happens is a hugely complex matter and is not a matter of how species differentiate at all.

The analogy with Darwinism fails in Meme theory. Victor Stenger tries to uphold the idea on the basis that memes are “information” just as DNA is. This is quite true, but there is a mistake here. An idea is not a

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<sup>77</sup> One author calls them “worthless cultural viruses” which might be going too far, as ideas are not viruses- again memes are merely analogies. see <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/12/07/memes-dreams-and-themes/?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=opinion-c-col-right-region&region=opinion-c-col-right-region&WT.nav=opinion-c-col-right-region>

living thing, but merely a thought. It hardly means that use of a circus act by one circus ‘evolved’ into a slightly different circus act in another circus. There is no selective advantage here. There is a chance that it might make more money for the circus. Making more money is not the same thing as growing wings to fly or eyes to see with. In the transmission of ideas, there is not actually a physical change, as there is in true evolution of species. It is hard to see nonphysical things as having physical properties. Meme theory mistakes ideas for evolved natural processes. While this analogy enables one to trace car or barn styles, it is not an evolutionary theory, it is merely a useful aesthetic or historical game to play in looking at the changes ideas or things go through over time.

Meme theory makes a mistake akin to the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Ideas are not things. While Meme theory is interesting as a sort of thought experiment, I have doubts about it applying to actual behavior and history, though someone applied it to tracing the development of the Tepee, or the history of different barns found in America. It could be applied to pie recipes or car designs. Again this is merely aesthetic appreciation of influences. So this is really a form of aesthetic analysis and not a very fruitful one. It certainly has no scientific merit. It is merely a pursuit of analogies and influences and thus is an explanatory device. I will show a much deeper way to analyze aesthetic phenomena later in these books.

Darwin’s notion of cultural evolution was more nuanced and does not imply a neutral attitude of ideas or meme participating in evolution. Rather he implies that pathological cultural variants, such as religion, are not instinctual, but counter-adaptive. I agree with Darwin and not with Dennett on this.

However, Pascal Boyer’s thought begins an inquiry into the role of evolution and cognitive development in religions, traditions and

institutions. He tries to answer whether “religious thought and behavior constitute an adaptation or a by-product of adaptive cognitive function.”(2008) In other words, is religion evolutionary? Of course to begin such an inquiry hardly means that such an inquiry has merit. It appears unlikely that evolution, in the usual Darwinian sense of natural selection, has had much effect on religion as religion is not very old. It is probably not an adaptation, but a “by-product” which tells us nothing, as every living thing is a product or secondary “by-product” of evolution. Tracing the ‘fitness’ of a given religious ideology is nearly impossible in such short time spans as the last few thousand years, 20-30 thousand years at the outside, since behavior that can be construed as religion began. So Boyer and others suggest that religion is a by-product of other, evolved faculties in the human brain. This is no doubt true in one sense, as all things mental or social come from our bodies and brains ultimately. Fake burping by 10 years old kids, or slap stick comedy can be said to be a by-product of evolution. But neither slap stick comedy, money nor religion are directly a result of evolution, they are artificial creations made by kids, social classes, clans, groups or elites in their own interest. They have no more reality than the content of dreams and myths, which in fact are what religions are. So by-product theory is not just questionable, but probably false.<sup>78</sup>

There is no denying that humans are creative, and make things up. My kids are amazing at doing this, far beyond what I can do in my old age. This is not a good or bad tendency, but the products of dreams or make believe are not themselves the result of evolution, but merely a secondary effect, like farting or burping are secondary effects of eating. Religion is perhaps a tertiary by product and even more distant from our

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<sup>78</sup> Gould tries to say that Bird wings were originally meant for something else and so are exaptations or spandrels, by-products, in short. But actually bird wings were adapted from gliding wings and before that, arms, and all this, arms, gliding and wings, is adaptive, so there is no need to complicate this or other adaptations with such terms.

physical make up than burping or farting. Dreams are necessary to maintaining health, certainly, but the content of dreams is not, and appears to be dictated by biology and the conflicts of the dreamers conscious life. Boyer mentions, for instance, the tendency of humans to infer agency. If someone dies something must have killed them. This is a logical slippage, a kind of mental mistaken misreading or dyslexia. Imagining a spirit who might have killed someone is not a big leap for the human mind—it is a sort of dreaming, perhaps a paranoid leap. Sometimes the logic in such inferences is sound and sometimes it is wild and make believe. So, people make up stories about hidden agents or forces that may have caused the things that happen to them, such as illnesses or imagine, falsely, that devils tempted them, angels helped them through a trouble, or to win at a lottery, or spirits that brought about calamity or made them lose their keys. This is neither logical nor factual. By product theory does not distinguish between sensical, empirical and irrational or nonsensical inferences. Religion begins with such “counter-intuitive” inferences, mistakes, or delusions, if you like. The religious believer thinks their ‘god’ made their favorite baseball team win, or got them the well paying job. Their god made them see the car they wanted so they bought one of those. But that hardly means religion is a product of evolution, it is merely a category mistake, an illogical slippage. Eating the dead god in the Eucharistic rite is no more effective than a homeopathic pill, it is merely a placebo with no active ingredient at all. Gods are just that, pills with no matter in them, mere placebos, make believe, pure and simple. Is religion evolutionary, no, no more than any absurd system of paranoid thought, or slippage of logic.

What becomes clear once one has read enough of what Boyer says is that he is playing an academic game. He tries to write as if religion were evolutionary, when really he knows it is all fiction. He says this in his

blog. He writes:

“we have to engage in a particularly delicate rhetorical exercise, showing that cognitive science and evolution have a lot to say about what people usually call "religion", and gently leading people to the realization that "religion", like aether and phlogiston, belongs in the ash-heap of scientific history”<sup>79</sup>

This is dishonest “rhetorical” game playing and does Darwin no credit. Darwin does not mince words like Boyer does and clearly calls religious fictions, “strange superstitions”<sup>80</sup> Darwin also does not try to justify these superstitions, but rather compares them to a dog growling at a parasol being moved by the wind.<sup>81</sup> In other words he thinks such figments of imagination are irrational or delusional, as they are. This Darwinian thesis against religion is very fruitful, and I have adopted aspects of it in this book, but I think it is very young as yet, too narrow and incompletely explored. Darwin does not think, as Boyer and Dennett do, that religion is evolutionary. Changes in religions are more akin to change in politics or fashion than to actual physical evolutionary change.

Darwin’s view of these things is rather different than Boyer, though Boyer takes his basic ideas from Darwin. The shortcomings of Boyer’s theory are clear, as they are the same as the shortcomings of Stephen Jay Gould who probably originated the “by-product” theory. Gould claimed, wrongly, that “natural selection has almost become irrelevant in

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<sup>79</sup> <http://www.cognitionandculture.net/home/blog/35-pascals-blog/764-why-would-otherwise-intelligent-scholars-believe-in-qreligionq>

<sup>80</sup> Darwin Descent of Man, Britannica Great books, #49 Chapter 3, page 303.

<sup>81</sup> Darwin’s analogy of a dog chasing and barking at a parasol is a good one. Similar experiments were done with pigeons and the pigeon would wrong associate wing flapping with getting food. False association like this are common in humans and sometimes occur in animals too.



human evolution. There's been no biological change in humans in 40,000 or 50,000 years.". This is hardly accurate, since we now know that humans mated with Neanderthals during this time. His by-product theory seems to have the intention of creating a homocentric speciesism of the sort that Chomsky would later adopt. This is very wrong, and millions of genetic changes have happened to humans. Gould's attempt to erect by-products in place adaptations is false and has no science behind it. So, I do not think evolutionary psychology has gone far enough yet in its analysis of the evolution of religion. <sup>82</sup> It is still stuck in notions of "by product", "memes" "exaptations" and "spandrels", none of which are very helpful, or even real categories. They merely attempt to describe adaptations of adaptations, or even worse, they sometimes describe things that spontaneously generated from who knows where, like fashion, money, religion and language. They are products of culture, not evolution.

Boyer follows Gould's theory and treats religion as if it were a fatality of human evolution, as if we had no choice but to be deluded. Exactly how god "lives in our heads" and became the silent ruler in the human brain is easily explained by propaganda and proselytizing by the priests or shamans. Exactly how 'by-product' theory physically works is nowhere stated and the basis for it in non-human animals is not very defined either. One reads Boyer's book and feels that there is no escape from the delusion making faculties of the human mind, put there by evolution. People create religion and give "airy nothing and habitation,

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<sup>82</sup> Angelus Silesius' notion that the "the rose does not ask why" does not justify spirituality, as he thought. On the contrary, the ignorance of the rose of the processes by which it was made is all about evolution. Its beauty belong to itself and is not a symbol. It was partly the result of both natural and artificial selection. Both of these are largely inchoate or unconscious processes. It is important not to confuse the unconscious with the spiritual as the first is merely ignorance of physical process whereas the second is a pretence to know something that does not actually exist. While they seem similar on the surface they are not at all. Religion often employs these specious analogies and is largely based on these illogical slippages..

and a name”, he thinks. This is not science, but ghost hunting, He writes that

People do not adhere to concepts of invisible ghosts or ancestors or spirits because they *suspend* ordinary cognitive resources, but rather because they use these cognitive resources in a context for which they were not designed in the first place. <sup>83</sup>

People are merely delusional in communities, obviously. Why should illusions be adaptive? Why should the human tendency to superstition be adaptive? It is not, and calling it a by-product, does not dignify it with evolutionary status either. Boyer says that religious ideas and fictions “are firmly rooted in the deepest principles of cognitive functioning.” Really? But this is simply not true as Darwin himself understood. Darwin says clearly that belief in God is not an adapted instinct in humans. It is not programmed, it is learned and laboriously learned in different ways in different cultures. It is nowhere the same. What similarities there are merely accidental analogies—illogical slippages.

I can see this in my children, who do not infer agents at all, as they have never really been taught to. Inferring agency is not an inborn mechanism as Boyer claims, but is taught as a way of stratifying social contexts. One can easily escape the delusion making tendencies of human language, politics and culture. There is no inevitable fatality in it. There is no “invisible hand” of evolution that presupposes people to religious delusions, as Boyer claims. Boyer’s use of this capitalist market term does not belong in a discussion of religion. Nor strictly speaking is religion literally a “by-product” which is a term used in meat factories to describe unwanted organs or animal parts, which were, indeed, created by evolution. When I use the term ‘by-product’, I just

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<sup>83</sup> [http://www.csicop.org/si/show/why\\_is\\_religion\\_natural](http://www.csicop.org/si/show/why_is_religion_natural)

mean that religion is a social creation that arises from the misuse of language or cultural/political/psychological fictions to create an ideological system. But it is far too ambiguous a term to employ regularly. Religion is by no means an inevitability of biology. It is a by-product of sloppy thinking, false analogies or magical thinking, misplaced concreteness or social engineering. This means that religion is not real, it is a mistake, a non-adaptive fiction created to seduce or deceive, for whatever reason. It is not a “by-product”, much less a product of natural selection, as a Giraffe’s neck is.

Darwinian evolution does not apply, convincingly, to recent cultural changes, though one can extrapolate backwards to origins of behavior in the brain and thus back to evolution. But this merely means that mistakes have been made in how information and language have been processed. Ideas are not genes and can be changed or altered at will. Darwin noted that languages and species both develop by natural selection.<sup>84</sup> He does not say that there is the “same” process that accomplished this, as Dennett claims. Darwin actually says that language and the species development are “parallel”. Parallelism is not sameness. There is merely an analogy between language and evolution. Dennett and Boyer should know this. But they seem to have forgotten it.

Elsewhere Darwin notes that language has to be learned and thus “language certainly is not a true instinct” as is the development of species. The word “instinct” in Darwin is more or less cognate with the idea of genetics now. This is to put language in a questionable or ambiguous domain compared to species. Boyer and Dennett and Pinker misunderstand this, as does Chomsky. Note that Darwin says that language and religion are not “instincts” and are probably not genetic. I don’t know if he realized that religion and language are so closely related

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<sup>84</sup> Descent of Man, Britannica great books, pg. 300, chapter 3, section on language

phenomena. They are not adaptive even if they ‘parallel’ adaptive processes.

It appears that humans have evolved to have language, both in their brains and to a lesser degree in our throats. But the ability to acquire a language requires a good deal of training, and thus is to some degree is not a genetic inevitability, but rather a propensity that requires a great deal of education and that developed late in human history. This appears to be the case in birds too, and no doubt other species in different ways. Dennett uses the analogy of the parallelism between language and species to try to further his Meme theory. But to do this he has to stretch the theory of evolution beyond reason. To go ahead and claim religion as a “natural phenomena” certainly does not follow any real evidence, indeed, the evidence suggests otherwise. Religion appears to be entirely artificial, and a form of fiction, and that means it is not at all a biological fact, but a mistake that grows out of our language, our political culture and our imagination or our brains abilities to imagine, dream or obey our parents.

. Organized religion as it is known today is not much more than 4,500 years old, going back to the Indus civilization in Harappa and similar state religions in Egypt and early China. One could stretch it and imagine it goes back to the origin of agriculture, supposedly in the Near East, among the Natufians around 11,000 BP. This was a warrior society that used religion to keep social control. Somewhere between the Natufians and the Harrappan culture is when religion really begins.<sup>85</sup> Other theories try to say that ancients burials show symbolic orientation or rudimentary art, and that is true. But it is not yet religion. Religion

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<sup>85</sup> Nicholas Wade seems to think religion began with language which may go back to 45,000 years ago. I doubt that is the case. What does go back 45,000 years is the use of symbolic speech or objects and this involves a certain ability to be abstract, and thus to deceive or pretend falsehoods. Language of another simpler kid seems to go back to Homo Erectus, hundreds of thousands of years ago. Many anthropologists brag about human capacity in using abstract symbols, but it is by no means a good thing in all ways. It is very destructive in many ways.

begins when social hierarchies started replacing equalitarian foraging that was the main political reality of most of human prehistory. Priests and accountants are administrators of surplus injustices. Religion begins with the ability to magnify injustices and deceit by administrators and priests. It is the creation of bureaucracies of injustice.

There were no doubt mystical tendencies—expressive superstitions--- in tribal cultures before that, all the way back to Chauvet in 35,000 BP. But in that case religion is not organized but largely depends upon the irrational trance states of Shamans or medicine men and women as well as the superstitious agency that Darwin speaks of. Nearly all early art is either about birth giving or animals, and as such is about those very things that are rejected by “metaphysical systems from Hinduism and Christianity to the Tao and Allah, which are male centered constructions that deny procreation and animals as “lower” phenomena. ‘Higher’ reality in religions is the metaphysical nonsense of the priests and seers.

Magical thinking, really mystical fictions are probably as old as language and I think it is probably an effect of the easily generalized abstract character of language, which allows for, and even encourages, symbolic mistakes of reasoning and erroneous analogies and suppositions. Eating goat testicles will not increase virility, but ancient Roman and earlier men thought it would, as men in China today foolishly think Rhino horn will help them get erections. One can also ask questions about the social value of theatrical presentations, where language and gesture are used to create emotions and propaganda. For these to occur there needs to be language and again I suspect that the origins of religion goes back to sometime after the origins of the widespread use of language.<sup>86</sup> Neither Chomsky or Boyer address these

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<sup>86</sup> Roy Rappaport studied this in Tsembaga Maring tribe of Papua New Guinea and theorized that language and religion may have common origins. The origins of language evolved as part of human physiology and brain development, he thinks. Religion is not like that. Religion was

concerns, as far as I can tell. I will talk about his in this book in various places.

Also, Pascal Boyer mostly stresses local and tribal religion rather than large scale religions of the historic period. This avoids the messy politics of dealing with early settlement of agricultural religions or Islam and Christianity. Boyer skews his evidence, as it enables him to avoid the political questions, for the most part. But any theory of religion needs to explain both. Ascribing ‘agency’ and inferring intentions to something that does not exist is a common mistake in human psychology, as Boyer and others show.<sup>87</sup> People imagine they have souls which migrate beyond death. This is opportunism and not evolution. They believe one can talk or ‘pray’ to an ancestor or a fictional ‘hidden deity’ in words, even if that abstract character does not exist or is dead or gone. Why people need this is ignored by Boyer.

Making unwarranted inferences about the intentions of deities is a common tendency in humans, as Boyer points out. In hunter gatherer societies spirits were thought to be everywhere, for good and ill. In settled societies the man in the next village might be trying to do evil to you by spells. In our society the same mechanism is in play with those who imagine ‘Jesus loves you’,<sup>88</sup> for instance. Shared and public declarations

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apparently something of an accident brought about by political opportunists, an effect of social organization and the need to exclude those who were not fitting into the social hierarchies that developed in various societies. This suggests that religion was a political construction primarily and injustices created by religion in part flow from the insider/outsider dualism it creates. My theory is that religion and politics are basically of one cloth, though they emphasize different matters in the modern world. But the separation of church and state is an artificial distinction. Ideology and money merely take over the place once accorded religion. One could theorize that religion is the archaic part of economic/political thought which is dying off now. This also explains why many of the problems created by religion are not gotten rid of by non-religious states and corporate structures..

<sup>87</sup> See Pascal Boyer’s Religion Explained, which goes into this in depth.

<sup>88</sup> I recently saw a Church sign that said “Our Jesus loves you more than other churches” which pretty much sums up the effort to sell religion as a group therapy or a capital enterprise with Jesus as the fictional snake oil that is to be sold.

and avowals of affirmations in faith through ritual or ceremony helps to fix the fiction in the group. Blood sacrifices such as a piece of a penis in the genital mutilations of Jewish and Christian circumcisions supposedly help prove the “faith” of the believer, and mark innocent children for life with their parents cruel beliefs.

Boyer claims that such unwarranted inferences might have been useful to our species and the survival of groups and thus important in the formation of religion. I doubt that were useful to our species but rather were useful to gaining power of groups or individuals in social contexts. It is arguable this helped the group itself. How exactly did the murder of young people by the Aztecs help the society as a whole? One can only demonstrate that it helped the priests sustain their unjust power. Religions and politics grow together and both contribute towards creating power relations in a given society. Religions helped cement social castes or classes by exploiting the tendency to “counterintuitive” delusions, and thus might have aided human development in ways that might or might not serve our evolution. It is only clear, however that such views served certain elites at a given time and place, but that such views do not do so now. One could easily argue that religion had a negative value on evolution, as a positive one. The truth also might be that it had no effect on our evolution at all. But it can be said with certainty had a very negative value on those who did not belong to elites. It is hard to see the evolutionary benefit of an exclusivist elitism, caste or religious warrior mentality. It has a negative value for most people. Indeed, I think the case can be made that religion helps harm social networks and has an overall negative value in terms to survival of both our species and non human animals. Yes, it helps the powerful stay in power, but can only do so by lying, cruelty and fear.

In its current formulations Boyer’s theory raises many interesting doubts and questions. It has been developed out of work in experimental psychology, developmental psychology, and cognitive neuroscience, all

converging toward a description of mental functioning. But it has not proved that religion is evolutionary, it only has suggested that delusions were useful to certain groups or individuals in social contexts. The “by-product theory” seems to be an utter failure and to explain very little.

Dennett tries to compare adopting a religion to the fact that human evolution presupposed humans to like sweets rather than bitter things to eat, so we have to force the discipline of not eating too much sugar, which is not good for us. Dennett says we accept religions because our mental makeup makes us prone to do so, as we desire sugar. But this analogy is false, as eating sweet things is a chemical and physical process and not at all like accepting the ideology or myth that Jesus died for your sins. Parallelism without sameness again. There is nothing physical in the mental accepting of a religions fiction. People accept religions because of lack of education. Religion is not a natural phenomenon like eating, it is a highly artificial and emotional sleight of hand --- a mythical fabrication. It is merely a word game created by inflated terms, meant to seduce into a way of thought and myth based living behavioral codes. It is emotional coercion, not natural or even artificial selection.

Religion does appear to be a “by- product”—in the sense that it is a misuse of brain functions, but not an adaptation. Boyer cannot explain things like the Inquisition or caste, dangerous cults or non-religious but destructive organizations like Stalin’s Russia or corporate “personhood” that does great harm. Certainly, evolutionary explanations of religion or destructive systems of ideologies is now in its infancy, or should one say that is is merely a doll, and not a thory that will bear real fruit. It may be that the leap based on analogy that Dennett and Boyer make to have religion be a “natural phenomena” is just too unlikely, as Darwin already suggested. Darwin writes that religion is a result of mistakes in imagination and reasoning as well as dreams. Making mistakes or having delusions is not a “natural phenomena” but merely a mistake of



perception. Such a theory might please William James who imagined truth only had to be useful and not real. But a scientific theory of truth requires reality, and Boyer, Dennett and James are not up to that requirement.

So it is my surmise that we must go beyond Dennett and Boyer and their thesis,-- it appears to me that religion is partly an outgrowth of misused brain capacity, as Boyer contends, but it is also a result of power relations in social contexts, as well of the abstract character of language. This hardly means that religion evolved as a way of misreading facts or employing magical thinking. Evolution seems to have nothing to do with it.

One common feature in all religions is the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Early people misunderstood the abstractions of language as literal facts. Religious people today are still treating abstract things as concrete, committing the ‘fallacy of misplaced concreteness’, making category mistakes..<sup>89</sup> Plato was wrong, there is no archetypal, abstract ‘TREE’, that is the mother or origin of treeness in all trees. There are only individual trees and species of trees. The “archetype” of tree is a fiction. The god idea is a similar example of misplaced concreteness. God is merely all analogies piled into one huge mistaken perception. There is no god, there is only the fictional ascriptions of infinite qualities to a linguistic term.

Religious fictions and delusions are partly the result of the abstract character of language. Language allows the inflation of fictional

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<sup>89</sup> I use this term rather wider than A.N. Whitehead did, who coined it. His meaning for it is peculiar and he applies it to space and time and I suspect was too loose with the idea. He appears to have thought that something in the present could not apply to the past and thus induction is questionable. But that seems quite illogical. I take the phrase to mean that abstract ideas should not be considered to mean something concrete unless they are proven to be so. This means that science must have real evidence of something existing. Science needs what Whitehead called a “critic of abstractions”, and much of this book is about subjecting abstract ideologies to criticism.

concepts such as the “body of Christ” to be placed over a metaphorical piece of bread or a church, at the same time, as if this metaphor were a real thing. This rather extreme example of magical thinking conflates a cannibalistic metaphor with both eating a thin piece of bread and a little wine and a community of people. This is basically a political metaphor and depends on never really being defined or spelled out, lest the fiction be exposed. Human DNA shows that people once ate a lot of people, and this is part of our genetic make-up. It is taboo now.<sup>90</sup> But the Eucharist exploits that taboo to involve people in a bizarre and moving ritual. The white wafer exploits human fears and need of belonging by making a metaphor literal.

There is no “Christ” or God who is the “father” of all gods. These are misapplied metaphors extrapolated from misunderstandings and inappropriately ascribed agencies. Most of religion depends in some measure on the slippery and abstract character of language. I will discuss this shortly and I will be questioning the baneful role of Platonism as well as role of language in the formation of religion, throughout this book.

So, going beyond Boyer and Dennett, another approach that has been very fruitful in studying religion as a social and psychological phenomena is the work of R.J. Lifton. Lifton goes beyond Boyer in many ways, and avoids Boyer's many mistakes, though he wrote well before him. Lifton is known for his psychological inquiry into the causes and effects of war and political violence and for his theory of ‘thought reform’. He was an early proponent of the techniques of psycho-history. This

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<sup>90</sup> “there is “strong evidence for widespread cannibalistic practices in many prehistoric populations,” the researchers say. Frequent epidemics of prion disease caused by cannibalism in ancient populations would explain the existence of the protective genetic signature in people today, they conclude.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/11/us/gene-study-finds-cannibal-pattern.html>

offers a better and less theoretical, real world example of an effort to create a science-based critique of religion.

The mis-named “anti-cult” movement is sometimes blamed on Lifton, Margaret Singer and others, but actually the –freedom from mind control movement, as it should be called, is completely reasonable and a good thing. Those who oppose it, are, in every instance I have seen, cultists, or far right fanatics, scientologists, or otherwise connected to repressive or far right regimes of unjust power. Those who have not experienced mind control techniques and how effective they are, thus do not know what they are talking about when they say such things do not exist. The critics of it are politically motivated. Cult deniers and apologists are a particularly backward group of people, akin to holocaust deniers, creationists and evolution deniers.

Lifton, Singer, Madeleine Tobias and others did some amazing work to outline the structural and psychological milieu and techniques of cults and religions. This approach had a basis in empirical observation of actual cults and organizations. It is wonderful work that has led many people to see through dangerous organizations, religions and governments. The critique of authoritarian leaders is invaluable. This science work has been little studied by Dennett, Boyer and others. I will devote a whole chapter to Robert J. Lifton and others who examined cults in this book. This book you are reading is primarily concerned to examine the relation of religion to unjust powers systems and social control. Boyer and Dennett’s thesis is very weak on that and needs bolstering. In any case, when appropriate I will be using all these modes of analysis in this book, from language analysis, to Lifton, and others and social theory. I do not think religion is either an adaptation for social reasons to insure group survival<sup>91</sup>, nor is it a by-product of misused

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<sup>91</sup> Societies survive just fine without groupthink religions to keep them deluded. Societies that are deluded in contrast do not seem to do very well, as in the History of Papua New Guinea, which had nearly constant war and cruelty, most of it sustained by religion,, for instance.

cognitive abilities. Both these theories are wrong. I do not swear by any one mode of inquiry and will use what I need to, to try to get to the truth if I can. I begin from Darwin's premise, which was that religion is superstitious and delusional and that gods are in no way the result of human adaptations. <sup>92</sup>

This book is likely to be accused of being "biased" against religion. I consider the criticism false and to be biased by the delusions of religion. Being "for" religion is an untenable position. One cannot be 'for' illusions, one can merely be sucked into them or tolerate them or in the case of a good magician, enjoy them knowing they are tricks. The attempt to be neutral about religious delusions, as Atran and Boyer are, seems absurd to me, a sort of convenience of living in a lie. One cannot be neutral about what one knows is not true. One has a responsibility to question delusions, except in cases where a person might be too far gone to allow this, or too dangerous to question. Questioning a Taliban militant might get one killed.

Delusions are hard to enjoy and usually evoke pity or contempt. I seriously practiced various religions myself and didn't just look at them from outside as Dennett, Hitchens and others do. I understand how they functioned in my own mind and how I fell for their sleight of hand and mind altering manipulations. I am not sure it is possible to look at religion with a "bias" against it, as religion has no real substance against which one can be biased. To be 'biased' against delusion is moral and decent, whereas to be in favor of "counter-intuitive" fictions and delusions is very odd and requires rather twisted explanations, if not outright dishonesty. Some Anthropologists need to be questioned about this.

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<sup>92</sup> I maintain that both the adaptionist theory fo religion and the byproduct theory of religion are not only wrong but are contra-Darwinian, and Darwin would not have liked them either.

To be “for” religion is a bit like being for the tooth fairy or Santa Claus, it is certainly possible, but it is an absurd position that involves lying to one’s kids. One’s kids figure out the sham eventually.<sup>93</sup> In my case, my wife and I decided never to lie to our kids about Santa, Tooth Fairy or the multitude of gods cultures have made up. My daughter bravely announced in her pre-school class that “there is no Santa, it is your parents”. This was quite correct and some of the parents were horrified she told the truth so openly other kids. We were reproached for stating the obvious. Religions are maintained by just this sort of righteous self-delusion, where people try to force others to accept the nonsense they believe.

Even images like “Superman” or “Batman” have qualities of a civil religion about them, attempting to condition boys especially to accept hierarchy, violence in imposition of social norms and a certain quasi-militarism. If the Superman fairy tales reflected the myth of American

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<sup>93</sup> Scott Atran writes an essay claiming that gods or religions are different than Mickey Mouse and Marx. He is wrong here. There are degrees of delusion, certainly. Religions are merely deeper forms of delusion that have been nurtured over centuries whereas Mickey Mouse is a corporate fantasy and Marx is a quasi-religion that has some basis in actual observation, however Marx’s conclusions may be questionable. Certainly state Marxism is a fairy tale, and very similar to a religious cult. Indeed, Stalinists I have known have been indistinguishable from cult leaders I have known in respect of their need of power and dogmatic ideology that structures the world in terms of Them and Us.

Interestingly, Stephen Jay Gould, who is not always mistaken, wrote an essay about Mickey Mouse in which he demonstrates that Mickey was in fact based on evolutionary adaptations which bring religion into question. These fairy tales tell about religion. Mickey, in the 1930’s, was originally a nasty little fellow, not at all the infant like charmer Disney eventually made him into. The large eyes and bulging forehead of human babies is made use of by Disney to get people to respond to Mickey as if he were a baby. This helps sell cartoons and tickets to Disney land. Disney was using the same device as the Catholic Church used in its many depictions of the Virgin and Child. This image was meant to win hearts to the Church by explaining what in fact an evolutionary and innate capacity for parents to fall in love with their babies because they are so “cute”. The reaction to cuteness being hardwired into parents to help the species survive. This is the case with many species and Konrad Lorenz showed. Baby Krishna also is exploited for this reason in Hinduism. Baby Jesus/Krishna and Mickey Mouse are closely related exploitive images. As Jeff Kripal has shown religion and comic books have a great deal in common. He fails to note that one should be as dubious of one as of the other, as both exploit young minds.

to read Gould’s essay see  
<http://www.monmsci.net/~kbaldwin/mickey.pdf>

exceptionalism in the age of Eisenhower and the Vietnam War, what was Christ or Buddha in various times and places but a local projection of motives on a fictional superhero? The history of art has a lot to say about this and I will be using art to reflect on culture a lot in this book

When one opposes religion one really just wants to clear the air of fictions and illusions. The fact that religions were useful in organizing societies into unjust power relations is hardly a factor in its favor. Survival was very likely done more harm than help by religion. Religions grew up to create hierarchies and they usually supported the upper classes, or the class that would supplant the upper classes.<sup>94</sup> I am creating a critique of the religious need to service power. This is an effort to give an anatomy of how belief systems operate to serve power. I am justifying science in this book. Many of my observations of religions are first hand and not merely derived from books. There is an attempt at an empirical approach here, and though it is far from systematic, it has been an ongoing inquiry for many years. So, with this provisional summary in mind, let us continue....

Most of what happens in religion is cultural and still largely outside of scientific inquiry, even if some work is now underway to look at religion from a Darwinian point of view. Stephen Jay Gould's notion of "overlapping magisteria" now seems ludicrous. Science and religion are not commensurate entities. Indeed, there is no way to compare religion and science and sound reasonable. There are many attacks on religion by science, starting with Marx<sup>95</sup> and Darwin the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but really

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<sup>94</sup> Chinese dynastic successions are good examples of this, Often new religious ideas or variants of the old Confucian Taoist or Buddhist formulas would be part of what helped bring the new dynasty in. one finds a similar tendency in Sufi ideas, which would sometimes embody ideas anathema to the current ruling classes.

<sup>95</sup> Early Marx is a very interesting writer. Peter Ackroyd, Dickens biographer notes that Marx wrote to Engels that "Dickens had "issued to the world more political and social truths than have

going back to Descartes the Nominalists and the Greeks. But there is as yet no thorough examination of the attacks religion as a whole makes on science, though creationism has been extensively studied and debunked. I outline some of these attacks in my third book and show how Darwinism's implications for religion are at the center of these attacks. The credibility of all those who attack science is seriously brought into question. As I will show there are even 'scientists' whose work is brought into question because of its allegiance to bogus cosmological ideas or the free market ideology of corporate personhood. Much of my book will be examining ideologies and practices or religions, in view of showing how religion is closely connected to power systems, historical forces and politics. I have added a chapter on Chomsky to show how even a secular thinker can take on a religious aura and become a cult like figure. I also wanted to examine how ideology become a kind of pseudo/spiritual brew with politics, all stirred together into a system that has no real basis in evidence but proceeds by dogmas and tacit assumptions

Religion is a drug of feelings projected in symbols<sup>96</sup> and nurtures

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been uttered by all the professional politicians, publicists and moralists put together" – This is a profound statement from Marx and is true about Dickens and shows that Marx, at least early on, was really paying attention to the plight of the poor and working classes, as was Dickens. Dickens by Peter Ackroyd, page 720.

My problem with Marx is in his solution, which gives all power to the state, which results in a situation as bad or worse than capitalistic greed. This letter to Engels, published in 1854, here: <http://marxengels.public-archive.net/en/ME1912en.html>

is not entirely right about Gaskell and Dickens. Somewhat yes, but Dickens did not have the courage of Gaskell and his support of the Strike at Preston was both weak and cowardly in various ways. Ackroyd discusses this at some length in his book and it makes one rather ashamed of Dickens who was too supportive of the upper classes at times. Marx is right about Dickens over all, but Dickens is a mixed case, as is shown for instance by his taking the Confederate side on the Civil War, But even this is complex, as Dickens is right that the North was not primarily interested in freeing the slaves as it was in taking wealth from the south. Many things in American history boil down to questions of greed, and the Civil War is one of these. It was an unnecessary fight about money, and the slavery issue should have been already done way with during Ben Franklin's time, who was already opposed to it. The English managed to get rid of it without a war: we should have too.

<sup>96</sup> There are millions of examples of this, but one random one just to clarify is El Greco's paintings. (Domenikos Theotokopoulos) (Greek, 1541–1614) They are heavily distorted by



mental constructs of magnified fictions and delusions of myth. The Creation myths of course, are political justifications allied with ideologies promoted through stories. The myth of Jesus is a story, for instance, about submission to a God ideology and eventually becomes the state religion of the Roman Empire. Evidence shows Jesus seems to never have existed, but was a mythic invention. The fiction of his life was penned by unknown people somewhere between 100 and 200 years after the Christ was imagined to have lived. You can see the myth grow over centuries until it becomes the ornate fiction you see in Renaissance and Mannerist painting of the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Now Christianity is a mostly a Protestant fiction, often used now as a justification of capitalism. <sup>97</sup>

Once the mythology is decoded, it is possible to look at what purpose the story is serving to the society that it arose in. The thesis put forward in evolutionary psychology that religion is a “by-product” of evolved brain processes, such as the dependency of children on parents and the abstract character of language may be correct, though yet to be fully developed. But by-product theory is questionable, as I have shown. Clearly myth developed to serve powers and hierarchies and to serve as an indoctrination tool and create behavioral models. Religion provides

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mannerist elongations and distortions that are partly the result of Michelangelo’s Platonist distortions as well as others of the “mannerist” school of that time. But there is also an element of Spanish mysticism in El Greco. The distortions of the body are inspired by a mystic hatred of reality and nature. This is reflected in the statement of El Greco’s companion, Giulio Clovio that “daylight disturbed his inner light”. This stress of inner “truth” is the source of many delusions. The fact that one feels something is not proof of anything. Many religions are based on cultivating inner delusions.. St John of the Cross is a similar example of the punishing and anti-natural tendencies in Spanish mysticism. from the same period. St John of the Cross and El Greco are not far in their zeal from the Inquisition. Theresa of Avila is in the same camp, as it were, all of them evidently inspired by Sufi mysticism to some degree and however obliquely, This is William James domain of religion as delusional subjectivity once again.

<sup>97</sup> A typical example is the claim made my far right republican ministers that Jesus said, the “poor we always have with us” and the “laborer is worthy of his hire” and these statements are used to justify destroying the middle class and giving huge tax break to the ultra-rich, who do not need them. Jesus was used to justify slavery in the same way, since he said, “servants obey your masters”. The fact that the guy probably never existed is irrelevant, the main thing is that he justifies power and always has done.



illusory security to a weak species who is easily afraid of the dark. Humans are fragile and vulnerable beings, with impossibly long childhoods, where they are utterly dependent on the truths or illusions of their elders during their early years. Enlightened education systems are still in infancy and often do badly in teaching the young critical thinking skills and independent scientific thinking that they need. Millennia of illusions have amassed in the minds of each new generation and get passed on in our languages from one generation to the next. Only in the last 400 years has this mass of illusion started to be cleared out and examined based on tests and counter-tests and compiling and comparing real evidence. Support of religions is support of eons of illusions. It is not at all surprising that many of these delusions still exist and exert powerful influence in our world.

Religion is useful to the far-right for various obvious reasons, as I will show in this book. But however religion might be useful to the far right, it is not true, as James thought, merely because it is useful. Magic tricks are useful but not true, novels are useful but not literally true, and political lies are useful but not true. Religions are part fiction, part magic tricks and part political lies. Machiavelli could write a good satire about this.<sup>98</sup>

The mystery of things is best dealt with by an approach that is scientific. I state this conclusion up front, so those who are still stuck in

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<sup>98</sup> I think Machiavelli's The Prince is actually a satire not a serious work of statesmanship as Henry Kissinger, Hitler, Lenin and other practitioners of cruelty in politics have thought. Indeed the list of those who take the book on its own terms is itself an example of shameful leaders and their twisted beliefs. Praise of the Prince as a book of politics on its own terms is a litmus test for bad leadership. "Realpolitique" is really lazy statesmanship that is good for those who want to excuse immoral political power seeking. I think there is evidence that Machiavelli was really a very moral man and his immoral picture of the Prince is really a diagram of what a Prince should not be. It appears to be a satirical portrait of the Medici family, who had their Mafioso characteristics praised, ironically, in the Prince. The Medici had tortured Machiavelli. . I doubt that when Leonardo and Machiavelli became friends it was because neither of them admired Caesar Borgia. As Garrett Mattingly wrote "The Prince contradicts everything else Machiavelli ever wrote and everything we know about his life." It is a satire and to think otherwise is to malign Machiavelli and embrace , cruelty, brutality, deviousness, lying and treachery in politics.

religion and hate science can jump ship here. Those of a more open mind will be able to traverse the whole ocean of delusions that the religions have created over several millennia. I begin to “frame a comprehensive view of the many aspects of religion” as Dennett called for. Though I do not pretend that this is done rigorously enough. I am basing my conclusions of reams of evidence and research over decades. I have not yet answered the second part of Dennett’s hope for the future. He calls for a way we can “formulate defensible policies for how to respond to religions in the future”. I am not sure I can speak to the future, though the future is welcome to all that I have learned.

I do not yet know how to deal with religious delusion in a systematic way, beyond convincing one mind at a time, by reason. That is a very difficult task, as religions have mechanisms to prevent any questioning of them. Religions like to call anyone who criticizes them a devil, or evil. Doing that is a form of guilt tripping thought control. Religion is not truly a “by product” of evolution, but a misuse of human capacities for political purposes that serve an in-group against an out-group. To criticize religions really means to criticize those who derive authority and power from the promotion of delusions.

In any case, I will be wandering the globe from religion to religion, into valleys and mountains. Analyzing and comparing, stretching the limits of my own mind to explain the evidence I have here compiled about the history of religion. I do not subscribe to “pluralism” when it comes to religion as Muhammad Legenhausen and David Fideler do. The belief in the various religions all having ‘their truth’ fades when you begin to see that they are all make believe. When I was a small child Christianity seemed all embracing and scary, and when I was six images of the bloody crucifixion, blood dripping down the side and feet of Jesus, made me want to vomit or faint in Church. My parents forced us to go to Church until I was eleven. Now Christianity itself is merely an historical aside and rather a digression. I do not take it seriously at all. Indeed, it is

largely a negative force that holds back progress, even if it does sporadic good here or there for homeless people or encouraging 'morals'. The crucifixion was an image that exploited suffering to benefit an institution. It is a powerful image, but it is not history, it is mythology, adult make-believe.

At a certain point one grows up and begins to distinguish myth and fiction from fact. In a chapter below called "The War between Christian and Islamic Fascism and the Myths of Jesus and Muhammad" I will discuss the fact that both Muhammad and Jesus are largely, perhaps entirely, fabrication and myth. These myths are a series of stories created over centuries. It is doubtful Christ ever existed as a person. Fundamentalists seem deluded to the extreme and persist in their delusions despite any reason, and claim, as Pascal did, that "the heart has reasons that the reason knows not of", which is a clever sentence but which again shows that religion is fundamentally delusional. There is no valid history of Jesus. The reasons for this are fairly clear, as I will discuss. He is a myth and not a history. Delusions of a religious kind give its addicts a sense of power.

Blaise Pascal was quite a mathematician and unfortunately gave up science to join the Jansenists. He seems to have realized this might be a mistake and calls the group a "cult", at one point, which of course, it was. But reason kept leaving him and he dallied with this cult for some time. It is too bad that he could not give it up entirely as he gave real contributions in his science and could have done much more if he had not wasted himself in religious controversies.<sup>99</sup> He felt an irrational

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<sup>99</sup> I read the Pensees in my teens and liked what I understood of the wonder and amazement he expressed. I picked them up a few years ago and found them well written nonsense. Indeed, what shines in them is the rationalist and what fails in them is the converted zealot. He occasionally speaks the truth despite himself as when he says in the Chapter, "the miseries of men without God"--- "I cannot forgive Descartes. In all his philosophy he would have been quite willing to dispense with God. But he had to make Him give a boost to set the world in motion; beyond this, he has no further need of God." But this is exactly what is good in Descartes, who saw more

power in religion. But if one gives that ‘power’ up, one outgrows religion like one outgrew diapers or childish nightmares. The “heart” that has reasons can be quite stupid and when one is able to think about what one feels, and not merely feel it, matters can improve. One can decide which emotions are based in reality and which ones are not. There is no cognitive need of religion, even if there are cognitive needs for power plays, sexual selection or survival depending on group chauvinism.

But having researched and studied it for years, I have long felt an obligation to face up to the failure of religion and tell others what I know and have experienced. I hope to save a few from having to go through all I went through. This book has been written very slowly and with a deep sense of duty. But I took no joy in the subject of religion and the far-right itself. Indeed, I find the domain of religious studies rather ridiculous, and this is not a religious studies book, on the contrary. I think religious studies scholars, by and large, and with a few exceptions, are irresponsible people who lie to students and preach delusions in public universities. Few of them have any objectivity and most promote all sorts of unanalyzed myth and superstitious rubbish under the guise of being “balanced”. Many “balanced” studies tend to accept absurd ideologies like creationism or climate change denial and set these up against the vast evidence of evolution and climate change

Religion as a subject should be subsumed under science and not be its own department. It has been over twenty five years since I had any interest in religion as a “believer”. I would rather ignore the subject if I could. But out of duty and a sense of wishing to help others, I have worked on it for many years. What little joy I have gotten from it is not from the subject itself. There is joy for me in the scope of the scholarship and the intricacies of truth seeking that have involved me in researches and inquiry. I like study and history, art and philosophy and these

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deeply than Pascal. Descartes is the begging of science and the end of the medieval period and has the good and bad of both. Pascal did not see this is and is thus less deep than Descartes.

things helped fuel my interest.

The thesis of this book is compelling and has led me to many discoveries. I love knowing and the following out of knowledge. However, this task was never a happy task, however seemingly unending. Religion is indeed an object of scientific inquiry to me now, and not a subject to be considered as of value in itself. Religion is not at all a “natural phenomena” as Dennett contends. Indeed it is largely the opposite of that. It is anti-natural, by and large, and seeks to supplant natural observation with mythic ‘facts’ that are not real. One could say that parts of Taoism is natural in that it uses nature in a symbolic way in paintings and poetic metaphors loosely based on nature. Similar things can be said about indigenous religions, like Aboriginal Australian myth or Native American myth and belief. Magical thinking is the tendency to imply causal relationships between actions and events when there is none. Chinese medicine implies Rhino horns increase virility simply because they are associated with penises, but this is erroneous, and Rhinos are nearly extinct due to this stupidity. The Tao Te Ching(11) is full of magical thinking. says that “thirty spokes gathered at each hub, absence makes the cart work” is a clever idea but that is not why wheels work at all. Actually, wheels reduce friction and create leverage, and that is why they work so well. It has nothing to do with the absence between spokes, wheels have been made that have no spokes and they work just as well.. Contagion is not caused by evil eyes or witch doctors getting a lock of your hair. But if one analyses these myths and superstitions carefully, it is clear that they mostly employ magical thinking. In Taoism, for instance nature is roundly condemned as having to do with the “ten thousand things”. Thus nature equates with the Hindu concept of Maya or the Buddhist ideology of Samsara, which are fiercely anti-natural constructions. Religion is not a natural phenomenon at all, but an artificial social and mythic construction, largely based on magical thinking. Many people in the West accept Buddhist or Hindu thinking

without being aware of what nonsense they accept.

I literally prefer insects, frogs or birds to religion, but study religion as if it were another natural and distorted artifact, like say, alcoholism or racism. It is not such an artifact, exactly, of course. Dennett is mistaken to think that religion is a “natural phenomena” as say, trilobites were, or mushrooms are. It is an unnatural phenomena that pretends to be natural,--- its duplicity being part of its success. But it is not like a saprophyte, which can be harmless or beneficial to the host that is ‘parasitized’. Religion is a parasite to the lower social orders and a tool to oppress others for the upper orders. The parasite model is not quite accurate either, as parasites have a natural existence, whereas religions are parasitical without being natural at all. While religion is not a “by product” of some human mental faculties, but rather an abuse of them, the concept is highly problematic. The use of the “by-product” idea in Dennett, Gould and others is its questionable.

Far more interesting is the work of G.J. Romanes<sup>100</sup>, who was a follower of Darwin and who followed Darwin’s argument that there is not that much difference between animal and human intelligence. This idea was recently shown to be accurate in the proof that humans have some Neanderthal DNA, thus tying us back directly into evolution. This was the right way to go, and it was the way that Darwin himself wanted to go, but it was stopped by a speciesist version of science that was wooden and false., Newer attempts need to be more thoroughly done than has appeared up till now. Animal intelligence needs to be taken seriously and human conceit put down, and made to size with other beings on the earth. Darwin was very close to the natural world, not just in his voyage

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<sup>100</sup> His Animal Intelligence is very interesting, and ahead of its time, as is his The Mental Evolution of Animals. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/40459/40459-h/40459-h.htm>

More recently see the works of Marc Bekoff and David Quammen on animals and evolution.

on the Beagle to South America and the Galapagos, but in his own life, studying barnacles, pigeons and many other species. He had much to say on how intelligent worms, or wasps are. He saw intelligence in vultures, where others only see rotting meat. This closeness of science to the actual animals was lost as academics mangled evolution with number crunching genetics and bogus ideas of human consciousness as supreme. There are people now trying to follow the line of inquiry that sees animals and humans are closely related and this the fruitful theory to follow in the future. .

The fault for the ruination of the Darwinian by speciesism lies partly with the false scientific speciesism of people like Conwy Lloyd Morgan<sup>101</sup>, who insisted scientists limit all talk of “higher level” description of animal mentalities while exalting descriptions of human behavior that make humans the recipient of an evolutionary organ of godlike consciousness. His notion of “emergent evolution”, would have appalled Darwin and gotten cheers from mystics like Teilhard De Chardin. It was later stripped of its spiritual associations but still stands today in the demeaning and grimy view of animals and equally ridiculous and exalted views of human consciousness, in such writers as Chomsky, Gould, Tattersall, Dennett and many others. This prejudicial and human centered speciesism went far to subvert progress across the development of Darwinian theory. It will be some time before Darwin’s real insights are really grasped by many people. Religion is just one element in this bubble of self-

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<sup>101</sup> Lloyd Morgan wrote his “canon” Which states: *“In no case may we interpret an action as the outcome of the exercise of a higher mental faculty, if it can be interpreted as the exercise of one which stands lower in the psychological scale”* This became a kind of academic dogma. It autocratically insists that scientists that study animals only attribute the lowest level of mental ability required in their research on animals and nature. But for humans, no praise is too high. He says that consciousness attains in humankind its highest reflective or “supra-reflective” level. This is transcendental magnification and speciesism of a particularly odious kind, closely akin to the racism that was sparked by Spencer and others around the same time. Lloyd Morgan is in some ways the intellectual ancestor of those companies who alter animal genes for profit: Cows with extra stomachs or Salmon that are 4 times the size and become meat quicker and are raised in disgusting pens that pollute oceans..

aggrandizement in human intellectual conceit. Linnaeus already recognized the problem when he said

But I seek from you and from the whole world a generic difference between man and simian that [follows] from the principles of Natural History. I absolutely know of none. If only someone might tell me a single one! If I would have called man a simian or vice versa, I would have brought together all the theologians against me.<sup>102</sup>

The religious have been reeling and straining against reason and science ever since Darwin drew the conclusion Linnaeus was afraid to say publicly. Animals in evolution are of equal value to that of humans. The notion of human supremacy is false. Humans are by far the most brutish and unjust of all animals. Each species is a unique thing, carefully becoming what they are through slow selection of traits that allow them to survive. Religions are not the “product” of evolution, but rather the product of mental faculties which have been abused for social relations and purposes. The same false pride that gives humans the belief in their own supremacy makes them killers and decimators of the earth. Darwin denies Boyer’s claims and says flatly that “It is however impossible, as we have seen, to maintain that this belief [in gods] is innate or instinctive in man.” This means that religion is not a product of evolution. Religion is hardly a necessary by-product, as it is easily abjured and abandoned. Indeed, it may not even be a by-product, but something akin to lying to children. It is healthy to overcome it completely. This is not at all like overcoming a sugar addiction, as

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<sup>102</sup> Carl Linnaeus (25 February 1747). [\*"Letter to Johann Georg Gmelin"\*](#). *The Linnaean Correspondence*. Uppsala, Sweden, also see



Dennett implies, but more like giving up a childish delusions, except in this case, the delusion is murderous. It is like giving up meat. It is not hard to do, it is just something one does not need. It was an illusion that we need it.

Darwin was on to something when he implies that wonder, curiosity and the need of beauty, as well as reasoning are “adaptations”. Why would they not be?. He never says religion is an adaptation, on the contrary he denies it, rightly. It is not an adaptation. He denies it has any value as an “instinct”. I can see that religion is a ‘by product’, in the sense of being a waste product, since we really don’t need it, but when I try to imagine giving up reasoning, or wonder or a sense of beauty, that is not possible. These cannot be eliminated without terrible results. Whereas, it is a good thing to give up religion and quite easy to do. Religion is closer to being a bad habit like lying than it is a ‘by-product’ of evolution. Giving up religion means giving up the addiction to human supremacy that language, religion and culture foster.

Religion is not like science or evolution at all as it does not contain real knowledge. It is more like politics and is similarly flighty and changeable depending on its purposes and what group it serves. It is led by interests and serves powers, not truth. Like politics it is a projection of motives and wishes, dreams and ambitions, greed and hopes. Gods are not real things but rather are receptacles of drives for power and magnified motives. So also like politics, religion gravitates into corruption, becoming the reflection of upper class interests. Saying that religion is created by evolution is going too far. Natural selection created cognitive faculties and tendencies, but religion and politics are mutable and changeable according to culture, social conditioning and structures. Religions are accidents or ‘by products’ in the sense of waste or remnants, and not directly caused by evolution. Societies can and have done well without religion and with minimal political structures.

I do not think anyone will discover that religion is hardwired in the

body or brain, as language seems to partially be. Boyer contends that “religion evolved as the plausible result of selective pressures on cognitive organization. In other words, these capacities are the outcome of evolution by natural selection”. But he is wrong that religion itself is the result of natural selection even though some of the capacities used by the religious were created by natural selection. Politics clearly goes back to coalition building in primate ‘tribes’ but this does not mean religion is a evolved phenomenon, it is an extrapolation of coalition building made complex by misguided abuses of evolved human faculties. While a sense for “social exchange,.... An intuitive fear of invisible contamination, and a capacity for coalitional thinking,”, in Boyer’s language, are all inborn tendencies they are exploited by religious institutions or individuals for very specific goals. There is nothing in the practice of ordinary religion that is directly connected with evolution. The Eucharist is not a product of evolution, it is a make believe ritual which uses bizarre analogies to force adherence to a rite.

I doubt that one can maintain that religion ‘evolved’ in the sense that bones or earlobes did. Religion is not so much a production of evolution as it is a product of social settings and constraints, which are a product of evolution. The distinction between a faculty and an abuse of a faculty should not be blurred too much. There are aspects of cognition such as inference or the ascribing of agency that are exploited by religions. Boyer claims that religion is a result of brain anatomy, just as political systems exploit innate human tendencies to follow the leader or the parents. But this is to misunderstand the brain. It is a misuse of the brain and not a result of its evolution. Religion is a waste-product of social relationships and specifically of power relation<sup>103</sup>s and mental manipulations. But it is an ephemeral ‘by product’ or a “waste product’ that is easily changed or dispensed with unless severe punishments are

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<sup>103</sup> The sophisticated adaptation of human vocal cords and a large complex brain to serve speaking skills are two such inherited characteristics.

erected to keep it the same, as was the function of the inquisition, Hindu castes or the Islamic Sharia in the madrasahs, enforced by the ulama or clerics. Religion persists by continuing the bad habit, the “traditions” the narrow minded exclusion of those who do not belong to it. If its constraints, habits and dogmas are not carefully maintained, it dies. This is not evolution or even the brain, but a sort of social addiction..

This is why a belief system like Corporate Personhood or Marxism has nearly all the markings of a religion, while not being one nominally. <sup>104</sup>Religion is really the flip side of politics and to the degree politics will be found to be evolutionary determined, so will religion. This is a major thesis of this book, and many of the chapters are structured as proof of this thesis. The involvement of Darwinian evolution in the development of religion will turn out to be indirect, more indirect than is the case with language, and it will be found to be primarily a social development. I would love to be proved wrong in this prediction, but I doubt I will be.

Religion is thus probably not a natural fact but a fiction, <sup>105</sup> not a

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<sup>104</sup> You can see this formation of a religious nexus around cult figures. Stalin had a nearly religious following, as did Castro or Elijah Muhammad. Chomsky did too. Even if I sometimes agreed with things he said, it was clear he had created something of a mild cult around him. Politics and religion are part of the same “meme” for lack of a better word. Perhaps we could say they are connected at the hip or that they of a genetic disposition towards grouping and following of autocratic elders. This seems to happen in chimp societies to some degree too.

<sup>105</sup> Boyer even admits this in his blog, if not in his books. He writes

“Our situation is difficult in that there is a great amount of social demand for naturalistic explanations of “religion”, all the more so in a world made more dangerous by religious fanatics. Obviously, meeting that demand does not imply that we believe in “religion”. But simply deflating the misleading concept seems dangerously close to “having nothing to say about religion”. People who are worried about the dangers of modern zealotry may tend to find the statement that “there is no such thing as religion” rather academic. So we have to engage in a particularly delicate rhetorical exercise, showing that cognitive science and evolution have a lot to say about what people usually call “religion”, and gently leading people to the realization that “religion”, like aether and phlogiston, belongs in the ash-heap of scientific history”  
<http://www.cognitionandculture.net/home/blog/35-pascals-blog/764-why-would-otherwise-intelligent-scholars-believe-in-qreligionq>

fact of evolution so much as a misuse of faculties evolution created in human minds and bodies. "Religion", like aether and phlogiston, belongs in the ash-heap of scientific history" The practitioners of religions enter voluntarily or by coercion into delusional states, beliefs, rituals and thoughts. It depends on gullibility and involves the same duping of the naïve that parents often practice, harmfully in many cases, on their children when they lie about that tooth fairy or Superman, Princesses and Santa. Parents use Santa to try to force kids to behave. While this sort of blackmailing of children into correct behavior is ubiquitous, it hardly means that Santa or the tooth fairy is a real thing. Religion pretends to be actual like all fiction, and so has some value, rather as a shadow expresses the figure that casts it. This is to say that religion has mostly a negative value, as crime does, or the humor of Charlie Chaplin. Charlie makes a mocking humor about a character like Hitler, but at the same time he is deadly serious. Religion is deadly serious, not because it is true, as is Chaplin's critique, but because so many people believe its lies, and so it has value as a sort of Pied Piper of Hamelin, leading children by the ears to their own harm. Though it has to be stated that religion also does good on occasion, as does politics.<sup>106</sup> But I prefer the 'pliant cane' of Charlie Chaplin to religion's falsehoods, but sometimes one learns by default or in spite of the lesson.<sup>107</sup> One can learn from

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My point is that someone who sees this should get out of the religion/academic business and stop this cynical discussion of something that is really not about evolution, as if it was. But then academics make up stuff to keep themselves in their jobs. He makes up stuff to keep himself working. Religion was a system of social control and was a way to keep people deluded..+

<sup>106</sup> Religion does resemble literary fiction superficially, but is also quite different in other ways. The novel is a product of enlightenment, largely, and is provoked by the difficulty of writing down true things about actual people, given their need for privacy, and anger when it is violated. Religion is not playing this game, but has other designs and purposes.

<sup>107</sup>From Hart Crane's Chaplinesque, part of which reads:

And yet these fine collapses are not lies  
More than the pirouettes of any pliant cane;  
Our obsequies are, in a way, no enterprise.  
We can evade you, and all else but the heart:  
What blame to us if the heart live on.

mistakes. Religion is a mistake humanity made and is still making. Forget about Christ and John the Baptist, what matters is the “kitten in the wilderness”. There are lessons to learn from the fiasco of religion. The poet A. R. Ammons wrote in his interesting poem Garbage that

“Where but in the grief of failure, loss, error do we  
discern the savage afflictions that turn us around:  
where but in the arrangements love crawls us  
through, not a thing left in our self-display  
unhumiliated, do we find the sweet seed of new routes.”

Religion is a failure, and it was in the failure of God and gods I found lessons about the depths of humanity and nature and animals. Why did we need gods, and why was it necessary to give up the addiction and delusion? One could charitably say that religion was an effort to create cosmologies, but that is not really true for the ordinary run of humanity, where it served quite other purposes. Sometimes religion involved ancestor worship whereby old men obtained the worship they wanted. Or it offered consolation to the grieved, mostly by lying to them. Or it performed marriages and funerals to helping sustain the poor who needed to believe lies to go on in spite their misery. Religion is a social succubus, and attaches itself to desperation and fear, loneliness and the terror of death.<sup>108</sup> Preachers of intolerance and repression clearly have

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The game enforces smirks; but we have seen  
The moon in lonely alleys make  
A grail of laughter of an empty ash can,  
And through all sound of gaiety and quest  
Have heard a kitten in the wilderness.

<sup>108</sup> Pascal Boyer records an interesting experiment where people were made to read daunting and forbidding literature that was about death and mortality. Others read innocuous material and all took a written test afterwards. Those who had just read the scary stuff were far more likely to favor the death penalty and to have repressive and punitive views towards outsiders. This suggests humans are hardwired to respond to fear with repression and social control. .Boyer does

something in their favor as they are able to force groups to act as cowardly units who will willingly kill for the leadership. Did evolution create war mongering and the need of old men to kill young men in battle? One could say that murdering young men in war is an evolutionary “by product” of old men’s hatred of their own sons. But that is a stretch and hardly is a theory that could be demonstrated. No, religion is the work of unjust elites and social classes. To claim religion is a “natural phenomena” is to ignore this important fact. War and religion share being the junk or waste of history, and a “by product” only in the sense that they are well gotten rid of and unnecessary, like garbage.

Boyer’s theory, among others, is that evolution appears to favor those who are overly sensitive to agents and religion is largely a result of this irrational favoring of superstitious excesses. But is this really so? It seems that repressive regimes do not last long, because people hate them and slaves revolt, Kings like Louis the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, were war mongers and repressive and greedy and worked peasants to death with high taxes. They excited the justice and revenge motives of the poor. The monarchy was mostly killed off in the revolt in 1789, victims of their own excess. There was a brief “restoration”, but it did not last long. So the value of religious repression and absolutist politics is questionable, like the value of torture, which rarely has good results. Even Marxism, both of the Stalinist and Maoist<sup>109</sup> variety, which was nominally anti-religious, but

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not draw this conclusion but history suggests that this is well known among elites who manage and intimidate others and “might makes right” is common in repressive states, mafias, or churches that employ methods like the inquisition or caste exclusions. Savonarola knows this just as well as far right Hasidic Jews for Jesus obsessed preachers or fundamentalist Mullahs. Blake said “Damn braces, bless relaxes”, for this very reason. People thrive when free and shrivel and cower when intimidated. People become monstrous when they are afraid in groups. A recent documentary shows a Kabul crowd killing a woman who is wrongly accused of burning a Koran. They kill a real life because they make an idol of a book. The death penalty for anything should be eliminated, The death penalty is a “cruel and unusual” punishment. (See Boyer, Religion Explained, Perseus Books, 2001 pg 205)

<sup>109</sup> Maoism became the perfect companion of late exploitive capitalism, when the US more or less took over China as a manufacturing proxy, both to break unions in the US and enable

behaved in every way like a fanatical creed, was undone by its own cult like behaviors, its cruelty and murder of innocents.<sup>110</sup> Religion is created by displaced desperations, panic, or inescapable miseries. Priests live on such terrors and fears, using them to create their churches.<sup>111</sup> Fearing a lion will eat you or the man in the next village who means you harm makes people afraid and so they make up fictions and religions to try to make themselves safe, ward off the 'evil eye' or purify their house against imaginary witch doctors. They imagine god will embrace their dying child. The priest or Shaman will do the work of getting rid of the imaginary witch or do an imaginary healing by pretending to suck out illness. But what is the cost of these shames and lies, repressions and superstitions? It tears the social fabric apart and leaves resentment and hate all around.

Religion is partly an irrational effort to manage fears. Fears are all real things that religion attaches itself to and exploits and in doing so it exploits real people, my grandmother, your mother, your sister, your uncle, myself, you. I remember after my father died, my mother was often tempted by religion and she would quote the Bible and say "Oh Lord, help my unbelief" because she really didn't believe all that nonsense, but she so needed help. I was her help, and she herself was her help. There was no god who helped her. She went to a psychologist a few times. He helped a little. But religion did not help at all. Most of what helped her was my sympathy and concern.

This is a book that is partly about finding new routes out of the "Garbage" or "Waste" of religion into the hope that we learn to help

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Corporate CEO to pollute as much as they wanted and harness the world biggest forced labor pool. Most Americans are not told how they have been abused by this horrible arrangement and the Chinese do not realize their revolution in 1948 turned out to be an excuse to enslave the population to American and European CEOs.

<sup>110</sup> Mao's little Red Book is a good example of bible like texts and how they can operate to create a system of mental controls, behavior regulations and dogmas. Khomeini's Green Book was similar. In the Schuon cult it was the "texts" that tried to control behavior.

<sup>111</sup> Chomsky's system of beliefs can be questioned too as it has various cult like characteristics.

ourselves. I use the word garbage here to refer to Ammon's idea something despised or rarely looked at might finally turn out to be something we have to admit is true and has to be faced. Religion is our garbage and we have to face it. At a certain point you have to face the garbage, failure or mistakes that you made. The garbage in question is the delusional nature of irrationalism and religion, corporate and spiritual elitism and the far-right anti-science and anti-education philosophies of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. All this has to be faced.

There is a lot that is beautiful in religion too, the ardent, useless prayers, the lovely rituals, the candles and incense, the wonders of gothic architecture, endless Tibetan chants in the mountains, and joys of contemplation, inner states in Sufi dances, Native American vision quests, moments of ecstasy and visions of the divine. There is much poetry in it, from Native American clothes and headdresses to Zen stones and gardens, silk paintings and monastic chants.

Even some of the delusions are beautiful, such as the man who believes that his ardent prayers saved his sick wife, child and mother, who were close to death. He did not, in fact, but he believes that he saved them and that has a beauty in it, even if it is false. But beautiful illusions are still illusions and cannot be believed on their own terms. But the beauty religion would still be in us without all the delusions and people would find ways to express the beauty within them without the mechanics of social control that religion engineers. The man's ardent hope that his wife mother and children survive is still beautiful, without his imagining Jesus or Mary or Krishna saving them Religion is a looking glass on humanity and we would not be less ourselves without it. It depends on us like a parasite and lives on our weaknesses and the beauty within us, as well.

In the end the thing we thought was the highest 'reality' is really the thing we have to get over and put behind us to survive. Religion is



human garbage that contains real jewels, not in the religion itself, but in an analysis for why we needed religion to begin with. We can get rid of religion and look at our motives and needs for having it. This detritus of religion has been around for many centuries, growing deeper on the back of civilization each year. It is time we looked at it more objectively. The inquiry about the failure of religion might just lead to us to learn to value life itself, and instead of longing for life in the “beyond” we will learn to value our contributions to helping those in this world, which is all that matters. The ardent and beautiful prayers offered up to non-existent deities could be turned to ardent care for an ailing planet and all the fragile lives that live upon it. All the garbage in the world is our garbage and it is we who must clean it up. This book is partly the result of these inquiries, searches and questions. It is an attempt to burrow through the garbage and jewels and come out the other side into the only real world there is, this earth and all that lives upon it.

The fraud of religion would not be effective if there were not a bit of it that is true. I don't mean there is truth in the god idea, far from it. I mean religion had its seeming evolutionary purpose. We want to belong to a universe that speaks to us as we speak to each other. We want to be part of things and not merely animals on a lonely planet, which is what we are becoming since we are killing most other animals off. Religions extend make believe into adulthood. The story tellers and priests seemed to give us hope and helped us pass along our genes: they kept us in order and under control of a hierarchy. This may have been a mistake in many ways, but it is a fact. But religion had its moment of usefulness and now it does far more harm than good.

The shadow of religion is about human longing for something that does not end in death. It is understandable humans wish of this, but the wishing for it does not make it true. The tragic nature of religion lies in its worship of the very things everyone wishes were true but are not. Everyone wants love and as most are lonely they make up a “God” who

will embrace them. Everyone wants to be comforted and their fears allayed, and so they make up a god of mercy, Mary or Avolokiteshvara or the ‘holy spirit’, that will soothe them. The longing for eternal life is there, even though death cannot be overcome, so they make up a god who gives them life everlasting in an imaginary heaven. Heaven is oddly conceived as being up in the sky is a great danger to humans. Astronauts cannot last more than six month up there since lack of gravity begins to destroy the body.

The sadness of mortality drives us. No one wants to be sick and die, yet everyone will be. This ought to be the argument for socialized medical care, not for religion. Religion uses the fear of sickness and death to turn us against the “world” and life. The religious end in rejecting the very thing they wish could have had. They wanted life forever but end in rejecting the life they could have had in service of a god who does not exist. Religion is dysfunctional in this and so many other ways. Religion is beautiful lies.

There is no life after death. Immortality is a supremacist fiction and has resulted in the mass slaughter of billions of animals and biomes, world wide, including global warming. The beautiful promises that religion offers to make life better and easier and give us immortality simply are fictions and fairy tales.<sup>112</sup> As my father died when I was 17 I

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<sup>112</sup> The education of the young demands a thorough criticism of the images and myths taught to children. It is not possible to teach the young about Santa Claus, Cinderella or Jesus without first telling them these make believe stories are not true. Fairy Tales have a disturbing history. It appears that the Brother’s Grimm distorted older Fairy Tales to give them a more aristocratic and elitist flavor. I have a young daughter and out of concern for what was going into her head I did research on Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and other fairly tales. These stories are very classist, sexist and elitist are really not appropriate for children. The Disney version of Sleeping Beauty shows her falling in love with a “commoner” as the prince falls in love with a peasant girl. By coincidence they are instead both actually royalty – thus betraying a real prejudice against the poor and middle classes. This elitist prejudice is inculcated in young girls by the ‘princess’ ideology, where girls learn to see themselves as commodities in a system of pseudo-aristocratic capital exchange. Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, Cinderella, and Rapunzel cannot be saved except by an aristocratic elitist, namely, the “prince”., implying women have no intrinsic value apart from men and the marriage market. Other Disney movies like the Lion King show nature as a system of medieval, nearly Hindu castes, which ultimately serve a form

had real reasons to wish to find an antidote to death. It would have helped my mother to find that religion is true. But no god helped her, only I did. My search into alternatives to realism and science simply failed. None of them work or are based on reality. I found that Tibetan religion, Islam, Native American religion, Christianity, Buddhism, all are make believe, fairy tales. I knew this intuitively in my teens but needed to prove it to myself. I realized that religion is an essentialist lie and the utter humiliation of this fact, when I had tried so hard to love it so deeply, has taken me many years to recover from. I realized to my great humiliation just how wrong I was, and I was blamed for this realization too, by people who were ignorant of what I actually went through. What I went through was a good thing, but to those still stuck in delusions, I was seen as a heretic, psychotic, evil or crazy. Religious fanatics, capitalists or Marxists, like to use these kinds of labels to harm those who question their favorite creed.

I began to acquire an acceptance that this earth and our being here is truly all that we have. What I went through caused me to “turn around” as Ammon’s says, in a profound way, towards nature and science. I realized matter is the truth of our actual existence, not the dream life beyond that religion promises and never delivers--- the actual life we live matters more to me than the humiliations of trying to tell the truth about religion to others who would not believe me. I realize not many will read this book. It does not matter, -that is OK. I know what it means to tell the truth and be ignored or to be despised and hated for it.

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of Social Darwinism,-- which is not Darwinism at all, but a sort of fascist distortion of Darwin’s theory in a way that justifies capitalist cruelty and injustices.

One footnote to this footnote: This explains why Schuon liked Disney so much. He loved Epcot and the pretend exhibit of other cultures. His own “esoterism” is really just a sexualized version of Disney-like esoterism, Schuon was a tourist of elitist myths and delusions. Indeed his “Transcendent unity” is really just the conceit of a metaphysical tourist, with a camera and Hawaiian shirt, beholding the make-believe of the major religions... The title of the book Schuon really wrote should have been” My Metaphysical Epcot—Essays in the Transcendental Delusions of the Religions”.

The main thing is the exploration and the finding of what is the case. I also know as well the gratification of telling the truth even when it is embarrassing or hard. I helped a few silent and frightened people who listened or heeded the warnings about the Schuon cult. The purpose of this book is to help a few people escape from systems of unjust and false knowledge, mind control, far right religious indoctrination and mythical or religious fictions of many kinds. Questioning system of power and authority is what this book teaches. I want to encourage a way of thinking, a way of asking questions.

So this book is the result of my “turn around”, about how I turned against those who hate science. I found myself against romanticism, mythology, religious poetry<sup>113</sup> and found that I had come to really dislike Plato, religion and systems of power. I formerly had thought these might have truth in them. I found myself turning against what is usually considered poetry and agree with Nietzsche that poets “all muddy their water that it may seem deep” <sup>114</sup> I literally ‘rolled over’ William James, and Huston Smith and other teachers of religion and culture, as well as poetic visions of “reality”.

I came to see human language has in it a capacity for abstraction. This is wonderful in some ways—at least as far a creative fiction is

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<sup>113</sup> Most poetry is “spiritual” or tends in that direction and that is its prime shortcoming, in my opinion. “I too dislike it” Marianne Moore said of poetry, and I agree with this author of the “Octopus”, a marvelous poem that looks toward a poetry of science. I’ve been puzzling why poetry is a handmaid to religion and power for some years. I think it partly due to the inherently abstract character of language. Language is prone to a certain interior dialogue and solipsism and this easily generates glittering generalizations, so those who play with language tend toward spirituality which is mostly false analogies, magical thinking, superstitious slippages of thoughts and confused fictions. Dante’s endorsement of Catholic guilt tripping and sadism in his Inferno or Whitman’s endorsement of the murderous concept of Manifest Destiny in Leaves of Grass are examples of poets whose thought is confused and sloppy with false analogies, endorsement of destructive myths and destructive irrationality. Dante’s Inferno embodies the righteous malice of the Inquisition and Leaves of Grass contains hints and suggestions of the myths that murdered so many Native Americans. The same is true of Mayakovsky and his Marxist Leninism, which tragically helped him toward suicide. See also Osip Mandelstam who was persecuted and killed by Stalin. Mandelstam’s bizarre relationship to Stalin is itself a good example of the close relation of religion and politics.

<sup>114</sup> Zarathustra 39, on Poets.

concerned, but it can also lead many astray into worship of mere symbols, misplaced concreteness, mythic and corporate personhood and unjust institutions of various kinds. The evolutionary theory of religion has not yet accounted for these facts. Jesus and Buddha are mythic abstractions of this same kind, as is the idea of Monsanto or some other corporation having rights like an immortal “person” in American law. Corporations and the CEOs that run them are the ‘gods’ of our world, and just as absurd as the gods of old. Gods are magnified abstractions as is the idea of corporate personhood. Gods, like the idea of corporate personhood, exists to inflate and magnify people who work in these institutions or who benefit from the lies involved in the magnifications. The corruptions of the legal world are the one place science does not touch often, and so it is unjust laws and courts that have allowed corporations to become “outlaws”, renegade thieves who take from the poor to give to the rich. The idea of corporate persons arose out of an abuse of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment was created to protect the persons of ex-slaves.

Symbols are not reality: religions act as if symbols are real. Reification is “the ability of the brain to convert a concept into a concrete thing,..... or to bestow upon something the quality of being real or true, when it might be a mere figment of an imagination. Reification refers to the power of the mind to grant meaning and substance to its own perceptions.” These perceptions are often radically false, or wrong. Religions rely on these false beliefs, on the gullibility of the human mind to accept false images, like, say the “crucifixion” or the language of the Bible, as the literal truth. Such images and language use are merely dramatic flourishes exploited by institutions to promote themselves. As A.R. Ammons says “beliefs [are] the shadows of images trying to construe what needs no belief”. In other words, beliefs are extrapolations, surmises, fictions that would dissolve if the truth were known. When the truth is not known, the mind makes images and

shadows of images, which are not real, just imaginary phantasms, fictions, make-believe--- and that is what religion is.

Religion is a failure of the mind to know. It is a making of imaginary, sublimated fetishes in the absence of truth. Religion is real to the extent that the needs expressed in it for certainty and safety, freedom from fear and desire for protections and help are all real. But the way these needs are expressed or met is false and a lie of sorts. The vulnerability that is at the basis of religion is real, the exploiting of the vulnerable by priests and churches is atrocious. So whenever religion is discussed what is really being talked about is codified fictions, imaginary constructions, make believe answers to real questions, superstitions based on surmises which are not real, but pretend to be real. The god idea is just such a magnifying abstraction and has no reality behind it—a mere shadow or projection of human interests, desires and wishes, class systems, hierarchies, exclusionary moralisms, racist preferences, and caste injustices. Religion is really political posturing, enshrining ritualized power structures.

This means that traditional metaphysics is fiction: a “transcendent unity of delusions’ . There is no god or gods, there are only fictional characters and make believe constructions. The god idea is finished and cannot be taken seriously on its own terms. The idea of Being, with a capital “B”, is finished too. (Heidegger, Sartre, Rilke etc. )All that matters is actual beings, not Being. The Logical Positivists already grasped the death metaphysics. But they did not go deep enough. Their condemnation of metaphysics, while necessary, is somewhat shallow. I don’t think they understood just how much metaphysics played a role in the formation of systems of power in history. This is true not just of Plato but continues to be so in India, China and all the way up to Hegel, Marx and Heidegger as well as the corporate ‘free market’.. Showing this is part

of the purpose of this book. <sup>115</sup>

I agree with Darwin, against the less brave thesis of Pascal Boyer and others. Darwin wrote that

“The belief in God has often been advanced as not only the greatest, but the most complete of all the distinctions between man and the lower animals. It is however impossible, as we have seen, to maintain that this belief is innate or instinctive in man.” <sup>116</sup>

I take this as Darwin’s denial that religion is evolutionary, an adaptation or genetic in its basis. He also implies, no he states, that there is no real distinction between humans and animals. Religion is an invention that creates a radical separation between the human and the animal. He implies a theory of cultural evolution more similar to Dawkins than Dennett. He implies religion is a pathological cultural variant, and not a neutral or natural phenomena. According to Darwin is not evolutionary. Darwin’s take on religion is implicitly a denial of some aspects of Boyer’s theory too.

So, to conclude, it is possible to show that evolved human mental proclivities make humans prone to distort reality and deceive themselves or others in the interest of social power. It is also possible to show that humans see agents where there are not any, due mostly to language

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<sup>115</sup> I was once accused of being a logical positivist, which I do not take as an insult. But I do not think of myself as one. They went far, and I admire Russell, Popper and others, but they did not go far enough to show how such systems actually operate and still operate now. Wittgenstein is not really a positivist, but is too much of a mystery monger and so helps metaphysics. Reality has its mysteries certainly, but they are not occult or usefully explored by a cult of Wittgensteinian “silence”. Zen’s “no mind”, Plotinus’s Nous, or the God idea serve specific purposes in social contexts and explaining this requires understanding how money and power are sequestered in certain classes. I think I make a start of showing how this injustice works in this book, but much more needs to be done.

<sup>116</sup> Darwin 1871, pgs. 394-395, Vol. 2.

distortions. Yet it is a mistake to conclude that religion is a genetic or evolutionary adaptation. Darwin denies Boyer and Dennett's theory of religion as a by-product and says "it is however impossible, as we have seen, to maintain that this belief is innate or instinctive in man."

Religion is a fictive array of superstitions and delusions created to supply social convenience to some at the expense of others, and it is often maladaptive and harmful to many to the advantage of the few.

Once one sees that religion is a "useful fiction" or a myth, that helps a given class sustain power and oppress others, it ceases to have any real meaning as a factor in evolution, and becomes instead merely a social construction. Boyer and Dennett are thus mistaken. Religion is not a fact of evolution, but a cultural fiction created by those who maintain and profit from it. Religion is as false as a genetically engineered fish or cow, merely the product of the greed of those who profit from useful fictions, here imposed cruelly on the facts of nature. <sup>117</sup>

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## **Richard Dawkins' Theory of Religion**

My theory of religion shares a few features with the theory of Richard Dawkins religion in his book the God Delusion. . But there are differences too. Dawkin's maintains that religion is a "by product" a result of "accidental firing" and genetic drift of a kind. I doubt this is accurate. But human minds are like 'gullible children' Dawkins says.

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<sup>117</sup> "In a 2015 World Wildlife Fund report, 1,200 marine vertebrate species, including fish like mackerels and tunas, declined by nearly half between 1970 and 2012". Genetically engineering fish while at the same time destroying natural populations is fundamentally immoral. It is like encouraging cancer at the same time as one tries to find a cure for it.



They are “vulnerable to infection by mental viruses”.<sup>118</sup> To be more precise Dawkins says that religious behavior is an

“Unfortunate by product of and underlying psychological propensity which in other circumstances is, or once was, useful. On this view the propensity that was naturally selected in our ancestors was not religion per se; it had some other benefit..... if religion is a byproduct of something else, what is that something else?

I don't entirely agree with him, however. The idea of a “mental virus”, like the Meme theory, is only an analogy and not really a theory that has any real physical weight. The idea of an evolutionary by-product seems questionable too, for reasons outlined in the previous chapter. It is hard to see the adaptive value of delusions, but easy to see the adaptive value of reason or imagination. Like the idea of “memes” the idea of evolutionary by products is really just a way of speaking—a metaphor---and not science. It is hard to see who benefits by the existence of religion as a by products, which is really just waste products. The by-product theory is a reach and a strange one, and hard to see how it could be a real theory of religion.

But it is different when Dawkins says that religion is a by-product of the tendency of children to believe their parents, the notion of “trust your elders”. This makes empirical sense. It is hard to imagine any positive value to something that is a by-product of lying. So once I get rid of the idea of “by product”, I can accept what Dawkins says. Certainly gullibility in children is a genetic propensity, as anyone who has children knows. Here he is on to something. This trusting obedience is valuable for survival. But the “flip side of trusting obedience is slavish gullibility”,

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<sup>118</sup> Dawkins, Richard God Delusion, pg. 188

Dawkins says. Parents lie to their kids about Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, Jesus, Zeus, Muhammad, Krishna, Quetzalcoatl or some other fairy tale or myth and these myths “come from the same trusted source as the belief that it is good to go to college or that one should stay away from alligators and lions”. Factual information or real benefit--- like going to college or avoiding alligators--- are treated as important as superstitious nonsense. So then, in Dawkins’ model of how religions operate in evolution, he predicts that

“different arbitrary beliefs, none of which have any factual merit, will be handed down, to be believed with the same conviction as useful process of traditional wisdom, such as the belief that manure is good for crops. We should expect that superstitions and other non-factual beliefs will locally evolve, change over generation, either by random drift or by some sort of analogue of Darwinian selection, eventually showing a pattern of significant divergence from the common ancestry. Languages drift apart from a common progenitor given sufficient time in geographical separation ... the same seems to be true of baseless and arbitrary beliefs and injunctions, handed down the generations—beliefs that were perhaps given a fair wind by the useful programmability of children”<sup>119</sup>

This is exactly right, I think. Indeed, I thought Dawkins book is the best of the various books that have come out in the last 10 years questioning religion. It is not the deepest, but it is well written and presented. All these books have an unstated political motive, of course, since the far right in American has been resurgent for 30 years, trying to roll back the advance for the middle class made since FDR. Great harm

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<sup>119</sup> Dawkins, Richard. The God Delusion. NY, Houghton Mifflin. 2006. page 174- 76

has been done to the middle class both by corporate elite and far right religiophiles such as George Bush Jr. Fundamentalist A surge of Christian cultism followed the late 1960's rebellions against the Vietnam war, alternative ideas, the rise of the New Age and the hippie movements. Christianity has adapted Christ to far right causes, showing once again the malleability of religion to politics, indeed, the seamless close relationship of religion and politics. The Christ of the new Testament, being a fiction, can be whatever anyone wants him to be. For the poor he condemns the rich and says the cannot get into the kingdom of heaven, but then for the rich he says the poor you always have with you" and justifies slavery and says "slaves obey your masters". He justifies Church wealth and says "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are Gods". Jesus is a fiction made up by ghost writers probably in the second century. I will speak more of this in a later chapter. But for now I just wish to make the point that Christian religion is merely a template easily adapted to far right or left wing politics. In America it easily becomes a parasite free enterprise capitalism. One would think Darwkins would be aware that corporations such as Microsoft are quasi-religious structures themselves, but he appears to be unaware of this. This is unfortunate and brings his thought somewhat into question. He serves somewhat the religion of greed in America, as for instance in his alliance with David Cowan, a "venture capitalist" who was brought up as a far right Christian but became a corporate capitalist and transferred the zeal he had for religion into the quasi-religion of capital. He started the Center for Inquiry, which is a questionable organization that attacks far right without acknowledging the fact that the ideology of corporate persons is itself a violation of Church and State alliances. The takeover of democracy in America is largely a corporate takeover of government by the ideology of big business. Far right Christainity has allied itself with this ideology and done a great deal of harm on its own, stealing from the poor to give to the rich. Chrsitiiaity in

America is largely a fr right parasite on corporate culture.

Religions are abstract stories that take advantage of the human brain and its linguistic basis in brain circuitry, which favor simple story lines and abstract ideology. The strength of these delusions becomes of such power that all presidents are required to say “god bless America” on every occasion. Religions are ideological systems that are social in nature and exploit brain circuitry to keep those in power where they are. This is not to say that religion is directly a product of evolution, Darwin did not think so and I don’t either. Dennett and Boyer try to say it is but I think they are mistaken. Darwin denied that religion “is innate or instinctive in man.” The greed impulse that is part of American Big business is not a fundamental drive either. It is a cultural construction akin to religion, hence their alliance. Dawkins serves this too much, in my opinion, since he has aliend himself with Microsoft and corporate culture through the Center for Inquiry.

Religions typically try to impose themselves most vociferously on children,---as the Jesuits, known in history for their cruel missions and education practices, would say, “give me a child for seven years and I’ll give you the man” with Catholic dogma irrationally imprinted on them. The Jesuits were among the worst of the abusers of Native Americans in Texas to California and down to South America, keeping them essentiality as slaves. Many natives died of syphilis and other diseases given to them by the priests, or were chained and beaten when they tried to escape .Children were taught a slavish respect for Jesuit and Catholic authority. Natives were bribed and held in forced labor, and if they tried to escape, they were rounded up by soldiers then whipped by the missionaries..

In many missions there were massacres and uprisings against the “Padres” and their imposed myths. The Franciscan missions were basically slave plantations, which required the Indian people to work for the Spanish under cramped and suffocating conditions where they were

whipped and forced to sleep in mass so they got diseases. The Spanish considered Indians like children to be beaten and forced to behave by violence and force.<sup>120</sup> Kept in prison like conditions they were forced to convert to Christianity. Infant mortality was high. The 'gentle' figure of St, Francis was used as a propaganda tool to hide the other side of Francis which was repressive and cruel. More recent examples of missionary activities occur in China, the Amazon and Africa, where Christians proselytize the locals in advance of a very exploitive capitalist takeover of these places, thus assisting in the ruin of the local markets and cultures.

A similar point is made in Nicholas Wade's Before the Dawn, Recovering the Lost History of our Ancestors. While Wade seems to have taken a nose dive into defence of religion as "evolutionary"—when it clearly is not--- and racism in recent years, this early book of his is pretty good. Wade follows various anthropologists, and also sees religion as largely an issue of trust. He discusses the role of the hormone oxytocin in trust, which makes mothers and babies feel pleasure when they nurse—and this correlates closely with Dawkin's theory of religions taking advantage of children's gullibility. This is probably right, as it suggests the parental and political nature of authoritarian religion. Religion is a sort of breast milk for confused, disturbed, poor and homesick adults. Cult leaders are referred to as "trust bandits" which is very accurate. Religions in general are trust bandits and take from their believers much of their individuality and autonomy, forcing them into prefabricated modes of thought and behavior. Once caught in this systems of behavior and belief it is very hard to get out. Indeed, there is a vast literature, largely untapped and ignored by the aforementioned critics of religion, of people who have left religions and cults and recorded

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<sup>120</sup> The Catholic Church recently canonized or made a "saint" of Father Serra, a horrendous man who enslaved and killed many Naïve Californians. This is not an atypical example of the absurdity of sainthood and its use as false advertising.

their psychological reactions.<sup>121</sup> .

In any case, it is certainly true that religions impose themselves on gullible minds as if all minds were children's minds. Many adults can never give up their childhood make believe, imposed on them by their parents. Christopher Hitchens puts this more forcefully and less charitably than Dawkins. Hitchens writes:

“Religion comes from the period of human prehistory where nobody---not even the mighty Democritus who concluded that all matter was made from atoms---had the smallest idea what was going on. It comes from the bawling and fearful infancy of our species, and is a babyish attempt to meet our inescapable demand for knowledge (as well as for comfort, reassurance and other infantile needs).” <sup>122</sup>

Religion is the breast milk of make believe for adults. Or in Dawkins phrase, religions impose themselves like “mental viruses” on adults, implanting all sorts of unproven and unwarranted nonsense in their heads at an early age. Native Americans to this day preserve irrational beliefs about bad medicine men who can cast spells on people, make objects fly about, find keys, or do other magic tricks . Notions of malicious magic appear to be worldwide. Darwin discusses this at length in his great Descent of Man (Chapter 3). He compares various imaginary

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<sup>121</sup> Some of this vast literature was collected by Robert Jay Lifton, ( see for instance, his Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism) and also Steven Hassan books, former scientologists have put together various texts, ex-Hare Krishnas, followers of Bagwan Rajneesh, ex-Mormans, ex-Muslims, victims of Tibetan Lamaism and many others. Ibn Warraq's collection of writing of ex Muslims, Leaving Islam is interesting. To read these vast, detailed and personal accounts is very enlightening and shows in no uncertain terms just how destructive religion is to individuals. It is moreover, individuals that matter in our world, not institutions and states, which are abstract entities.

<sup>122</sup> Christopher Hitchens: God is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything, Twelve Books, 2007 (p. 64)

beliefs of tribal peoples to dogs who bark at an umbrella that accidentally moves it the wind. Ascribing agency to outside forces or imaginary people or gods is a common abuse of humanity throughout our history. But one can only go so far with the Mental virus or “Meme” analogy. The weakness of Dawkins book is in this, and in his ignorance of actual religions and the facts of how they operate. Moreover, Religion does not appear to have a Darwinian purpose. Darwin thought it was purely superstition and ignorance, not an adaptation. So why is it still with us?

One other thing about Dawkins which I find brilliant is his theory of embryology<sup>123</sup>. He sees the development of the fetus as a bottom-up affair of local rules and not a top-down blueprint. This is the Darwinian point of view too. I agree with that and this has social implications too, as it brings all top-down systems of government and arbitrary dictatorship into question. This is an amazing discovery. He does not really take credit for it, as it is already implicit in Darwin, but it has to be mentioned, and I will be arguing that this is how nature functions in general, throughout these books.

### **Religion as a Mistake of Language.**

*Note: this section explores language in relation to religion and it might be useful to read this along with the essay “Chomsky’s Cartesian Speciesism and the Failure of his Linguistics” in the third book, Persistent Illusions.*

So to expand on what I was saying earlier—religion may still be with us, because it is an effect, or a mistake ---created by the abstract,

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<sup>123</sup> See his Greatest Show on Earth. There is a chapter on it. He does not draw the social conclusions or the fact that embryology itself brings into question the argument of creationists, which is a top down argument.

magnifying, analogy finding and inflating nature of human language. One could say that religion is a wasted by product left over by the abuse that language makes of reality. Language by definition is an action that occurs between people and since politics is the affairs of the people, language is political by definition: so is religion. Linguistic behavior is a much overrated thing. It is in fact, a kind of whispering between people, mostly gossip and talking as an in-group behavior, inside families, social networks, and communities. If you look at human behavior from outside, as it were, from a perspective that is not human. Humans overrate their own language capacity. It is really a very transient and artificial phenomena that is full of errors and mistakes. Language helps people ascribe agency to things that do not have it, as a dog will bark at an umbrella caught by the wind, as Darwin suggests. Darwin suggests that religion is not a direct effect of evolution, but an accident of our perceptual foibles. Religion is based on many mistaken analogies. Religion is akin to literature, and full of mistaken similitudes, A is like B, so B must be like C. Some humans are like gods so particular humans must be gods. If that is the case, then what is religion but partly a mistake of language, or a mistake in the brain?

It is a wasteful mistake of language that elites found useful in exploiting as way of creating patriarchal systems, which most religions are. Language is inherently political in that politics and religion are largely based on convincing people that such and such a thing is for their own good, and so lies, sleight of hand, myth and make believe are part of speech and part of religion. Religion is not a natural fact but a con-man's fiction, not a fact of evolution so much as a misuse of faculties evolution created in human minds and bodies. If this is the case, then finding "agents" on which early humans could project their needs and fears was a mistake of language use. It was born of the exaggerations, false analogies, and abstract and unreal implications of words and concepts. Gods were created from thin air, and Jesus and Buddha did



not exist but were made up by skilled wordsmithing. This surmise is quite accurate and fits the distorted facts of the actual history of religions, as opposed to the myth purveyors.

Bertrand Russell thought something like this about religion, with good reason. He writes:

We want to stand upon our own feet and look fair and square at the world-its good facts, its bad facts, its beauties, and its ugliness; see the world as it is, and be not afraid of it. Conquer the world by intelligence, and not merely by being slavishly subdued by the terror that comes from it. The whole conception of God is a conception derived from the ancient Oriental despotisms. It is a conception quite unworthy of free men.

Language is merely words, but looking at facts is a good thing. Boyer implies that the belief in agency is some sort of necessary and fatal flaw in human evolution. But this is not the case at all. It is very easy to remove the bad habit of belief in the fiction of agency from one's brain. One only needs to resist metaphorical leaps and keep to the evidence and the facts. Ascribing agency to things or natural events is just a linguistic error, not a fatal flaw in human evolution. Language is made up of symbols and symbols are not the things they describe, but humans tend to think in terms of symbols rather than realities, and this makes for living in a nearly constant state of fiction making in everyday life. Chomsky's theory of language is very largely make-believe and very close to a religion. Reality is not in words, but in things.

Timothy Fitzgerald notes that religion is basically politics and then raises the question of what is politics. He writes

"I suggest that the perceived self-evidence of politics as a meaningful category derives from an inherent ambiguity – and in

this it is a mirror-image to religion. On the one hand, the term ‘politics’ generally simply means ‘power’ or ‘contestations of power’, and since power is probably one of the few universals in human relations we can see why it might appear intuitively convincing. However, on that understanding, it is difficult to see what is *not* about politics, because it can surely be argued that all human relations have always been about contestations of power.”<sup>124</sup>

Language, religion and politics are all basically about social control or power. Jeremy Bentham implied this in his “theory of fictions”. He held that some of what humans make up about the world has to do with fictions created by language. Gods are inflated fictions, made up entities that depend on language. Bentham wrote that “it is to language alone —, that fictitious entities owe their existence — their impossible, yet indispensable, existence. “ (works 8,198) <sup>125</sup> This does not mean that reality is a human construction, but only that some of what people make up, lawyers, scholastics, mythicists, theologians, poets, Chomskites, is indeed, a creation, a fiction, an abstraction. It might reflect something real, indirectly, or it might be utterly unreal. Bentham thinks that ‘god’ is exempt from this fiction making aspect of language, but this is not true. Gods are one of the best examples of this linguistic mistake.

The problem is the way language operates and is structured. Indeed, Nicholas Wade speculates that language and religion grew up

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<sup>124</sup> <http://criticalreligion.org/author/timothyfitzgerald2012/>

<sup>125</sup> Discussed in Luiz Costa Lima’s Control of the Imaginary: Reason and Imagination in Modern Times. See also “Of Fictitious Entities in: <http://books.google.com/books?id=hWlYAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA198&lpg=PA198&dq='To+language,+then++to+language+alone++it+is+that+fictitious+entities+owe+their+existence;+their+impossible,+yet+indispensable+existence.'&source=bl&ots=pNAW5yG3ES&sig=yWduNTITPsemYwc3lZCYzWocgVQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=zsSfU6qTLyYxAT19YHoAQ&ved=0CCgQ6AEwCA#v=onepage&q='To%20language%2C%20then%20-%20to%20language%20alone%20-%20it%20is%20that%20fictitious%20entities%20owe%20their%20existence%3B%20their%20impossible%2C%20yet%20indispensable%20existence.'&f=false>

together, during the so called Cognitive Revolution, about 70,000 BCE. Religion is a mistake that occurs because of misunderstandings and projections on words. People learned to believe in what does not exist, because it existed as words. Animals do not believe in such nonsense, to their credit. In the beginning was not the “word”, but the priest or Shaman who wanted to convince others that he knew what should be believed and made up the myths to capture the minds of the gullible. In the beginning is the con-man. The origins of both language and religion goes back to when humans were mating with Neanderthals. There are indications that Neanderthals were the first artists and thus first users of symbolic expressions.<sup>126</sup>

Christians and Jews think they are the ‘chosen people’, for instance. This is a political generalization to a whole people of a concept that really only applies to kids. Kids start to see others as outsiders around 6 or 7 years old. The function of these beliefs is partly to insure inside group safety, or at least the illusion of group safety. Nearly every culture has some sort of group solidarity based in an irrational prejudice like this. The slippage occurs when this understandable insider prejudice gets generalized through language. In this case, religion is a political affirmation of a mistake of language. The ‘Chosen People’ are the most special people, the best people, the people who are not inferior, the people who have the right fathers. But better than all others, as the “patriarchs” are the best. This is again a magnified abstraction: ‘our dads are the best therefore our gods are like our dads’..

Ritual has this national or tribal function too, as in the preservation of Native rituals like the Sundance or African American solidarity in gospel music. Those who perform these rites or practices get a feeling of insider solidarity and importance from it.. From this it follows that a theory about a “common origin” or “transcendent unity of the

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<sup>126</sup> <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/359/6378/912.full> It is interesting that the long term speciesism that was prejudicial against Neanderthals is finally breaking down.

religions” is actually just a fantasy. There are similar systems of superstitious delusions that have grown up with similar features in different areas of the world, rather like different languages. Dennett might call these “memes”, though they do not really have a real existence, they are sideshows and smoke in mirrors.. The features that they share in common do not indicate an abstract “esoterism” at all. There is no need to posit a “universal religion” just as there is no need to posit a “universal grammar”, as Chomsky has done, but never managed to prove. Neither can be proven because there is no universal religion just as there is no language organ in the brain. Brain science shows us language is present in areas like Wierneke’s and Broca’s areas but also takes advantage of other parts of the brain too. As Pascal Boyer observes, religions seems to be similar only because they are based on a

“very restricted set of supernatural concepts: the ones that jointly activate inference systems for agency, predation, death morality , social exchange etc.. Only a small range of concepts are such that they reach the aggregate relevance, which is why religion has common features the world over.<sup>127</sup>>

In other words, religion is common and it is a “useful fiction” in similar social ways all over the world and the same is true of language. The “transcendent unity of religions” is really an illusion. Boyer is right about this I think, with many far reaching consequences to be drawn. Though he does not specifically address these delusions as a mistake of language. He mistakenly thinks this is an evolutionary process when really it is just a social and political process.

Unfortunately Boyer still leaves too much out in this scenario, but he

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<sup>127</sup> Boyer Pascal Religion Explained, page 325

is headed in the right direction. Religion does appear to be something like his model of false inferences and imaginary agents imagined as helpers or imagined in fear of death. But he fails to stress that this imagining in fact is not a genetic proclivity but a mental conditioning born of a social and linguistic systems. Religion is also a set of false inferences involved with social life with others. This appears not to be the result of evolution so much as it is a mistake that grows out of language. The basis of religion is delusions and fictions of various kinds. But Boyer does not go far enough to explain the toxic character of religions, or its habitual and repressive features and attachment to political structures. Are delusions a function of social structures or do the structures arise out of previous delusions?. Boyer appears to think that religions arise from a mental set of proclivities, genetic in character, that suggest or infer delusory conclusions. I am sure this is correct in some cases, but it is more often the case that religions arises from imposed delusions made obligatory by an elite, fashions of delusions, as it were; spreading ideological drifts and mythic inflations maintained by culture managers in the interests of the upper classes. This is not a Marxist description but merely a description of the facts in our society.

Language may be at the heart of religious delusions, in the sense that the abstract character of language favors inventing categories and concepts that are have no basis in reality. When something appears in language many people suppose it is real. Gods, Ghosts, Luck and similar make believe things are linguistic slippages, an effect of abstract, magnified Pronouns. The fact that we make up a “He” rather than a ‘he’ that is a god, and ascribe qualities to the abstraction, is an accident effect of language use. One dignifies with the high status of ‘He’ rather than ‘he’, to create class or caste distinctions, for instance. But it is still magical thinking and his is delusory, even if it appears real to followers or worshipers.

Another instance of this is the use of the word, “Heaven”, a

meaningless concept in itself, as is the word “God”. The word, if it has any meaning, merely refers to things in the sky. But into this word gets poured all sorts of projections, containing fear of death, an imaginary life in the beyond, flowers, happiness, cessation of sufferings and all sorts of things, varying with different cultures and religions or different in the same religion. The Catholic Heaven pictured in Raphael or Michelangelo is very different that the Jehovah’s Witness heaven. The former shows a heaven peopled with aristocrats, partially nude or in Greek dress, acting like polite courtiers, of rather inflated musculature, in a structured hierarchy., In the Jehovah’s Witness heaven we see an American suburb with two cars, a green lawn, and some kids at a picnic with their 1950;s parents, right out of an American situation comedy or an advertisement. This is merely a projection of fears, politics and wishes, a dream, and hardly an example of a sublimated evolutionary tendency of behavior created by our DNA. Such visions of paradise are class based projections. In short religion is detritus, waste products of language projected into the bubble or our mental spaces.

The use of language helps create these imaginary illusions or useful fictions. Christians imagine that the “Word” is the creative origin of the universe. This is true only in the sense that the delusory “Word”, a generalized abstraction of language itself, is supposed to be the origin of the universe. Actually it is nothing of the kind, it is merely a mind stopping abstraction. This abstract word, which really means nothing at all, is in fact the origin of the Christian fiction. The Hindus imagine that all things flower forth from the letter OM. This is a similar metaphysical fiction.

It is quite possible to show in great detail how a given language functions to legitimize transcendent fictions. A major part of religion is due to the delusions that language allows. Sutras, sacred Torahs wrapped in a cloth, Bibles, Holy Korans which must not touch the dirt,

holy scriptures and language of all kids are just this sort of useful fiction. Language functions in religions to legitimize inflated and fictional excesses and make believe, alternative worlds and consciousness. This is quite plain and obvious, for instance, in Hindu and Buddhist texts. One Hindu text that is used in Zen Buddhism and taken from the Sochanda and Malini Vijaya Tantras, as well as the Vigyan Bhairava.<sup>128</sup> This is made up of short Koan-like sentences the purpose of which is to stop thought and force a dissociated mental/emotional state in which inner emotions are fixated on abstract concepts of totality—generalizations in other words. So for instance, the reader is supposed to associate breath with “vanishing” or stopping the ears, with the “sound of sounds”. If one strings these generalized abstract words together one comes up with, “transcend”, “weightless”, “great peace”, “in your heart”, “beyond human” “limitlessly spacious”, “over death itself”, What we have here is a sort of formula for self-hypnosis that creates a dissociated state of being—an imaginary state of being, beyond time space and death. This is not the result of evolution, as Boyer might claim, but a is psychological/linguistic trick for creating certain inner states which are actually fiction but which give calm and the otherworldly illusion of overcoming oneself and the world. It is the inner appearance of overcoming that is evoked in Koans of the kind used here. One does not actually overcome anything in reality, one merely creates an inner fiction that is practiced as a habit until it becomes constant, or at least appears to be constant if done often enough. The “non-dual” state of mind is a state of mind without reality in it, a delusional state with no future or past, and this becomes a social symbol worn by Zen priests, Indian Yogis and new age gnostics who teach it to others in similar denial and submission. Non duality is merely an expression of abstract identity, “I am that I am”, thou art that, or “I am you”. It means nothing but seems

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<sup>128</sup> See the chapter Centering” in Paul Reps Zen Flesh, Zen Bones 1961, 1989 Anchor books,(pg. 159).

to mean everything. This is a language based system of social controls and advisories.

This is Zen and Vedanta in a nutshell. The void or Sartori is a fictional state created in a subject by practice of technical and deliberate dissociations and forced analogies. Such linguistic entities, created in oneself by excessive “practice” are given reality by imagination and became “ real” in peoples’ minds by the process of inference that Boyer traces so well. This is why those who say that Buddhism is not like Christianity or other religions are mistaken. All the religions are systems of magnified abstractions, whether they are personified abstractions or not. Gods are not different than sunyata or Sartori, they are merely different terms that describe subjective projections or magnifications of abstract concepts. But the process whereby the abstractions are created is not evolutionary at all. Language itself might be, though that is still uncertain too, but the investiture of words with delusional meanings is not about evolution but about culture and human needs expressed in political icons, Koans, prayers or practices. The mental/emotional states created in Zen become images of social authority and are taught by “masters”. This process gets quite baroque in Tibetan Buddhism for instance where the imagined gods—imagined with great care and detailed exactness, become ‘agents’ with purposes and designs, just like humans: Dakhinis, Mahakalas, Sambogakayas, Maitreyas. This is fiction on a grand scale and produced elaborate bureaucracies in India, Tibet and elsewhere. The same thing happened in the Catholic Church, where abstract analogies become magnified and exaggerated in system like that of Aquinas or the poetry of Dante. These fictions created by linguistic generalizations are promoted into mind control techniques and social injunctions and practices: Inquisitions, Crusades, killing off other cultures that are different than one’s own. .

Of course, language is very different than religion in that different languages confer real benefits whereas different religions are



hypertrophies that distort social relations and create injustices. The ubiquity of languages proves the need to communicate,<sup>129</sup> whereas religions proves nothing so much as the universal tendency of humans to make things up out of fear, loneliness or the need for power. Creating agents that are not there has a social purpose, and is not driven by evolution, directly, as might be the case with language.<sup>130</sup> We have vocal cords adapted to speech and complexes of areas in the brain evolved for language, though our vocal cords are very little different than those of non-human primates. That does not mean that language is necessarily evolution based, but as there are brain differences, it may mean that. It has not been proven that is the result of evolution, and Chomsky and Pinker's systems might well be failures. But the fact that these areas are so fraught with conflicting theory that it appears that the truth is not really known as yet. Religion has no area in the brain, but rather appears to be a delusional effect of cognitive skills misapplied for social purposes. This means that Dennett and Boyer may be mistaken as to their thesis that religion is directly a result of evolution. At best it is a "by product" though that thesis is still questionable too. It is not really a 'by product' but a mistake or a false inference based on analogies. The politically fraught nature of linguistics studies suggests that the science is still largely incomplete and unresolved.

If the problem of religion does indeed lie in language, and religion and politics are indeed born of one impulse, then, there might be some justice in saying religion and politics are both a chimera. Schuon's

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<sup>129</sup> Chomsky claims that language is not about communication, which is a little like saying that the sky is not about atmosphere. I am sure he is wrong about that. Communication with others is not really different than communication with oneself. It evolved to facilitate communication. I speak more on this in the last chapter on Anti-Science and in my essay "Chomsky's Cartesian Speciesism".

<sup>130</sup> When people say "have a blessed day" they are invoking a deity who is supposed to bless them from a distance, giving them a good day over others who have a bad day. This is discriminatory and fictional at the same time, revealing the imaginary but social nature of the 'blessing'.

notion of the “transcendent unity of the religions” is a system of bogus similarities and false analogies between discretely separate fictions or fairy tales, all of them slightly different than one another. Schuon’s view is completely lacking in insight into brain science and evolution, which he opposed. Each religion is about social control, and each has their own methods of social control, local varieties, customs and evolved characteristics. There are similarities, as every human culture has similarities, since we are all evolved as humans. But the arbitrary similarities between religions are an accident of human genetic and cultural characteristics, not a sharing of a ‘Platonic essences’. Essences are merely imagined analogies. Guenon and Schuon mined the seemingly ‘transcendent’ data of the religions to draw correspondences or abstract similarities to make themselves king of the lot. This is hardly legitimate. Of course Schuon, who had few original thoughts, got this whole procedure from Guenon, and merely adapted it to his own peculiar needs and psychology, so the credit goes to Guenon for coming up with much of this nonsense. There is no super “primordial religion”, there are only convergent similarities between cultures due to similar genetic makeup, inherited characteristics and cultural needs. The control of language is the control of belief and the control of belief is the control of behavior.

In other words, religions are mistaken systems that are partly born of abuse of the trust that children have for their parents, partly derive from power needs of the elites in these societies and partly derive from peculiarities of the language and the human brain which favor mythic constructions, simple stories or delusional systems of imposed belief.. Many adults retain this gullible trust and transfer it onto churches, cults, temples or corporations. We live in a society where many are not educated to think for themselves, often deliberately so. Corporations, the department of education, even universities are often loathe to teach critical thinking skills. Religions develop like mental viruses or languages and spread from person to person via parents,

churches, books, media, T.V, corporate propaganda or whatever. Humans become receptacles of abstract ideologies, both political and “spiritual” via the religions they accept.

### **The Failure of the Traditionalist Theory of Religion**

Among other things, the three books that follow, use the theories and actions of a minor movement among spiritual reactionaries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to illustrate aspects of the religious mentality. They merely imitated what they thought was orthodox and combined religions into a Ur-religion, purely imaginary on their part. In other words they had no critical assessment of religion to speak of.

Traditionalism is a failure as a viable system of explanation of religion. It is perhaps the last gasp of conservative Scholastic and “esoteric” thought, expiring in the dust heap of comparative religion, as espoused by Huston Smith and others. Its main function is social in that it is a far right example of an ideology that opposes any liberal and progressive movements. It easily became a kind of poster boy for far right corporatism and neo-aristocratic wealth. Not very interesting in themselves I use them as an example to elucidate more general aspects of many religions. Its main proponents are now Moslem, which makes sense, as Islam is still emerging from medievalism.

I don’t think of myself as an “atheist” or as “secular”, since these terms are created by religions to describe hated people or “profane” conditions. The Latin word *saecularis* meant "of a generation,--- belonging to an age". This was derogatory. The secular world for the Church was the place of sin and the “fallen” world, not the “real” world of imaginary gods, which was assumed to be eternal and unchanging. To use the term “secular” is thus to buy into Church ideology, which is bogus. There is only this world, and it is not a lesser world.

The phrase 'secular humanist', really describes certain hated and ambiguous people in the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century, proto-scientists in fact.. The notion of humanist had a rather different meaning then, whereas now being a humanist is more or less synonymous with being a speciesist, and I do not find that a good thing. Humanists tend to think the human race alone matters, and thus they are environmentally or biologically ignorant. Neither of these terms are very happy ones. I am a "reasonist", or perhaps an actualist, in the sense that I am concerned with actualities and reasoning about them. I prefer these terms, even if they are more or less synonymous with "atheist". I am not that crazy about the term 'atheist', as I don't wish to define myself by a negative, and theism is really a fictional system that cannot be taken seriously. Being against a fiction seems rather absurd and I do not wish to be defined by that.

So, this is a book about religions in general, with many allusions to the major religions, but also studies a specific group of cranks and reactionaries whose movement had its apogee in 20<sup>th</sup> century. Called the Traditionalists, they are strangely modern, motley crew of Symbolists and disaffected gnostics of the far right. No one serious can take them seriously. But they are a convenient way to analyze the religions as a whole, since they are 20<sup>th</sup> century revivalists of the various dying religious traditions, about which they are often fairly accurate. They practiced "comparative religion", or in other words made analogies between various systems of make believe.

. The Perennial/Traditionalist movement is largely splintered or dead now, with a few fanatic stragglers, hangers-on and dreamy eyed exegetes, some in universities, mostly in Europe and America. They all continue to sound their hopelessly cramped and narcissistic spirituality with "magisterial" stale air and excessive verbosity. Sophia Magazine is one of their online productions and is a good example on the inbred

nature of their writing. Charles Upton, a hardly noticed member of this hardly noticed movement, in recent essays, which are eminently unreadable, even admits that the movement is about dead. It is not really a movement worth paying much attention to.

So I use traditionalism partly out of an autobiographical impulse, partly for pedagogical reasons. The movement is useful as a teaching vehicle to discuss the anatomy of religion, even if the specimen is largely dead. I got involved with Traditionalism briefly, (2 years) and watched various legal actions against them in the early 1990's, so I know a great deal about them. I compiled yet more evidence against them, in later years, and proved the case clearly that Schuon's Primordial Gathering did happen and children were involved.. Reviewing the traditionalists is a good way to review my intellectual mistakes and seek to correct them, refining a view of reality that is healthier, based in the actual and closer to science. I also wish to supply examples of critical thinking—including self-critical thinking--- so that others might apply such thinking to other irrational and bogus systems of phony knowledge.

And there is a journalistic impulse too. Many in my generation, inspired by examples like the Beatles, Zen flower arranging, or the weird death and sex of Tibetan Buddhism, fell for varieties of metaphysical nonsense and here I can review and perhaps correct the mistakes of a generation. Besides using this dying, archaic and nostalgic movement as a spring board to discuss religions and systems of magnified abstractions in general, I also mean also to question the largely bogus discipline of “religious studies”. Religion is not a real category of knowledge, but is really a kind of political anti-knowledge,-- a set of “alternative facts” a way of learning that depends of false premises and compiled, “counterintuitive” (read: delusional) illusions and myth. As such it is partly a system of lies, or a disinformation discipline and is helpful to ruling classes in acting as such. This is partly why Religious Studies has

long been a haven for fanatics and proselytizers of various sorts. It is about time that this was brought into the open and questioned outright.

I call the traditionalists reactionaries because they are the inheritors of the school of thought advocated by Joseph De Maistre and others, who despised the French Revolution, science and the Renaissance and wished to return to rule by priests and superstition. They are fundamentalists of an elitist sort, rather than of a middle class sort as one sees in fundamentalist Islam or Bible belt America. Like these groups they hate science and are Creationists, deniers of the obvious facts of evolution, haters of physics. They are rather creative anachronists, in that they seek to resurrect dead systems of myth as if they actually described something real. I am not an advocate for religion or orthodoxy, on the contrary, my express wish is to analyze and critique religion. I use the traditionalists as a springboard to a more general meditation on history, far-right spirituality and philosophy and political systems of many kinds.

The reason there are few critical assessments of traditionalism is not hard to find. Hardly anyone paid attention to them. Traditionalist writers willingly enclosed themselves in a small world of their own making, cultish and secretive. But their influence, on the Trump administration, for instance, is truly insidious. This is true of early Christianity, which was a cult, and early Islam as well. I got to watch as the traditionalists made up myths out of existing myths and pushed ideas that they found useful to advertise their campaigns and ideologies. I could see clearly there was no truth to what they were saying, it was merely political posturing based on delusional thinking.

This gave me insights into how early Islam and Christianity were made up. There is no real difference between cults and religions other than size. Like the ideology of “too big to fail” the size of religions hardly means that they are true, just as the size of banks makes them any less corrupt. The Traditionalists have a very small following among those who, for various reasons, decided to despise the ‘modern’ world’. The

inbred or hermetic insularity of the cults and groups that follow Guenon results in a Manichean world view. The traditionalists largely are lacking in real education, though many of them have read books, or even gone to universities, but they tend to read only within a narrow range of like-minded religious writers,<sup>131</sup> and none of them have much real scientific knowledge. I learned when in the cult that they hated universities and those that worked in them. As many worked in universities they despised their colleagues in secret. Indeed, the basic evidence based tenets and canons of academic work and inquiry are anathema to traditionalist values. Because they have so little understanding of modern science, they have no concrete understanding that real progress has been made in many areas of human knowledge, from biology to medicine. They believe in nonsense that is not falsifiable and cannot be verified, such as gods, voids, beyond being and other metaphysical fictions.

Most critics of Schuon, Guenon and Evola are far right fanatics of one orthodox stripe or another, fanatic Muslims, fanatic Catholics, far right nationalists etc. There is no god, there is nothing to be against, so as I said, being atheist is rather silly.. I am not a ‘secular” either because there is no real normative notion of the sacred that I have rejected. I simply do not accept the reality of the religious and the “sacred” as defined by those who claim to know what that is. But I am not a theist and reject the notion of gods. Belief in religion seems untenable to me as a naturalist and historian, first because there is no evidence whatever that nature has anything to do with gods. Second I do not believe there is a god, and third I know how horrible have been the atrocities caused by the god idea. History proves that if there were a god, it would be necessary to deny his goodness and struggle against his dark need of power. The god of the religions was a psychopath, or in the terminology of this book, a theofascist.. Those who believe in gods like to say that god

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<sup>131</sup> Typical for a narcissistic cult leader, Schuon told his followers that there was little reason to read any books but his and those close to him.

has mysterious designs in killing premature babies, murdering children in car accidents or leaving homeless men in freezing rain for whole days, until they die of exposure. But only a very bad person would do such a thing and a God who prides himself on killing kids for ineffable reasons is a monster that everyone should declare a fraud. If god existed, it would be necessary as William Blake showed, to seek redress against his horrible injustices.

So this book is only partly a meditation on a failure and decadence of a small religious and mythical system that grew up and largely died in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I will be using them as a ready example,--a foil---typical of many cults and religions, against which I can compare other systems of ideologies.. Remnants of it remain on the fringes of our society, A few backward academics who ought not to be at universities are members of it, and the son of the King of Jordan is a follower of it, and Prince Charles supports it. But it is dying and has few followers. It is a very forgettable group of men, who created a throwback philosophy that sought to return to the Dark Ages. I got involved with the group briefly and was a witness in a trial against one of the leaders. It is not an interesting cult, really, but it is useful as a touchstone to reflect on religions at large, why they arose and why they are dying off, as well as more modern ideologies and how they function.

It is often called Traditionalism or the Sophia Perennis or Perennialism. Rene Guenon ( 1886-1951) had four main followers of note in the generation between 1935 and 1950. One, Frithjof Schuon (1907-1998) was a self-styled “Sufi” who degenerated into a polygamist, cult leader and director of nudist gatherings. This group call themselves the Maryamiyya, but I never call it that. The image of Mary in this group is a cult image and there is a pathology at the basis of that, as I will explain in later chapter. I call this group the Schuon cult, which is what it was. The second was Ananda Coomaraswamy, (1877-1947) a Pre-Raphaelite, Platonist and medievalist, Hindu scholar at the Boston Museum of Fine



arts who tried to rewrite art history as elitist mysticism and who was sympathetic to caste, and Platonist hierarchy. He hated the modern world, though in his early years, He did some of his best work as geologist before he abandoned science..<sup>132</sup>

Lastly there is Rene Guenon.

Apples do not fall far from the tree. The main ‘apples” that fell from Guenon’s ‘tree’ in the first generation after Guenon were Schuon and Evola, and numerically speaking, Evola is more popular than Schuon.<sup>133</sup> Julius Evola, (1899-1974), the fourth of Guenon’s followers, was a wanna-be Nazi—who dreamed of reforming fascism along Guenonian lines. The Nazis rejected him but he went on to covertly adapt fascism to spirituality in post-World War II world. Evola wanted a Fascism advanced

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<sup>132</sup> Some Schuon cult followers are able to produce amazingly baroque hyperbole about the object of their worship. Most Schuon groupies have a very distorted view of him. Most did not actually know Schuon on a daily basis at all, or merely met him in artificial ceremonies or appointments at Schuon’s house designed to exalt Schuon himself. I got to watch him on a daily basis and could see clearly there was nothing sacred about the man and he was a fake. Such a cultic and largely ignorant view of the actual Schuon can be seen in the essay (below) by the fanatical Brazilian Schuon follower, Mateus Soares de Azevedo . He writes that ” Guenon was the pioneer and Schuon the consummation” ----though exactly what Schuon was a ‘consummation’ of is unclear: decadence perhaps, pretense and symbolist gatherings of a sexual nature? Or was he the consummation of narcissistic polygamy, cultic authoritarianism, being married to other men’s wives, obtuse prose, or glittering generalities ? The word ‘consummation’ is a strange word to use in respect of Schuon. It implies some sort of wedding ceremony or something. I knew Schuon and he was not a consummation of anything except the ability to pretend, pose and turn people into victims and accomplices in his psychopathic maneuvers. Azevedo is a fundamentalist traditionalist who is insufficiently educated. He hates science and wrongly thinks science is the same thing as other irrational systems of belief. He is a cult follower.  
[http://www.sacredweb.com/online\\_articles/sw10\\_azevedo.html](http://www.sacredweb.com/online_articles/sw10_azevedo.html)

<sup>133</sup> One could include Huston Smith perhaps, though arguably he is from the next generation, or Martin Lings, who was heavily influenced by Guenon and Schuon. However, Huston Smith was really an advertiser and right wing promoter of an uncritical and largely New Age notion of religion as a shopping mart, pick your variety and sample the cakes and gurus. He was an uncritical cheerleader of religion and a creator of the bogus way of studying religion that usually reigns in “religious studies”. There is little “original” in him. Guenon, Schuon and Evola are all ‘original’ in the sense that they are eccentric and extreme individualists who hate individuality. For Guenon ‘originality’ was a sort of sin because he loved abstract gods and fictions so much that he was sure that only these are real. He wanted to deny existence and uniqueness to the point of eclipsing the diversity of life. He hates ‘history’ and the “personal”. Yet he was extreme eccentric himself and an individualist in denial

“from above” rather from “below”, which of course is what Coomaraswamy admired in Nietzsche’s over-man or superman, and what Schuon meant when he saw himself as “the last manifestation of the Logos at the end of time”, in his own words. These men all wanted a “top down” authoritarian caste system, based on unjust anti-democratic and totalistic ideals. This is a complicated maneuver. These men hated the modern world so much that they wanted to radically alter it to fit nostalgic dreams of totalitarian system in the past which they wished to somehow implement on the plane of action. If this were not possible they wanted apocalypse rain down on everyone. “After me the deluge”, might be written on the Traditionalist flag.

When I think of Rene Guenon the first thing that comes to mind is his devotion to a dream of an eternal metaphysics that is now dated and crumbling into fiction and ruin and embarrassment. What comes to mind is his description of the “Wall” he believed circles the world and the “cracks” or “fissures” were appearing in the “Wall” in the 20th century. In his paranoid delusions he thought demons or other maleficent influences were pouring through the “Wall”, headed to attack the unaware, the “profane” the evil ones—which is what he called ordinary people, who are not counted among the “elite”. The belief that the universe is cracking up is a common belief in certain kinds of paranoid schizophrenia, which is probably what Guenon suffered from, or some variant of this illness. Evidently, for Guenon, these maleficent influences infested the whole earth. Because of this, Guenon thought many individuals or groups were after him, trying to take advantage of photos of himself, for instance. He thought people might use pictures of himself as witchcraft against him. When he came down with serious illnesses, probably due to his excessive smoking habit, he believed that people made him sick from a distance. This is not just primitive superstition. It went much further than that. He thought that coins that are uninsured by god are conduits of devilish

“psychic entities”. Indeed, he thought “psychic entities” inhabited metals. One can say a lot against the institution of money, certainly, and the rise of capitalism. But Guenon really goes very far into purely imaginary excess. Guenon says the psychic entities that are associated with metals are “extremely dangerous for anyone to approach who is not of the required qualifications”. Thus, if you need a plumber, call a Guenon scholar, a priest and an exorcist next time your toilet clogs up, if you want to be safe! Or if you cross over a metal bridge like the Golden Gate: beware! Since metal is full of evil little demons, your whole mental structure might be in danger of profanation, via the pipes under your house or crossing over a bridge!

Seriously, these examples of Guenon’s thought are all symptomatic of a serious mental condition, either a Paranoid Personality Disorder or paranoid schizophrenia. Metal is merely one element and not a dangerous one. It is not to be judged by an article hierarchy of values. Indeed, blacksmithing is early science and fascinating and worth attention. Guenon declared that the project of the Enlightenment was dead and that we should abandon science and rationality. What possible good could this serve ?--- If Guenon got his will on this it would increase violations against human rights, subvert what is left of democracy and increase disease and ignorance, wars and environmental disaster. All that matters is our earth and how well we care for it and each other. Religious hierarchy is an unfortunate accident of our history and indirectly of misuses of cognitive faculties created by our DNA. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> book below you will find chapters dealing with facets of Guenon and his milieu. One of these essays is an in depth critique of his bizarre book the Reign of Quantity. These chapters will spell out just how dangerous this author is

The first thing I think of when I think of Guenon’s other main follower, Julius Evola is that he so admired the Nazis and that he really

tried to talk the Nazi's into becoming Guenonians. He thought the Nazis and fascists were close enough to Guenon that there might be a real chance of making them Guenonian traditionalists. There is no overt mental illness here, but there is madness of a kind, both in Evola, Guenon and the Nazis. These people and their cults had a big influence on the European far right and I will discuss that too.

The first thing I think of when I think of Guenon's follower Frithjof Schuon, who I came to know well through two years of close observation, is the absurdity of his "Primordial Gatherings". In these gatherings 20-30 women dance around him in various stages of nakedness. Schuon pretends to be a Native American chief or an Indian Raja, penis exposed though a transparent loincloth. I will discuss these gatherings in later chapters. They are interesting as an example both of creating religious rituals, myths and secrecy. One of the chapters below will discuss these gatherings as part of a much larger discussion on women and metaphysics and how many metaphysical systems the world over denigrate women.

People who are susceptible to the considerable propaganda put out by the Schuon cult and Guenon and Schuon's followers are unaware that Schuon pretended he was someone he was not. However, when the facts are presented to most reasonable people they generally grasp that Schuon was insane. When I showed my mother some nude photos of Schuon, she said right away that he looks crazy and that he is one of the ugliest men she had ever seen. I'm not sure how ugly he was. But I witnessed Schuon behind the veil his wives put up before him to hide his real character from others. I saw him in moments of high stress where he showed me who he really was. Few got into the inner circle of Schuon's wives, who cloaked the reality of this man from followers and the public. The wives function was to keep him looking the part of the spiritual sage and 'master of wisdom', preventing real understanding of who he really was. Books and bios of him are mostly fiction created by the wives or

Schuon himself. Actually, he was a frightened man with huge insecurities and major shortcomings. His decisions were often very ill advised and caused the cult far more problems than they solved. It was Schuon's own bad leadership that led to the many break ups and ultimate failure of the cult

The Schuon cult has put out its own largely bogus or misleading histories, padded extensively with personal mythology, damage control and public relations, or in other words with lies and inventions. The Schuon cult does all they can to hide the truth about who Schuon really was at the same time and they pretend he is the great prophet of truth. They never note this contradiction. Liars sometimes parade themselves as truth tellers. I got close enough to Schuon to see how insane he really was. I am not the only one who was this close who has tried to tell the truth about what he saw; Cyril Glasse, Aldo Vidali, Maude Murray, Catherine Perry and others tried to do so too, but gave up when the road was too difficult. I cannot give all these voices a chance to talk in this book, as many people are too afraid of these cults to say anything. But I do express some of the point of view of some of the victims when I can. Many people have told me they are afraid to speak out about the cult and would not allow their names to be used. For the most part, unless there were good reasons not to, I have honored these requests. But I do use some of their comments or evidence here and there.

The great Mathematician Paul Erdos liked to tell a wry joke that god is the "supreme fascist" (SF)----- it was a joke because he didn't believe in gods. But there is truth in his joke. Religions are nearly all authoritarian and arbitrary. Any god who created the caste system, any god who allows species like the Ivory Billed woodpecker to go extinct or who allows the killing of young children who die in great numbers every year, or who tortures people in hell for small infractions or who designs a religion to

support a “them verses us” mentality that kills people—, any god who does these things is a tyrant. As Robert Ingersoll wrote. “The doctrine of eternal punishment is in perfect harmony with the savagery of the men who made the orthodox creeds. It is in harmony with torture, with flaying alive, and with burnings.” It is wrong to believe in such nonsense.

Christ’s espousal of the idea that “he that is not with me is against me”, fueled the Inquisition and the murder and exploitation of slaves and native peoples. The Christians who promoted and allowed the atrocities of the Inquisition or the cruelty of Catholic education are theofascists. I coined the term ‘Theofascism’, to have a word that explains the considerable difference between Nazism and the far right “spiritual” politics of the traditionalists, Dante, Plato, Augustine and other such tyrants of the sacred. Indeed, my original researches had more to do with trying to define the view so Plato and Augustine than with the Traditionalists. I will discuss many “traditional” theories of political/spiritual, governments and their relation to religion in China, India, Medieval Europe and elsewhere as examples of theofascism.

Theofascism is in part what the god idea is about. The God of the Old Testament like the God of the New Testament and the god of the Koran are all arbitrary tyrants, sociopaths and dictators.<sup>134</sup> It is hard to think of religion without thinking of those who killed Jews in ghettos like Warsaw or the Jews who kill Palestinians the ghettos of Gaza. Those who claim to be the elite and the chosen people claim the right to kill the outsiders with impunity. Murder is still murder whether it is done by a state or a person.

The followers of Guenon have created a hagiography about a man

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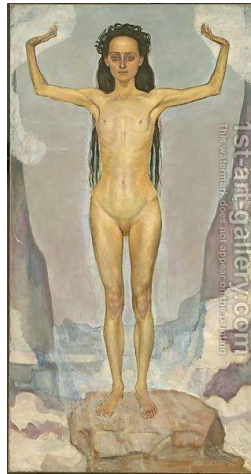
<sup>134</sup> The term Theofascism is more or less synonymous with spiritual fascism, ---- a phrase which was used by Guenon’s follower Guido do Giorgio to describe Guenon’s system. Spiritual fascism is not fascism, but rather a form of arbitrary “spiritual” dictatorship by priests or high castes and hierarchies, and this can be found in cults, the Vatican, the Inquisition, Dynastic China, Aztecs, Brahmins in India, the system of Dionysius the Aeropagite, or Tibetan Buddhism, as well as many other religions and political systems from Israel to Iran.

who was no saint. Scholars who write about him try to defend his ideas as if they were sacrosanct. A good part of these books is devoted to debunking this sort of mythological construction. Guenon supported caste system and hated science and reason. These two facts alone make him suspect, a supporter of irrational social inequality and a man who hated objectivity and preferred irrational claims of authority. However, there is so much else. Scholars sometimes lionize men who should have been forgotten or at least questioned. Religions are “insane” because they will rationalize abuse of children to justify their position and need of power. I will even discuss the role of myth making and lionization in figures like Praxiteles and Chomsky.

Look up images of Guenon on a search engine. Guenon was Boris Karloff skinny and zombie-like, a hashish addicted and anorexic esoterist, bloodless and life denying as if from the land of the world-denying dead. Not everyone remembers Boris Karloff. But he plays a vampire and charlatan in 1930s movies, pasty white face, bloodless and somehow purple with overwrought devotion to the symbolist nether-world. Like Artaud wanting to escape to Mexico, Guenon was a romantic looking to escape into spiritual principles”. Of course there are some photos of Guenon with his two girls in which he looks slightly normal, even friendly, but even these show a man who is bizarrely at odds with the conspiratorial evil obsessed Manichean of the Reign of Quantity. It is hard to imagine Guenon changing poopy Diapers, just as it is hard to imagine Schuon doing anything at all for himself, he was so coddled and spoiled by his wives and followers. He was mollycoddled by his “wives”, who were more servants and ego builders than wives. Only one of his wives had children and that by a man that Schuon despised. One of the children was nearly brought into the family as a wife, and thus an attempt was made by Schuon to steal the childhood of this girl and make her his own. Everything had to serve Schuon’s narcissism. Indeed, his wives were not really wives at all, as I will discuss later. I used to wonder

what would have happened to Schuon if he were left in Caspar, Wyoming without his entourage. He couldn't survive without admirers and servants to bolster him up, feed him and make sure he kept his pants on, his wounded ego ever in need of lifting up. These were decadent <sup>135</sup> men, half in love with ideas that are superstition and voodoo, half ghosts from the faded gilded age, symbolists with purple cloaks, weavers of metaphysical systems meant to dazzle and pervert, spoiled and helpless aristocrats who could not do anything for themselves.

Schuon was a decadent painter of the symbolist school, and his mentality in life was very much a decadent dreamer of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The photo of Schuon standing in front of the Matterhorn<sup>136</sup> sums it up: traditionalism is all pretenses, guilty associations of ideas that really don't belong together. Schuon was a little guy with a big nose, not a Napoleon in front of a big mountain. Look up Schuon's name in Google's search engine and press "images" you will find him standing against a mountain, not too different than these images, indeed, some of Schuon's artworks are nearly copies of these.



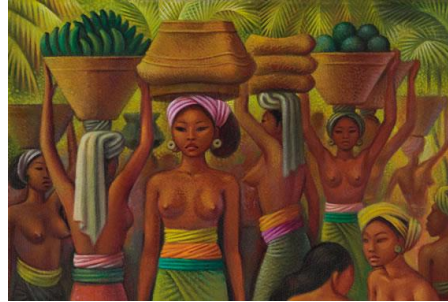
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<sup>135</sup>

<sup>136</sup>



Hodler



Caspar David Fredrick

Covarrubias

I

There is a famous image of Goethe and Schelling before the Matterhorn and Klee and Kandinsky aping this image in a sort of parody.... Schuon's favorite painter Ferdinand Hodler did this painting (upper left) of a nude young boy on a mountain that closely resembles some of Schuon's paintings of Indians. Indeed, Schuon paintings are almost a copy of this. There is a similar image by Caspar David Fredrick of Faust on the Mountain. (right) Schuon's art is in line with this modernist 'tradition'. The Goethean world-weary and romantic misanthrope becomes the romantic paranoid cult leader, who tries to be and Indian chief. Greatest prophet at the end of time. This is the same thread of myth that inspired Novalis dream of the millennial poet prophet and Hitler dream of the Third Reich. These arrogant images picture the

man as a kind of lonely alien god, very much a pre-fascist image of the romantic or Fictian “universal ego” alienated, exalted and above everyone. This is the Schuonian delusion in a nutshell. So I will use Schuon’s art as a way of talking about Modern art in general and how corporate and traditional art are curiously linked in iconography.

Like Ferdinand Hodler, Schuon painted numerous nude young girls. Schuon also did paintings of nude pubescent or pre-pubescent Native American boys or girls and the poses are almost copies of Hodler. The other artist Schuon liked, besides Hodler and Gauguin was Miquel Covarrubias, who did nude women from Bali that Schuon was infatuated with. He had photos of seminude women from Bali which were models of girls used in primordial gatherings. His tastes in art moved along sexist, colonialist and racist lines. His aesthetic ideology was very much like that of Arthur Versluis who writes in his book Restoring Paradise that

This new paradisiacal earth is in the gnostic; it is generated through the creative power of Sophia and perceived through the gnostic imagination ( pg. 15)

If you analyze this sentence carefully it is promoting fiction making. It is saying that the fiction of “paradise” is created by the creative fiction making power of the mythical being Sophia, and is ‘perceived’ by the fictional ‘gnostic imagination’ which really does not exist, because gnosis is another fiction, a bogus claim to secret knowledge. So it is saying basically that the fiction making faculty of the imagination makes the fiction of paradise and by strength of delusions, if one can keep this fiction inside oneself.. The romantic notion of creation via secret faculties or goddesses that only the elect or ‘gnostic’ can get in touch with arises from delusional and emotional ‘visions’, in short. “what he is really describing here is the “sordid excellence of paradise” as Emily Dickenson

rightly describes the delusions of the religious.

The aesthetic pictured here is very much like Schuon's aesthetic. Schuon created his rather Salome like, Asiatic and vampy goddesses or devadasis out of just this fictional imagination—he calls it the “Intellect”—and he piled imagination upon mythic constructions.<sup>137</sup>

Schuon was a rather angry and bitter megalomaniac who had fake visions and serious delusions of grandeur. Guenon was skinny, overwrought intellectually---frightened by life, defensive, paranoid and hardly the saint followers picture him to be. Evola was a cramped and militaristic intellectual with close ties to the Italian and German fascists. They were what the religions have always been, human pathologies seeking respite in phony ‘wisdom’, trying to assert power claims and acting as an ideological manager class for far right movements and politics. The Schuon cult ran on required adulation for the “master”. There is a similar if slightly lessened required adulation about Guenon. To many he is a “saint”. The Brazilian Website, Irgret, wrote of Guenon, for example:

Impassive and above all these noises, lies the impersonal authority of René Guenon's work, up to date and not temporal, silent and eloquent, powerful and unshakable, alive as Tradition itself, because it is a crystalline and fulgurant expression of it.

Actually, Guenon was a very neurotically tense and nervous person, even obsessive in his writing, laboring to appear stylistically impersonal,

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<sup>137</sup> The Sophia myth is a Platonist construction, made up partly out of the bible and the “wisdom” books of Solomon and partly from gnostic myths and Renaissance imaginings. It has been resurrected by New Age and Goddess groups in recent times. Sophia as a goddess is a weak character, resembling a classical version of the Virgin Mary, Its appeal was that it is a goddess who is not Christian, Christianity having been discredited by the far right and a history of abuses going back to the Inquisition.

but really on the verge of inner mayhem inside him, paranoid and holding onto logic to try to still the inner rush of psychotic fantasy and fear. He was not impassive at all. Like Schuon, Guenon posed at being impassive in his writing and photos. His works are personal projections hiding behind the pose of the impersonal. He is irrationally superstitious, prone to wild fantasy, but holding his madness in a Cartesian vice inside himself.

Guenon's god is a god of mathematics and non-dual emptiness living on the verge of total collapse, grasping at apocalypse out of a hatred that goes back to before the Renaissance. There are no real "invisible masters" behind him, just reactionaries like Joseph De Maistre and con-men like Gerard Encausse. The Traditions he is supposedly "alive" with are actually all decadent, based on false premises and falling apart. I tried many traditional religions when I was reading Guenon and religion no longer works. Guenon's attempts to keep it alive are partly maniac efforts, "fulgurant" expressions of a desperate reactionary trying to turn back the clock to before 1313 and the rise of science. An Anti-nominalist like Guenon does not make sense after the 14<sup>th</sup> century. His hand never did any real work and his brain was too self-involved. The Platonist conceit was effete and "mind' centered and disdained anything that was "contaminated by practical uses". The Platonists of the middle ages uphold only mind as superior. That world hating and insular intellectuality fails and practical hands-on knowledge and technology begins to take over. Indeed, Plato was wrong, it is not the fiction of effete otherworldly truth that matters, but the nifty gritty of the everyday and the practical, the heft of the hammer and the feel of a pencil, fixing an engine or cooking for kids. Nominalism triumphed and left medieval Platonic "realism" and in the dust of history. That is a good thing too.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> If you read the esoterists, people like Arthur Verluise or Schuon, what they are trying to do is

So I will discuss Plato's ideas at length and in relation to many later developments and show how baneful the influence of Plato was.

There are those who want to say that Guenon and Schuon were somehow a mere decadent byway, not affecting the heart of the religions at all. In one sense that is true, religion has become irrelevant, and so Guenon and Schuon are irrelevant too.<sup>139</sup> However, in another sense, I do not agree. Islam is not just as bad as Schuon's use of it, in fact it is much worse, -- as much as I know Schuon was a fraud, cult leader and poseur, Iranian Mullahs and Afghani Taliban sheiks are just as bad and many much worse. For instance, only 12% of Afghani women are literate and they have a life expectancy of 44 years. This ignorance is enforced systematically by denying girls education. There have been cases of acid being put on girls faces because they went to school. The perpetrators of this crime were Taliban officials. They are far right Moslems. Afghanistan has nearly the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in the world. This abuse of women is enforced by Islamic codes and norms. Similar figures have prevailed in India for centuries. So there will be a chapter on misogyny and its relation to nature hatred, below.

Guenon's paranoid insanity is more than matched by many apocalyptic Islamic and Christian fanatics through the centuries, who did so much to encourage world hatred and backwardness over the course of the last two millennia. Religion is a force for harm and unreason, as Goya already saw his great series of prints the Disparates,

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ensnare reader is anti-technology and anti-science. They caricature technology as evil machines and try to uphold esoterism as anti-Christian new religions. This has an appeal to those seeing an "inner life". It is an escape from reality of course, and the best way to have a good inner life is to study what is real in nature and humans, not the unrealities speculated on by Kabbalists, mystics and hermeticists. An inner life based on delusions does not satisfy for long.

<sup>139</sup> As David Hall rightly wrote "no one can live within the womb of Islam or any other religion.... The new start has to made elsewhere." Hall, David. Islamic Mysticism, A Secular Perspective. Prometheus Books. Amherst New York. 2000. this is an amazing book which I highly recommend. David has put up very accurate arguments not just against Islam but against all religions, Indeed, this book brings all mysticism into question, in a way that I know was utterly sincere and well meaning. David went thought the delusional fire of mysticism and came out the other side wishing to help those still stuck in the muck of it.

and Caprichos, Disasters of War and Black Paintings. So I will also discuss the invention of Christianity and its help in creating the Dark Ages and its opposition to Darwinism.

I am fortunate and I thank Guenon and Schuon for saving me from religion all together. They were excellent examples of all that is wrong with the religions, not just their little formulas of it. It must be said that Guenon and Schuon deserve credit for being an example of the corrupting fictions and subjective fantasy that is what religion really is. There are good things about both of them.<sup>140</sup> They showed me a false system of myths and beliefs that distort and falsify reality. They maintained their beliefs by elaborate efforts to create make-believe, manipulate minds, magnify myths, promote superstition, exploit ordinary human drives like pride, sex, or fear of death. It was not just a question of their exploiting “counter-intuitive conceptualizations”, though they did this in excess. They taught me about how the religions conceal, deny, lie and cover up. These methods were their stock and trade. Schuon and Guenon were bizarre charlatans, liars, and pretenders, but at the same time, they were human exemplars or great moral worth as seen by their followers, and thus exemplars of what was wrong with religion

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<sup>140</sup> Since I wrote this I have been trying to think of good things about Schuon I remember, and frankly there are very few. I liked his collection of Native American shoes. Some of the Native American dances in his back yard were enjoyable, though Schuon didn't need to be there at all. It would have been just as fun if he wasn't there. He just stood there with his hands out trying to be priestly. There was a certain golden sort of beauty in the many cult houses, and that had its charm, though I have seen many more beautiful houses. The cult of nudity was what it was. At first I did not judge it as a negative thing, as we are all bodies. I like the human body, both male and female. Nudity in itself is a good thing, as we all have bodies and loving bodies is a big part of human life. As an artist I love seeing human bodies, far from perfect bodies in many cases, and many of the bodies of cult members were very imperfect, both men and women. But once he involved children I saw there was real illness in him. I did learn a great deal about religion and that was good only in that it helped me to reject religion. So really there was not a lot that was attractive or real about the Schuon cult. When I left it I realized that all I really missed was a woman I loved. I had quickly grasped what Schuon had to teach and saw it was a dead end and he was crazy. Schuon as a person was not a nice guy and had few virtues that I would recognize as virtues. He had many faults which the cult tried to sell as virtues. Indeed, Schuon's whole moral system—the Six Themes--- is premised on his own claim to be virtuous, but in fact, his system is questionable and his virtues were negligible or the opposite of what I would call virtuous.,

throughout the past: it's misogyny, its despising of human rights, its elitist promotion of caste. This is not to overestimate them. They are pathetic in a fundamentalist way. But once you see through the lies that religions are, they are all pathetic and hardly worthy of academically inflated phrases like "counter-intuitive conceptualizations", when really they are just systems of delusion.

Followers of Schuon and Guenon are deeply offended whenever their chosen guru is even slightly criticized. The same is true of followers of Chomsky who call one names as soon as you criticize their chosen Master. In the Schuon cult Schuon's personality was grossly overestimated. He was really a lackluster and fanatical fellow in person, angry and petulant, glum, moody and forbidding. But the followers are lied to and told that Schuon and Guenon greatly surpass them, are wonderful amazing people, and they believe this, like dumb sheep. Schuon and Guenon were nutty or wacko, to speak in the vernacular, because religion itself is nutty and wacko. I do not mean to use this pedestrian term "nutty" in any literal sense. I like nuts, I even like some crazy people, in moderation. Terms like 'Nutty' are not scholarly. I just mean that when anyone is confronted with the literal facts of what Guenon or Schuon actually believed, they are indeed, clinically unbalanced ---with a lunatic addiction to never admitting they were sick.

For Schuon committing himself to the ignoring of facts and evidence was a principle. To Schuon--- and to other Traditionalists and religionists, facts don't matter. Faith is irrational. Schuon writes --with amazing arrogance and ignorance at the same time--- that "the knowledge of facts for their own sake is, apart from practical applications of an always limited interest, without value" <sup>141</sup> Actually facts are of primary importance but, for Schuon who made his living, as it were, selling fictions, only the abstract and the make believe matters. For

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<sup>141</sup> (Schuon. Eye of the Heart, unpublished typescript version, trans by Gerald Palmer Page 192,)

Schuon, the world as it is was of “no interest” and is not factual for him, it is merely passed down lore about the “sense of the absolute”—which really is just vague intuitions about something out there that cannot be defined and would not be useful if it could be defined. The something out there that is not defined is an irrational feeling, and it is upon this easily delusional unknown that religions bases its right to “truth”. For these men, abstract fictions are “facts” and “objectivity” is the study of delusional “facts”, His metaphysics is thus a narcissism, a way of talking about himself and his feelings, however hidden they might be.

Actually there is no religious truth, there is only an avidity to believe in this make believe, in concert with others and as part of a chain of “memes” or tendencies. Schuon’s devotion to the irrational allowed him to think himself the embodiment of the imaginary divinities. Sam Harris notes regarding the madness of the religious that “it is difficult to imagine a set of beliefs more suggestive of mental illness than those that lie at the heart of many of our religious traditions.” Exactly. Most religious people are unaware they are devoting their lives to something that does not exist. Huge amounts of precious human energy goes into creating and sustaining these systems of political/spiritual delusion. As Harris says, “most religions have canonized a few products of ancient ignorance and derangement and passed them down to us as if they were primordial truths”, <sup>142</sup> What Guenon and Schuon call “esoterism” is only the inward dimension of alienated and magical thinking, crazy myths and figments of religious imagination. Henry Corbin called this realm of delusions and religious fictions the “imaginal realm”<sup>143</sup> Sam Harris is

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<sup>142</sup>Harris, Sam. *The End of Faith*. NY. Norton 2005 pg. 72

<sup>143</sup> Corbin’s notion of the imagination is rather like Jung’s. Yuval Harari calls it the “common imagination”, unfortunately with no critical intent. It is all about dreams, visions and delusional and romantic “prophetic revelations”. It is an inflated poetry of the fancy. The Imagination for Corbin--is an organ of perception gives us access to a realm of delusional “being”, a subjective world that Corbin came to call the *mundus imaginalis*, the “imaginal world”. This is his neologism for the Arabic term *alam al’mithal* used by Ibn ‘Arabi and many others. But the “active imagination” is also *creative* imagination in the sense it creates magnified delusions of a



right that religion must come under question. The need for the “end of faith” as a survival priority for the species. “Esoterism” is merely a new religion that prolongs the harm done by earlier religions.

It is really quite irrational, and yes, even crazy, for Christians to think that “God’s son” Jesus died and somehow reproduces his body and blood every time a priest says a few Latin words mumbled over a glass of burgundy and a cheap, round cracker. It is irrational to think Mary was born in an immaculate conception or that she gave birth to Jesus in a “Virgin Birth”. It is likewise absurd to claim that Jesus was descended from David at the same time as one claims that god was his father, who impregnated Mary. (Romans 1:3).<sup>144</sup> Ibn Arabi thought he was having sex with the entire universe, which Walt Whitman might think is poetic, but really such fantasies are really just exercises in imaginal excess. Schuon thought his sex fantasies meant he was a universal prophet. This sort of nonsense gets believed as being the literal truth by deluded and gullible followers. Schuon’s followers thought that Schuon’s penis conferred blessings of a Eucharistic sort, just as Guenon’s followers

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mythic nature.. The exploration of the “subtle realm” requires an interplay between the human and illusion of the “divine” that pretends to be both a discovery and a creation. Really all this is just an invention or a fiction. Prayer is the activity of pretending these fictions are real. Corbin’s effort, Like William James, is an elaborate effort to pretend the unreal is the measure of reality, that delusion is fact. It is no mistake that Corbin’s original researchers were into Heidegger, Hence Corbin’s fantasy of a metaphysics outside history and hence he flirtation – or is it immersion---with far right ideology.

<sup>144</sup> The Gospel fictions try to claim that god was Jesus’ father, which makes no sense if he was descended from David. He could not be both. But myth is not rational, the religious would say. Saying it is a “mystery” is a common way of hiding the fact that none of this happened,, it is just mythic hyperbole in the service of useful delusions. The Christ myth is lacking in any real facts at all, as Robert Ingersoll wisely wrote:

. We have listened to all the drowsy, idealess, vapid sermons that we wish to hear. We have read your Bible and the works of your best minds. We have heard your prayers, your solemn groans and your reverential "amens". All these amount to less than nothing. We want one fact. We beg at the doors of your churches for just one little fact. We pass our hats along your pews and under your pulpits and implore you for just one fact. We know all about your moldy wonders and your stale miracles. We want a this year's fact. We ask only one. Give us one fact for charity. Your miracles are too ancient. The witnesses have been dead for nearly two thousand years.  
-- Robert Green Ingersoll, "The Gods" (1872)

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thought that metals channel maleficent and negative spiritual influences. Muhammad thought he had the right to commit horrible atrocities and to marry a nine-year-old wife because he was the 'chosen prophet'. The world is crowded with god's prophets, all of them claiming to be god's chosen vessel and to beyond any laws. Just how the Christ myth arose, as well as the Myth of Muhammad is a subject of great interest nowadays and I record some of the findings about this in these books. See my essay below: "The Myths of Jesus and Muhammad and the War between Christianity and Islam

In Tibetan Buddhism a female 'saint' Machig Lepdron and her associates did bizarre Chod ceremonies having sex in cemeteries on top of corpses, in order to feel themselves beyond birth and death.<sup>145</sup> This is a crazy procedure, when no one in fact is ever beyond birth or death except in fantasy or delusion.<sup>146</sup> The psychotic exercises are meant to push the human mind into insanity, as religion requires insane delusions to exist. This is not evolution art work, but a technique ancient

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<sup>145</sup> Tibetan Buddhism was a violent religion. As Victor Trimondi writes: "Lamaism's evaluation of war is fundamentally positive and affirmative, as long as it involves the spread of Buddhism. (We shall later demonstrate this through many examples.) This in no sense implicates a discontinuity between historical reality and the Buddhist/pacifist doctrine. *Vajrayana* itself cultivates an aggressive, warlike behavior and indeed not just so as to overcome it through mental control. Wars are declared — as is usual among other religions as well — so as to proceed against the "enemies of the faith"." <http://www.trimondi.de/SDLE/Part-2-09.htm#tibetans>

<sup>146</sup> Similar useless and destructive attitudes can be found in some artists, whose empty sensationalism gives them fame with no content. Zhang Huan, for instance "witnessed the Tibetan Sky burial, in which a monk eviscerates the human corpse, leaving the flesh as food for vultures and smashing the bones into a grainy dust. The process is supposed to liberate the spirit from the body for peaceful transport into the next life. "Most people, when they see this ceremony, think it is gross and they cannot bear to watch," Mr. Zhang said. "But, when I watch the ceremony, I feel this hallucination of happiness, and I feel free." This willingness to hallucinate is characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism and other religions. What is involved here is an absurd transcendentalism that sees death and sacrifice as a desirable thing and can do so only by entering a kind of madness. Christianity does this same thing. Violence correlates with transcendental delusions.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/arts/design/zhang-huans-colorful-skull-paintings-at-the-pace-gallery.html?\\_r=0&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1379292653-WiIdwnSsFU1YmCDd+j724w](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/arts/design/zhang-huans-colorful-skull-paintings-at-the-pace-gallery.html?_r=0&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1379292653-WiIdwnSsFU1YmCDd+j724w)

shamans already knew—you must derange yourself to convince others you know things they do not know. Religion in one sense is merely insanity channeled into myths useful in controlling the behavior and thoughts of others. Victor Trimondi writes of Tibetan Buddhism that

“In Tibetan Buddhism we have an archaic, magic-based religious system, which has remained to a large extent untouched by the fundamentals of the Western Enlightenment. This is also the reason it is so attractive for right-wing extremists. For centuries it has led to social injustices that any freedom-loving citizen of today would be forced to reject. The equality of the sexes, democratic decision making and ecumenical movements are in themselves foreign to the nature of Tantric Buddhism,”<sup>147</sup>

Tibetan Buddhism is a bizarre combination of the indigenous Bon religion of the mountains and plateau of that area and Hindu and Buddhist ideas imported from India. Tibetan religion served an hereditary theocracy kept in place by the absurd idea of reincarnated lamas and holy men and women. Misogynistic clan deities ruled the land in the persons of Lama run monasteries culminating in Lhasa, where the Dalai Lama lived. Tibetan history is rife with political religions and infighting. Religions are all fairy tales, fabrications, constructions or cultural inventions: fairy tales for adults. Buddhism pretends to present teachings that are beyond birth and death. They are not of course. Birth and death are part of the planet we live on and as much as they are difficult and painful, our earth and lives that are possible because birth and death exist. Without them we would not exist. The amazing thing is that priests, Rabbis, shamans, poets and “sages” sucker so many people

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<sup>147</sup> <http://www.american-buddha.com/critic.for.htm>

into believing this anti-life nonsense—I even tried believing it myself, much to my continued embarrassment.<sup>148</sup>

I tried on some of these beliefs for size, for a short time. I was a suckered fool too—I let myself be a suckered fool, partly out of curiosity, partly wishing it were all true and partly to find out the truth about these con-games. For instance I once thought the Tibetan “Wheel of Life” (Bhavacakra) held important truths. I first saw one at the Tibetan Museum on Staten Island, a propaganda museum for the Tibetans who were dispersed in the Diaspora. It was exotic and interesting. It is a conceptual diagram of Buddhist ideology. It seemed at the time like I discovered something. But once I finally studied it, it doesn’t hold truths that seems true to me.--- it merely shows ideas which are misinterpreted and lied about to sucker in the gullible. It was a propaganda advertisement meant to condition minds to a way of thinking the served a ruling class. At the center of the Bhavacakra is a pig, snake and a bird. These are equated with the “three poisons”, ignorance, attachment and aversion. This is speciesism of a rather rank sort. Animals do not personify human faults. Ignorance in the Wheel, refers to ignorance of Buddhism, which is not a bad thing, as the fundamentals of Buddhism are so distorted and delusional. The idea of Karma ( caste) and that of samsara( life is illusion) are very harmful ideas. Attachment is a good

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<sup>148</sup> The same appears to be the case for Victor Trimondi, who, according to his wikipedia entry, was a leftist, was disillusioned, explored religion and was disillusioned again. He writes that he came to the

“conclusion that political and sociopolitical activities alone are not enough to solve the pressing problems of human society once and for all. I saw a new and promising possibility in a — as it was described at the time — “radical transformation of consciousness”.”

He became an organizer of New Age conferences. He seems to have been somewhat disillusioned with this too. This disillusionment makes his writings on Tibetan Buddhism very interesting and accurate,-- disillusion leads one to seek truth. I think. I don’t know about his current efforts to write a positive assessment of his beliefs. He says this has to do with “Eros”— but I don’t know what he means by that. He seems to be an idealist and a romantic who could use a deeper understanding of science. Trimondi birth name is Herbert Röttgen. He is an interesting writer and scholar.

thing as we only live once, and those close to us are what really matters. The only “poison” that makes sense is anger, which is rarely a good thing, though there are times where it is not a bad thing. Getting angry about abuses of business or government is essential to creating social change for instance.



Tibetan Wheel of Existence  
(Bhavacakra)

Therefore, since I thought there might be truths in this ideology and I was wrong,, I am not lily white here. I too have made mistakes and believed beautiful lies. I admit I was fascinated by the intelligence put forth in these elaborate symbols systems. I wanted to decode them. These “technologies of the sacred”. However, I came out of it knowing I

had the responsibility to say to others that this way is a way of lies, beautiful lies that really are ugly and malicious, once you get to know the truth about what religions really are. <sup>149</sup>

Since I had been insider involved with the Schuon cult for a few years, between 1989 and 1991, and met various Guenonians, both then and since then. I have observed Traditionalists as a critic and as an outsider since 1991. Given these facts, I thought it might be a good idea if I reflected critically on what I have learned, aware that I would not be able to say everything that needs to be said. There are few who knew as many of these people as I have and still managed to retain some measure of objectivity. Indeed, there are none that I know of. I don't say this out of any pride, as I often wish I never met any of these people. It is a source of shame to me to write about this, and I do so with some regret. This book is one that causes me great embarrassment. But it is the truth telling that motivates me, partly against my own interests.

I heard various accounts from people who met Guenon that he was deeply paranoid and prone to paranoid fits, amounting to a mental illness. This is evident enough in his writings. I learned the hard way how the machinery of fabrication in the Schuon cult works and know that this is partly derived from the paranoid elitism of Guenon. The cult still exists though in much altered form and barely able to maintain their lies. I saw with my own eyes how Schuon was willing to lie, pose, create phony visions or have others lie for him, to protect his mythical delusions of grandeur and his cult continues trying to maintain this

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<sup>149</sup> Those who manage to retain only what is lovely in a religion are rather rare, but they do exist. There are nuns who have been wonderful people and priests who seems unusually kind or generous, such as are sometimes pictured in literature, Alyosha in Brothers Karamazov or the Priest in Les Miserable. In real life Fra Angelico seems to have been a very kind and gentle man, as was Seraphim of Sarov. These are exceptions that prove the rule, however, and they very likely would have been good people in any case, though perhaps not to the same exaggerated degree. The demand for saints in religions is very high, partly to justify its power needs, so exceptions such as these are to be expected.

traditional of lies. There is similar machinery at work in Guenon inspired schools, though it is not exactly the same. My knowledge of Guenon is considerable but not encyclopedic, and some research materials, available only in Europe or unpublished, I have not seen. But I have learned enough over the years to have a well-informed opinion of what he did and why. In addition I have known a lot of the secondary characters in the traditionalist milieu, such as Rama Coomaraswamy of Wolfgang Smith. At the same time I have known many of these who left these cults. In addition I have knowledge of various religions I have practices in varying degrees of depth.

Writing this book is not a task I have wanted to accomplish but more one that I feel a certain duty to finish. To be honest I hate this subject and would rather be with my kids, in the woods, studying insects or painting pictures of my garden or in the National Park. But someone has to do it. In the main, outside the joy I take in scholarship, I have not enjoyed writing this book. I do it from a sense of duty. I feel there needs to be a voice that questions the rather toxic heritage left by religions and ideological systems from Marx to Guenon, Coomaraswamy and others. Further than that I mean to question the subjectivist culture of ‘post modernism’ in which I have lived most of my life. So I wrote the first version of this long essay in 1996 for one of my professors, David Adams. It was then called “A Pathology of Power”. I wrote it as part of an inquiry I was making into systems of Knowledge and Power. It was a long footnote to my book, The Empire of the Intellect. In that book I showed how ideologies and system of political and epistemological power occurred in large patterns of history, resulting in favoring some and causing atrocities toward others. I wanted to show how the “Intellect” creates atrocities. This study about religion as well as Guenon, Schuon and others was a minute exploration of a very specific and minor group of extremists in the 20 century and how they fit into religious studies as a whole. It was meant to chart the abuse of knowledge for power in a



microcosmic way. I rewrote this 1998 and 99. I then dropped it, partly because Sedgwick had contacted me and claimed to want to write a critical assessment of traditionalism. For a brief period I was quite happy that he wanted the job and was swilling to take the burden from me. But his book did not do what I hoped it would, on the contrary, he partly affirmed traditionalism and orthodox religion and used me in a cynical way. In 2006 I picked it up again and looked at the 120 or more pages I had already written again. I decided this should be put in some better state so as to be available to others. So I did a lot editing, cutting out about half of what I originally wrote. A Belgian friend, Denis Constales, helped me with some of the text and translations of some quotes. But then I put it away for a few more years and then picked it up again a few years ago and work on it when I can ever since then, and it grew more complex and branched out in many directions. What I present here, in I hope a somewhat readable form, is a version of what I wrote in 1996 and 99. I have added 1300 pages of new material, since 2009 expanding it to range across the whole area of religious studies, science, philosophy, linguistics and art-- with the basic thesis still there. I did not have the intention to make it this long, it just became that long, now it is three books---growing out of its own momentum and according to my research. But I have covered most of what I have learned about religions and side issues much developed and expanded, such that now it is an overview of religion itself and covers the area from anti-science to Plato, biology, William James. And from Zen to Darwin and Pascal Boyer.

In what follows I assume the reader has prior knowledge about the major religions as well as who the Traditionalists are, especially Guenon, Schuon, Evola and Dugin. If not they should read Mark Sedgwick's Against the Modern World, a very flawed book, marred by Sedgwick's careerism and Islamic attachments but at the moment the best general



over view of the traditionalist movement---- I hope another and better book will appear. But so far Sedgwick's is the only book that tries to assess the traditionalists from a somewhat objective, academic perspective. Virtually all other books written on this subject are biased, ideological tracts written by cult members or followers. (I offer a brief review of Sedgwick's book below).

Furthermore, I should state that though I belonged to the Schuon cult for a few years, when I left it, I left religion too, shortly after, indeed, my attraction to Schuon to begin with was too all the religions, I saw no point in studying just one. It was quite clear to me that the revelation of the true character of Schuon which I had witnessed was not just the end of Schuon for me but the end of the whole traditionalist movement and of religion as a whole. I saw how Schuon's own particular formula of truth was bogus and in the process learned that religion as a whole is largely about studiously maintained fictions. But I had been a sincere practitioner of many religions outside of Schuon's influence and I saw they were all compromised. In the Schuon cult, I saw how they all fawned over Schuon, a man I could no longer respect, and how they fawned over Guenon, who I already knew was a charlatan. I saw Nasr's small minded ambitions and Ling's weakness. I saw in a deeply personal way, the narrow, far right and cramped dogmatism of Rama Coomaraswamy, and learned a great deal from him about his father. I really liked Rama and thought him a warm and caring person. Unfortunately his cramped and bigoted religion made his kindness moot. His dogmatic, John Bircher view of the world made his views extreme and intolerable. I learned from Wolfgang Smith how religion abuses science and how the far right imagination seeks to subject and deform observed truth and evidence. I wrote about all this too.

I told the truth about Schuon and Primordial Gatherings. They are still lying about it and denying it 20 years after, without answering any of

the evidence I and others have provided which proves the case.<sup>150</sup> They only deny, like holocaust deniers and cry “conspiracy”. Various people who have no evidence as I do, have come along and say I lied or I am a bad person, or it was not so bad what Schuon did. The severity of his crime is irrelevant now. What is a fact is that he had children involved in sexualized gatherings that were about his supposed divinity. I proved this and proved he lied about it. What this proves is the man was a sleazy character with delusions of grandeur and was no transcendental prophet at all. Those who continue to promote Schuon are themselves charlatans and liars.

I had the misfortune of witnessing just how controlling, megalomaniacal and delusional Schuon was in person. I watched the cultic apparatus hide the reality of his awful personality just as they hid his small stature and bad teeth, nurturing the myth of his holiness, even encouraging the myth of his handsomeness when he was hardly handsome. His public persona was and still is managed to a high degree by his wives and followers. In reality he was petty, selfish and mean and prone to fits of anger and childish tantrums.

These days I have no interest in Guenon at all, but since I know a lot about the groups and individuals that believe the nonsense he spills out in his books, I owe it to reality to account for what I have learned.

Guenon and Schuon both were devotees of the “gnostic” the

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<sup>150</sup> Charles Upton, whose wife is in the Schuon cult, admits it. He writes “ Schuon himself characterized his primordial gatherings as the expressions of a personal predilection, not an integral aspect of his spiritual method”. This is not accurate at all. Schuon’s statements about this were merely PR posturing. In the inner circle of the cult the spiritual method was the essence of the “ primordial dimension”. It was the culmination of the spiritual method and the “themes”. The gatherings were presented as the ultimate esoteric act of Schuon and not merely a personal predilection, so that statement is just the usual damage control put out by the cult and the Upton’s were not privy to the real events and what they were about.  
<http://traditionalstudies.freeforums.org/critical-review-of-schuon-biography-by-upton-t20.html>

“inward”<sup>151</sup> and the “infinite” and thought themselves beyond the law, infallible and blessed with the highest spiritual faculties of the age. Whatever humility they may have affected on occasion, they believed themselves beyond change and vicissitude, a law unto themselves, “a man not like other men” as Schuon said of himself.

He says of himself that that “I was from the beginning a person different from the others, I was made from different material.” Actually he was rather a normal, rather small German Swiss. An unpublished paper, “*The Veneration of the Shaykh*” [written by Schuon and his fourth “wife” Sharlyn Romaine in conjunction with Schuon], says that Schuon is “an eminent manifestation of the eternal *sadguru* ... an ‘avataric’ phenomenon ... a ‘prophetic’ figure ... and a great bodhisattva”; that Schuon demonstrates “the qualities of Shiva and Krishna”; and has affinities with “Abraham”... “David”.... “Christ”, and “Muhammad....”---- Notice the endless listing of superlatives, obsessively and excessively enumerating his superlative qualities, as if they had to utterly convince cult members against the overwhelming doubts that inevitably occur. This encrusted piling up of superlatives and analogies with the supposedly great of history is obsessive in the Schuon cult. It is not enough to be merely a “manifestation” one must be an “eminent manifestation”. Schuon does not write good books they are “magisterial”. No doubt is possible and the excess mounts, and insanely, “avataric” is piled on top of “prophet”, “sadguru” on top of “Krishna”, on top of David, on top of Abraham etc. ---one on top of another like clowns in car or Russian dolls spilling out of a mad king’s closet. That is how it was in the Schuon cult: The man needed excessively endless praise and it had to be

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<sup>151</sup> An example of the cult of inwardness fostered by romanticism would be the poetry of Wordsworth, Rilke, Rumi, as well as Heidegger and many others see also Patrick Laude: *Pathways to an Inner Islam: Massignon, Corbin, Guenon, and Schuon*. Laude is a cult follower of Schuon’s, so don’t expect much to be illumined by this book. Cult followers generally have little original to say and slavishly imitate their cult leader.

constant and plural, the whole group had to be devoted to tending his greedy and insecure hubris.<sup>152</sup>

Both Guenon and Schuon claimed infallibility and the right to dictate to others out of their madness. Schuon writes his basic doctrine in one of his unpublished texts that

“I know with certitude that all phenomena, inward as well as outward, reflect the “absolute”, in itself or according to a given aspect...since there is a sole Reality... I know with certitude that evil derives from what is illusorily other than the Essence”<sup>153</sup>

This is magical thinking. There is no all-pervading “Essence”. That is merely trick of language; no one has even discovered such a thing as the “essence”, neither Schuon nor anyone else knows anything about it. The Platonic/Scholastic idea of “essence” is merely a confusion and misunderstanding of language, as Bertrand Russell points out. So Schuon’s basic doctrine is false or wishful thinking from the very start. Based on this illusion of “certitude” about a linguistic generalization, Schuon deduces that the entire world is illusory, except the delusion he has singled out as the sole reality. So actual reality, the reality where we all live, becomes a lesser reality, mere “manifestation” and evil because of

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<sup>152</sup> There are so many instances of this praise for Schuon, but the excess of it is itself telling. Whitall Perry, whose wife Schuon stole from him, wrote of him that “ I once told Schuon that I thought it possible he himself incorporated certain aspects at least of the Johannine function, and he did not deny it.” This identity that Whitall established with the man who stole his wife is very odd. Of course Whitall stole Schuon’s wife in return, and the whole game went on absurdly with all of them praising Schuon to cover up their own emptiness and corruption. Perry’s praise of Schuon was very odd since I know Schuon despised Perry, and according to Glasse, it was rather mutual. Glasse says he and Perry discussed Schuon being a con man and insane.. Perry was an alcoholic according to his daughter, who was violent with his children. Perry praises Schuon because if he didn’t he would have little standing in the cult, where mindless praise of Schuon is obligatory. This dual appraisal of the cult leader is very common and is called “doubling” but R.J. Lifton.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/51122452/Sophia-vol-4-whithall-perry>

<sup>153</sup> Text number 249—these texts are given to disciples. Some of these have been published as letters but actually they were not that at all. Schuon and his cult are addicted to dissimulation.

its “remoteness ”. In other words, the idea of essence like the idea of quality, when applied as a metaphysical concept, is really an excuse to extrapolate ideas of hierarchy, caste and inequality. Schuon’s cult and his delusions of grandeur derive from this simple delusion.<sup>154</sup>

Conveniently, Schuon forbid anyone to question him. He said “no one may circumscribe the competence of the Shaykh”, since he is “infallible”. He claims to be beyond question, beyond the law, beyond criticism, beyond assessment. He is both prophet CEO and avatar. Rudolf Hess wrote of Hitler that:

The National Socialism of all of us is anchored in the surrender to the Fuhrer that does not ask for the why in individual cases, in the silent execution of his orders. We believe that the Fuhrer is obeying the higher call to fashion German history”<sup>155</sup>

Silliness, of course, but silliness that had lethal results. This lethal hero worship—of the same kind that Schuon tried to induce in his followers--- is an inevitable development of romantic thought, and one finds the same thing under Stalin in Russia of Khomeini in Iran. The Fuhrer or

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<sup>154</sup> David Hall writes about the delusion of the “intellect”—which is the name Schuon and Guenon give to “atman” within them. – they both claimed “infallible knowledge based on this intellect, and this knowledge was self-authenticating. There is no credibility that can be attached to such claims as such claims led to delusions as was obviously the case in both Guenon and Schuon. David uses the example of the man who tries to shake the hand of a wax dummy in Madame Tussaud’s wax museum. He thought the person was real, but it was not. It was wax. “There is a difference between sense experience and its interpretation” David writes. “---“we should not accept the interpretations that mystics themselves give to their experiences.” ... “none of the religions are revelations but merely human constructs”. Schuon thought his feeling and thoughts were from the divine, but really they were an illusion, like a wax figure at Madame Tussaud’s. ( see pg 153, in David’s [Islamic Mysticism: A Secular Perspective](#) by Ibn Al-Rawandi, whose real name was David Hall.

<sup>155</sup> Harris. Sam. The End of Faith. New York Norton. Pg. 100

Shaykh or the corporate CEO<sup>156</sup> is always right. But one realizes at last that the Prophet, the CEO and the psychopath don't just have a lot in common. They are men who think themselves "laws unto themselves". The mindless subjection to an overarching totalism is characteristic of Hitler's Reich, the Schuon cult, the Catholic Church, some corporations or Stalin's Marxist Leninism. The Romantic ego of Fichte and Hegel must be universal and must reach the stars, be the ultimate exception, the absolute voice of the ultimate and absolute. Even when the "Supreme Leader" does harm it is for the good. Hegel said that history is "god's plan" and "that which does not accord with it is "negative worthless existence" <sup>157</sup>. Indeed, Mao and Guenon are not far apart after all, whatever the differences in the doctrines. Their doctrines almost do not matter, it is the power that is in their arrangement and purpose that matters.

Russell goes on to show that the Romantic belief in irrationality and

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<sup>156</sup> The psychopathology and cult leaders and CEOs is very similar. Concerning the psychopathology of CEO's Paul Street observes that "In a study published by the British academic journal *Psychology, Crime and Law* six years ago, Belinda Board and Katarina Fritz on performed in-depth psychological tests on 39 senior managers and chief executives at leading British corporations.<sup>156</sup>[26] Monbiot describes the chilling results:

"They compared the results to the same tests on patients at Broadmoor special hospital, where people who have been convicted of serious crimes are incarcerated. On certain indicators of psychopathy, the bosses' scores either matched or exceeded those of the patients. In fact on these criteria they beat even the subset of patients who had been diagnosed with psychopathic personality disorders."

<http://www.zcommunications.org/a-deal-with-the-devil-a-happiness-that-harms-by-paul-street>

<sup>157</sup> Quoted in Chomsky, Year 501. Boston, South End Press Pg. 109

“inwardness” as espoused by Bryon, Rousseau, Hegel <sup>158</sup>and others deified the irrational ego and in so doing set the stage for Robespierre, the Terror, the Nazis and Stalin’s terrors in Russia. What “triumphs the future has to offer this ghost I do not venture to predict.” <sup>159</sup> But the “ghost” Russell refers to here is a form of what I am calling spiritual fascism or theofascism, or the irrational amalgam of anti-scientific religion and the social means of power and coercion.<sup>160</sup> Aspects of culture in the United States and Europe, in this way, recalls Nazi Germany, which also fell into disenchantment with reason. America in our times maybe falling in a downward spiral of “a historic process in which resentment against a disenchanted secular world found deliverance in the ecstatic escape of unreason.”<sup>161</sup> The trick of Guenon

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<sup>158</sup> William James thought that it was only when he was under the influence of nitrous oxide that he was able to understand Hegel. It is the self-induced mysticism of Hegel’s ideas that reminded James so much of being drugged state. Indeed, religion is an opiate. Marx thought this a bad thing whereas James wanted more of the drugged states it gave him. James got high on delusions. Indeed, James and Hegel both base their religion largely on the idea of “feeling” or subjective states. Romantic subjectivism is one of the last holdouts against science.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, pg. 701

<sup>160</sup> Muhammad Legenhausen quote Hegel as saying that “If we also say that feeling and devotion are essential [to religion], this is because there is a spiritual relationship or spirituality in this feeling”. This is the subjective nature of religion about which Russell is complaining. Legenhausen quotes another author about the meeting of Hegel and Von Baader, a devotee of Bohme and mysticism

“Baader visited Hegel in Berlin, and the two studied Meister Eckhart together. Baader reports that on reading a certain passage in Eckhart, Hegel cried “da haben wir es ja, was wir wollen!” (“There, indeed, we have what we want!”). ...Hegel then subsequently introduced a quotation from Eckhart into his 1824 Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: “The eye with which God sees me is the same eye by which I see Him, my eye and His eye are one and the same. In righteousness I am weighed in God and He in me. If God did not exist nor would I; if I did not exist nor would he.”

This again is the narcissistic spirituality that is so much a feature of mystical projections and self-magnification, and defines the “pathological subjectivity” that I discuss throughout this book as being a defining feature of mystical excess, so called esoterism and theofascism. Romanticism exalts subjective feeling as paramount. This is also akin to William James’s subjectivism. See : [https://www.academia.edu/6112017/Hegels\\_Spirituality](https://www.academia.edu/6112017/Hegels_Spirituality)

<sup>161</sup> This is a quote from Fritz Stern in a Chomsky essay called “Outrage, Misguided” (2010) [http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/6615/outrage\\_misguided/%2010](http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/6615/outrage_misguided/%2010). Chomsky compares 2010 America to Weimar Germany in the 1920’s. He thinks people are deceived and exploited by the

and Schuon as well as other far-right ideologues is to convince people that their sorrows are not caused by the actual causes, but rather to deflect the real cause and blame their misery on the poor, the Jews, the “profane”, “liberals”, secular humanism or Osama Bin Laden or whoever.<sup>162</sup> The real problems that affect the West are much more internal to America itself. There is a refusal to hold the wealthy accountable, and an unwillingness to do good for the whole of the society including the natural world, rather than merely caring for the rich and their need of tax breaks, more money and more stockholder benefits. There is a deliberate effort to make the middle class assume all the risks for the rich. There is an effort to undermine education and universities and promote anti-intellectual ideologies. Scientific humanism of an enlightened sort is the one thing that does help people get out the holes the elites in society put them into. That is why scientific humanism is so roundly condemned by the far-right. The real problem is the greed and

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far right pundits like Limbaugh and other media minions of the corporate state. I think he is right about this. Part of the function of traditionalism is to enable just such far-right irrationality .

<sup>162</sup> This pattern plays itself out in history many times. The English Civil War was a just cause and well argued. Robert Filmer’s notion of Divine Right ( see his *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings* , published in 1680 but written in around the time of the Civils Wars in the 1640’s.)was absurd and the English Monarch had to be reined in. But once Oliver Cromwell took power he soon becomes as corrupt as the Kings he replaced. His he helps kill King Charles I Stuart in an effort to free England of monarchical tyranny but unjustly goes on to killing of Irish Peasants. Robespierre in France and Napoleon later fall into the same trap of unreason and terror in the name of right. In France standing against Robespierre was Marat and Georges Danton and in England was Thomas Rainsborough, all of them more reasonable than most of the time. Rainsborough said

“ I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the greatest he; and therefore truly. Sir, I think it's clear that every man that is to live under a Government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that Government; and I do think that the poorest man in England is not at all bound in a strict sense to that Government that he hath not had a voice to put himself under”

Tom Paine said similar anti-hierarchy truths and had insights into the corruption of power in revolutions too. Indeed, all the revolutions between Cromwell and Lenin to the current Islamic revolutions fails to differing degrees because in no case have the injustices of power been well and truly addressed and learned from. Power corrupts but it also can be seen through and seeing through power is real liberation. One gets free of it and then power becomes a kind of horrible and tragically humorous inevitability that one seeks to overcome.



illusory grandeur of the élites, be it the corporate CEOs, the priests, the aristocracy or kings or the top castes. <sup>163</sup>

So I will discuss the origins of some of these ideas in Romanticism and how Romanticism ended up being one of the roots of fascism and theofascism. Trying to understand the relationship of power systems to cultural creations in religion and art, literature and poetry will be a major part of this book. I will show in these books how traditional religious constructions helped create the Dark Ages and sought to restrain or destroy science, the one source of knowledge that has helped all humans and not just the rich. I will discuss Plato and how he inspired far right fanatics over many millennia and Hypatia, a woman who studied the stars and was murdered by Christians, and Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite and how he and Plotinus sought to create a Platonist justification of unjust hierarchies. I will show how the Hindu caste system and Buddhist ideology served to justify killing and hatred and how Darwin's idea foiled all the religions of the world.

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<sup>163</sup> There is a concerted effort in America to make a sort of caste system with CEO's in one caste and everyone else lower than them by degrees, with the poor and lower classes used to suffer and work hard to absorb the risks of the irresponsible rich. There is a sort of socialism for the rich, and brutal capitalism for the poor and lower classes. The "supreme court" is partly responsible for this in cases such as Santa Clara and Citizen's United. This horrible injustice, with many dire consequences around the globe-- is due in part to the idea of corporation being "persons", which of course they are not. The solution to this is resistance and eventual dismantling of the corporate structure of laws and loopholes, tax breaks and privileges. For more on how corporations use disasters, hurricanes, and financial crises to exploit the poor and middle class for profit, see Naomi Klien's Shock Doctrine.. She writes:

"At the most chaotic juncture in Iraq's civil war, a new law is unveiled that would allow Shell and BP to claim the country's vast oil reserves.... Immediately following September 11, the Bush Administration quietly out-sources the running of the "War on Terror" to Halliburton and Blackwater.... After a tsunami wipes out the coasts of Southeast Asia, the pristine beaches are auctioned off to tourist resorts.... New Orleans's residents, scattered from Hurricane Katrina, discover that their public housing, hospitals and schools will never be reopened.... These events are examples of "the shock doctrine": using the public's disorientation following massive collective shocks -- wars, terrorist attacks, or natural disasters -- to achieve control by imposing economic shock therapy."

Most of the writing about Guenon is from the point of view of a supercilious certainty in Guenon's superiority, ----a baseless superiority adopted by those who belong to the various secretive cults, groups or loose knit right-wing associations of individuals who rather slavishly follow his work and treat it as if it were holy writ. The group-think in these little backwaters and cults is oppressive and their servile addition to Guenonian orthodoxy is tiresome. Unable to think outside the Guenonian or Schuonian box, there is little critical historiography of traditionalism outside these self-congratulatory or cultish sources. The slavishly biased sources are legion and are immediately viewable if you look up Guenon in the internet or look at Mark Sedgwick's site.<sup>164</sup>

Traditionalism is a right wing, reactionary, upper-middle class and pseudo-aristocratic religion composed mostly of European and American arm-chair, suburbanite and academic 'metaphysicians' (as they pretentiously call themselves) who long for a return to archaic eternal worlds of their own imaginations. There are a few traditionalists in Russia, Brazil, Morocco, Iran and elsewhere. In their respective societies they are outsiders who hate the world they live in. they all live in a reactionary fog of denial and escape, caught in arrogant ignorance Guenon's claim to present the eternal "pure truth", a 'super-religion', turns out to be increasingly time bound, past tense, and retroactive. He pretended to desire only to express simple "traditional truths", when in fact traditions are far from uniform and where they overlap the cause is a similar devotion of aristocratic monism or polytheist monism. His false humility hides an enormous and vicious pride that wants the return of

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<sup>164</sup> Here:

<http://www1.aucegypt.edu/faculty/sedgwick/Trad/index.htm>

I will critique Sedgwick's book below

autocratic caste elitism. Guenon was a last gasp of the European aristocratic values, just as his Islamism was a last gasp of impotent rebellion against the inevitability to Enlightenment values coming to Islamic countries.<sup>165</sup> The whole notion of the “unity of religions” is a modernist and romantic fabrication, an invention based on superficial correspondences between different religions. Guenon, Schuon and Evola claimed to be expositors and Prophets of the Great Tradition, when in fact they were merely inventors and manufacturers of a new mythos, a new cult, a new way to sell old fictions—an new way to insure the injustice of elite classes and unfair economics. “Tradition” is merely a code word for the habits of unjust elites.

Regarding the ideology of “tradition”, my first point is that the very notion of a “tradition” as used by the traditionalists is questionable. Traditionalism is a “Manufactured Mythology”, an invention. As Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger have shown in their book The Invention of Tradition, traditions are not born like Athena from the head of Zeus or impregnated through the ear of a Virgin Mary but rather are political entities dressed up as metaphysical ‘truth’. Traditions arise from various habits and misunderstandings of the historical record, sometimes going back only a few generations, sometimes longer. Hobsbawm and Ranger’s book attempts to show how many traditions were deliberately invented or fabricated, often to highlight or enhance the importance of a certain institution. For instance, they try to show how Welsh and Scottish ‘national culture’ was a recent creation. They show also how the elaboration of British royal rituals in Africa and India justified political

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<sup>165</sup> It might be worth noting here that the Christian resurgence in America is likewise a nostalgic movement for a power that in fact is leaving America. The real power in today’s world is global corporatism, which does have resonance with Perennialism in that both the corporate and the Traditionalist view of the world is based on false abstract and ‘universal’ entities. Corporations are fictional persons, just as religions are fictions based on imaged gods and fictional principles. Corporate personhood is as much make believe as the deity of Zeus or the fiction that the Japanese Emperor was a holy god.

regimes and 'the empire'. In a similar way, the Catholic Church was founded on the forged Donation of Constantine in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> The forged document of the Donation of Constantine supposedly was written by Constantine, granting authority over Rome and the western part of the Roman Empire to the pope. Valla is an interesting man and is also credited with exposing the fraud of Pseudo Denys the "Aeropagite". The document was often cited during the Middle Ages in support of the Roman Catholic Church's claims to spiritual and earthly authority. Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla was one of the first to expose it as a fraud. Valla writes

"I know that for a long time now men's ears are waiting to hear the offense with which I charge the Roman pontiffs. It is, indeed, an enormous one, due either to supine ignorance, or to gross avarice which is the slave of idols, or to pride of empire of which cruelty is ever the companion. For during some centuries now, either they have not known that the Donation of Constantine is spurious and forged, or else they themselves forged it, and their successors walking in the same way of deceit as their elders have defended as true what they knew to be false, dishonoring the majesty of the pontificate, dishonoring the memory of ancient pontiffs, dishonoring the Christian religion, confounding everything with murders, disasters and crimes."

The Vatican ignored Valla and the fact of its own illegitimacy, of course, though the Protestants, like Martin Luther thought it proved Rome's illegitimacy, which indeed it does. In any case this is proof again that orthodoxy is spurious and the notion of filiations back to a religions founder is also mere mythologizing.



Constantius appoints Constantine as his successor by Peter Paul Rubens, 1622. This is a typical theofascist image where god (through an ‘angel’) gives Constantine control of the world. Done with Reubens usual fluidity, it is a picture of European self-regard of its own power in the 1600’s

As a reviewer of John Julius Norwich says in his survey history of the Papacy, decent popes were “outnumbered by the corrupt, the inept, the venal, the lecherous, the ruthless, the mediocre and those who didn’t last

long enough to make a mark.”<sup>167</sup> He notes that the long age of the Papacy after makes it the oldest continuing absolute monarchy in the world.’ The Donation of Constantine gave rise to a long history of corruption overlaid with all the finery of overdressed and pretentious “tradition” . Indeed, many of the basic premises and relics of the Catholic Church are forgeries, fakes or fictions. The Lentulus letter , for instance ascribed to Publius Lentulus who is supposed to have lived when Christ was said to be a young man, during the reign of Augustus (27 BC-14 AD). This letter is a fake. It describes the guy with long hair and beard parted in the middle, like nearly all the paintings since the Quattrocento. The standard image of Christ is itself a fake, the result of this forgery. Probably most of the bones of saints, pieces of “true cross” and other relics in Churches all over the world are fake too The miracles of the saints, the visions, auditions and holy dreams are fake and the ones that are real are just dreams, delusions of sleep. Stigmata and forehead sores in the shape of crowns of thorns which are probably just psychological anomalies. Luther is supposed to have said that “Rome has enough nails from the holy cross to shoe every horse in Saxony. Eighteen out of twelve apostles are buried in Spain.” Even if he did not say these things exactly, the falsity of relics is both accurate and much worse than Luther realized..

The invention of the Eucharist was an ongoing event in Christian history. I’ve written about this elsewhere.<sup>168</sup> The notion of an infallible “tradition” emanating from impeccable sources in any religion is utter

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<sup>167</sup> Norwich, John Julius, Absolute Monarchs, a History of the Papacy

Though I think he overstates the dates. The Catholic Church is really only about 1200 years old, not 2000.

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<sup>168</sup> <http://naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/eucharist.asp> The eucharist was not about saving anybody, it was about the consolidating the power of the Church around a ‘symbol’



nonsense. It is clear that the Gospels are later works patched together after the invention of the Christ myth by Paul and others, probably in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, since Jesus was a myth that early Christian passed off as historical. The Koran after Muhammad's death was in many versions and even four centuries after Muhammad there was no agreement as to what the "Koran" actually said.<sup>169</sup> It was written by many people. There is no definitive Koran and the "Hadith" or sayings of the prophet are spurious inventions. Sufism itself is in many cases hardly Islamic at all, and was strongly influenced by Christianity, Buddhism and even unbelievers and atheists. The notion of "orthodoxy" preached and adhered to by traditionalists is largely a romantic fiction. Being orthodox is merely being narrow-minded, adhering to traditions created by priest classes, who mentally jail followers in a system of arbitrary rules and laws. Orthodoxy is really little more than the payment one must make to conform to the men's clubs called Churches, Monasteries and other Patriarchal institutions. The usually all male priesthood that sustains these orthodox rules are anxious to hold onto power and they do so by an amazing variety of means, from threats of hell, to imposed celibacy to art as propaganda, elaborate prayer cycles, even incessant prayer.

The Traditionalists sought to invent a new mythic history based on a pastiche of other "traditions" largely in reaction to the rise of industrialism and the enlightenment, which they not just opposed but hated with passion. Guenon and his followers wanted to advance what has been called the "endarkenment". They hate the enlightenment and seek to return to the Dark Ages: they want to restore superstitious orthodoxy, reinstitute fear of the hierarchy; they want to restrain or eliminate science; return our schools to Church control(trivium, quadrivium) and deny the facts evolution, undermine democracy and destroy human rights. All this has been amply demonstrated below. The

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<sup>169</sup> Ibn Warraq has a very interesting chapter of questionable origins of the Koran in his Why I am not a Muslim--- Chapter 5

traditionalists like to deny the importance of history--- (since they believe they possess the secret of being “beyond time”) —as part of their effort to manufacture the myth of their own perennial and eternal wisdom, a wisdom whose high, peerless, aristocratic eminence they never doubt.<sup>170</sup> This is the religion of aristocracy, though none of the founders of this new religions were in any way aristocrats. However, their belief in their peerless wisdom is untenable and I saw no wisdom existing among them in practice. Therefore, their belief that they transcend history is merely a pipedream, a delusion, an example of the insanity of religions. The idea of “Transcending History” is above all a political ploy, based on a delusion and is always an effort to claim exceptional power and dominion. One can argue about history and what it might mean, but to be beyond history is ridiculous. We all live in time and evolution.

The traditionalists have no real historical sense: they are prone to revisionist, orientalist fantasies of worlds that never really existed. They are even anti-historical in many cases and try to pretend that their oracular pronouncements glitter with pretentious generalities, like diamonds outside of time. They speak from a non-existent eternity about things that do not actually exist. Many of the traditionalists, like Hossein

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<sup>170</sup> A good example the Flat Earth Society and the ‘Return to Idiocy and the Dark Ages’ promoted by traditionalists is Harry Oldmeadow’s statement endorsing ignorance and embracing stupidity that

“it is preferable to believe that god created the world is six days and that heaven lies in the empyrean above the flat surface of the earth, than it is to precisely know the distance from one nebula to another whilst forgetting the truth embodied in this symbolism, namely that all depends on a Higher reality that determine us.” (Sacred Web 14, Science Scientism and Self -destruction.)

It is typical of these writers to choose some minor scientific fact such as the distance between nebulae rather than say, the existence of cells and DNA or the importance of vaccines, or the nature of heart disease. Oldmeadow knows nothing about any fictional ‘higher reality’. He merely makes that up following Schuon et al, in an effort of make himself a sort of academic priest, spouting things, when he doesn’t know what he is talking about. I am amazed that a man who writes this sort of anti-intellectual rubbish is allowed to teach at a university. He should be at the Gnostic School of Applied Disney Metaphysics along with other academics of the Traditionalist variety.



Nasr, Ananda and Rama Coomaraswamy as well as Guenon were alienated and displaced individuals who were forced out of their parent countries or left it in the hopes of finding a romanticized and idealized culture elsewhere. They idealized the nostalgia they felt for cultures they romanticized as lost or on the brink of being lost. These idealizations are what they call “traditions”. Coomaraswamy, both father and son, displaced from India and half Indian half English, dreamed of returning to the glory days of dying religious worlds. Back then, in their dream world, the Hindu world was composed of Hindu caste systems which Ananda loved, or Christian apologies for the Inquisition, like Rama admired. It could have been Taoist dreams<sup>171</sup> of immortal emperors and the “mandate of heaven”, or other figments of their reactionary imaginations. These were alienated men who wished to return to what they wrongly felt was lost, when really they hopelessly idealized India or the dream-world Christianity of Meister Eckhart.

They divide the world into specious categories, such as claiming that “modernity” is profanity and tradition is “sacred”. The historical truth is quite otherwise: the world is a much better place than it was in 1000 C.E., and Pinker shows with elaborate statistics. But of course, they hate statistics and Guenon has a whole chapter against them. They hate science and claim pseudo-objectivity based on whether or not something “leads to god” when god, it turns out, is merely the subjective invention of the intellects of the Traditionalists themselves.

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<sup>171</sup> Taoism has elements that grew out of the Shang Dynasty religious tyranny (1766 to 1122 B.C.E.). The Shang emperors ruled by claiming descent from the fiction of “Shang Ti”, a god of their ancestors. On the basis of this bogus claim they created an elect status for themselves and claimed to be able to shape events, control weather, harvests, economies, politics and virtually everything else. The Taoist Way has its roots in this autocratic fiction which leads to cruelty. The Shang rulers ended being hated by their people. The idea of the “mandate of Heaven” is a development of the Shang Ti idea by which the Chinese state claimed legitimacy based on a religion fiction. The ideology of the “Mandate of Heaven” is a central part of the Tao te Ching and of Chinese government and history. It is accurate, I think to say that Taoism enshrines a justification of state totalitarianism in its founding doctrines. Later dynasties apply the concept back in time retrospectively, to justify their own claim to power, but it really is magical thinking and there is no such thing.

Traditionalism is a tiny and closed fraternity of privileged, narrow minded and self-serving men, a criticism that extends to the women in the cults as well, who by and large support the patriarchy and are willing to keep the secrets, lie, justify their submission and surrender, and do whatever it takes to protect the Traditionalist fantasy.<sup>172</sup> In his book In the Tracks of Buddhism, as in other writings, for instance, Schuon opposes the “emancipation” of Japanese women, and argues against feminism.<sup>173</sup> What they call “metaphysics” is really merely politics set up as faltering dream of fading glory stolen from dead or failing societies. In the end the Traditionalist fantasy is a self-mirroring world of narcissistic Symbolists who serve a far right political agenda, and in most cases, don’t even realize it. I would not know this, unless I had seen these

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<sup>172</sup> There should be some critical studies done about the treatment of women in Traditionalist ideology and social practice. Feminism is a good thing and has freed women from much suffering and oppression. Guenon’ of course was a Moslem and there have been many studies on the atrocious treatment of women in Islam, justified in many cases by the Koran or Hadith. One day when I was up with him in his study talking, Schuon said to me in a sneering tone with a thick German/French accent which was typical of him, that “feminizm ist zatanic” (“feminism is satanic”). and he writes against it in various places. I catalogued many of the abuses against women I saw in the Schuon cult and how Schuon justified his ill treatment of women in primordial gatherings and otherwise. For instance, in an obvious allusion to his own wives and use of nude women in primordial gatherings Schuon writes of “the throne made of human substance” - the harem, that is – “indicates in an eminently more direct and concrete manner the real of borrowed divinity of the monarch.” This very grotesque image of himself as a “prophet” or “monarch” drunk with power, sitting on a throne made of “human substance” reminds me serial killer trophies or Nazi lamp-shades made of human skin. Schuon saw himself as a prophet, the “summit of the human species”. It shows Schuon’s sexist attitudes toward women and his delusions about himself. (Esoterism as Principle and Way pg. 133)

See also Rama Coomaraswamy’s website for more example of Traditionalist sexism. Rama says of women that “within the social relationship, reflecting the relationship of the Church to Christ, she does have a subordinate position.” He says that “Like a king who rules by divine right - that is by God’s laws, so also the husband must rule [his wife]”. He talks a lot about ‘obedience’ and condemns women who “rebel”. “Women was made of man to his glory, as his workmanship and image; therefore she is subject to him” This is basically the same medieval sexist and patriarchal attitudes about women that resulted in the burning of witches, legalized battery and the denial of women’s rights. It is this sort of nonsense that any sensible woman has fought against in the last century or two since Mary Shelley. Rama was a sexist, a homophobe and an Holocaust denier. For more on Rama’s dreadful and reactionary views see

<http://www.the-pope.com/femveili.html>

See also <http://www.the-pope.com/coomcawr.html> and <http://www.the-pope.com>

<sup>173</sup> Schuon, Frithjof IN the Tracks of Buddhism. Allen and Unwin. 1968.Pg 113

people operate on a personal level, apart from their books. Even in my teens, I leaned to the left, sometimes to my father's dismay and my mother's joy, and towards humanism in my politics, but was one of those who did not know traditionalism was a reactionary political movement hiding behind spirituality.<sup>174</sup>

I gave Guenon a healthy chance to sell me on his ideas. I read him too uncritically. He tried to sell me religion the way a used car salesman sells cars. I fell for it for a while. Or more accurately I tried on the belief system as I had tried on various belief systems to see what it felt like and to learn from experience. I agreed with Leonardo Da Vinci that one must experience something to truly know it. World Spirituality is a supermarket that sells many different system of belief. Buy what you want, it is all so many systems of superstition and make believe. I entered into many and left many such systems, like suits of clothes, like houses.<sup>175</sup> Guenon's answer to the problem of modernism was to point the way to traditional religion. The problems presented by modernism cannot be solved by merely going to a church, mosque, reciting empty

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<sup>174</sup> When I was 15 or 16 I had read Marx's Manifesto and under its just concerns I asked my father, who helped run a steel making factory, to be better to his workers, and he did try to be. He painted their lunchrooms and workspaces.

<sup>175</sup> Like the Magic Bead Game in Herman Hesse's novel, or like the Magic Theater in Steppenwolf, where the Hero enters into and out of many doors or worlds to try to find his way. I was a seeker in this surreal or Dadaistic sense of trying many worlds and seeking for the real in all of them. You can see this questing mentality in the poems of Arthur Sze or the mental calisthenics of Paul Feyerabend, whose Dadaistic relativism interested me in the 1980's. I ended up giving up these views, but for while they served my need to explore many different mental or ideological worlds. The wikipedia article discusses his rather weak attitude towards Nazism.

"Hesse was criticized for not condemning the Nazi party, but his failure to criticize or support any political idea stemmed from his "politics of detachment [...] At no time did he openly condemn (the Nazis), although his detestation of their politics is beyond question." <sup>[35]</sup> From the end of the 1930s, German journals stopped publishing Hesse's work, and it was eventually banned by the Nazis.

formulas or taking initiations.<sup>176</sup>

However, I did not know this then. In order to explore Guenon's answer to modernism I had to explore the religions. I did that. I went to visit boring local Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches and tried not to be bored. I spent time in monasteries, joined zendos, temples and mosques, and stood above them, with my esoteric Guenonian cultural imperialistic ideology in tow, as I looked down on the exoteric plebeians below me. That is no way to treat others. Over the course of 5 or 6 years between 1984 and 1991 I explored the landscape outlined by Guenon, Schuon, Coomaraswamy and others. I traveled. I lived in England and studied philosophy, trying to find a way out of the desperate impasse that seemed to me to have overtaken the times I lived in. Through Scott Whitacker, I met Huston Smith, (1919, Dec. 30 2016) in California who got me into the Schuon cult that Smith was also a member of, though I later watched as he lied about this and covered it up. I lost my respect for him. Smith joined the cult in late 1960's, has defended the cult on a number of occasions. I tried to inform him of the cult and its crimes, but he refused to acknowledge the evidence. He continues, as far as I know, as a disciple of Schuon, though he carefully did not mention Schuon in his recent TV series with Bill Moyers(1996). He did promote Schuon's ideology in this series, nevertheless.. Smith's cult name was "Jalaladin"

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<sup>176</sup> I took initiations of various kinds. I was initiated into Buddhism and Islam (on Schuon's insistence), and then I was initiated into the Schuon cult. Initiations were the primary obsession of Guenon for most of his life. The reason for this is because initiations are all about hierarchy and power. They have no real content other than social relations. They pretend to be about actual transmission of something but all that is transmitted is tendencies, ideologies and superstitions. Initiations are mere symbolic and bureaucratic forms. In the Schuon initiation Schuon held his hand on my head and supposedly passed some invisible something into me. "The hand of god is above his hands" was said. But it was all about myth and hierarchy and in fact there was nothing there. I was too uninformed to understand this yet and thought there was reality in it. But it was all theatre and pose. Those who in the great room at Stan Jones' house with 70 other people who were at my initiation claimed to me afterward that it was amazing and full of "Baraka" or blessings, were merely part of the self-deceit of an entire group. It is all smoke and mirrors, with the Wizard of Oz behind the curtain waiting for the dog Toto to expose the fraud.

Schuon gives new names to new members of the cult. <sup>177</sup> You and not allowed to be who you were when you entered the cult. You are supposed to be mindless putty in his hands, or as he says, ‘an empty cup’.

I entered the Schuon cult through Huston Smith, who recommended me to it. I made the mistake of trusting him. I thought he could be trusted, and did not realize that he himself was a promoter and a con man who believed his own rhetoric. As I learned Smith was a careerist who bent the truth to serve the needs of his fame. He was informed by me and others of Schuon’s crimes and actively continued on serving himself and hiding the truth about it, as did Nasr and Lings too. They denied the direct evidence I collected to exonerate and help themselves, which showed them all to be selfish men. Since I knew in my bones what had happened and he denied what I myself had seen with my eyes, I knew he was not a good man, but a pretender. <sup>178</sup> When many unpleasant things came out about the racist tendencies of Joseph Campbell he also covered up for him. Andrea Chambers wrote that “yes, says Huston, he believes Campbell harbored some racial prejudice. But he will not elaborate. “He’s no longer living. I don’t think we need to probe those closets anymore,” Huston says. “Those things did not come out in the series, so why drag them out now?”. He likewise wanted to keep truth about what Schuon did in the closet, as I found out myself.

Huston Smith helped invent the fiction of “world religions”, as if such a thing existed. Smith’s idea of religion is a “modernist sentimentalization of classical piety”, Russell McCutcheon said. This is

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<sup>177</sup> I was given the name Faisal Jamaladin, which means the decisive one and lover of beauty, Schuon said. It did not matter what he named me, as he called me the decisive one because I chose him quickly, or so he thought. The name lover of beauty was given to me after he saw my paintings. When I left the cult he changed my name to “intrinsic swine” so his names were really just self-indulgences on his part, more a description of him than of me. Cults typically try to change the personality of their followers and replacing their names in part of this. I never much liked the names he gave me in any case, and easily dropped them, both the negative and positive ones.

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quite true. There is little critical acumen in Smith, he writes as a true believer and proselytizer, about every religion, never questioning anything. He is a promoter not a truth teller, and willing to lie about each and every religion. Smith oversimplifies religion along Schuonian lines for unspoken religious and political purposes. He deceives people about who he really is and how much he was a follower of the Schuon cult. So in the end, I did learn something, even if at one point, I wanted to think highly of him. The truth of the matter was painfully clear. Smith was a con man, and willing to lie.

I met many Traditionalists of many kinds and lost my respect for them too. I had seen with my own eyes and very closely who Schuon actually was. I knew for a fact there was nothing “holy” about him and the cult was just another cult, one of thousands. I watched with dismay as my witness of facts was ignored, denied, altered, mythologized, lied about, minimized or elided and falsified. It is quite an experience to go through this process of being a whistleblower, who everyone calls crazy, when I actually wished I was, sometimes, but knew in my heart, I didn’t make any of it up. I was amazed that religious people really didn’t care about truth at all, they just cared about preserving their particular delusion. There was so much pretense and pride, but so little virtue or honesty, among all these people.

Cyril Glasse notes the lack of virtue in Schuon. He writes that dinners with Schuon after Sufi gatherings<sup>179</sup> were not enjoyable, “not because there were no refreshing sides to his character, but the narcissism, self-love, and pride were unmistakable, and difficult to square with elementary notions of what a spiritual master is”. Yes, I saw little virtue in Schuon’s character either. People have asked me then,

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<sup>179</sup> Dinners were a big thing in the cult. I must have gone 4 or 5 dinners or lunches a month at least during my two years there. I went to different houses, often bringing visitors from other countries. This was a major part of cult indoctrination and conditioning, as one said prayers there and had one’s “character” examined. If it was found wanting in some way, one had to be instructed by ones “superiors”.

“Why did I fall for him”. Why indeed, it was the biggest mistake I have ever made in my life. Though I learned a lot. I really was sincere in wanting to know if religion were true or not. I was willing to put myself on the line to find out. Does it reflect on me that I fell briefly for such garbage and lies? Yes, there are people who will not talk to me or forgive me because I made such a bad mistake and they blame me. Others think that Schuon’s corruption somehow stains me, but that is not true either. Whatever my faults are, I have done all I could to make up for it and to tell the truth and expose the fraud. People send death threats to me because I changed. People like to threaten killing of others. Human beings are a very questionable species. More I cannot do. The blame for telling the truth will always be mine, as it is with any whistleblower. There has probably never been one who did not feel guilty for doing what was right. It is hard to do and the suffering one undergoes because of it does not make sense.

I wanted to try out the spiritual and see if there was truth in it. There is not. I wanted to know if those who claim to know really do know. I learned that the whole notion of a “spiritual master” is questionable, as there is no “spirit” to master, the whole notion of it implies pretence and delusion. If you follow out the god idea to its conclusions you realize it is just emotions and feelings that end up self-revolving in personal delusions. God is a human construction, not anywhere an objective fact.

I have met those whom I have expressed this to and they have said that without god, Allah or the Catholic Church, life is meaningless, “anything is allowed” and they expressed the wish to commit suicide. Actually this is just addiction to delusions speaking. The world does not collapse without religion. This is the argument of a childish adult, who cannot face reality. People who have no religion are not less ethical than those who do, indeed, they are often more ethical. Dostoyevsky argues that life without religion is meaningless in the character of Ivan in Brothers’ Karamazov. But he is wrong. Life is more meaningful without a

fake god to steal the show of the wonder of actual existence. The fact that we are here, and alive, and plants are and trees, and the sky and our earth and even those things that hurt us, we have bodies that feel happiness and pain and it is the height of existence just to be alive. I knew that after I almost died. Matter is amazing, true, but life, life, biology, is even more amazing, and it should be the first science, not physics.

One must find the meaning in oneself and others without it being dictated by priests and gurus. Just as one wakes up one day and realizes our parents lied to us about Santa Claus, so one wakes up one day and realizes god, Jesus or Allah were beautiful lies too. Committing suicide for the fall or failure of a delusion is foolish. It is always good when delusions fail and one sees the truth, even if for a time it is painful. Love begins as a dream and ends in the fact of a child and this is wonderful, even if there is hardship raising a child. Life goes on and letting it go on is itself a sad happiness. This paradox is at the center of what life is in reality ---a happiness that is inevitably sad too: existence is an unfolding, giving and a passing away..

All spiritual masters are involved in manipulation and presumption, without exception. They are self-deluded too, so many are not aware they are fraudulent and their followers keep them in delusion by constant adulation the power goes to their heads. This happens even with linguist like Chomsky, who fell in love with the adulation of his followers. Cyril Glasse notes that Schuon had an “egocentric side” and that “his capacity for self-delusion was nothing short of astonishing”. Schuon wrote a lot about the ‘virtues’ but possessed little of them himself. As David Lake, an English follower of Schuon, says in a very good open letter in which he refuses to participate further in Schuon cult because of the manifest “bigamy and adultery” and other corruptions. Lake also writes that Schuon treated his followers “in a manner incompatible with basic



virtue.” Schuon was prone to lying, cover up, excessive pride, fits of irrational anger, selfishness, lack of generosity, self-pity and pettiness among other problems and hypocrisies.<sup>180</sup>

The “capacity for self-delusion” that Glasse mentions as a strong aspect of Schuon’s character is also to be found in Martin Lings. I was amazed when I spoke with Martin Lings how willing---even eager---he was to deny direct evidence put before him and live in a cocoon of self-delusions of his own making. I lost all respect for him and saw him as a sad old man clinging to illusions. I was even further amazed when others praised Lings for “sanctity” when I knew him personally and saw how he lied to himself, fled from the truth and hid behind the cloak of Schuon’s delusions of grandeur. But in the end, I saw through the façade. The Emperor had no Clothes; the Wizard of OZ was a fraud. I was the little dog that pulled back the curtain. In other writings, I have outlined the corruptions of the Schuon cult. I will not go into all that here. Suffice it to say that exactly the same pattern of cult adulation, self-delusion, and psychopathology is to be found in other cult leaders, from Charlie Manson, Jim Jones to Bhagavan Rajnessh, Adi Da, David Koresh and many others on back to Muhammad and Christ.

When I left the Schuon cult in disgust, I also left Guenon, who I already doubted. I soon left Islam and eventually religion in general, all fairly quickly, as it was obvious that this was not just about Schuon. I

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<sup>180</sup> In the Glasse File Jacqueline Danner (wife of Victor Danner, who was forced out of the cult by Schuon’s destructive machinations in the early 1980’s) notes Schuon’s lack of virtue in a marvelous open letter s in which she condemns Schuon of hypocrisy and says Schuon “forces others to deny evidence and tell lies.” There are many people who have witnessed and shown Schuon to have been a liar and to have supported his disciples in lying to others. The lying went along with the secrecy and with the secrecy went the pride and the will to deceive and cover up. There is a consistent pattern of all the critics of Schuon in the Glasse file who all say the same thing. There is no conspiracy here, it was merely objective observation about a cult leader. Of course where there are delusions there are those willing to be deluded. Many of those who left the Schuon cult ended up in other cults or religions, even Jaqueline Danner who ended up enamored of a Hindu guru, Ananda Moyi Ma.

went deeply into study for many years, trying to figure out what was wrong with Plato, Christianity and Hinduism. Between 1991 and 1997, I studied at great length in college. It was clear to me that religion was not true in any real sense, but rather was a system of falsehoods designed to serve social needs of certain classes or institutions. But how is it that these delusions are maintained and who profits from them? It is sure not merely a matter of evolution gone awry as Boyer and Dennett seem to think. Religion is about making mistakes and power relations, myths and social constructions.

Religions exploited human needs and the needs were true but the religions that used them were not true. They are parasitical, not fundamentally part of human nature. I found Guenon's answers to the question of modernism to be all wrong.<sup>181</sup> I had visited monasteries, practiced various religions and studied deeply and without ceasing. I wrote a book about my findings and eventually realized that all I had

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<sup>181</sup> I practiced religions very seriously for the 5 or 6 years I was involved with it—my religion period as it were. Prayer and contemplation were particularly interesting to me because they exploit real human desires and needs. What I found out in the Schuon cult is that in the act of prayer the method and object were illusory, but the activity itself was real—so for instance, I witnessed one of Schuon's followers, formerly his "wife", Maude Murray, pray to a nude portrait Icon of Schuon for months on end. I watched her rolling on the floor naked holding this absurd image of Schuon against her chest and praying desperately to it and god because she didn't want to stay married to Schuon. She used beads to count her prayers. He forced her to stay married to him against her will. This alone was tyranny. He forced her to watch him make love to his other wife. The real Schuon was a nasty man who treated her very badly, blamed her for things she didn't do and eventually forced her out of the cult unjustly. He set attack dogs after her when she asked him for help, according to her own testimony. The entire cult turned against her for doing exactly the same things Schuon had done. The Schuon she prayed to in the Icon was a lie. The god she asked for help was a lie. The only reality was that this man despised and ill used her. What she needed to do was to wake up to the illusion that Icons hide. Wake up to the fact that the man and god she prayed to were frauds. She didn't need prayer, she needed to look at the reality around her. The object of all prayer does not exist. But the petition and the petitioner are real. Maude's desperation was real. Prayer does not "fashion man" as Schuon claimed. The cult of Prayer fashioned Schuon's delusions and magnified the illusions of his followers. Prayer is a form of mind control and way of exploiting the real needs and desires of people. In the end I realized that spiritual longing is a false longing. What is real is us and our earth and our need to help each other on the earth. There is no god beyond. There is nothing to pray to. There is only this earth and on the wonderful beings on it which we must care for and sustain.

written was mistaken, since the evidence did not support Traditionalist claims. I slowly came to see that the sadness I felt about Guenon's Reign of Quantity masked a sense of horror about just how mistaken Guenon was, and that his book was really the book of man that was mentally ill. His answers did not satisfy. Indeed, Guenon's solution was far worse than the problem he set out to solve. There are ways to solve the problems of industrialization and environmental destruction, but the answer was not in Guenon. The answer to the rape of the earth is not to return to the caste system or the medieval system of politics. More tyranny and hierarchy will help no one.

So, since it is obvious that Guenon is wrong, why is he wrong and where did he go wrong? What appeal does he still have and why are so many interested in following his ideas? In the process of exploring answers to these questions I will seek to explain religions themselves and who they appeal to delusions and why people want to be deluded. I will try to answer some of these questions here, though I doubt I will be able to cover all of this. So, I will write about this in later chapters. In any case, I hope others might continue this work and expand on what I have only been able to suggest.

The appeal of Guenon arose in me because I was questioning science and the destructive tendencies of the modern world. I chose Guenon in a moment of despair or weakness about our society, when it seemed that nuclear devices and environmental degradation would never be addressed. It was a horrible mistake, but one, for better or worse I lived through and addressed as honestly as I could. It was obvious to me as it is to many that something is terribly wrong with our times. I was desperate for answers to this. I did not realize at first how deluded and paranoid Guenon's ideas were. Guenon was a mentally sick man who had identity problems of some kind and so he created elaborate self-

defenses out of concepts and ideas in denial of his mental disability. He projected his personal fears onto others. As Adorno said “the hypnotic power exerted by things occult resembles totalitarian terror.”<sup>182</sup> this is exactly right. Guenon was a totalitarian hypnotized by the delusion of transcendence and his followers are hypnotized by his expertise in pandering illusion. Guenon was not the student of the charlatan Papus for nothing. He held onto the fantasy that daily life is somehow unreal. He imagined huge cosmological plots to explain away his deep and irrational fears. He was a sick man and the sickness resides in his philosophy. Guenon’s sickness was communicated to his disciples, notably, Schuon, who had many of the same tendencies and traits. I did not know any of this when I first read the traditionalists and it took me years to learn about it directly. But I did wake up finally and escape the trap of self-delusions, and have been free of it for nearly 25 years now. Thank goodness.

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<sup>182</sup> Adorno, Theodore “Theses on Occultism “. I have always had trouble reading Adorno, but in small pieces he can be interesting. This essay is full of small insights. For instance when he says “They take speculation to the point of fraudulent bankruptcy” this is certainly true. Guenon writes metaphysic like a medieval Aquinas writes on the head of a pin, -- it all amounts to empty words about an invented fiction that does not exist. “ Or when Adorno writes “Their procedure is to be strictly scientific; the greater the humbug, the more meticulously the experiment is prepared.” Exactly right. They write with scientific exactitude about that which does not exist. And there is this delightful joke: “The soul can soar to the heights, heigh-ho, / the body stays put on the sofa below.”—yes that is Martin Lings on his comfy English sofa dreaming of things that do not exist. And then this “power of occultism, as of Fascism, to which it is connected by thought-patterns of the ilk of anti-Semitism” yes, Perennialism is all about first inventing and then hating the profane world just as Hitler hated the Jews. For the traditionalists “Superstition is knowledge, because it sees together the ciphers of destruction scattered on the social surface; it is folly, because in all its death-wish it still clings to illusions: expecting from the transfigured shape of society misplaced in the skies an answer that only a study of real society can give.” Exactly right. There must be study of reality to achieve real knowledge. Occultism is cheap fetishes of knowledge, not the real thing. “By its regression to magic under late capitalism, thought is assimilated to late capitalist forms.” Yes, Schuonism ultimately is Disney’s Epcot Center, regurgitated culture colonized as a commodity fetish . Epcot was one of Schuon’s favorite places in America. He saw himself there in Disneyland fantasy. Schuon liked Disney and Disney land very much. Cyril Glasse says of the inner circle interest in Disney that “Disney World seems to have become the spiritual retreat of the Schuon inner circle, who go there whenever the going gets rough”. Yes that is correct. Schuon thought very highly of the place and went there with his various “wives”, who also loved to be tourists down there at Epcot.

### **Answering Religion with Science.**

So, since Traditionalism fails as an explanation of religion we must look deeper into systems of ideological power, politics and their relation to language and religion. Since science has supplanted religion this cannot be left out of our inquiry. I will discuss this at great length, probably at too great length, through these three books. I apologize for the length and would have written more briefly if I were able, My skills as a writer are questionable. But then, good writers are often too in love with their craft to tell the truth, or they are more orthodox than I and are lauded because they conform to some kind of existing power. I am a better painter than I am a writer. So I made a rather complete index of subjects to help the reader move around. Moreover, these books are written to cover large areas of information, so it is really individual bits of research and meditation that matter here and there are thousands and thousands of them These books are very much subject driven, so it would be entirely appropriate for any reader to read it in pieces, skipping from subject to subject using the find-tab or looking the index for what interests them.

These three books began as a mere illustration of my Master's Thesis, which was about abuses of knowledge and power and a history of atrocities in the last millennia. I realized eventually how many mistakes I made in that book. I had to try to face the subject more squarely and much more deeply. I continued to work on the subject only because it continues to turn up new and surprising details of corruption and truth about the religions, and about science. Indeed, it is a 20 year long research project that created these books. I could say it goes even further back than that as I started researching religion back in the early 1980's. No doubt there are still many mistakes. But basically I went through a sea change in my thinking rather as Newton did when he investigated

alchemy for many years. Alchemy was his secret passion and it utterly failed him. Science was what he did well and his science still survives. I rejected the misery of religion and learned from my mistakes. I am not Newton obviously and do not wish to be, but the point of this analogy is only that I learned from my mistakes. I don't think sure if Newton did.

The accuracy of a thesis is assessed by how well it predicts unknown relationships and facts. It is not science to write a book, but when one has a thesis and it continues to turn up new facts and predicts other facts as this one does, there is truth in it, even a sort of scientific truth. Not the whole truth, and certainly not the Truth. The thesis of theofascism is very pregnant in this way: it is a thesis that keeps on giving. New chapters have grown organically. I recently (2011) reread Guenon's Reign of Quantity, aghast at its sophomoric and superstitious paranoid invocations of irrational, even lunatic conspiracy theories. I wrote a new chapter recently reviewing this really ludicrous book of Guenon's, as you can see below. It is called "A Review of Rene Guenon's Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times"

Over many years, I have watched with a certain humor how seriously many people take Guenon, quoting him like a scripture.<sup>183</sup> Like gullible children, they really believe he is an infallible source of information. They cannot question him at all. The religious mentality is proud of its adherence to bogus notions of tradition, orthodoxy, dogma and hadith, all of which are not just questionable but certainly false. It

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<sup>183</sup> A good place to see this cultic atmosphere around Guenon is the "Retour a Guenon" Yahoo groups site run by a certain "Isik" or "isikqukqumadevu" a rather nasty cultist who believes all Guenon's nonsense. He is also a cowardly man who is afraid to use his name, but who is basically a cultic cyberbully, a critical watchdog of a repressive and paranoid Guenonian orthodoxy, a sort of Guenonian Inquisitor as it were,--- not unlike Guenon himself he looks down on everyone. What a vicious, mocking and decadent man this "Isik" is, not unlike Guenon himself. Scarcely anyone can fit into his ideology of narrow cultic elitism and it seems no one does. Perennial Guenonism is just this dead end, that finally self-destructs in obsessive pedantry and a pride that eats itself with hate and disdain for others.

amazes me in the same way how Creationists believe that the dinosaurs lived in the Egypt of the Pharaohs. They see dinosaurs painted in caves from 30'000 years ago, hallucinating what is not there. Some of them imagine the world being less than 10,000 years old, even though this is obviously wrong as the dinosaurs went extinct 65 million years ago. They think dragons are were real, when in fact, dragons are make believe myths engendered by people finding fossils millions of years old. Creationism is held by adults who think like children and have not grown up. They think the Bible is the literal truth and want all art and science to follow that lunacy.

Orthodoxy is just a lack of imagination, an adherence to a system of make believe origins, rules set up by priests mostly meant to benefit them. The creationists want to believe the bible is the factual truth and are unable to admit it is make believe. “Esoterism” is merely another fiction built up on the lie of orthodox truth inherited from a ‘reliable’ source. I will discuss these ideas at length. What many do not realize is that Guenon was primarily a defender and advocate of repression and elite status quo. They imagine that Guenon takes us beyond the material age, to reconnect with a forgotten, idealized, transcendental, cultural heritage that never existed except in imagination.

What this really means is he wants to go back to archaic forms of totalistic power and what he called “spiritual authority”, which is authority based on no evidence at all.. What Guenon calls the philosophical and spiritual gifts of antiquity are really just the mythic and metaphysical detritus left by unjust powers and repressive religious institutions, which served those powers. Guenon wants people in the modern age to rejoin the Catholic Church, as if the Catholic Church of the 12<sup>th</sup> century were not an unjust collection of corrupt priests and popes exploiting the poor and the ignorant in the name of orthodox dogmas. Guenon probably knew little about the elitist roots of Sufism either. The Sufis were, in many cases, the advance guard and protectors

of the Muslim upper classes, mystic forerunners of world denying jihadists and sword carrying assassins of the holy book.<sup>184</sup> The notion of holy Sufi's is pretty ridiculous, though there are a few. One of them was proably Ahmadou Bamba, of Senegal, a somewhat Gandhi like figure. But he has been magnified by all sorts of obviously mythical magic stories, so it is hard to tell what he actually did. But he was a pacifist, to his credit. Like Gandhi he seems to have been a good person in spite of his religion rather than because of it.

In any case, admirers of Guenon don't see how ridiculous many of his writings really are, how superstitious and paranoid the man who wrote The Reign of Quantity really was. Many do not see that Guenon was essentially a fiction writer, writing down paranoid fictions and religious delusions inherited from questionable "traditions" as if they were facts. This book is not for true believers of whatever stripe, to them it will merely be another example 'downward tending', 'low caste' or 'diabolical' nonsense. Guenonians tend to think that all those that do not think like them are low, inferior people who cannot understand their chosen master. But I am not writing for such people, who are in the various traditionalist cults or in other "spiritual" groups.

I wrote a new essay on the Traditionalists and Science, after rereading Wolfgang Smith's recent works(2012). It is called "On Those

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<sup>184</sup> An eventual Sufi social history will demonstrate this. In India for instance, the invading Muslim marauders were helped by Sufis who overlooked or assisted in atrocities committed by Muslims and acted as proselytizers for the religion and political ambitions of Muslim leaders. There also needs to be a study of the Sufi relation to state powers. Nasr was an advertiser and promoter of the Shah of Iran's regime, for instance, which was an American client state and a neo-fascist monarchy. It should be noted that Reza Shah was removed by the Allies during the second world war for his support of Nazi Germany and people's hatred of him. Reza Shah was a vicious dictator and father of the last Shah, who Nasr worked for. Schuon referred to the close relation of Sufis to Islamic princes and powerful leaders when he said that in medieval times the king would have killed Schuon's personal enemies for him, and Cyril Glasse was one of the people Schuon said he would like to have killed by an Islamic prince. This maliciousness towards Cyril was utterly unfounded and based on Cyril's justified reaction against Schuon's own corruption, which he learned by being very close to the center of the cult, as I did too.



## Who Hate Science and Reason:

Anti-Science and Irrationalism in Guenon, Wolfgang Smith and Other Reactionaries. That is an important essay in these books, which I have meant to do for many years. It addresses a subject never before addressed in this way, I think. I wrote this essay to make it a critique of any effort to combine religions with science. It also is a justification of Darwin's thinking and a debunking of those who deny his ideas and all that evolutionary theory has grown into. These critics of Darwin have failed utterly to bring any really valid criticism against science and Darwin's theory. They merely make themselves look ignorant.

Darwin comes out of these discussions as the greatest scientist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He is in some ways the hero of these books. Indeed, I think anyone at all reasonable will realize that the anti-science people and traditionalists are prone to bogus theories and delusions and their works have no truth value. There is a chapter also about traditional theories of art compared to modern art and both are rejected and I explain why. There is another chapter on a speculative theory of mine that the Greek sculptor Praxiteles did not actually exist and from that I draw various conclusions about how classical historians and scholarship might have been misused. This again is an example of belief parading as fact. Of course, I am not totally sure of any of this, I am just trying to understand.

There is also a chapter about Chomsky also, who might not seem to belong here, but I use him as an illustration of someone who pursues a belief when the empirical evidence does not accord well with his beliefs. I compare Chomsky to Darwin and find Chomsky wanting. Chomsky is a sort of cultist prophet of the Left. The Left is not immune to its own power posturing, and religion is above all power posturing. Just as religion can appear apolitical but not be, a politician like Chomsky can be totally political and actually to be a sort of Guru. This is a book about many things. Innocent III, Dante, myths, the Templars, Zen

Buddhism, systems of mind control, cults, and also gurus of various kinds, including “secular” ones. I was interested too in seeing if the Chomskian left was capable of any self-analysis based on a belief that just as the best science questions itself, testing things over and over, should not individuals or groups also be prone to self-correction and weighing evidence? So I compared critics of Chomsky’s work in Linguistics, some of them by well-known men such as Dan Dennett or John Searle. I also did my own independent inquiry on Chomsky as was aghast at what I found. I found that the Chomsky group behave very much as a cult. The master cannot be criticized and when he is the cult circles their wagons and shuns the inquiry. Shunning is a typical technique used by cults and cruel organizations. Power corrupts people, even in small circles.

Religions are cultist and symbolist ideologies. So this whole book is an examination of various ideologies, looked at through a scientific lens. But to read further on this subject of why atheism is both a moral and a reasonable way to look at the world, I would recommend the reader to Richard Dawkin’s very fine and well-argued book, The God Delusion, which is an excellent refutation of theism. See also Daniel Dennett’s Breaking the Spell, though he endorses Pascal Boyer’s rather limited critique of religion. Christopher Hitchens has done a compendium of recent atheist writing which is interesting: The Portable Atheist. These are all fine and well-argued presentations of the atheist case against religions. I came to reject religion on my own, many years ago now, but I respect these books and recommend them to open minded readers of this essay.

So at the outset of this study of religious delusions and fanatic preachers of comparative religion it is important to state where I stand. My sympathies lie with science: I do not believe in gods, mystic fictions or transcendental ideologies. I have been transcending

transcendence for some years now. I do not believe that religious or theocratic governments can be good governments, as all of history as well as recent failures in Israel, Iran and U.S under the Bush administration amply prove. I do not believe in Plato's totalitarian 'closed society' as Karl Popper called it, or idealized versions of the Hindu caste system as justified by Shankara or the Bhagavad Gita or any other supposed "great books". I do not believe in Buddhism resold as a palliative--- a corporate Buddhism calming its followers into conformity. I do not believe in reactionary and violent Islam as a way to counter the excesses of capitalism. I believe in science, the earth, and a generous effort to understand the actual. I believe in democracy so long as other living beings are part of the democratic understanding of rights. There are no such rights as yet, but there needs to be.<sup>185</sup> I do not believe that corporations are people or that money is free speech, giving the rich more rights to speak than the poor.

I do not believe in "the body of the church", the "body of Christ" or "being part of something bigger than yourself". "Being part of something bigger than yourself" was a slogan used by the U.S, army to get recruits to join the killing machine. George Bush Jr. used this slogan in his Iraq war campaign and fundamentalist Christianity uses it too, to get people to join their far right political rallies.<sup>186</sup> Individuals and animals are beaten down by things 'greater than themselves' such as corporations,

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<sup>185</sup> There are marginal rights of a kind, such as protected forests, elephants in Africa, or limits on hunting or fishing, but as yet no plenary rights as human alone have at this point, unfairly. Ecuador passed a rights of nature, but that too is limited.

<sup>186</sup> "Bart Ehrman recounts in some of his recent books how he started out adulthood as a passionate fundamentalist Christian, anxious to read the infallible word of God in its original Greek — and only when he did, and started studying its internal contradictions and the history of its composition, he realized that fundamentalist Christianity was untenable.)" (Quoted from an article by Alan Sokal, who so eloquently brought post modernism into question, NYT—website, March 12,2012--<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/11/defending-science-an-exchange/>)

governments, dictators or religions. What really matters is not institutions of large groups but the small beings of the world, the Aye Ayes, Wallabys, Katydid, Bloodroot and Trillium, Golden Frogs or Prairie Dogs. What we need is to see through all transcendent fictions and look at actual things as they are. We are small people living with millions of other beings on a small planet in an ocean of space far beyond us. We are destroying our planet's weather systems, forcing species into extinctions, endlessly 'developing' by cutting and killing off what is not ours to cut or kill. No one yet knows what is really out there, but certainly it is not gods or the fictions of metaphysics. Stressing "transcendence" in such a world is nearly always a power play and should be resisted.

In short, I am not even remotely transcendentalist, Guenonian, Schuonian or traditionalist. I am a naturalist and historian who loves science and who seeks to educate and share what he has learned. I am one who thinks transcendence must be transcended. I have never stopped studying, since I was in my teens. I have learned a great deal and treated life as a huge laboratory where experiences were also experiments. Trying to apply science to everyday life has been one of the joys of my older years and something I try to teach my kids.

I am one of the few who has learned about Traditionalist movements first hand and have survived mentally enough to assess and reject them and talk about them. I got to know the Schuon cult, the poetry world, academia and the cultish environment around Chomsky pretty well. So I talk about that too. Most of those who left Schuon <sup>187</sup> ended up burying

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<sup>187</sup> According to Rama Coomaraswamy, many who left the Schuon cult joined Nasr's cult, which is surprising. I find it hard to believe that anyone with a brain would take Nasr seriously about anything. However, I know Nasr as a coward and a liar, a man who called me up and begged me in tears to lie about Schuon's primordial gatherings so that he could be Schuon's successor and a Shakyh himself. Ever since then I have no respect for him. What I have experienced watching the lies and hypocrisy of Schuon's followers should be enlightening to anyone who has survived a system of cult beliefs or ideological controls. The lies of the Traditionalists continue unabated in many books, websites and yahoo groups. There is a veritable industry of liars in these groups and

themselves in other Sufi Muslim or Christian cults, or denying their own history by inoculating themselves against their cultish past by reading mind numbing escapists like Eckhart Tolle or the Dalai Lama.<sup>188</sup> I know the art world pretty well too, and I talk about that, and I know a few things about nature.

This series of essays is not written for the true believers, Islamic, Christian, Chomskyite or otherwise. Nor is this written for cult followers of Guenon or followers of Schuon and Evola, who have expressed their dislike of what I say here, not surprisingly. I see little difference between Guenon and Evola, and think both of their respective followers to be partisans of separate insane camps. One of the Russian defenders of Dugin had it exactly right when he said, “if Evola and Dugin are Traditionalists to the same degree as Guenon and Coomaraswamy , then why not proclaim Plato, Jerry Falwell, and Benito Mussolini to be traditionalists as well” <sup>189</sup> Yes, exactly. There is not that much difference between all these men. These are all right wing ideologues all interested in public power and correct doctrines used against ordinary people to keep them subservient. There is a wide similarity in all these thinkers and their movements, enough to warrant the consideration under one collective inquiry. Mussolini is not a traditionalist, of course, but he is a sort of adjunct to traditionalism. Ezra Pound was more or less a

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they all are promoters.

<sup>188</sup> It was distressing to see various former members others who left the Schuon cult, disappear into these escapist Buddhist sects and new age religions, rather like dogs return to their own vomit. Some went into other Sufi cults, some became Buddhists or Christians. One turned toward Eckhart Tolle is a thinker who wants you to ignore any critical thoughts and only live in the “present” as a positive state. This advocacy of mindless vacancy dumbs down the minds of his followers, making them passive little robots who support the status quo.. They are not supposed to have troubled thoughts or accept any conflict in their lives but live as perfect zombies. I speak of the Dalai Lama in this book in various places, search his name to find others things I’ve written about him .

<sup>189</sup> Andreas Umland “ Is Dugin a Traditionalist---Neo-Eurasianism and Perennial Philosophy”. Pg 16 see:  
<http://ku-eichstaett.academia.edu/AndreasUmland/Papers/110691/Is-Dugin-a-Traditionalist---Neo-Eurasianism--and-Perennial-Philosophy>

Confucian traditionalist in later years, concerned with the conservative “rectification of names” and with advocating a repressive social order as Confucius did. He was a devotee of Mussolini, rather as Evola was to both Mussolini and Hitler.<sup>190</sup> Schuon’s disciple and Guenon’s secretary Martin Lings admired the Spanish fascist Franco and saw him as an ideal traditionalist leader. Lings was the ‘quintessential’ (they love this redundant word!!) traditionalist and his political views are characteristic of the entire movement. Schuon loved Japanese theofascism during the World War II era.

Plato was probably the most important thinker to Schuon’s peculiar brand of traditionalism, because of Plato’s caste obsessions and theory of Archetypes, which dominated the whole of Schuon’s thought. Schuon’s thought is effete and self-centered and like Plato he disdained anything that was “contaminated by practical uses”. Schuon’s cult allies itself politically with the far right in America and Schuon demanded his inner circle vote republican.<sup>191</sup> I consider Plato and his influence in

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<sup>190</sup> Speaking of Pound’s racist diatribes during WWII, in which Pound advocated hatred of Jews and America, the novelist Saul Bellow wrote that “if sane he should be tried again as a traitor; if insane he ought not to be released merely because he is a poet. Pound advocated in his poems and in his broadcasts enmity to the Jews and preached hatred and murder. Do you mean to ask me to join you in honoring a man who called for the destruction of my kinsmen?” It is a valid question in some respects, though the notion of “treason” or sedition” as well as that of heresy seem non-crimes to me. It makes sense in some contexts to oppose a given form of power, which invariably have unjust features that call for protest. Putting people in prison because they disagree with a given government seems absurd. I certainly don’t agree with Pound and think he was a maniac whose theories of coinage are as bogus as Guenon’s. And Pound’s advocacy of harm to the Jews is really horrendous. I also thought Schuon should have been deported back to Switzerland from the U.S. and there was talk in the government in Indiana that he might be. But in the end, was I right about that? No, it does not matter if Schuon was in the U.S. Foolish fanatics like Pound or Schuon are not that unusual. Let them talk and rant and say what they like. In the end they sink in their own rhetoric.

<sup>191</sup> I remember visiting with Catherine Schuon in their house and she was trying to preach to me about the importance of getting god back in American schools, the last thing our schools need—she even printed out a flyer against Madalyn Murray O’Hair, who had very little to do with the fight to get religion out of American schools, but who should be praised for helping. But her role was minor. But Catherine Schuon was not very bright and didn’t do much research on this, she just wanted to blame O’Hair, because she heard from other cult members, who were right wing Americans and O’Hair is a favorite bogey woman of the far right in America and a scapegoat for fundamentalists. Schuon agreed with this nonsense and in general agreed with the far right in

some depth. Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly and other far-right talk show fanatics in America continue a long line of fascist and quasi-fascist radio and other bogus "journalists" that go back to Father Coughlin. Coughlin was Catholic and fascist. Coughlin began used his radio program to issue anti-Semitic commentary, and later to rationalize some of the policies of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. The broadcasts have been called "a variation of the Fascist agenda applied to American culture".<sup>192</sup> This is what Bill O'Reilly and Rush Limbaugh's commentaries are too. They are paid liars and advertisers for the ultra-rich 1% of the population. It is quite accurate to compare Guenon, Schuon, Rama Coomaraswamy, Evola and their followers to far right fundamentalists in America, there are real overlaps between in the respective views of Rama and Limbaugh, despite significant differences. The views of the far-right are amazingly uniform and predictable. Schuon supported the Vietnam War; Nixon and Reagan, apartheid in South Africa, prayer in schools and other far right views. His support for prayer in schools was part of a hatred of democracy he had, since he was well aware the American constitution forbids prayer in schools.

So it is a long time since I had much respect or trust in the opinions of the people in these marginal cults around Schuon, Dugin, Guenon or Evola. I am not writing for them. They have been lying about Schuon and slandering me for years. Oddly, one gets largely used to being slandered, one almost expects it as a sort of complement from certain people. I wrote this book I also wanted to expand it into a not just a critical essay

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America. He liked Nixon, Falwell and Bush family. Those who say that Schuon was not political are just deluded. Of course Michael Oren Fitzgerald financial backer, disbarred lawyer and 'spokesman' for the failing Schuon cult, frequently tries to maintain that Schuon was not political as a public PR posture, in other words as a lie. But Fitzgerald has been caught lying about various things, as well as trying his best to silence any critics of Schuon's megalomania. Fitzgerald, his son and wife and Catherine Schuon all gave money to the Bush campaign, indicating certain hypocrisy, since they are farther to the right than far right republicans. Secrecy and lying is a regular feature of Schuon's cult and traditionalism, which is why no one reasonable should ever trust the promoters of Schuon and Guenon.

<sup>192</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_E.\\_Coughlin#cite\\_note-5](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_E._Coughlin#cite_note-5)

on an esoteric modern cult, secret until I exposed it in 1991, but also for those who wish to understand how delusional systems of thought express themselves in religions.. I think the experience I have had of these wacky organizations generalizes into something larger. So I began to write a book that is about ideological constructions of many kinds. I wish to show how religion misrepresents reality and leads to ignorance, lies and superstition. Indeed, a goodly portion of my intellectual work, since the 1990's is about deconstructing systems of knowledge that serve powerful ideologies, so I have written against Augustine, Aquinas, Plato, Creationism Sufism and so on. Thus a rather myopic study of a marginal writer like Guenon and his followers is a specific case in point where I can work though some of my larger ideas in relation to actual events on the ground—a ground moreover I have gotten to know pretty well.

In these books, or series of related essays, I intend to supply a critical assessment of religion itself. I will sometimes use Guenonian traditionalism as illustrations of my points. I wish to provide as an example for others, how to do such an assessment, outlining basic arguments against traditionalism and religion and suggesting avenues of research others could follow. Doing the research on this book has been very satisfying because for the 15 years I have been writing it I have been amazed at how far my thesis for these essays generalizes across so many areas. A good theory must generalize over a fairly large area to prove its truth. Some people think I am mixing up things that do not belong together. But that is false. Traditionalism is one aspect of far right movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It opens up inquiry into far-right movements and individuals of many kinds across many disciplines and enables me to write the kind of history I always dreamed I would. I can write about science art, math, biology and nearly any other subject and still address my central thesis.. It opens up the whole field of religion as an object of criticism. It is clear cult leaders and political leaders often have much in common with De Maistre and , Burke. The root of the far



right go way back before into Romanticism,, Bonald<sup>193</sup> and back before the French Revolution. Indeed, the roots of reactionary politics go back to Anti-Roman Christian killers of Hypatia during the Roman times and those who hated the Nominalists, who were the early advocates of an anti-Platonic world view that would become science. Indeed, as we will see, the roots of the religious delusion go all the way back to Plato and before.

The fact is that the idea of “theofascism” or ‘spiritual fascism’ covers a very wide area but not so wide as to be vague and unmanageable. Applying this idea to divergent areas and cases as Ezra Pound, Guenon, Martin Lings and Martin Heidegger and their advocacy of theocracy or fascist leaders rings true in each case. Nasr’s hatred of evolution dovetails seamlessly with his love of irrational romantic poetry. So in this books you will find discussion of the politics of Nietzsche compared to Coomaraswamy or the political theofascism of Guenon compared to the fall of Rome. Prior to writing these essays I did not know that theofascism is a fairly common system of belief, and that its general features can be found in widely variant thinkers, poets and writers in different times and histories. For instance, I knew Schuon was a “theofascist” because I saw it in his face, his behavior and in his cult, but I did not realize the extent of Schuon’s adulation and endorsement of the Imperial fascism of Japan during World War 2. Nor did I know that Martin Lings was a great admirer of the Franco, the fascist ruler of Spain. Nor did I realize that there is not that much difference between

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<sup>193</sup> Bonald was a far right Catholic and one of the leading writers anti- French Revolution theocratic or traditionalist school,<sup>[3]</sup> which included de Maistre, Lamennais, Ballanche and baron Ferdinand d'Eckstein. I heard Schuon mention him approvingly once but did not know who he was. But now I know he was a science hater and like Schuon complained bitterly about the French Revolution for justly removing the unjust power of the class system. They call this a “usurpation” of the power of kings and priests.

Heidegger and Guenon or between Eliade and Evola. There are differences, yes, of course, but they are minor and really are a result of these men all being romantics and each one fighting mightily to see themselves as the utterly 'unique' expositor of the "Truth".

These are all very similar thinkers and their differences are grossly exaggerated by followers and careerist academics who multiply distinctions beyond necessity, violating Occam's Razor. So, research for this book has taught me a great deal about how systems of knowledge work spreading through network of many individuals, as well as how persistent delusions are shared across a given political spectrum. The search for truth is a pedestrian affair by contrast and involves many people in a more direct fashion. I was very gratified to learn just recently that Karl Popper's original impetus behind his Open Society and its Enemies, was the need to question Great men, 'heroic irrationality' and romanticism both of the sort that led from Plato to Hitler as well as from Hegel to Stalin. This again confirms the basic thesis of this book.

In the 1990's I began my questioning of traditionalism by doing exactly the same thing. I wanted to reexamine the ideology of greatness, Great Books, great men, the elitism of the arrogant. There was so much to learn if I was to understand how traditionalism related to far-right political movements. I really had no idea in 1991. I had gotten involved in traditionalism innocently and naively, following my intuitions. I learned that intuition is not a good way to proceed sometimes, if reason is lacking. I was not yet able to assess facts or judge via reason a vast network of complex information. It took me years to gain and use these skills. I am still learning this.

Traditionalism serves reaction in so many places because so many far-right fanatics have need of it. I did not realize, for instance, that T.S. Eliot, often thought to be a modernist, was in fact very far right-wing in his beliefs, nor that Byron was too---- as are many of the romantics, even up to recent romantics like Joseph Campbell. So I face some of this in

my chapter on fascism. Indeed, I have begun to question the history of poetry up to the present because of some of these realizations and to do so beyond the confines of this study of a few 20<sup>th</sup> century thinkers. So my view of poetry has matured beyond what I ever thought possible. I have come to see that poets like Plato and Muhammad condemned other poets because of the conceit they had in their own transcendentalist verse. What is wrong with poetry is what is wrong with Muhammad, Christ, and Plato too. These poets were willing to destroy the world in their fiction by creating a magic world of literary delusions. They write theofascist poetry,,: poetry that serves power and delusions. Their poetry serves abstract delusions and generalizations born of words, human excess and speciesism and transcendental fictions. <sup>194</sup>They convinced people these delusions were true. Religious “Tradition” is nothing more than the ongoing effort to sustain these delusions. However, I will not pursue my thoughts on poetry here very deeply. <sup>195</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> We need a poetry that stays on the ground, and one that is not seduced by the excessively subjective and abstract character of language. This might not be possible. Such a thing does not exist yet, and it is hard to imagine what it would look like.

<sup>195</sup> Poetry has been too close to religion and shares many of the faults that religion has. Neruda defines this pretty well in a poem where he castigates the rather effete and transcendentalist poet Rilke and his cult of inwardness. What good is the inward when so many are suffering. Neruda writes:

"what did you do  
in the kingdoms of agony,  
in the sight of nameless humanity  
and their vexed acquiescence,  
heads drowned in the offal, the harrowed  
quintessence of life trampled under....  
Flight and escape, nothing more.  
You peddled the rinds of the dump heap,  
probed for a heaven...'pure beauty', 'sorcery'. "

In other words, in Rilke, the abstract world of perfections, ideas and aesthetic conceit was put higher than the actual world of natural and human suffering, agonies, poverties and deaths. Rilke “escaped” into the abstract and rarefied realm of spiritualized 'higher' conceits and imaginary flights of intellectual sublimity. He neglected the agony and nameless suffering of those trampled under. Pure Beauty and sorcery sums up Schuon and Guenon in a nutshell. They were sorcerers of comparative metaphors, creators of transcendental simile's of delusion (See Neruda, Pablo. Five Decades: Poems 1925-1970. (Trans, Ben Belitt.) New York Grove Press 1974

But I will say that while I feel an affinity with Popper because he confirmed my belief that Plato is a reactionary, and his questioning of great books and men, I owe a greater debt to Bertrand Russell, who I began to read in my teens and who was so right about so many things. He showed that romanticism was a species of far right ideology.



Bertrand Russell

Russell opposes the scientist and socially conscious person to the high-minded romantic---the individual mystic that romantics love to admire: the mystic is led by esoteric “inwardness” and cult of the transcendent leads the mystic into social irresponsibility. The mystic is one who:

“Becomes one with God and in the contemplation of the Infinite feels himself absolved of duty to his neighbor. The anarchic rebel does even better, he feels himself not one with god, but God. Truth and duty, which represent our subjection to matter and our neighbors, exist no longer for the man who has become god: for

others, truth is what *he* posits, duty what *he* commands. If we could all live solitary and without labor we could enjoy this ecstasy of independence; since we cannot its delights are available only to madmen and dictators” <sup>196</sup>

This describes various extremist and mystical charlatans fairly well. It is one thing to have feelings or intuitions about the beauty of nature or the wonder of existence. This is poetry or ordinary aesthetic insight. But once such feelings become the center of all thought and mind, inflated by grandiose subjectivity, mystical magnifications produces some really horrendous delusions. To arrogantly make a religion out of one's intuitions and rope others into the charade is a monstrous thing that happens with men like Muhammad or Joseph Smith or those who use the Jesus myth.

In a later chapter I will discuss the mythic nature of such figures as Jesus and Muhammad and some of the evidence that such men probably did not exist at all. This essay is called “The War between Christian and Islamic ‘Fascism’ and the Myths of Jesus and Muhammad” Bertrand Russell helped me see through these myths. What the mythic diversity of subjectivities does in our world, is create a mirage behind which the real power play of greed helps the wealthy classes take more and more from the poor and middle classes as well as from the earth. The corporate CEO is a virtual deity just as Jesus is a fiction that sorts the upper classes, for the most part. The CEO is “blessed” with more than anyone else and all those who have little or nothing are supposed to pray to get theirs too and they might be “blessed” too. When in fact these no such things as those blessed and damned. It is all arranged by unjust institutions and laws. Getting rid of the fiction of the “Corporate Person” would make CEO's personally responsible for the depredations they

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<sup>196</sup>Russell, Bertrand. A History of Western Philosophy, Simon and Schuster, 1945, pg. 681-82

cause to workers, the environment and cultures where they explain cheap labor. It would abolish transcendent fictions of all kinds. It would allow workers to unionize more freely, repeal the Taft Hartley Act<sup>197</sup> and punishing CEO's with higher taxes who that locate their factories to other countries to exploit cheap labor. If fewer people spent time in pursuit of delusions, things like this could be easily organized. Human rights, animal rights, rights for the earth itself: nature's rights. There really is no real difference, the idea of rights is for all living things and this follows from the deepest inquiry began by Darwin over 150 years ago.

### **Defining Theofascism: in Cults, Religions, Institutions, Fundamentalism and Traditionalism.**

#### **a. The Question about Theofascism**

So, in what follows, I meander through ruminations on the ruins, delusions and hardships caused by various religions of the world. I will also try to show the complex relation of religion and politics, I will be using examples like traditionalism and fascism in the work of Rene

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<sup>197</sup> Taft-Hartley Act, rightly called a slave labor bill, still in effect, was a horrible blow to democratic America. It was and is a means to seen as a means of demobilizing the labor movement by imposing limits on labor's ability to strike and by prohibiting labor leaders form organizing. It restricted the power of unions to call strikes that "threatened national security,". It also limited free speech and gave CEO unfair advantage to promote anti-union sentiment. It also stigmatized communist leaders form helping unions. This was a gift to big business and CEOs that continues to help them destroy workers' rights to this day. There is huge wage inequality because of if it and other laws which punish workers and favor the rich. It continues to not only harm workers but enable CEO to harm the world and the environment. It gave the executive bran unfair power to destroy unions. This is one reason among many why the executive branch of the US government out to be retried form American politics.

Guenon and his main followers, Frithjof Schuon, Julius Evola, Ananda Coomaraswamy Alex Dugin and others. But I will be going much further afield too into all the major religions. I will do this to show one of my thesis of this book that religion in fact is a close kin to and probably a flip side of politics. I will show that Traditionalism has some distant relation to the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini, which I will call ordinary fascism. But I will also show that traditionalism/theofascism is different than ordinary fascism in important ways.

What Guenon created is a form of meta-fascism, traditio-fascism or 'theocratic fascism'--- or what I call Theo-fascism. I coined the term 'Theofascism', specifically, to have a word that explains the considerable difference between Nazism and the "spiritual" politics of the traditionalists. The term Theofascism is more or less synonymous with spiritual fascism, ---- which was used by Guenon's follower Guido do Giorgio to describe Guenon's system. Spiritual fascism is a far right, conservative and nostalgic form of "spirituality" that pretends to transcend ordinary fascism in being anti-science and but shares a lot with ordinary fascism basic characteristics. Theofascism is a form of totalism that seeks to return to theocratic and metaphysical autocracy and employs an oppressive apocalyptic and unjust government that employs questionable means to create hierarchies, harm people and subvert human rights, democracy, science and education according to science. In this definition, the Church of Aquinas and Augustine as well as the caste system of India or the government of Japan under Ieyasu Tokagawa or the various Islamic autocracies, as well as the ideology of Schuon and Guenon are theofascist. Religion magnifies political motives and tries to make them seem part of the structure of the universe.

Why do various neo-fascist groups and far-right individuals as a major influence or forebear claim the name of René Guenon? For instance Alain de Benoist, the French neo-fascist, claims him as a

primary influence as does Troy Southgate, England's resident racist and right wing hater. Various far right Catholics with fascist leanings as well as some Islamists, Islamo-fascists, orientalist Sufis and far right cult leaders, such as Frithjof Schuon, also claim him, as does Massimo Introvigne, the Italian apologist and defender of dangerous religious cults such as the Moonies, Scientology and far right Mormons.<sup>198</sup> Introvigne has mounted an attempt at 'affirmative action' for dangerous cults and superstitions, defends extremist Mormons who practice polygamy.<sup>199</sup> He is also the far-right organizer of the Center for the Study of New Religions ("Cesnur").<sup>200</sup> Julius Evola, a fascist connected to both the

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<sup>198</sup> It appears that the cult apologist movement was created by scientology and later picked up by Introvigne and others and from thence spread around the academic establishment, among those who want to defend dangerous cults, partly in an effort to defend their own jobs. A *cult apologist* is someone who defends the teachings and/or actions of one or more movements considered to be cults - as defined sociologically.

The term "cult apologist" is technical, and not derogatory -

Cult apologists generally defend their views by claiming to champion religious freedom and religious tolerance. But they are not tolerant toward the non-religious or those who are critical of criminal actions their favored group might have committed

Many cult apologists support cults, collaborate with them, have financial interests in them or use tactics that misrepresent or lie about the groups they defend. The head of Scientology, David Miscavige has been shown to be prone to violence against followers and condemned by many who left his cult, including close relatives. Scientology legally abused and then destroyed the excellent Cult Awareness Network which was a group that tried to expose destructive cults. "This just is David Miscavige," Mike Rinder, a former executive of Scientology who is featured in "Going Clear" said of Miscavige: "His personality type is sociopath. He takes a lot of things that in the hands of someone else would be innocuous and uses those as tools of weapons to abuse people."

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/going-clear-wife-of-scientologys-miscavige-not-in-hbo-documentary-2015-3#ixzz3aEGAAqXT>

<sup>199</sup> Arthur Versluis would try to do the same thing in America, echoing the whole reactionary promotion of "religious freedom" as a pretext for advancing system of backwards irrationality.

<sup>200</sup> <http://www.knowledgepowerbook.com/guenon.asp> - <http://www.kelebekler.com/cesnur/eng.htm> to study Massimo Introvigne's and his associate Pier Luigi Zoccatelli far right connections see Miquel Martinez's interesting website <http://www.kelebekler.com/cesnur/eng.htm>. According to Martinez "Introvigne is also a member of the militant Catholic splinter movement which he joined 18 years ago. The Aleanza Catholica (AC) is a daughter organization of the international Tradition, Family and Property [T.F.P.] an ultra-conservative club of rich, influential Catholics who are admittedly "ready to fight tooth and nail" against "perverted elements of society such as abortion, socialism, unions, drug use and homosexuality." CESNUR is a cult apologist network and religious studies professors belong to it or use its services. Prompting anti-science and



Italian and the German fascist groups claims him, as does Andreas Serrano, the Chilean writer of the Hitler, the Final Avatara.<sup>201</sup>The internet is full of references of the importance of Guenon to neo-fascist, New Right or far right “conservative revolution” movements. So what is the relationship of Guenon and his followers in the Traditionalist movement to fascism?

Before answering the question, let me pause on the claim by many Traditionalists that they have nothing to do with politics. It is Orwellian<sup>202</sup> how many Traditionalist ideologues strenuously deny the fascism of their masters or try to say that it was only Evola who was a fascist. They “protest too much” of course and use Orwellian double-speak to try to deny the obvious. Some of them have even tried to say that the Traditionalists are “apolitical”, which is rather like saying the pope is not a Catholic.<sup>203</sup> But then some Traditionalists, even assert the

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subjective irrationalism is its main motive. Like Introvigne, Guenon was a catholic theofascist, with some ties to Masonic organizations. I will discuss aspects of Catholic fascism throughout this essay.

<sup>201</sup> Serrano derived his idea of Hitler as the Last Avatara from Guenon, whose apocalyptic notion of the “Lord of the World”, or some final manifestation of the Logos, would precede the “second coming”. Schuon also claimed to be a “manifestation of the Logos at the end of time” or to be a kind of ‘avatara’, also following Guenon. These fictional delusions are interesting as they show a similar mythic imagination arising from Guenon’s influence in different places. The delusions of grandeur involved invoke the similar cult of personality that surrounded Hitler, “the Fuhrer”, who, for a time, most of Germany worshipped as a kind of god. Hitler created a religion of politics and Schuon and Serrano created a politics out of religion. The same thing occurred around Napoleon, Hitler, Franco and other autocrats

<sup>202</sup> Most cults are Orwellian, this term refers to the Orwell’s Animal Farm in which the autocrats declare that War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength...this is double speak, or lying to justify horrendous behavior. Orwell wrote that “Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written directly or indirectly against totalitarianism and *for* Democratic Socialism as I understand it.” Orwell and R. J. Lifton had similar concerns, both of them opposing Totalism of all kinds.

<sup>203</sup> Like Evola both Schuon and Guenon wanted a government that was founded on religion. Griffin writes of Evola that “According to Evola, Nazism and Fascism were doomed from the start because, instead of seeking to re-establish an ‘organic’ state on the Traditional model, they create its travesty, the totalitarian state, flawed in its very conception, both by the leveling forces exerted by the masses it had to enlist in its support, and in its exaltation of ‘modern’ technology

pope is not a real catholic! The pose of being apolitical was common to Guenon, Schuon and Evola and their followers. The hated democracy and socialism and their politics were Pre- renaissance, so they had to pretend to be apolitical rather than show people what they really were: monarchist haters of enlightenment and freedom. They were all extremely far to the right---more fascist than the fascists as it were. This hiding behind the pose of “apoliteia” as Evola called it, was a ruse justified by the need to not ‘cast pearls before swine”, the entire modern world being demeaned as ‘swine’ or “profane” the lingo of Guenon and Schuon. <sup>204</sup> As a general principle those who say they are not political are usually to the right of the political spectrum. It means they endorse the status quo or something to the right of it.

What is wonderful about being a Traditionalist, from their point of view, is that they subjective idealists. They can make up their own reality,--- ironically, like the “relativists” they hate.<sup>205</sup> They make their

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and bureaucratic apparatus, not to mention the blinkered nationalism so far removed from a genuine 'imperialism'” This is the criticism of Guenon and Schuon too. They wanted something like Franco’s fascism, which was a catholic fascism, which is what Martin Lings approved of, Lings being a sort of midway point between Guenon and Schuon.

<sup>204</sup> Apoliteia is most explicit in Evola’s work, where he calls it “riding the tiger” that is riding though the modern world as a reactionary monarchist and theocrat without causing too many to despise you. Evola's belief was that despite the horror of the modern world, there always exists the ability for the individual person to live his life always looking "above" himself toward the “imaginal” realm of gods and projections. In other words for Evola, in his words “Apoliteia” refers “essentially to the inner attitude” whereby a reactionary who desires to live in a theocracy can pretend to be apolitical when in fact he wants apocalypse and revenge for his religious ideology. In yet other words, apoliteia is the way that spiritual fascists pretend to be unattached to politics yet plot their return to power in hopes of Armageddon

<sup>205</sup> The issue of “relativism” in traditionalism is a messy muddle. They did not understand what relativism is and confused the theory of relativity with moral and cultural relativism, all of which are different things. Schuon’s hatred of relativism is really a hatred science. Schuon hated relativism, which he wrongly saw as a denial of “absolute truth”,-- by which he meant an imaginary “Absolute”. He thought that this denial leads to moral license and a denial of the possibility of sin and of God. Actually no god is needed for morality and “atheists” are some of the most moral people in the world, certainly more moral than the Catholic Church which is a sink hole of corruption. Schuon was a moral relativist however, and allowed himself all sorts of hypocritical license which would not allow to others. Of course sometimes those who say they hate relativism really mean they hate moral relativism which means selfish behavior, but again, Schuon was one of the most selfish people I ever met so he allowed himself to be a moral relativist, taking extreme liberties for himself while denying them to others.. Schuon opposed the

own reality based on make-believe Platonic categories and live in a delusional world where evidence and science are cast to the winds. It has amazed me over the years to watch how the various Traditionalists I have known persist in believing the most ridiculous superstitions. They are “true believers” in Eric Hoffer’s telling phrase. Hoffer writes that members of a cult are “deindividualized” and “incorporated” into the movement.

“When we lose our individual independence in the incorporateness of a mass movement, we find a new freedom—freedom to hate, bully, lie, torture, murder and betray without shame and remorse.”

The Schuon cult had a corporate and unified mentality like this, joined together by make believe and a common delusional ideology. The chose to hate the world outside the cult and consider as nothing those who are the “profane”. Being “apolitical” meant an inner attitude of indifference and detachment, bolstered by a habitual secrecy and if needed, a willingness to lie at a moment’s notice... They did this while at the same time claiming to be the most educated the most reasonable of people. But then Guenon wrote in a style that makes him sound reasonable even when he promotes the most malicious hatred of the world, and the most absurd and paranoid rubbish. People fall for the big Orwellian lie. The notion that traditionalism is not political is a lie.

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“relative “to the “absolute”, which is a false opposition or a false choice since there is no demonstrable absolute, except maybe gravity or the inevitability of taxes. Isaiah Berlin said not to “confuse our own constructions with eternal laws or divine decrees is one of the most fatal delusions of men.” There is some truth to this sort of relativism, which merely means that people influence the views of the e world that they have. However, this sort of cultural relativism is limited too as science at its best does seek to be adequate to reality, or to describe real things and facts. The other thing that Schuon meant when he condemned “relativism” is that he condemned the ‘relative world’ by which he meant the “contingent world”, the world of things depending on other things. To him only the absolute idea mattered, which means that only the imaginary mattered, reality was a lesser thing. This view denigrates the whole universe, and sees it as merely symbolic. Hating the relative in this sense is perverse, destructive and malicious. It is the hatred of all that really matters. This hatred of the ‘ten thousand things’ or “original sin” is a mental disease that is common to all the major religions.

But whatever superstitions and untruths the traditionalists endorsed and used to harm or exclude others, it is a historical fact that Rene Guenon got involved with the ideological roots of reaction and theofascism long before Evola and in some ways his involvement was much deeper. With Guenon fascism is not about Jack boots and swastikas, but about high-falutin symbolism and ideology of “them verses us”. As I will show here, Guenon is the origin of theofascist tendencies in traditionalism, Evola was merely his follower. Guenon created a form of what I will call Theo-fascism or ‘spiritual fascism’ that has long outlasted the ordinary fascism of Hitler and Mussolini. It is quite true, as someone said to me recently, that traditionalism is a trivial movement. Pay no attention to it. I don’t think much of it, actually, which is why it has taken me so long to write this book. I think it is only of important as an example or a good case study how a delusional ideological systems came into being in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is also a good thing to study to understand other right-wing movements. I merely explore here the psychotic character of a fairly trivial ideological cult, endeavoring, if I can, to show how it relates to most of the far right movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

To use a concrete example of the Orwellian double-speak of which Traditionalists are capable, and the way some of them try to hide and obscure their repressive, right wing political agenda, consider the website Integral Tradition.<sup>206</sup> This is a fairly typical neo-fascist website, one of

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<sup>206</sup> [http://www.reocities.com/integral\\_tradition/vesting.html](http://www.reocities.com/integral_tradition/vesting.html)

This site states the following “ The main issues of this site are:

The Crisis of the modern World, Eschatology, Globalism, the New World Order and Kali Yuga  
A conservative Revolution, Revolt against the Modern World  
The Primacy of the Spirit, Hierarchy, Traditionalism and Metapolitics

dozens. It was evidently put together and maintained by Martin Schwarz. It also calls itself “Conservative Revolution” a term coined by Hofmannsthal and later used in Arthur Moeller’s book The Third Reich from which the Nazi’s got their concept the “Third Reich”. This webpage features a motley crew of biographies and some texts by an amazingly consistent group of extremists, right wingers, neo-Nazis, spiritual fascists, racists and hater mongers. Some of the most representative authors Integral Tradition publishes are Julius Evola, [René Guénon](#), James Cutzinger, [Frithjof Schuon](#), Oswald Spengler,<sup>207</sup> Carl Schmitt <sup>208</sup>, Alain de Benoist, Troy Southgate, the British neo-fascist, Oswald Mosley, Ernst Junger, and Arthur Moeller as well as and many others. Moeller was a German Fascist and an influence on Hitler as well as current Russian fascism. Moeller was also an advocate of “Conservative Revolution”, which is one of many terms used for a Fascist, nationalist apocalyptic or revolutionary attempt to seize power. Alexander Dugin has a “Conservative Revolution” party in Russia built up on ideas derived from Guenon, Moeller and others.<sup>209</sup>

The “Integral Tradition” site also offers books pertaining to political

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Imperium Europa, the Eurasian Alternative, Geopolitics  
Defending European heritage and identity “

<sup>207</sup> Who writes there that the “more fully matured the State, the higher the standing, the historical capacity and therefore the Destiny of the Nation. State-majesty, sovereignty, is a life-symbol of the first order.” This sounds very much like Guenon, Nietzsche or Hitler. It is a theofascist description of the state.

<sup>208</sup> From the same website I read that Schmitt wrote in the 1920’s that a “dictatorial methods can be not only sustained by popular acclamation but be seen as a direct expression of democratic substance.” Schmitt was here making an argument for neo fascist alternative established by ‘democracy’.

<sup>209</sup> There are many other theofascist website that promote traditionalism. At random for instance is <http://www.cakravartin.com/the-purpose-of-this-site>

To find more sites of this kind look up integral tradition. Tradition Guenon Evola an similar terms. Sedgwick has an out of date list on his site

topics such as the European New Right, as well as books related to the [Indo-European](#) ( read; Ayran) cultural and religious traditions. Others listed are fringe extremists like Francis Parker Yockey, an American right wing fanatic who supported the KKK<sup>210</sup>, and took inspiration for the 1930's right wing radio demagogue Charles Coughlin, a racist Catholic Fascist, precursor to today's Bill O'Reilly or Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity and Glenn Beck all far right demagogue on the corporate dole. There are many others on this website such as, Savatri Devi <sup>211</sup>, who like Schuon, was a romantically attached and mystical supporter of Japanese Fascism: Cornelius Codreneau: leader of the Romanian, fascist Iron Guard: Oswald Spengler, Nazi and historian and Charles Maurras who I will discuss at length later. The proximity of these writers is not guilt by association but a natural affinity between these various far-right ideologues. After all Guenon's first important teacher was a decadent spiritualist that worked for the Czar and Guenon is a creator of systems and ideology meant to justify the decadent upper classes and

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<sup>210</sup> Yockey is a repulsive racist of the worst sort, railing against Jews. Liberals and Blacks and invoking the destiny of the American national state. "We have seen the spirit of the white race: the spirit of divine discontent and self-help, the spirit of self-reliance, of fearlessness in the face of great danger, the feeling of racial superiority, the urge to great distances and the will to conquer all that lies between, the spirit of the Alamo. ...Of this feeling was every great American: Washington, Hamilton, Henry Clay, Robert E. Lee, Sam Houston. The American soldier shows in every war that even today this true American type survives." This sounds like some of Hitler's rhetoric and recalls the equally repulsive movie Birth of a Nation.

<sup>211</sup> Sivritri Devi born Maximine Julia Portas, (September 30, 1905 — October 22, 1982 )She was an avid supporter of the Nazis, moved to India and romanticized both Hindu and Nazism. According to Wikipedia, not the best source available. "she had Nazi interest in occultism, Deep Ecology, and the New Age movement. She influenced the Chilean diplomat and Guenonian Miguel Serrano. ". On the Integral Tradition website she writes in praise of both German and Japanese fascists that

"Do not forget, dear Japanese friends, that Aryans, before being converted, were "*worshippers of the Sun*,"[like the Japanese] faithful followers of the cult of heroes, blood and soil, just like you! One of your fellow countrymen, who worked at the Japanese Embassy in Calcutta in 1940, was right when he told me, "Your National Socialism is, according to us, just a Western form of Shinto!"

Schuon also endorsed and supported the Japanese fascists as can be seen in his essay on Shinto. I will discuss this more later..

failed aristocracy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The texts used as propaganda on the “Integral Tradition” website all support various aspects of the theofascist message. I select one text, a quote from Charles Upton. He is a far right fanatic Sufi with latent Catholic views, rejecting democracy, socialism and the Enlightenment. He is late and rather trivial follower of Guenon, Schuon and Coomaraswamy, and claims, falsely, that traditionalism is “apolitical”. Upton evokes Guenon’s Manichean paranoia, and writes that the “the evil of the world....the coming regime of the Antichrist” has established itself everywhere. Like Guenon, Upton imagines a world swarming with evil little demons, as if reality actually were J.R.R. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings trilogy. For Upton as for Guenon, the evil of the world is this comic book “Reign of Quantity”. The evil for them is science and the “liberal/communist/ materialist” era, as Upton has called it. The only way to fight this, Upton says, is to express the “principal Truth”. But the “Truth” that Upton and Guenon claim as their own is above all a political truth masked as metaphysics, and the “principles” involved are fictions. The “Truth” Upton apes comes from Guenon and religion and is THE TRUTH (capital “T”) that opposes democracy, human rights, science and the enlightenment, all of which are basically good things. This is a political ideology under a veil of pretentious metaphysics.

But Upton denies the obvious. Expressing this reactionary “principal Truth”, Upton says, “is not and never can be a case of propaganda; it is not a social-political act, but liturgical one “. Upton seems to think that pontificating pontiffs are infallible! A liturgical act, for Upton, is one where reason, human rights, democracy and science, all good things, are called evil. In other words, no one may question the liturgy even if it is itself evil or harmful. This is absurd.

To look at this in more detail: Upton is claiming that such “Truth” as is expressed in Guenon’s and Schuon’s writings are beyond politics

because they are based on the “liturgical” truth of the religions. But Upton is a bit obtuse here. There is no such thing as ‘liturgical’ truth, what he is calling liturgical truth is merely make believe and wishful thinking. Liturgies are merely the passed down ritual of a priest caste or class. The word liturgy derives from a Greek word, *leos*, which means people and *ergo*, “to do”, hence liturgy to do service to or for the people. Liturgy is a political act by definition, however much it may try to create a fictitious sacredness. Priests can pretend it is a divine act and that is their belief, but that is a private belief. In fact, a liturgical ceremony is a sort of political sleight of hand or pretense. Its real purpose is to hold followers in a web of belief and fictions which at bottom is political propaganda, precisely. Religion is merely the other side of the coin of politics.<sup>212</sup> So Upton is merely a propagandist hiding behind religion as was Schuon and Guenon, and this is obvious if you read a few paragraphs of any of their books.

Upton’s views in his silliest and longest book, the System of the Anti-Christ are basically souped-up fundamentalism repackaged as propaganda for a “gnosis”---- along with a “esoterism”. “Gnosis” is a favorite all-purpose tag of the traditionalists. They claim a special and exclusive “knowledge” or gnosis, but actually possesses nothing of the

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<sup>212</sup> Chomsky observes that Hans Morgenthau wrote a book called *The Purpose of American Politics*. “Other countries don’t have purposes. The purpose of America, on the other hand, is “transcendent”: to bring freedom and justice to the rest of the world.” In other words Chomsky is claiming that the American political system is based on a religious ideology. Morgenthau claims that “the United States hasn’t lived up to its transcendent purpose. But then he says, to criticize our transcendent purpose “is to fall into the error of atheism, which denies the validity of religion on similar grounds” -- which is a good comparison. It’s a deeply entrenched religious belief. It’s so deep that it’s going to be hard to disentangle it. And if anyone questions that, it leads to near hysteria and often to charges of anti-Americanism or “hating America” -- interesting concepts that ought not to exist in a democratic society. “In other words to question American exceptionalism is to be like an” atheist” and to incur the wrath of the ideologues. I don’t know how aware Chomsky is of what he is implying, but he is quite right. Religion, like politics is basically a social phenomenon, not a genetic one. It is an ideological imposition. The notion of America’s ‘transcendent purpose’ is an irrational justification of power politics as well and is a spiritual construction with no basis in reality. It is not different really, than a religion. see <http://www.zcommunications.org/the-paranoia-of-the-superrich-and-superpowerful-by-noam-chomsky>



kind. Both terms, gnosis and esoterism, are really meaningless. They use these terms to refer to a mystical monism that is solipsistic and to mystify and exalt themselves. They want to make themselves sound like they are different than other rag tag, run of the mill, far-right groups and cults, who also invoke the holy spirit or other mystical subjective emotions. “Esoterism” claims a totalist autonomy with respect to religion, and assumes thereby the religions are legitimated by the invented “kernel of the kernel”. But the religions are clearly based on all sorts of fallacies, superstitions and outright lies, none of which the traditionalists face or admit. Esoterism claims for its innermost substance is the “Primordial Tradition” itself, as if there were such a thing. There is no such thing and the idea that there is really a 19<sup>th</sup> century invention later extrapolated by Guenon and others.

No one has anyone ever proved such a thing exists because it does not. Esoterism claims to be based on “pure metaphysics”, but that too is a false category, there is no “pure metaphysics ” other than confused inward states and feelings that no one has ever been able to prove or indicate has any concrete reality. Metaphysics is really about feeling and just because something “feels” right does not make it true. These are only fictions created by men who claim their fictions are pure and real when they are not. Miracles are often trotted out to prove it, but these are always questionable and specious.

Esoterism is magical thinking and claims its goal is the realization of the ‘superior states of being’ and finally the union between the individual self and the “Principle”. If one studies claims to “Spiritual Enlightenment” or satori, there really is nothing there. No one has a permanent state of realization because there is no god or nirvana to realize. There is no ‘principle’ and esoterism has never had “superior state” in any way, they just pretend and exalt themselves and make silly claims. Indeed, I have never met anyone whose claim to “superior” states

actually manifested as being better than others, and often they are worse.

The rise of religious irrationalism in America and the appeal of writers like Upton, Schuon, Evola or the far right Christian novelists is defined well by Noam Chomsky when he writes:

“The rise of what’s called Islamic fundamentalism is to a significant extent a result of the collapse of secular nationalist alternatives which were either discredited internally or destroyed, leaving few other options. Something like that may be true of American society. This goes back to the nineteenth century. In fact, in the nineteenth century you even had some conscious efforts on the part of business leaders to promote and encourage fire and brimstone-type preachers who would lead people into looking in another way.”<sup>213</sup>

Upton is proud of looking the other way, and of being an American anti-intellectual, both as a wanna-be Beat poet and as a Schuonian. He thinks that because he does not understand how his belief system is political, it actually is not political. This is a sort of inversion of Cartesian inquiry. Rather than ‘I think therefore I am’, anti-intellectuals think, “I don’t think therefore I deny.”<sup>214</sup> This sort of arrogant ignorance is common across the board in far right circles. One can see it in Rush Limbaugh or Bill O’Rielly, those fatuous, neofascist, far-right, corporate propagandists.

This was exactly Evola’s strategy after World War II. He wished to turn fascism into religion and have it act under a banner of “apoliteia”, pretending not to be a-political, while in fact being totally political. Like

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<sup>213</sup> <http://www.chomsky.info/interviews/1990----.htm>

<sup>214</sup> Somewhere Upton claims that Schuon was full of Baraka or grace. Schuon had no “grace” at all, but was temperamentally mean, cold and incapable of sincerity. I never saw him smile and few ever did. Maude Murray was his lover for 15 years and she never saw him smile. Upton just makes up what he wants to see and pretends it is there.

many American fundamentalists he wanted to subvert the Enlightenment and Rationalist values that give us science. Upton's idea of disengaged religion is likewise based on the erroneous idea that liturgy is not propaganda and that religion is not political.<sup>215</sup> Liturgies are propaganda--- that is to say, they are a form of social control or manipulation-. Religions impose their propaganda deep into the body and the mind through rites, yogas, songs, art, prayers and other means. They impose propaganda and irrational belief through a politics of the 'inner life' as it were,<sup>216</sup> and implant there irrationalities and allegiances that no one can question or measure. For instance, The Christian liturgy is founded on the fiction of transubstantiation. Those who accept this

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<sup>215</sup> One of the best writers on the way in which religion sublimates, hides and obscures its political agendas is Russell McCutcheon. It is well to read him rather than proselytizer's like Arthur Versluis and Huston Smith. See his Manufacturing Religion, for instance, or his more recent books. McCutcheon contends that the study of religion as an historical category participates in a larger system of political domination and economic and cultural imperialism. He shows how the claims to make systems that supposedly reflect an imagined metaphysical basis of the "real" are shot through and through with political assumptions, class interests and prejudices. This is obvious, but the traditionalists do all they can to cover up their real views. For McCutcheon such categories as "religion" or "faith" as well as such opposing assumptions as spirit/politics, private/public, essence/manifestation are rhetorical tools that involve specific types of social engineering, helping to create a very specific sort of world. I agree with this view of religion, having seen myself how Traditionalists claim power on the basis of their ideology and hide their political repressiveness behind metaphysical rhetoric. McCutcheon points out that there really is no 'esoteric' core to the many religions and that such essentializations are a form of colonizing tendencies. I have been saying this for years, but it was good to read McCutcheon and hear him concur in such an exact and well researched body of work. He states for instance that "The fact that essentialist and generally de-historicizing strategies operate so widely as to be virtually transparent to the mass of scholars of religion is the key to understanding the way the field as a whole has avoided confronting the charges of extreme politics." There is no denying anymore that traditionalism is based on extremist politics....

<sup>216</sup> Robert Orsi notes that those who experience the "presence" of god angels or whatever are usually poor. He says "Experiences of presence are delusions; children are susceptible to scary stories; desperate people do whatever they need to do to get comfort or relief. Furthermore, such experiences are shaped by class, race, gender, and by power generally. If you're poor and lack access to good health care, you're going to turn to the saints. We know this about religion. Among the poor and the marginal, who are more likely to experience presence than the rich and powerful, presence serves fatalistically to endorse and sustain the status quo." Religions exploit needs and sufferings. Orsi wants a religious studies to be about the "power of non-existent objects" but this is just not possible. It is a pipe dream of his.  
<http://www.theamericanscholar.org/when-2-2-5/>

make-believe are lost to reason and live apart from reality. To the Eucharist is to deny both the Universal ideas of Plato or the Universal Substance of Aristotle as well, and this was tantamount to a denial of the act of transubstantiation. The eucharist act of eating the wafer imitates cannibalism. As Rubin writes in her marvelous book on the history of the eucharist

“We know too little about the inner workings of minds to be able to assess the impact of the invocation of the taboo of eating human flesh, the fears and desires related to it. But what we can assert is by combining the most holy with the most aberrant/abhorrent- the routine workings of sacramental power- an image of the fullness of live-giving which dwells in the image of utmost transgression- a very powerful symbol was created, -” <sup>217</sup>

Symbols are not always symbols of something real. In the case of the Eucharist it is a fabrication that has to be with getting an ideology implanted in people’s minds and emotions. To assert that what you eat in communion does not become Christ is to say the Church is a liar and a fraud. Well, yes it is....

In the eucharist, in the act of eating the wafer, the Church conflates fears of eating human flesh and conflates that with a barely veiled sexual union, and a wish not to die, or rather to die in an ecstasy of physical disembodiment in the “passion”. The Eucharist is primarily about the physical assimilation, through eating, of knowledge and power and through that the church more or less comes to ‘own the souls’ of those who eat its products. By doing this it secures a kind of thoughtless obedience. That is part of the genius of religion, of course, but also their danger. The purpose of repetition of eating the Eucharist like that of prayers is to stop thought and force conformity of outlook and

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<sup>217</sup> Rubin, Muri, Corpus Christi, The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture. Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 361

belief. Eating the eucharist is a meaningless act, which only takes on meaning by association with institutional suggestions. As William James noted “prayer... “Is the very soul of religion” but of course prayer is self-deception. It posits dissociated fictional agents or objects that do not exist and convinces those praying that these object are real, when they are not. James also observes that it may well prove that the “sphere of influence of prayer is subjective exclusively”.<sup>218</sup> Here his conjecture is correct and the “soul of religion“ is a deceit, a subjective phantasm. But he ends in denying the obvious, which is partly why I write this book, to correct his error.

Still on the subject of prayer, a mantra or repetition of a divine name is inculcated as a way of ritualizing social and mental control. Those who take the eucharist are allegedly saved and those who do not are allegedly damned. The truth is quite otherwise, but these illusions are foisted on believers. This is pure politics—“them versus us”---- as well as superstition. No one is damned or saved. The whole propagandistic sleight of hand of religion is convincing people that this nonsense is true: Religions try to assert that Christians are better than non-Christians are, or Moslems are better than “kefirs” (unbelievers), that Jews who eat off clean dishes are better than “Goyim” who eat off unclean dishes. Religions try to say that the religious are better than those who love science and freedom of thought. Religion is this propagandistic sleight of hand, this system of prejudice and mental manipulations. Religion does not have the credibility or truth of something like physics or evolution, proof of which is beyond a reasonable doubt. Such books as the Koran or Bible are political propaganda at their core: they are promotional texts, even archetypal PR, as it were. <sup>219</sup>Metaphysics is a systematic imposition of superstition.

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<sup>218</sup> James Varieties Of Religious Experience, pg 454--455

<sup>219</sup> Pinker argues against the attempt to posit a God gene, in his speech “The Evolutionary Psychology of Religion: Does the Brain Have a ‘God Module?’”

Pascal Boyer suggests that ritual, on a deeper level, is an effort to sublimate fear of predation. He suggests that humans are hardwired for this through evolution and religion has grown up to exploit this tendency. Ritual and prayer exists to try to create an antidote to “ the potential danger from contamination, predation, and social hazard.”<sup>220</sup> Prayer and ritual is a by-product of the need to feel unafraid, protected by ones parents or village. This is basically John Dewey’s argument that religion is about the need of security. Certainly the point of ritual is to cleanse a given person or group against the influence of outsiders and those thought to be dangerous, as well as to cement a mentality. Boyer elsewhere loosely compares rituals to obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCDs).<sup>221</sup> There is truth in this and I have seen people in cults perform rituals and prayer for weeks, most of their free time every day and not get what they wanted, and still be undeterred and continue with the rituals. OCD indeed.

Steven Pinker describes the Bible as “a manual for rape, genocide, and the destruction of families...Religion has given us stonings, witch burnings, crusades, Inquisitions, jihads, fatwas, suicide bombers...and mothers who drown their children in the river,” Noam Chomsky has said, “The Bible is one of the most genocidal books in history” and the irrepressible Mark Twain would agree.<sup>222</sup> Twain said that “[The Bible is] a mass of fables and traditions, mere mythology.” Exactly right. So is the Koran, Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures. The mind is what the brain does, not the “soul” which is a fiction, as non-existent as Santa Claus in the melting arctic.

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<sup>220</sup> “Whence Collective Rituals? A Cultural Selection Model of Ritualized Behavior”

<http://artsci.wustl.edu/~pboyer/PBoyerHomeSite/articles/LienardBoyerAA.pdf>

<sup>221</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWI3i2M0zl8>

<sup>222</sup> In Judaism, in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy the Bible advocates stoning women for adultery and killing or beating children kids for misbehaving. The god of the Bible is a violent sadist who destroys whole towns because he doesn’t like a few people in it. The god of the Bible supports slavery. Even Jesus supported slavery.

Traditionalism gives its addicts a sense of their own exclusive and supreme worth, over and above all the “profane people”, as Traditionalists disdainfully call everyone who is not in the various Traditionalist cults or cliques. The Traditionalists I have known, all of them ordinary folks who went to high schools or British or French or other schools, read a few books by Guenon or Schuon and think no one but himself or herself will ever be so eminent or full of grandiose esoteric truths. They strut and puff themselves up, imitate Schuon’s hand writing and beard and think they are the elite. One or two books elevate them above the rest of humanity, they believe. These books are like a heroin shot of pride and arrogance. Schuon claimed in my hearing that most of the world’s people, ‘profane people’ “deserve to be killed” because they are unbelievers. He thought his disciples deserved a special heaven all to themselves.<sup>223</sup> That pride, that arrogant willingness to destroy others, is what Theo-Fascism is all about. Guenon created this form of religion as a means of escalating and inflaming political and spiritual discriminations and prejudices while putting himself and his followers on top of the imaginary celestial heap.

Charles Upton’s rather bombastic books are slavishly derivative of Guenon and Schuon. If they were dilettantes and they were, Upton is a dilettante’s apprentice. Like them he assumes himself to be to be superior to all politics, when actually politics oozes from his tomes with a pathological subjectivity. He suffers from the same apocalyptic arrogance and proneness to narcissistic inflation that characterizes other spiritual extremists, from George Bush to Rene Guenon. Politics is nominally a lesser realm in the Guenonian ideology — politics is merely the affairs of the temporal realm, he says, as if the fictional ‘spiritual realm’ were a real thing that he knows anything about. I have met Upton and his wife

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<sup>223</sup> The disciples of Schuon used to worry that any airplane or helicopter that flew over them was spying on them. God was evidently looking down on the things they were doing that they felt so paranoid about with approval. But helicopters presented them with a real and present danger.

and I can tell you he has no inner track on the secrets of the universe. On the contrary, he merely parrots other people's ideas, and books he has read, pretending to be a 'spiritual' authority when really he is just another poet, dreaming of worlds that do not exist to flatter his own vanity and hopefully gain fame the approval of others. Religion grows out of bogus authorities, not on the basics of evidence. Authority in religion is hypocrisy by definition. No one who claims anything about religion in a madrasah or a Schule, a theology school or a religious studies department is telling the truth and the more they pretend the bigger hypocrites they are. They are merely custodians of delusion, keepers of the flame of organized deceit.

In fact, Guenon's metaphysical infinities, his eternal thoughts, his "beyond being" are all very 'temporal' creations used to ultimately fuel a politics of hate and prejudice, superiority and disdain, caste and delusions of grandeur. Guenon's system of spirituality involves the use of traditional religions as a vehicle, and methods of invocatory prayer and metaphysical dreams of other worlds as means of realization. Guenon's rhetorical claim to metaphysical unity and oneness in the midst of his "Intellect" is a self-magnifying mythic fantasy. His "shinning realm of the pure intellect" is neither shinning nor pure, but merely a self-delusional projection---a self-magnification of his paranoid subjectivity. In Schuon's case, the "Shining Realm of the Pure Intellect"<sup>224</sup> was often a cesspool

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<sup>224</sup> This is the title of a starry eyed and naive thesis written by Renaud Fabbri. Fabbri is typical cult follower of Schuon, unable to think for himself and full of mindless adulation for the cult leader. He says of Schuon that his cult was "destined to communicate the quintessence of all possible religion" which merely says that religion is delusional across the board and Schuon one of the worst of deluded men. He also says that Schuon must be more than a saint when he wonders if the category of "sainthood" adequately applies to the type of Gnostic spirituality "personified by Schuon." . He goes on to imply Schuon is a "major avatara" or some nonsense like this, the point being of course that Fabbri is a special guy, since he devotes himself to this charlatan This is a typical example of the sort of cultish adulation that Schuon inspires in certain duped followers people--- I witness a lot of this in the Schuon cult and know its signature very well. Schuon required this adulation as part of membership in the group. With no proof Fabbri also lies about and slanders some unspecified person who exposed Schuon's nudist primordial gatherings of imaginary crimes of embezzlement and lying. This attempt to slander witnesses



hidden by cult obfuscators. Because of this fantasy, he and his followers think themselves to superior to all that is “worldly”. Of course this is pure hypocrisy. <sup>225</sup>Guenon’s claim to be beyond all politics is, in fact, an enormously self-inflated claim to define all politics— this is the ultimate political claim. Edward Said defines “worldliness” as agaisint the ethereal, escapist, otherworldly, make believe of the religions and the upper classes. This is correct. The condemnation of worldiness is “meant to be a rather bludgeon like term to enforce the location of practices back in the mundane, the quotidian, the secular” Whereas actual worldliness is oneself, nature, work. He is right here, to which I add, the otherworldly is fiction, fraud, pretend. The “world” is all there is, and those who pretend they have knowledge of other worlds are fooling themselves and others.

Guenon is a fraud. There is no “higher” more conceited or more absurd political claim, and it is a claim that dissimulates itself as if it were not such a claim and not political. His followers fall for this nonsense. Well, the fact is, Guenon did not study with charlatans like Papus (Gerard Encausse) and Blavatsky for nothing. He learned from them how to dress up lies as rhetoric.

One need only read a few of Guenon’s or Upton’s paragraphs to see that these men believe themselves to be the ultimate deciders of worth and truth, a position they adopt that is really repulsively arrogant. I happen to have met Charles Upton once and know he is an unassuming

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against Schuon is in lock step with the Schuon cult who have been slandering people with these fictions for years to try to cover up for Schuon’s real crimes. The witnesses against Schuon told the truth about his gatherings, and the cult tries to cover this up with lies. See <http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi/Fabbri%20Renaud.pdf?miami1175881809>

<sup>225</sup> This is quoted in Edward Said, Criticism and Socioety, by Abdirahman Hossein. Some of this can seen here:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=9hxG7UmGCJsC&pg=PA160&lpg=PA160&dq=edward+said+human+beings&source=bl&ots=-COWZzvIQW&sig=c3iYtDe281mjR93c46mvtSJefis&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiAw-SPoPjVAhVL5YMKHee2DwUQ6AEIWD AJ#v=onepage&q=edward%20said%20human%20being s&f=false>

man on the outside,-- a humble, honorable man<sup>226</sup>-- but his books show him as a right wing, neo-fascist Moslem, fixated on “evil” with an ego many miles high. Like Guenon, his idea of god is flaccid and empty but his idea of evil is rigorous, extensive and pregnant. He was a New Age hippie for some years before moving to the extreme right. Now he is a New Age theofascist (who hates left New Age socialists) and who denies he is new age and denies he is theofascist.<sup>227</sup> He is obsessed with apocalyptic ideologies as was Guenon.<sup>228</sup> Guenon was a man drunk in

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<sup>226</sup> Was Shakespeare being ironic in calling Brutus honorable? That is the usual interpretation. But maybe Caesar was indeed a tyrant as Brutus suggests and maybe the authoritarian rule that he represented was a form of theofascism. Did Brutus serve the common man in killing Caesar? Perhaps. Of course in this age where political assassinations is so often practiced by corrupt presidents and prime ministers, it is a morally questionable thing to advocate it. Power does indeed corrupt and those who would kill those who kill end in getting corrupted too. It is much better to put people on trial than to kill them. Osama Bin Laden should have been put on trial and not murdered by Obama.

<sup>227</sup> For a flawed but very interesting account of New Age spirituality that is full of critical insight about cults, see:

Geoffrey D. Falk. Stripping the Gurus

<http://www.strippingthegurus.com/stgsamplechapters/aftertheordeal.asp>

The book begins

“Ramakrishna was a homoerotic pedophile.

His chief disciple, Vivekananda, visited brothels in India.

Krishnamurti carried on an affair for over twenty years with the wife of a close friend. Chögyam Trungpa drank himself into an early grave. One of Adi Da’s nine “wives” is a former Playboy centerfold. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh sniffed laughing gas to get high. Andrew Cohen, guru and publisher of *What Is Enlightenment?* magazine, by his own reported admission sometimes feels “like a god. ”. There is more on Ananda Moyi Ma, Ken Wilber, Bhagwan Rajneesh, Satya Sai Baba, Andrew Cohen, Jim Jones, David Koresh, Paramahansa Yogananda, Aurobindo, Krishnamurti, Mother Teresa and many other wackos and lunatics, -- (and even Schuon gets a little discussion in this book of cults and cult leaders) It is a delightful expose of the most kooky madmen and women of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

<http://www.strippingthegurus.com/ebook/download.asp>

<sup>228</sup> Apocalyptic fantasies are fictions designed to threaten and thus control minds and behaviors. They are based on impossible standards of correct behavior or arise out of political and economic inequalities as in cold war apocalyptic scenarios. In the Apocalypse of St. John for instance John

his own self-importance, hiding behind a pose of a humble man leading a “simple life”.<sup>229</sup> Upton read a few books and now thinks himself the supreme authority on truth and righteousness. Guenon and Upton claim to speak from the height of “Truth” and their words are supposed to rain down on readers head like biblical manna from heaven. Actually they are just bullies who impose bogus views without evidence. Upton is claiming in his writings that Guenon, Schuon and perhaps himself are speaking by “divine right”, or because the holy spirit tells him. The subjective delusion of the ‘holy spirit’ is never questioned.<sup>230</sup> Like a

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is poisoned by his own lust for perfection. His otherworldly sanctity (as represented in the Gospel of John) erupts in a diseased and self-righteous hatred of the world. This malicious literary Apocalypse ends with the cultish threat that any man who questions these prophecies "God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." This form of spiritual blackmail is common in many religions and cults. This is the way of a mafia or an Inquisition. Indeed, threats of the end of the world are all about the abuse of power. Anyone promoting apocalyptic ideology is involved one way or another in a con game, a manner of blackmailing others, a creating fear through threats to get what they want. I cannot submit myself to anyone who needs to resort to blackmail to convince me. Indeed, both the Koran and the Bible are full of such threats and this is one reason to deny them as “holy books”. They employ psychological strategies that are offensive and should be opposed by anyone with any sense. St John and Muhammad wrote books that desire to destroy the world in the name of love, and then to seek to blackmail anyone who objects to this tyranny of thought. Such an approach makes St John and Muhammad beyond reason, indeed, what they try to do is it is reprehensible. I find Guenon and Upton to be underhanded and scurrilous writers for the same reason.

<sup>229</sup> The French biography of Guenon is titled the Simple Life of Rene Guenon, trying to pose him as a St Francis like figure, But Guenon’s life had nothing simple about it. The Traditionalists often pose themselves in this sort of way; hoping followers will buy the pretense. Schuon has written a whole article on ‘holy childhood’ (“Reflections on Naïveté”) and often mentions the subject in other articles. Schuon certainly did not love actual children, the only child Schuon has shown evidence of loving is the child in himself. Schuon created childish cartoons and had a toy box, this was one of the “most esoteric parts of him” one of his wives told me. Schuon's toy-box is in his "treasure room" and is full of stuffed animals which he sometimes plays with. He had collections of marbles and other objects that a celestial child might have (little golden daggers, clear marbles, dolls, etc.,) The collection of toy animals is spread out across the table in the kitchen to greet him for breakfast Christmas. All this might be cute until one realizes that this man invited children to adult sexualized gatherings. His interest in naïveté was part of psychopathic psyche.

<sup>230</sup> The new testament even condemns anyone who questions the holy spirit, “And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven,” (Luke 12:10, Matthew 12:31, Mark 3:29). This is an in an obvious effort to create psychological black mail and force allegiance to the subjectivist and delusory nature of religion. The ‘mystery’ of the subject must be identified with an

Baptist preacher seething over the existence of evil, Guenon claimed to have been initiated into the divine mysteries by secret masters. No evidence is given. He claimed that god speaks out of him directly and that all politics must derive from this “truth”. He claimed to possess the secret of all orthodoxies. This claim to speak out of or in the interests of the “absolute” is theofascism itself.

In fact, Guenon was obsessed with the idea of evil from an early age. One of his first pieces of writing was a poem about Satan, and notes for a novel in which he would gain tremendous spiritual powers. Guenon and Upton are writing fantasy novels presented as if they were true, rather like today’s far-right Christian novelists. Like The Christian apocalyptic novelists, Upton and Guenon are obsessed with branding all they do not like with the term “evil”, which is basically a political term in their usage.<sup>231</sup> Like many religious people, their prime aim is to control

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institutional construction. The holy spirit is really just a misunderstanding of one’s own life force or feeling of existence. The effort to make what is our very lives as if it were owned by a church is horrendous.

<sup>231</sup> Evil per se, does not exist. I discussed the ideology of evil in [The Empire of the Intellect](#), as follows:

”The concept of evil, like the god concept which it compliments, is an essentialization, an abstraction, a fiction extrapolated from experiences and reactions to real or imagined events. The concept of evil, like that of god, has a history and the history of the use of the concept of evil indicates that the concept is a psycho-social and mythological generalization whose purpose is to legitimize one form of knowledge/power while stigmatizing another. Evil is not a concrete existing event or force, as is power, murderousness, war or hate: evil is a mythological or political construct, whereas murder or the effort to exterminate is a fact. The concept of evil is an orchestrating mechanism which justifies actions. It is an element in a system of knowledge and power. The Nazis called the Jews 'evil' and the holocaust resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews: 30-80 million Native Americans died in the Conquest yet the Native Americans were considered 'evil' savages lacking in civilization by the Europeans; or 4 million Vietnamese were killed in the American invasion of Vietnam to stop the 'evil' of "communism". The term evil is meaningless, or rather it hides an agenda of power and knowledge or politics. Continuing to refer to a metaphysical existence of evil merely serves to help perpetuate the illusions of beneficence and supremacy that have accompanied atrocities. Moreover, the concept of evil is a hindrance to talking about the history of atrocities. As Chomsky has pointed out, the US propaganda system “consistently portrays people abused in enemy states as worthy victims, whereas those

behavior. The Traditionalists play on the borderline between religion, fiction and politics and they do so as part of an effort to claim global authority on the basis of all religions and not just local authority based on one religion. This claim, is absurd, of course, and can only be sustained within a small and well policed, cultish world, where disciples, cult members and true believers alone are allowed to penetrate.<sup>232</sup> The claim to possess the ultimate truth to which all others must submit is a claim to political and social power, however ridiculous it may be. This is the claim that Guenon made, and it is what makes Guenon sympathetic to neo-fascists and orthodox Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and Christians alike. Like Guenon, Upton reduces the world into a Manichaeian dualism. For Upton, as for Guenon, there is the myth of the “Antichrist” set against the esoteric Truth represented by Guenon and his followers, in an absurd battle of modernism against tradition; “Them versus Us”.<sup>233</sup>

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treated with equal or greater severity by its own government will be unworthy. The evidence of worth may be read from the extent and character of attention and indignation”.

<sup>232</sup> I’ve written about the whole issue of secrecy and lying and its relation to cover up and corruption inside the Schuon cult elsewhere. See also Hugh Urban’s writing on the role of secrecy inside Tantric Buddhist cults and sects in India, where he shows how secrecy in Tantric cults served a political agenda—specifically how the cult of Kali was actually about Hindu Nationalism. Kali was also used to hide unethical or illegal behavior. See his Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics and Power. He also wrote an interesting study of how the apocalyptic ideas of George Bush influence his power plays. The essay is called “America, “Left Behind”” Bush, the Neo-cons and Evangelical Christian Fiction. Urban chronicles the relation of evangelical preacher Tim LaHaye and fiction novelist Jerry Jenkins whose books advocate a very “theofascist” message, though Urban is rather weak in drawing inferences from his own findings. Scott Atran seems to think that religious lying and fabrication has a virtuous aspect since it gives people hope and deludes them into a patina of social harmony. Such a false harmony serves no one really.

<sup>233</sup> This paranoid “Them versus Us” mentality can be seen in Charles Upton’s rather ridiculous book the System of the Anti-Christ, when he says, for instance, that Traditionalist “groups and individuals who hold to this doctrine have been subjected to the immense degree of psychic pressure which observers on the outskirts of the Traditionalist School, such as myself, cannot fail to note. It is reasonable to conjecture that Antichrist would like nothing better than to subvert and discredit the Traditionalists....” ( pg 490) This is self-fulfilling fiction where the author makes up falsehoods and then invents a boogiemane to fan the flame of his victim hood and create notoriety. Notoriety is what Upton is all about. The

All the Traditionalists, Guenon, Schuon and others create their systems of thought based on a radical extension of the “Them versus Us”, idea. Christ’s statement, quoted earlier, “he that is not with me is against me”, is a paranoid statement meant to declare a war against critics.

Traditionalism, like many religions or cults is systems of moral blackmail. Similar threats throughout the Koran become the bedrock of the Traditionalist movement, fueling their certainty in their superiority--- a superiority that does not exist except in the minds of brainwashed followers. In their minds, the entire world reduces to a paranoid and poisonous war between good and evil, spirit and matter, quality and quantity. For the Guenonians, metal objects ooze evil influences, coins are full of harmful Satanist forces and archeological sites are centers of harmful effluents coming from evil worlds. For Guenon the entire world is a “great wall” and evil is seeping through the cracks or “fissures” in the wall like bad thoughts infecting the mind of a schizophrenic serial killer. Only the spiritual fascist, the ‘avatara’ will triumph in the end, armed like Nazi Warriors, like Siegfried, like Saint George and the dragon, like the Templars, like Mussolini, or like Schuon claiming to be the final prophet at the end of time, will survive the cataclysm. For Traditionalists, these delusional figures of myth and fantasy are real.

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traditionalists have already discredited themselves and it does not take a fictional anti-Christ to accomplish the restoration of traditionalism to legitimacy. Upton is here claiming that his little formula of truth, the Schuonian ideology of the “transcendent unity of the religions” is under huge pressure because they are more or less lonely saints keeping the world safe against the mythical “anti-Christ”. What a make believe world of fictions Upton is living in!! This video-game view of history, or rather this history as a sort of Star Wars movie, is childish, bombastic and paranoid. Such paranoid nonsense has the purpose of making those in these groups feel important and elite. The truth is otherwise. The fate of the world has nothing to do with what the Traditionalists do or do not think. They are irrelevant. It is a trivial school of thinkers who have little influence in the wider world. The Traditionalists that I have known are hardly suffering--- Schuon’s followers were and probably still are spiritual materialists, upper middle class, live in expensive houses, go to nudist gatherings, swap wives, overdress in expensive Hindu and Moslem clothes and spend a lot of time going to expensive restaurants and thus suffer little pressure at all about anything. Upton too is indulging a kind of shopping mall spirituality, using multiple and stereotyped religions to inflate his imagination to a maximum degree of narcissist expansion.

I use this example of Charles Upton's fake claim to be apolitical on the neo-fascist website Integral Tradition to illustrate how the Traditionalists can be extraordinarily pretentious. However, putting the penchant of many Traditionalists for self-delusion aside, the fact is that from its inception among figures such as Joseph De Maistre or Rene Guenon, the entire Traditionalist movement was fundamentally political. Their metaphysical claim to represent and promulgate the "fundamental", "quintessential", "magisterial" essence of "the real", to use their own inflated language, was itself a grandiose political claim. They wanted to turn back the good done by the Enlightenment and the Renaissance and go back to the good old days of the Caste system, the Inquisition, the aristocracy, military backed priesthood and vast inequity, inequality and hierarchy.

#### **b. Romanticism and the Origins of Fascism**

##### **( On Eliade, Jung, Heidegger and Campbell and others)**

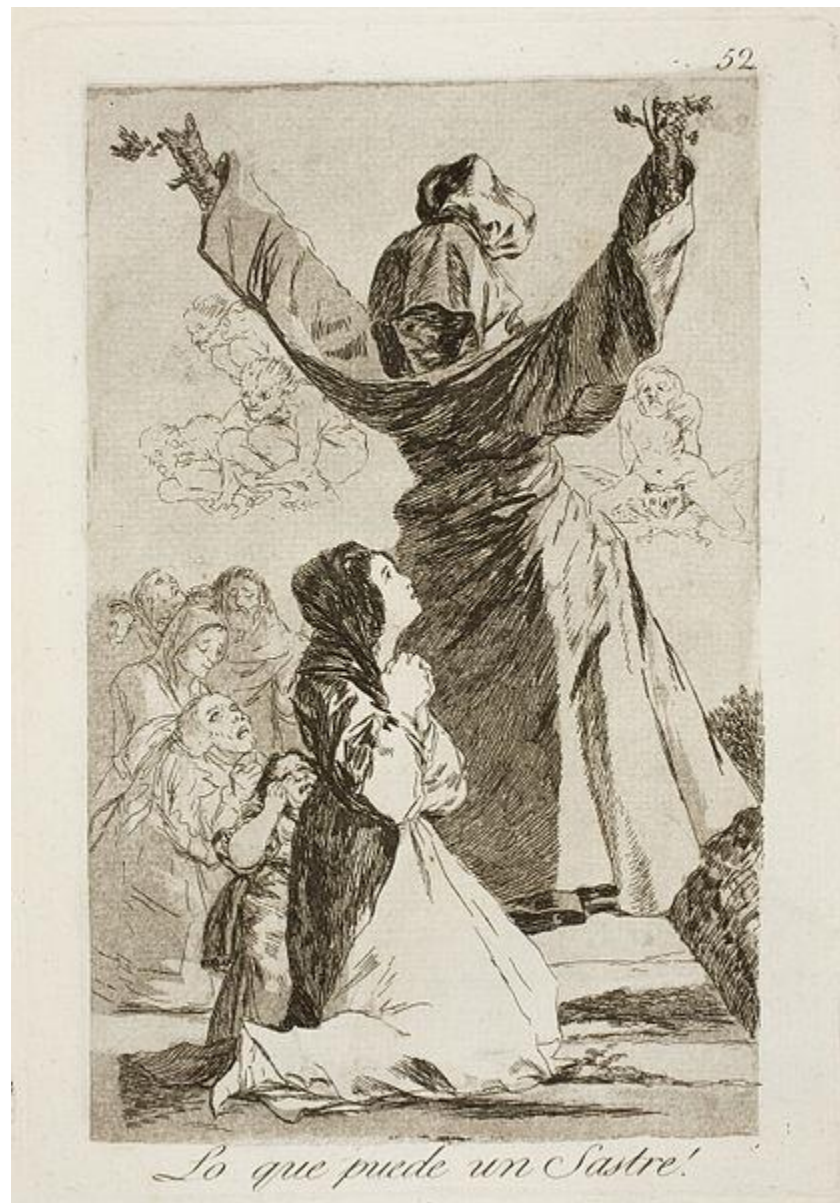
*(Note: this is one of several essays that trace the history of a certain ideology, in this case, fairly recent history. Tracing how ideologies were created after the erosion of the major religions is an interesting tack and the evidence suggests that religion as indeed replaced by various power systems, from Nazism, Marxism, Free-enterprise capitalism to the Eurozone. Romanticism had a great deal to do with preserving aspects of far right religious ideology and the supremacy of human subjectivity, itself and ideology, which gave us speciesism. Other essays echo this concern such as the one on Nietzsche or the ones in the last book on Roman and Greek history or Christianity's horrible suppression of science, discussed in. )*

Bertrand Russell, in his History of Philosophy, devotes a large part of a chapter to show that Romanticism led to fascism. He specifically connects the poetry of Byron to some of the ideas that led to Hitler and the Third Reich. This is quite accurate. Romanticism led up to reactionary political systems of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Guenon, Schuon, and Evola share the same far right category as reactionaries like Mircea Eliade, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Jung and Heidegger. There are arguments and counter arguments for and against the connection of many of these Romantic thinkers the extreme right. It is a thriving area to consider the ties of these people to the fascist movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the passage of time, it becomes clearer that all these men are far-right in their basic thought, in deep and incontestable ways. To grasp the relation of these people to the larger category of Romanticism is a little harder.

The central Romantic ideas and forms of imagination were secularized versions of traditional theological concepts, imagery, and design. There is a slow change in romantic thought from the Middle Ages to the rise of totalitarian regimes exemplified in Byron and Hegel. As Russell point out, Byron and Hegel helped create or prefigured later movements in Nazism and Stalinism. Guenon and Schuon trace back to romantic and occult thought prior to the development of these totalistic regimes. They are, as it were, born of the same river. Figures like Madame Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, Yeats, Pound, Wagner, Stravinsky, Kandinsky and Rilke were concerned with ecstatic states and in which they claimed a sort of inner eternity, “eternity” here being an elitist magnified fiction. They thought they were creating a new form of consciousness to ‘save’ the West from what they saw as a process of spiritual decay. Pound for instance, claimed he felt a ‘light from Eleusis’ or the ‘gnosis’ of the Eleusinian mysteries. Schuon claimed this too. What they felt of course, was their own arrogance and need of power.



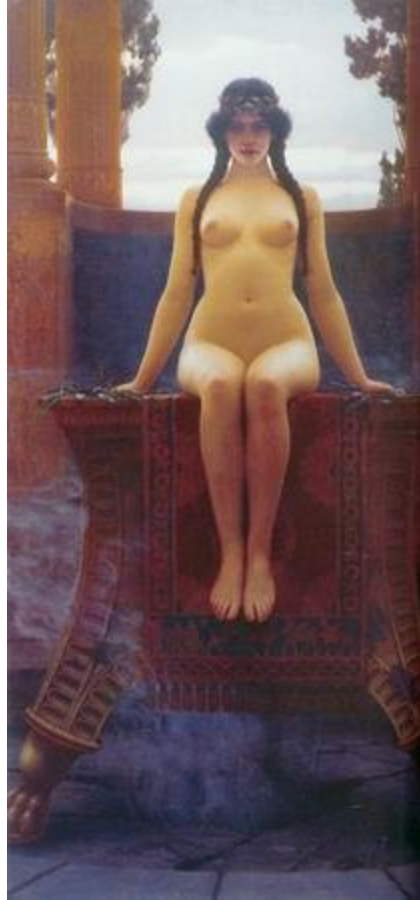
This aristocratic escapism has a curiously reactionary quality to it, even if they were not out and out fascist as most of these men were not. This is a very murky realm, as Bertrand Russell indicates. The “gnostic” pretensions of the romantics imply there might be a reality to the idea of “gnosis”. I do not think there is in fact. It is merely subjective elation gone amuck. Goya defined the process of magnification very well in his great Caprichos #52:



“What a tailor can do”

In this print a crowd of people bow down to a sheet put over a tree as if were a god. The title is “what a tailor can do”. Religions are good at doing just this, creating a fake image for people to worship, myths and holy books, prayers and vestments to exalt and magnify priests and churches. This process of glorification of fictions is endless and constitutes of great deal of what religions actually do, from sermons, to dances, art to architecture on even the Summa Theologica.

The idea of gnosis traces very far, really back to before the Delphic Oracle and Pythian Sybil, an old woman hired for the deed, who was intoxicated by the gaseous vapors, probably ethylene, and the sibyl would fall into a trance, allowing “Apollo to possess her spirit”, or so the myth proclaimed. This was another form of fictional magnification.



The Delphic Oracle  
A 19<sup>th</sup> century fantasy by  
John William Godward

What this ideology of gnosis comes from is a mistaken perception that the human mind is somehow separate from the body. The disembodied “spirit” is just this deluded and bubble-like subjectivity detached from the actual facts of existence. It was only 500 years ago that people started grasping elementary things about how the body/brain works. Evolution made us rather dense when it comes to our own bodies. Religion deserves much blame for preventing inquiry about this. Much of what goes on in us, physically is largely unknown to us. Most of the processes that go on in human and animal bodies are autonomic. This

fact explains why people have such weird and false ideas about the importance of human subjectivity and create bizarre and largely false notions of Chakras, Galen's "Humors", or the Chinese notions of Chi (Qi) meridians or Channels. These superstitious ideas dominated medicine for millennia. Actually since has proven all of that wrong and work is now underway to understand the brain and how it works inside the body, and not separate from it.

The 'holy spirit' of gnosis is really just this sort of emotional or subjective fantasy and intoxication, inspired by gases, drugs or auto-suggestion. This is what becomes central in romantic thought, the presumed divinity of the subject.

But for my purposes here let's trace gnosis back to Valentinus, Basilides, and the "heretical" sects, such as the Donatists, that so angered Augustine that he thought they should all be killed. One of Augustine's nicknames is the "Hammer of the Donatists". Indeed, Augustine is an early example of Theofascism. He sets up a dichotomy of "them verses us", Christians verses heretics, and then oppresses and kills people in the name of a fictional god. For Augustine God is the 'bestower of all power' and since the Church has "the authority of the mysteries" in its rituals, it is the supreme power.<sup>234</sup> Of course, the reality is that there is no authority into those rituals, they are make believe, so the power of the Church must be imposed by force, which is what has happened over several thousand years form the murder of the Donatists to the Inquisition to George Bush's declaration of holy war against Moslem nations.

But the Christian hatred of gnosticism is rather arbitrary and represents the drive of early Christians to eliminate oppositional groups.

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<sup>234</sup> [Essential Augustine](#) page 61 check ref

Indeed, the term 'gnosticism' is problematical and ultimately meaningless. I mean by this that though the word means knowledge, the sort of thing that gnosticism actually refers to is not knowledge at all, but myth and fairy tales of union with a god who does not exist, the pleroma, and the journey to the beyond. Moreover, because the concept of gnosticism is used to describe too many different things it really refers to nothing meaningful. It is used to describe what the Templars claimed to possess--- but did not--- to Carl Jung's mysticism, to the cults of the Black Virgin, legend of the Grail, and systems of knowledge from the Carpocratians to Marx, Blake and Nietzsche. Even science is referred to as "gnostic" by Eric Voegelin. There is really nothing that ties these very different things together other than a dreamy proneness to utopian, backward, mythical or imaginary beliefs.

In most cases "gnosticism" has been formulated as a reaction to dominant European powers, but often it joins these same powers in sects and secret societies. But in its various forms, gnosticism remains a will to power through false knowledge. Insofar as the term can have any meaning, Christianity is also gnostic religion, in the sense that it "assumes man's alienation in the cosmos",<sup>235</sup>--- an alienation that can only be reversed through violence and social control. The notion that people are "alienated" from the entire cosmos is rather ridiculous and if anything is the result of religion itself, which radically separates people from nature. But then all the major religions are 'gnostic' in the sense that they all assume human alienation from the cosmos. This is precisely what is at issue with religion in this book and why I am opposing it. The gnostic wants to transcend and overcome the human state, which he thinks is low and unworthy. He hates evolution and science and wants to join a mysterious beloved beyond who is not there. But this is true of all the religions, more or less. That is exactly what is wrong with religion.

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<sup>235</sup> Voegelin's definition of gnosticism

All that matters is our 'cosmos, our earth and we and all the other beings on it. We are only aliens from this if we alienate ourselves.

Should one call all the religions gnostic? Some do this and claim that the "esoteric"—namely the elitist and secret part of religions is 'gnostic'. But then where does this stop? Nietzsche saw himself as a knower or a gnostic in that he thought he recreated himself out of the ashes of dead religion. Foucault wants to recreate himself as a "total innovation"—which is a totally Nietzschean project. Foucault also has an apocalyptic narcissism that recalls Foucault. Marx is also a gnostic in this sense, except that his concern is not merely personal transformation, as in Foucault, but totalistic social transformation. Marx is a religious figure. Anyone who has long experience of watching a Marxist thinker as I do, knows that Marxism is a religion with many cult like attributes. Stalinism is a form of gnostic utopianism, very much like the Catholic Church without its god.

One could perhaps speak of a gnosticism of the right and of the left. However, there is no clear dividing line. Schelling, Von Baader, De Maistre, Shelley, Coleridge, Novalis, Robespierre, Hegel, Jung, Guenon, Lanz von Liebenfels, Wagner, Rilke, Pound, Guenon, Schuon, Jean Borella, Wolfgang Smith, Arthur Versluis <sup>236</sup> have all been considered 'gnostics'. However, what ties them together is actually a concern to

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<sup>236</sup> Arthur Versluis tries to define gnosis rather narrowly and from a proselytizing and "spiritual" point of view based in a self-interest fails. . "Gnosis" is basically a system of esoteric religious fictions that seeks unity with an imaginary "non-dual "principle, such as Brahma or god. The Advaitic formula "Atma is Brahma" is a 'gnostic" formula which means that an individual joins himself in his or her imagination to an imaginal construction that is 'god', "void", Jesus or the divine name or whatever—it could be anything. This is a form of imaginary or "virtual" self-magnification and is properly a psychological inflation, not an objective accomplishment. The process of gaining this "knowledge" which really isn't knowledge at all but a sort of imposture—involves the devaluing of the cosmos, since one "transcends the world" and seeks union with what one is not. One seeks union with what does not exist and in so doing denigrates all that does exist. Mystical "Gnosis" is thus a destructive thing, not a positive thing. The world become Maya or the "ten thousand things", as is stated in Hindu or Taoist thought. Gnosis devalues earth and the cosmos in favor of non-existence. Gnosis or esoterism is merely a new attempt to recreate religion in the modern age, using the same of tired fictions. Esoteric gnosis is just a new form of metaphysical sleight of hand. It turns reality into an imaginary construction

advance an imaginary system of knowledge in view of gaining some sort of social power.

The word “gnosis” is Greek for ‘knowledge’. M.H. Abrams writes:

“in romantic [or gnostic] thought, the mind of man confronts the old heaven and the old earth and possesses within itself the power to transform them into a new heaven and a new earth by means of a total revolution in consciousness”. (Abrams. *Natural Supernaturalism* pg.334)

In short, for Abrams, history is merely an alteration of mental fictions. Understood in the widest sense, Christian symbolism aside, this ‘gnostic’ drive for total transformation is as much a part of Christ and Descartes as of Mao, Newton, Plato, Confucius and William Blake. Einstein, with his philosophy of hating the personal and the earthly in favor of the mathematical and otherworldly is a Gnostic when he does that. That is his personal belief system; his science of relativity is independent of this. Hinduism is gnostic in the sense of its radical hatred of the actual and its embrace of the imaginary and mythic “Self” or Atma. The romantic ideology of Nazis like Goering and Himmler is also gnostic. This is confusing.

What ties all these thinkers, poets, scientists and political leaders together is not gnosticism but the will to power through a variety of different kinds of fake or pretend systems of knowledge. Gnosticism is a delusion of will, or fake ontology of the spiritual. What is called gnosticism appears to be little more than the romantic oppositional aspirations of a few poets and leaders of sects. It also appears to be present in the major religions. What it really is a vector in a power play. Gnosticism or “esoterism”, the two terms being roughly synonymous, is a widely various attempt to theorize about and seize and maintain power through erecting fictions. It is not merely a second or fourth century



heretical sect, defined as such by the Christians who hated them. Gnosticism is a subjective state of spiritual delusion which occurs in many places times and individuals.

But though this definition has some merit, it is misleading, because it is too wide, diffuse and insufficiently descriptive.. So I state here that I do not think that the idea of gnosticism or gnosis has any real value at all. Like the category “esoteric” it is really a trumped up term to repackage religious mystifications and fictions for the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries . It is a meaningless term that is used by proselytizers and careerists who pretend to be talking about something real, where really they are making claims to know things they don’t know at all. So I will use the word or concept occasionally because it arises so often.<sup>237</sup> But when I use such terms I am seeking to explain that ‘gnosis’ is not something real but rather a cloak for competing systems of ‘knowledge’ and power.

So gnosis or spiritual claims are a kind of dangerous romantic fiction that tries to insinuate itself into the mind and social fabric. So, how does gnosis become theofascism? There are various peripheral figures to the Traditionalist movement who demonstrate Bertrand Russell’s point that romanticism and fascism have clear links. Mircea Eliade<sup>238</sup>, for instance, supported the Romanian Iron-Guard, another far

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<sup>237</sup> I saw this phony knowledge fall apart clearly in various traditionalists. Schuon and R. Coomaraswamy presented themselves to me as gnostics, but I discovered at last that all that was pretense and false posing. In each case I saw the mask come off and their real self was really just a grasping human being pretending to be something they were not. Their tragic pretense made them intolerably at close quarters. From a distance they might seem wise of good, but up close they were pretenders and weak. In all three cases I felt pity for them, but could not express it to them because they could not take off the masks they wore, unlike the Wizard of OZ, who becomes humble when his mask is uncovered, as I uncovered Smith’s Coomaraswamy’s and Schuon’s.

<sup>238</sup> In 1938, Eliade was arrested for being a member of the Iron Guard. He was on the parliamentary lists of the Iron Guard for the December 1937 elections. He held public speeches and participated in various rallies all across Romania, all of them very well documented. He was a virulent racist and propagandist for hate and murder



right anti-Semitic fascist organization with ties to orthodox religious ideology. Its leader was Corneliu Codreanu, a religious mystic who aimed at a spiritual resurrection for the Romanian nation. He killed many people. Mircea Eliade's relation to Romanian fascism, the Iron Guard and anti-Semitism are well researched and undeniable. Eliade was important to the academic study of religion for years and the academy that he influenced still continues to try to ignore or minimize his relation to fascism. Because of Eliade and other aspects of theofascism survive uncriticized in religious studies departments of today's universities. Eliade was also deeply influenced by Traditionalism and by Guenon, indeed, his interest in them occurs at the same time as he was attracted to the anti-Semite and fascist Corneliu Codreanu., Corneliu Codreanu and the Iron Guard. Evola had been attracted to the same man and for similar reasons. Eliade was a very secretive man and hid the fact that both Evola, Codreanu and Guenon were central to his development. He corresponded with Evola and met him several times. Sedgwick says that "Eliade's general model of human religiosity in effect was the Perennial Philosophy dressed up in secular clothes." But Sedgwick's fudges considerably on what was under Eliade's clothes.<sup>239</sup> Sedgwick goes to some length to try to excuse

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<sup>239</sup> Sedgwick's discussion of Eliade is interesting because it shows some of the dilemmas Sedgwick faced in himself writing this book, Against the Modern World.. For instance, he writes that Eliade's more or less lied about the deep influence Guenon had on him and did so because in order to "make a career as an academic he could not admit a debt to authors who were not—at least in academic terms—serious." Pg. 112. "Eliade was irritated that Guenon was so anti-western and polemical—that is--- political--- and it is clear that this is Sedgwick's irritation too. Sedgwick seems to excuse Eliade's ties to fascism as some kind of justification for his own rather weak attraction and repulsion for traditionalism. Sedgwick can't admit he is very much like Eliade, a sort of confused duplicitous character caught between spiritual fascism and academic careerism. I suspect Sedgwick invented the whole category of "soft traditionalism"—which is his suggestion of "soft fascism"—in order to put Eliade in it and exempt himself as well from "hard traditionalism". Hence his book ends with an effort to justify the academic who is caught in postmodern rejection of science, yet who is not quite able to join in on Guenon's version of theofascism.

Eliade. The theofascism <sup>240</sup> of Eliade was really quite extreme. Eliade wrote in his journals In 1936, that

“to me, it is a matter of complete indifference whether Mussolini is or is not a tyrant. Only one thing interests me: that this man has transformed Italy in fifteen years, turning a third-rate country into one of the world powers of today.” He also writes that “ We know of several tyrants who have transformed stupefied countries into powerful states: Caesar, Augustus, and Mussolini.”

Eliade’s love of “mythological thinking” made Eliade, as well as Jung and Campbell, “essentialist” writers, which means he tends to stereotype, over generalize and pronounce in a far right manner. Eliade’s fascist politics discredits his foundational methodologies and theories as a scholar of religion, or at the very least they indicate the reactionary and theofascist nature of a lot of the work that has been doing in universities on religion. Eliade is criticized in the writings of Ivan Strenski, Stephen Wasserstrom, Daniel Dubuisson and Russell McCutcheon, who explain his relation to fascism.

The writings of Bryan Rennie, on the other hand, who is the advisor for Mark Sedgwick’s book on Guenon, which has many pages about Eliade, seek to apologize for Eliade’s fascism in a similar way that many scholars try to deny Heidegger’s direct connections to the Nazis.

<sup>241</sup> Apologists for a figure like Eliade appear to be mostly scholars who

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<sup>240</sup> “There are a great many revolutionary impulses that have been waiting for thousands of years to be put into practice. That is why the Son of Man descended: to teach us permanent revolution.” All these quotes from *Happy Guilt*.: Source: *New Republic*, 8/5/91, Vol. 205 Issue 6, p27, 10p Author(s): Manea, N.; Bley-Vroman, A.

<sup>241</sup> See also Stephen Wasserstrom’s Religion after Religion for a discussion of the quasi-fascism of Henry Corbin, Eliade and others. Wasserstrom says that “While I would not claim that Corbin was fascist, I am saying that he cannot be understood historically unless he is seen in light of such contemporaneous themes in fascist thought” (155). This is exactly what one would expect, given that the same is true of Schuon, Guenon, Lings and, in fact, most conservative religious movements since 1945. The real question is not if this is so, but why this is so, This book is part

wish to sanitize or justify their own profession, such as Sedgwick. To look at Eliade's too closely is to bring the whole enterprise of academic religious study into question, --- as it should be under question. Steven Wasserstrom suggests that Eliade de-emphasized law, ritual, and social history in the study of religion and thus banished historical analysis and morality. This means that questions of the bogus origins of most religions or the religious abuse of power just don't get often discussed. Instead, like William James, he extolled the role of myth and mysticism, thus making religion a purely subjective phenomena. Eliade had disdain for an empirical-historical method of investigating religion. This makes sense if you want to keep delusions alive into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and this is what Eliade did. His disciples are basically apologists for delusion.

Many religious studies professors are advocates of a Eliadean concept of religion or various religions. There are many reasons that this is objectionable. Professors should not ambiguously pose as divines, priests or holy men, as Huston Smith or Schuon's follower James Cutzinger has tried to do, for instance. Huston Smith and Mircea Eliade both had secret alliances to far right traditionalists like Schuon or Guenon. In any case, the importance of figures like these to the religious studies profession, it is appropriate to question the validity of that profession as a whole.

Michel Valsan, student of Eliade and one of Guenon's main followers, as well as a disciple of Schuon at one time, also had a fascination with this The Iron Guard organization, according to Marcel Clavelle, who wrote a chronicle about Guenon's life. Sedgwick mentions this too.<sup>242</sup> Every major disciple or follower of Guenon, advocates far-right ideology, was a Nazi, fascist or is somehow a participant in far-right

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of an answer. As I show in the book the question has to do with the far right character of romantic and irrationalist thought, from Plato to Heidegger and beyond to today's "gnostic poets".

<sup>242</sup> Sedgwick implies this in Against the Modern World pgs. 112-115 and 136.

organizations of some kind, some leaning toward fascism, some toward a reactionary religious monarchism, or far-right Catholic, Moslems or Masonic organizations. The far-right of the 1920's and 30's which created and sustained Guenon also created and sustained these other thinkers. Exactly how much they individually supported fascism is debatable in each case, but it appears that the weight of evidence shows that they were all more or less promoters and supporters of the far-right of the period, one of the most destructive examples of death and murder in human history. None of these men were ever honest or apologetic for their relationship to the far-right, indeed, they all excuse it and justify it, while trying to avoid discovery of further involvements. They all are prone to dissimulate their actual interests and allegiances. Current traditionalists, Eliadeans and many religious studies people tend to the far right as well.

There are also those who bear a close resemblance to Traditionalism but who are not part of it. Some of these men, are roundly despised by the traditionalists, who consider them part of the "counter initiation" or new age parodies. But actually figures like Carl Jung, Martin Heidegger, Joseph Campbell, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound are close to Traditionalism in general outlook, and in many cases believe the same things. As a young man in art school, I first read Jung, Eliot, Pound and Campbell and reading these men led me naturally to read some of the traditionalists. There is a visceral continuity.

I read Jung because of his idea of "active imagination" which interested me as an artist for obvious reasons. I was also early enamored of Coleridge, Shelley, Poe and the romantics. I was terribly excited by Jung and gobbled up much of what I could read by him. Particularly his books Aion and Mysterium Conjunctionis, for his essay on Job and his interest in Alchemy as a psychological process. Jung sought to integrate subconscious things back into consciousness. I thought there was truth

in this until I realized that he was resurrecting dead systems of knowledge like Alchemy as a way of resurrecting a deeply backward and reactionary way of thinking that will bring neither “wholeness” or good. When a writer like Geoffrey Falk<sup>243</sup> writes that he sees through science and “that consciousness is the fundamental reality at the basis of all creation”, he is merely uttering a delusional state. Falk thinks that Ramakrishna’s pedophilia and Hitler’s megalomania could never negate their ‘true realization’, if they had it. “Spiritual Enlightenment” is pure fiction. What Falk cannot grasp is that this idea rests on a very pernicious misunderstanding. The notion of ““ Spiritual Enlightenment””, “realization” or ultimate awareness or “consciousness” is an utter fiction. These people have nothing others do not have other than charisma, delusions of grandeur and acting skills. Their moral repugnance is not a symptom of “realization”--- which doesn’t exist--- but a fact of their delusional and psychopathic condition. I could see in a daily and concrete way that Schuon had no “realization”, he just had the ability to create the illusion of it, the pretense to it and all the rest was left up to his gullible followers to create myths about it. Most everyone except the very sick among humans and animals have consciousness. But the magnification of consciousness into a supreme state is really just a narcissistic projection of wellbeing into a delusional transcendence.

This is true of every spiritual pretender I have met. I am sure it is true of Muhammad and Christ and all the other probably fictive originators of the religions. The illusion of an ‘eternal consciousness’ is projected onto the fiction of Christ or Buddha. The historical progression of charlatans, frauds, cult leaders, greedy popes, corrupt priests who become ‘saints’ and pretenders with a beatific smiles proves this. The notion of a supreme consciousness that is everywhere in the universe is just another god fiction, and not a very interesting one. The facts of

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<sup>243</sup> [http://www.geoffreyfalk.com/books/The\\_Science\\_of\\_the\\_Soul.pdf](http://www.geoffreyfalk.com/books/The_Science_of_the_Soul.pdf)

see intro

consciousness are much more mundane and ordinary and “witnessing awareness” is really just self-hypnotized mirroring.<sup>244</sup> Like the Sufi’s , or Ramakrishna,

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<sup>244</sup> Falk tries to claim that

“One could, in all seriousness, be the greatest living Realizer, and still be a pedophile, rapist or murderer. ....Conversely, no crime or misbehavior, no matter how heinous, perpetrated by such a great “sage,” could do anything to disprove his or her claimed realization. Thus, Ramakrishna’s pedophilia, for example, “only shows how difficult it is for people afflicted with that orientation to grow past it,” and says nothing about his realization: He was still “indubitably” a “great sage.” Indeed, his behaviors may even be used to validate one’s own comparable *sadhana*. (As to why Sai Baba’s alleged pedophilia would not be equally tolerable, given his fully comparable claims to divinity: it basically depends on whom you started out naïvely believing to be “authentic” in the sagely arena.) The likes of Da, too, even given all of his alleged abuses, could still be Self-realized, just “patterned by partying behaviors.” .....Hell, you could be Jack the Ripper, attain to non-dual awareness, and go right on ripping. You could be Adolf Hitler himself, not merely “mystically awakened” but non-dually enlightened, and it wouldn’t affect your actions one damned bit. “

This is the conclusion of a moral idiot and shows again that the amoral consciousness of mystics is really just license to create a fictional world in which narcissistic psycho-pathology reigns supreme. William James’ view of consciousness as subjective illumination is again shown to be a charade of excessive self-projection.



Jung was wrapped up in the trance like irrationality of dreams, trying to make something of the mayhem. The chaos of dreams is easily systematized to fit any made up ideology that one likes. Transcendental consciousness is not a supreme state but merely an excess of inner self-mirroring obsession with mind and emotion. As you can see in the picture of Ramakrishna I did many year ago, done from a photo of him in one of his excessive trance states. He was in a delusional state of the very sort that James thinks is a scientific condition, but really is just an example of visionary subjectivity as advertising. It is no more important than any other extreme state, such as extreme anger or sexual pleasure, jealousy or greed. Many mystics have used high subjective states as an



excuse for amoral or immoral actions, not only in Zen Buddhism but in Krishna and Arjuna, Oppenheimer, Himmler and many others.

Jung was likewise enamored of what Freud rightly called “the black tide of mud” of occult mysticism. Getting out of the black tide is no easy matter.<sup>245</sup> Even one of the critics of religion, Sam Harris, stumbles over the issue of mysticism and mystics and their tendency to be immoral. The problem was already discussed in William James. James < James rightly states that “Mystical states indeed wield no authority due simply to their being mystical states” since they are inherently delusional. But he is wrong to suggest that “It must always remain an open question whether mystical states may not possibly be such superior points of view, windows through which the mind looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world.” I have believed at various points during my religion period that I “saw through the veil”, or lying under a tree, I believed the universe opened up into me. <sup>246</sup> The notion of a “separate

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for more of James expressing his point of view on mystics see :

[http://www.meta-religion.com/Psychiatry/psychology\\_of\\_religion/varieties\\_of\\_religious\\_experience\\_xi\\_5.htm#ixzz28SDyS35S](http://www.meta-religion.com/Psychiatry/psychology_of_religion/varieties_of_religious_experience_xi_5.htm#ixzz28SDyS35S)

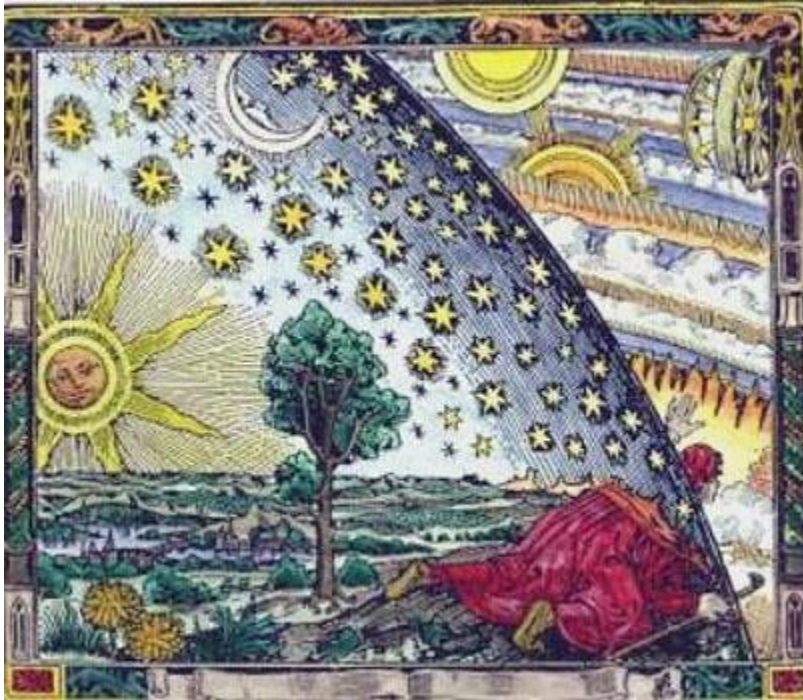
<sup>246</sup> The original Vision had some truth to it of a poetic sort. It was a kind of vision of biological energy and sunlight. But later it became encrusted with all sort of other fanciful and “traditional meanings. I wrote of it in 1979 that”

Sound: Air: Light: Fire: how the world glitters with these-- the veil that rubs and wafts, brushes and clings, blows, laces together with another veil. The pin points of the stars, how they look reflected in the rippled water, the shining blur of sun on water, scintillating moonlight, how all these are reflected in the old man's beard, on the woman's wet skin, how all matter is transparent and solid at the same time.....”

“The vision occurred in a specific place, while I was sitting up in bed in my apartment on Taylor Street in San Francisco. It was not a religious or a drug experience. It was merely an awareness of the energy that sustains being, a concrete experience of a sensitive mind trying to understand the world around him .” I have written rather extensively on this cultured delusion and its actual referents and how I extrapolated on the basis of here:



reality” and one can pass through the Veil is itself a delusion and one that occurs in many cultures.



I realized at certain point that these states could be manipulated, and I could control them to a degree. That is when I realized that consciousness of god was actually a produced thing, like crying or sexual ecstasy. The mind is a manipulatable instrument and it can be altered by methods and practices, emotions stirred by inner images and reality apparently changed such interventions. I lost interest slowly after I

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<http://www.naturesrights.com/z%20philo%203%20vision%20of%20veil.asp>

This is an example of how delusions get magnified and how they have some basis in reality, but get blown up and inflated. I am myself a guinea pig of sorts here. Veil imagery is ubiquitous across cultures. It involves a certain sort of mental dissociation or alienation and is psychologically caused.

realized religion is mental, as I could see that there was no “there” there, as it were. It was all emotions and inner states produced by the mind, usually in extreme states and emotional excesses. James was wrong, there is no objective content in it other than the variety of human emotions and states. Consciousness is a biological thing, born of our brains and changes based on our health, tiredness, pathology and wellbeing. This book is an example of this, as it is a variable text written over twenty years, that embodies the thought of both a younger and older man, writing about the world in a healthy state of mind over many years. Some of it is wiser than other parts, some less well done or less well thought through than other parts.

The cult of “consciousness” in modern thought is an interesting phenomena. The need to section off consciousness as a separate, sacrosanct reality is common in New Age and esoteric religious fictions. This comes largely though the religions where this prejudice is common. There is no doubt that subjectivity is a fact, but it is a nebulous fact, and all sorts of things can be projected onto the fact of our “self” and our brains. If there were an awareness of no human consciousness too, or death and raw matter, one might think differently about all the twaddle that has been written about the glory of human consciousness. But in Ken Wilber and his many followers, for instance, we see the erecting divine subjectivity as if it were a first Amendment right. Schuon thought for instance that materialists were wrong to

“believe that the brain produces thoughts as an organ secretes fluids; this is to overlook what constitutes the very essence of thought, namely the materially unexplainable miracle of

subjectivity: as if the cause of consciousness—immaterial and non-spatial by definition—could be a material object. “<sup>247</sup>

But this just shows Schuon’s ignorance of brain science and the fact that subjectivity is a function of brains not just in humans but also in non-human animals. Actually consciousness is in no wise a mystical thing. It is a factual thing, like, sex, eating or being alive. Animals are conscious as are insects and there is even an elementary consciousness in cells, as anyone who has watched the purposeful activity of Paramecia knows. Consciousness is a product of evolution, whereas spirituality is merely a social invention based on fictions. It is hard to see how Eastern spirituality can be of any use in helping science see deeper into consciousness.<sup>248</sup> Buddhism is yet another fiction. How fictions develop out of the ordinary fact of consciousness is a complex question and my theory of magnification of mythic fabrications for social empowerment is partly meant to address this question.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Schuon, in essay traces of Being, Proofs of God in Roots of the Human Condition

<sup>248</sup> Sam Harris thinks otherwise, and sees great value in Buddhist mysticism to brain science. I have doubts this is true, as Buddhism is so overwrought with delusory ideas about nature and the world. The self is not entirely a fiction and all animals have some version of it. Certainly the self can and does break down. But one must be careful of abstract and transcendental thinking as I have shown throughout these books. The Buddhist practice of self-analysis is really an effect of distorted language, where one convinces oneself one is beyond looking at oneself by negating every thought that passes. By so doing one tries to make analogy between the not-self and the cosmos, and thus exalt oneself as a transcendent being. This is delusional, in fact. The claim that this enables one to transcend suffering is absurd. It can be used to remove anxiety, but not change physical disease..

<sup>249</sup> Curtis White’s The Science Delusion is a clumsy attempt to deal with science as an ideology, but does not make clear distinctions between corporate scientism, which is mostly a salesman’s chauvinism and real science which is based on actual observations and close practice. The best science is hands on. He does not really understand romanticism either, and its destructive Platonic roots. If he did he would not see the Romantic poets as he does. Darwin understood wonder as a fine thing and one does not need transcendental ideology to appreciate beauty or marvelous things in the natural world. A good scientist is one who has not stopped seeing with his whole self and not merely a camera. This is not to say that cameras have no value either. But romanticism has some very toxic features which are not dealt with by Curtus at all. White tries to say that “Our knowledge is never the thing. We are modelers, not knowers. We are condemned to life in the analogue”. This is simply not true, as a mother or father well knows when they have a child. One

The brain is a vehicle of being as is the body and both together tie us to the natural world. The notion that humans are superior to birds or aardvarks is absurd. Like us they live on our collective earth and seek to keep living. No one “owns” the earth, despite human conceit which tells them they do. Earth is the right to all the beings of evolution. This is one of the few really ancient, “primordial” truths. Human solipsism convinces many that we are the most superior of all beings, but this is mere vanity. Religion tries to erect this vanity into supremacist and speciesist notions of the “Intellect” as a divine agency in the brain. But such “first principles” have no existence whatever.

So the notion that consciousness comes in degrees and that those who are “more conscious” are superior is merely wishful thinking. Consciousness can be abused, inflated and magnified by mental tricks, myths and self-hypnosis.. Intelligence can be abused. In extreme versions of the consciousness myth the ideology of human supremacy of mind is projected onto the universe itself and it becomes the divine mind, as it were, the thing that ties all life and matter together in a totalistic subjectivity. A partial example of this, among many, is that Schuon thought he had sexual relations with the Virgin Mary in his mystic states, which, while ridiculous, is not novel as others have claimed the same thing. It is a delusion of one who wishes to be better than all others, since the Virgin is herself a delusion that is better than all other women, it is supposed. Hong Xoaquin and Da Free John, also claimed this to mystical/sexual union with the Virgin Mary. It was only their social abilities or ability to write separated them from ordinary schizophrenics who populate mental hospitals and prisons and who have similar delusions. But in fact, the Virgin does not actually exist and is a fabrication from early days of the Roman Empire.

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can know another to a very close margin of error, not perfectly, but well. Kant who said we can never know’ the thing in itself”, never had children and does not seem to have studied anything closely. Had he done either, he would not have written this.

Ramakrishna was a spiritual gymnast who was always getting into one state or another, obsessively flipping and twisting through emotions like an actor. It really means very little, as these are merely feeling states. People wrote in books in which the character of Jesus thought he was the son of god or Muhammad and Joseph Smith thought that God talked to them personally. There is no evidence for any of this. Followers of these myths and fictions act as if these delusions are true. They are elaborate fictions written many decades or centuries after the supposed facts. Countless mental patients of many kinds have similar delusions. Few get written down, but Gospels and holy books are just later extrapolations of fictions groups found useful to create and promote. It hardly means reality is constructed out of someone's feelings or that an overwhelming feeling of "transcendence" is a measure of facts. It is easy to have such feelings. I have myself had many visions and dreams and accord to them no superior meanings, though I too have accorded great meaning to these things, once upon a time. I had to learn how to have such feelings and visions initially and later I had to unlearn it. It is not evolution that causes this but social learned behavior suggested by culture.

Subjective and romantic states are merely states. Amazement at nature or the universe is an ordinary feeling for anyone who studies nature and this has meaning as far as it is grounded in actuality. But making a religion out of such feelings is nonsense. Feelings do not confer authority, they are merely feelings. What truth is in them depends on what one does with them and how one expresses them. To use them to gain superiority or authority is to abuse them. The best thing is to cultivate those parts of being human that help others, that creates and which allows one to get closer to the springs of real lives and animals, trees and the earth itself. Education is really the exercise of one's faculties in view of deep experience of life and survival in our world.

It is true that what Jung wanted was actually healthier than what

the traditionalists recommend, which is to exteriorize 'evil' and assume that evils are due to other lower caste people. But Jung is not much better. Indeed,, Jung's own insights tended toward theofascism too. In Jung's case, he was fascinated with the occult, just as the traditionalists were. The traditionalists despise him because he was "too psychic", too concerned with the "unconscious" and therefore not 'elite' or "solar" enough in his love of the occult.. Jung had the same hero worship of the ultimate prophets, heroes or supermen that one finds in Schuon and Evola. In one interview Jung praises Hitler, indeed, he sees him as the acme of his own theories.

"Only the self-development of the individual, which I consider to be the supreme goal of all psychological endeavor, can produce consciously responsible spokesmen and leaders of the collective movement. As Hitler said recently, the leader must be able to be alone and must have the courage to go his own way."

Jung had a powerfully positive response to Hitler as is revealed in a 1939 interview. Jung states that there are

"Two types of dictators the Chieftain type and the medicine man type. Hitler is the latter, German policy is not made, it is revealed. He is the mouthpiece of the gods of old. He says the word which expresses everybody's resentment. .. in Germany they still have dreams....hence the sensitiveness of Germans to criticism or abuse of their leader. It is blasphemy to them, for Hitler is their Sybil, their Delphic Oracle"<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> <http://www.scribd.com/doc/38245720/C-G-Jung-Speaking-Interviews-and-Encounters>  
see pages 45 and 60

In other words Jung, at least during the War, saw Hitler as the manifestation of his own theory of the “collective archetypes”, the supreme individual embodying the dream revelation of the entire nation. Jung calls for aristocracy as his preferred form of government and his theories line up with the basic outline of what I am calling theofascism.

But like Guenon, Carl Jung’s relation to fascism is complex. In the 1930s he saw National Socialism as manifestation of his “archetypes” and wrote about fascism in glowing terms. In addition, there was also an authoritarian tendency in Jung. Like Martin Lings, Schuon’s follower, Jung was partial to dictators like Spain’s Frederico Franco. Jung also saw himself as a sort of magus, or spiritual prophet. In this Jung is very much like Schuon who thought he was god’s gift to women and the world. Indeed, in Jung adulation for Hitler one can see the outline of Jung’s whole theory of psychology

“There is no question but that Hitler belongs in the category of the truly mystic medicine man. As somebody commented about him at the last Nuremberg party congress, since the time of Mohammed nothing like it has been seen in this world. This markedly mystic characteristic of Hitler’s is what makes him do things which seem to us illogical, inexplicable, curious and unreasonable...So you see, Hitler is a medicine man, a form of a spiritual vessel, a demi-deity or, even better, a myth.....

.... And thus Hitler, who has more than once indicated he is aware of his mystic calling, appears to the devotees of the Third Reich as something more than a mere man”<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> [-Speaking-Interviews-and-Encounters](#)

See pages 117-118

Also found here:

Here Jung shows an important core of his theory that ties him with Hitler. One could say that Jung was merely diagnosing these characters, as he did indeed, reverse himself after the war. But he was clearly carried himself by this terrible movement and the alter retraction would require much more elucidation than he gave.

Muhammad was likewise seen as a precedent of himself by Schuon. Muhammad is probably a fiction too. This need to adulate for the romantic man of impulse and aggression--- the prophet of total subjectivity, obviously has a political basis too it for both Jung and Schuon. It is the "Great Man" delusion. This is a Nietzschean/Fictian/Napoleonic excess combined with religious and theocratic delusions. William James would exult in such a theory too, great delusions for Great Men. Thus. Muhammad: Hitler: Schuon: Napoleon: Jung, all them are men devoted to a great delusional ideology that they hope will make them or their followers lords of the whole world--- this is theofascism in a nutshell.

The strain of thought I am developing here involving goes very deeply into the madness of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To see the full extent of it one has to study across many fields if inquiry. The model of romantic and transcendental delusions as a means of political power is one that is predictable and has knowable features. I can apply it to Heidegger too. The case of Heidegger's relation to fascism is also undeniable.<sup>252</sup> Emmanuel Faye has written a deep and interesting book spelling out

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<http://carljungdepthpsychology.blogspot.com/2012/02/diagnosing-dictators-cg-jung-1938.html>  
<sup>252</sup>

See "A Normal Nazi" Thomas Sheehan, NY Review of books, Jan. 14 1993. which discusses Heidegger's relation to the Nazis. There is a huge and developing area of scholarship on Heidegger's Nazism.



Heidegger's connection to the Nazis in great detail and insisting that Heidegger's books and ideas are shot through with Nazi ideology.<sup>253</sup> I think Faye is right, though he has been mercilessly attacked by the many who are interested in promoting obscurantist ideologues like Heidegger. There is an increasingly tendency to right wing ideology as corporations gain more power and the defense of Heidegger may have some relation to this. Those who criticize Faye promote an absurd notion of a "pose of balanced history" as if it were OK to be a Nazi as long as one likes German forests "clearings" and House Fraus. Others criticize Faye because they don't see Heidegger's writings as hate speech. Faye makes very clear that Heidegger came to identify his crucial distinction and connection between "being" and "beings" as the connection between the Nazi state and the German people and other citizens of the Reich. This means that Nazism is central in his work and to the degree that this is true, Faye is right, Heidegger's work is fundamentally questionable.<sup>254</sup> Heidegger certainly did advocate for the total extermination of the Jews. It is hard to excuse that on any grounds, just as it is hard to excuse a 'saint' who molests children, like Schuon or Ramakrishna, or a Church that creates an Inquisition that lasts half a millennium. Heidegger is both a fascist and a theofascist, and his idea of Being is more or less identical to Guenon's idea or a fundamental metaphysical principle accessed through the Intuitive "intellect".

Faye insists that "Libraries, too, should stop classifying Heidegger's

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<sup>253</sup> Faye, Emmanuel. Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy

<sup>254</sup> There are similar defenses of Werner Sombart (1863-1941), who was also a Nazi sympathizer and who wrote absurd attacks on Jews going back to his first book The Jews and Modern Capitalism. The later book is clearly an antecedent of his later Nazi views and he is complicity in the Holocaust. There are apologists for Sombart's race hatred in Iran who have a similar political hatred of Jews. In these instances of racism one sees an inability to separate Jews as people from the Jewish state, which, like the Iranian state is a toxic religious state that depends heavily on conspiracy theory and religious ideology to maintain illegitimate control of people's minds. There are writers and academics in both Israel and Iran who fuel the fire of mythic differences and religious fictions which help stoke the fires of conflict and war..

collected works (which have been sanitized and abridged by his family) as philosophy and instead include them under the history of Nazism”<sup>255</sup>, according to a New York Times article. Marx is usually classified under politics rather than philosophy and this could be true of Heidegger too. He is a Nazi philosopher. When Heidegger writes:

With each new moment the *Führer* and the people will be bound more closely, in order to realize the essence of their state, that is their Being; growing together, they will oppose the two threatening forces, death and the devil, that is, impermanence and the falling away from one’s own essence, with their meaningful, historical Being and Will. ( 140)

It is clear that Heidegger whole notion of “being” is bound up with Hitler. The great Leader is a construct of unjust power in Heidegger just as it is in Novalis, Nietzsche, Fichte or Schuon. Heidegger is only one case of a counter-enlightenment ideology being promoted by a right wing thinkers. This book you are reading is akin to Faye’s in some ways. I am concerned to supply a critique of religion and a group of thinkers and I am not trying to write in an immoral pose of balanced history but rather one that advocates a point of view that I have acquired after living and in depth experience. Oppositional histories are totally valid, and this is one. I write from the point of view of victims of cults and religions and systems of power. I do not write history to serve power, cult leaders or religions. I differ from Faye in that my concern is to examine many such thinkers all of them advancing a far right agenda through different routes over longer periods of time. Faye’s book on Heidegger helps mine and I recommend anyone who reads this book to read also Faye’s and many other books I will mention along the way.

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<sup>255</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/09/books/09philosophy.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/09/books/09philosophy.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

So it is useful to compare Heidegger to other far right ideologues, Schuon, for instance. On November 3, 1933, in his role as Führer –rector at Freiberg University, Heidegger issued a decree applying the Nazi laws on racial cleansing to the student body of the university.<sup>256</sup> He turned in Jewish students and teachers to Nazi authorities. Heidegger’s spiritual “volkish”<sup>257</sup> ideology of “Being” deserves comparison with Schuon’s metaphysical system. Heidegger told Herbert Marcuse that

“I expected from National Socialism a spiritual renewal of life in its entirety, a reconciliation of social antagonisms and deliverance of Western existence from the dangers of communism”.

Heidegger thought the mystical Third Reich would establish the “truth of being”. Schuon hoped the same thing for his system. In both cases the “being of being” is exactly the effort of create an “archetype” of reality, once removed, as we discussed earlier, archetypes are a delusion born of the abstract character of language. Schuon demanded his followers be an “aristocracy” just as Heidegger wanted to create a “new aristocracy”<sup>258</sup> The basis for this is really just a metaphysical sleight of hand.

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<sup>256</sup> Heidegger met with Henry Corbin in 1934, right in the middle of his Nazi period. Interesting that Corbin would write that “What I was looking for in Heidegger and that which I understood thanks to Heidegger, is precisely that which I was looking for and found in the metaphysics of Islamic Iran.”. Yes, Theofascism and Islamofascism are close bedfellows. Heidegger’s “truth of being” was quite compatible with Nazism and Corbin’s Iranian Sufi truth is, in his own words, similar. And he claims that “I have not ceased to make contact with and to deepen that which is the spiritual culture and spiritual mission of this country.” So the Germany of the Nazi period is evidently like the Iran that Corbin lived in? I recall Foucault’s similar love affair with the right wing regimes in Iran . These analogies are not without interest and they indicate again that mysticism has many relationships to far right and repressive governments as I have shown to exhaustion in this book.

<sup>257</sup> Heidegger wanted to replace the Enlightenment idea of the self or subject with the idea of Volk in order to despises with the idea of democracy, which he hated. The Volk are a manageable category, like “peasants”. You can see in Nazi films the idea of the Volk as being a one dimensional stereotype, easily manipulated and controlled.

<sup>258</sup> Interview with Faye

[http://an-archos.com/pipermail/heidegger\\_an-archos.com/2005-May/025579.html](http://an-archos.com/pipermail/heidegger_an-archos.com/2005-May/025579.html)

This is what Evola hoped from fascism too, as did Eliade. The similarities are definitive and inescapable and show again that we are dealing here with large scale tendencies in romanticism in Europe and its relation to the far right.

Schuon did not put hope in Nazism so far as I know, but he did put hope in Japanese theofascism. Schuon's most important disciple Martin Lings endorsed the Spanish fascist Franco. Schuon, like Heidegger, Kierkegaard, and Rilke<sup>259</sup>, is an extra-denominational religious thinker—someone who makes up his own religion. Religions is subjectivism made into a social force. Rilke wanted deliverance from Western existence and the imagined terrible 'dangers of communism, science and democracy'. Heidegger wanted to universalize Rilke and make him a social force. Heidegger said that "democracy is the death of Europe", which of course implies that theocracy must be universalized and theofascism made into a transcendent unity, just as Schuon thought. Heidegger's "new aristocracy" is echoed in Schuon's silly aristocratic poses and private texts where he exhorts his middle class followers to behave like

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<sup>259</sup> These thinkers share an extreme form of subjectivism, or inwardness, where nearly everything gets transplanted into an inward resonance, or poetry, and becomes of individualistic religion or sorts, though often denied to be such, that is what it amounts to. You can see in Angelus Silesius poem which states:

*I am like God and God like me.  
I am as Large as God, He is as small as I.  
He cannot above me, nor I beneath him be*

Selisius was a reactionary, Protestant turned catholic monk. Attaching a name like God to the fact of one's subjective self is not an uncommon delusion. You can see a similar subjectivism particularly in Rilke's Duino Elegies, and in Heidegger's writings on "Enowning". Rilke was fascinated by Muhammad, and monasticism, as he shows in the Book of Hours. His religion like that of Heidegger is an amalgam of subjective impressions. Hiedegger made up a sort of religion based on his idea of Dasien or Being, and made Rilke its prophet, with Holderlin as his John the Baptist. These thinkers make more sense once I realized that they all share William James' devotion of the arbitrary and the subjective,. Delusions become facts simply by virtue of having felt them. Religion functions in just this way, though in more 'traditional' setting it is the parents who instill the subjective delusions in children even before they are aware of what a delusion is. The children grow up thinking what is in them is real, when actually it is merely make believe told to them in childhood..

aristocrats. Schuon claims to be a ‘monarch’ in a letter. Heidegger calls Hitler, a “new dispensation of Being”, a phrase that evokes religious association with Christ. Similar language would be used to exalt Schuon: I quoted this earlier where Schuon is adulated by his flowers who call him ....

“an eminent manifestation of the eternal *sadguru* ... an ‘Avataric’ phenomenon ... a great bodhisattva”; has “the qualities of Shiva and Krishna”; “Abraham”... “David”.... “Christ”, and “Muhammad...” and to top off this absurd list Schuon calls himself the “final manifestation of the Logos at the end of time”.

Indeed, Schuon, Heidegger and Hitler all saw themselves in grandiose and apocalyptic terms. Heidegger said somewhere that he was attracted to the “essence of the Nazis” an interesting phrase. It is an essentialization, like the ‘being of being’, and refers to what I am calling “spiritual fascism”, which is not ordinary fascism exactly but meta-fascism. It is much greater, deeper and more total than ordinary fascism. An essentialization is something that does not actually exist. It is a convenience of language, a conceit of sorts, and a pretend abstraction.

<sup>260</sup> Metaphysics in Heidegger becomes an escape into a fantasy of Being”, which is just another name for god: both are the subjective self-magnified by language. Theofascism is fascism as myth or religion that is not a nationalistic fascism, but rather is a universalized or generalized fascism, a sort of “esoteric” or ‘gnostic’ fascism. Theofascism is a political metaphysic that holds a reactionary political will at its center. It is nothing other than politics though it pretends to be so much else.

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<sup>260</sup> I will discuss the abuse of the idea of ‘essence’ later in this book, in the chapter on Reign of Quantity by Guenon. Suffice it to say here that I agree with Bertrand Russell who said that Essence and substance are merely “convenient ways to collecting events into bundles”.



### Martin Heidegger and the Nazis.

( Heidegger is 4<sup>th</sup> from the right, with the X in front of him)

Heidegger resembles Schuon in attitude and demeanor. Photos of both of them show them as autocratic, elitist and severe. Heidegger was “in opposition to the humanist thought of the Renaissance” as was Guenon and Schuon. Indeed there are very many similarities between Heidegger and Schuon. I can’t put up any pictures of Schuon as the cult is obsessed with copyright and likes to sue people. But Schuon looks a lot like the made up fictional actor Saruman in the movie “Lord of the Rings”. Heidegger Schuon and Saruman all look severe and mean, serious and forbidding, far right elitists who hate the world that they wish to alter in frightful ways. I imagine Savonarola looked similar to this too, big nose, prone to fits, angry most of the time.



Heidegger



Saruman

I hasten to add that the traditionalists were not overtly involved with the Nazis as was Heidegger. But like Heidegger, they despise democracy, equality and human rights. The traditionalists also justify the dispensing of large numbers of people because of their anti-humanist beliefs, as I will show in a later chapter. They all hate ‘modernism’, reason and science. All of them wanted to return to a medieval world before technology.<sup>261</sup> However, they also justify the dispensing of large numbers of people because of their anti-humanist beliefs, as I will show in a later chapter.<sup>262</sup> Heidegger “was nourished on National Socialism and served

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<sup>261</sup> Heidegger’s poetic prophet is Rilke, who he sees as a sort of priest of the New Age inwardness. Rilke has real theofascist tendencies, he admired Mussolini at one point and his effort to resurrect Roman imperialism. “Rilke believed that fascism incorporated and made visible the spirit of the old glory of Rome into the present, a spirit he hoped would bring Rome and Europe back to the time of Augustus”. See Between Philosophy and Poetry, Massimo Verdicchio, page 102. see also Heidegger’s Poetry, Language, Thought, which was sort of a Bible to Jack Hirschman, with its extolling as the poet as neo-spiritual Prophet. Rilke is discussed especially in the chapter called what are poets for? In which Heidegger tries to uphold Rilke and the Fuhrer or great reactionary of anti-modernism and hatred of technology.

<sup>262</sup> In his Letter on Existentialism, Schuon shows he didn’t read Heidegger very deeply or well. He says that Heidegger, is a  
“decadent philosopher [who is] no longer even Christian in any degree, being in fact, to put it briefly, an atheist; .”



it whole heartedly to the point of trying to reintroduce the racist basis of Hitlerism into philosophy”.<sup>263</sup> Faye quotes Heidegger trying to justify the death camps. Heidegger excused the death camps because, in his estimation, “no one died in the death camps”.<sup>264</sup> So Heidegger is an early holocaust denier. Faye refers to this as insane. It is. It is an outrageous thing to write and believe this. It reminds me that Rama Coomaraswamy tried to excuse the death camps to me once, saying that not many people died there. This sort Holocaust denial is repulsive and inexcusable. The facts are crushingly obvious. Heidegger also wrote about Jews that

to seek out the enemy as such, and to lead him to reveal himself, to avoid nurturing illusions about him, to remain ready to attack, to cultivate and increase constant preparedness and to initiate the attack on a long-term basis, with the goal of total extermination.  
(Quoted in Faye, 168)

This desire for genocidal extermination is deeply reprehensible. Faye considers it bad enough to warrant Heidegger being excised from the serious consideration of those who study and love philosophy. I tend to agree with him on this. Faye suggests that Heidegger’s work not be “placed in the philosophy section of libraries; its place is rather in the

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Heidegger is not an atheist, but a post Christian universalist, as was Schuon. He is believer in a universal system of “Being” as is Schuon. He made a religion out of this that differs very little from Schuon. Schuon further criticizes Heidegger that

“Heidegger “seeks” a mode of knowledge which goes beyond discursive thought; this is all very well, but discursive thought is worth infinitely more in itself than anything that a Heidegger can conceive of, seek, or find.”

Well this is on the verge of seeing that Heidegger resembles himself closely but then fails to see it. Ever the competitive ego-maniac, Schuon wants to slam down a thinker who is very like himself. Schuon almost gets it too when he says

“If the existentialists’ criticism of reason—or of rationalism—is justified, why do they not become Platonists or Vedantists? “

Yes, so in other words, narcissist that Schuon was, he wonders why Heidegger is not exactly like himself, since Heidegger is an irrationalist just as was Schuon. Letter On Existentialism: *Studies in Comparative Religion*, Vol. 9, No. 2. (Spring, 1975).

<sup>263</sup> Faye, Emmanuel. Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy Pg. 321

<sup>264</sup> Ibid Pg 305



historical archives of Nazism and Hitlerism". He is right about this. Schuon and Guenon should not be in philosophy or metaphysics either, but in psychology or the history of cults, delusions and conspiracy theorists.<sup>265</sup> I think religion in general should never be taught in universities as a subject of its own, but always subsumed under a disciple of science, even it is anthropology or sociology or history.

Carl Jung and Heidegger are roughly of Schuon's and Guenon's Generation, and like them are prone to a version of romantic, extreme right, spiritual politics. Like these thinkers, the case of Joseph Campbell, is another example of a thinker tarred with justified accusations of various charges of racism, anti-Semitism and bigotry. In a New York Times article it states

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<sup>265</sup> There are lots of conspiracy theories. Freemasons, who were actually a fairly trivial group and again church authority are sometimes seen as heads of a worldwide cabal that is Jewish and seeks to create or World capitalist order. Fundamentalist Christians also imagine a worldwide conspiracy of Jews and Freemasons. Sometimes is harms done by the U.S. government that spawn these theories, sometimes in is harms done by the Chinese, Israel or Britain or Iran. Daniel Pipes wrote a book about conspiracy theories Iran and he notes that

While the conspiracy mentality exists in all regions of the world, it is outstandingly common in the Middle East. Nothing is so false that someone will not believe it; and transparent silliness does not reduce the importance of conspiracy theories.....Conspiracy theories spawn their own discourse, complete in itself and virtually immune to rational argument. Five assumptions distinguish the conspiracy theorist from more conventional patterns of thought: appearances deceive; conspiracies drive history; nothing is haphazard; the enemy always gains; power, fame, money, and sex account for all.....In the Middle East, moreover, almost every speculation about the hidden hand ultimately refers back to two grand conspirators: Zionists and imperialists. And imperialism, of course, means primarily the U.S. government.

The answer to such conspiracy theories is to remove religion form the equation and to look at Nationalist exaggerations and do everything for encourage sharing and compromise. Between Israel and Iran for instance Jews have reason for fear and hate Moslems and Persians have great reasons to hate Israel and Jews, even though they are so much alike, No one reasonable should want to part of either side. The solution to it is to increase communication, downplay religion, stop supporting the far right nationalists in Iran and Israel and increase secularity and compromise of all kinds. Conspiracy theory grows out of resentment and hot beds of hatred.

“Roy Finch, a professor emeritus of philosophy who knew Campbell for 20 years at Sarah Lawrence, said Campbell was “a crypto fascist” who “could be reckless in expressing his views.” These remarks are in a letter he wrote to The New York Review.

In a telephone interview, Professor Finch tried to put Campbell into an intellectual context necessary, he said, to understand him.

Campbell, he said, was an admirer of figures like Nietzsche, Oswald Spengler and Ezra Pound, all of whom contended that Western civilization was threatened with the rot of decadence.<sup>266</sup>

Schuon and Guenon contended the same thing of course, neither of them willing to look at their own decadence. Like Campbell they claimed to be ‘apolitical’. He was anything but apolitical in fact. He was a reactionary with racist leanings. He was against any of his students taking part in Vietnam war protests. He hated the 1960’s counter-culture, feminism, socialism and anything of the left in the political spectrum. Campbell promoted the New Age idea of “follow your Bliss”, an anti-social narcissistic tendency as it involves a denial of any social responsibility, escaping into fluffy fantasy of myth and make believe. Follow your bliss and ignore the need to change the world by only working on yourself. Bliss became escape in Campbell. Finch says that Campbell promotes the one “do what makes one happy.....[and] sanctions selfishness on a colossal scale”, and he blames Reaganite narcissism for just this sort of “crypto-fascist” narcissism.<sup>267</sup> He also says that for Campbell the most important thing was “the hero within,

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<sup>266</sup> New York Times, Arts section Published: November 6, 1989

<sup>267</sup> This is accurate. There are many poets now who promote this “follow your bliss” spiritual narcissism, inspired by such quasi-religious poets as Rainer Maria Rilke or Robert Bly, Coleman Barks, Art Goodtimes or writers like Martin Pechtel or Judyth Hill, these writers are pied pipers of delusion who seek to seduce the young into escapist denial and reactionary religion. They claim to be “open minded” but actually want to open people up to superstition, tyranny, world hatred, and irrational hatred of science.

the god within, the Christ within you. And bliss was discovering that you are your own hero”—and Finch is right, this emphasis on the god “within”, is what the stress of romantic spirituality was all about, in Campbell, Rilke, Bly, Coleman Barks’ Rumi and many others. The escape into the delusional mythos of bygone ages is a way to avoid the responsibility of living in and loving the actual world you live in. The corporate elite have every reason to support such escapes, as it helps them solidify their power without opposition from the “people”, the “rabble” or in other words, ordinary folks who are just trying to live decent lives. <sup>268</sup>

What ties Campbell, Eliade, Jung, Schuon, Rilke, Guenon, Pound together? They are all escapist, symbolist, romantic, anti-social and prone to grandiose narcissism. This is more than merely a group of romantic right-wingers and a heterogeneous group of eccentrics. Bertrand Russell is right, there is a tendency in romanticism that is toxic and that tends toward authoritarian amorality that quickly becomes disdainful, elitist and dangerous. Right-wing romanticism is a boon to elite capitalist culture and helps them keep their power and wealth.

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<sup>268</sup> Chomsky writes about the systematic corruption of corporate life as follows. Speaking of CEO’s he says they “have to try to maximize short-term profit and market share—in fact, that’s a legal requirement in Anglo-American corporate law—just because if you don’t do it, either your business will disappear because somebody else will outperform it in the short run, or you will just be out because you’re not doing your job and somebody else will be in. So there is an institutional irrationality.” In other words the corporations must be unethical and do things that harm people and the environment and the state and system of law uphold them and this arises from the very nature of the corporate charter and mandate. . Chomsky refers to economics as a “fanatic religious ideology”, which is accurate. You could see this in the figure of Allan Greenspan, who ran the federal reserve for a few decades. He was a devotee of the neo-fascist author Ayn Rand, who was a Libertarian in a sense but in a sense that goes into the territory of Social Darwinism and fascism. She is the favorite writer of the greedy misanthropes and financial thugs who are prone to be misers and who want the return of the caste system for the rich. Rand speaks of the “virtue of selfishness”, by which she means ‘screw your neighbor and everything is for me and nothing for everyone else and let old ladies die of starvation in disgusting nursing home and let children be neglected and racism thrive and slavery return’. This is the gospel according to corporate fascism.

See

<http://www.zcommunications.org/human-intelligence-and-the-environment-by-noam-chomsky>

Each most of these thinkers, their relation to fascism has been studied in detail. What they all share in common with Guenon and Schuon is that they are all romantic, reactionary and nostalgic for past myths and religions. They are prone to creating systematic theories based on essentializations, stereotypes, heroic elitism, as well as being prone to patriarchy or racism. They are misogynistic and skeptical or hateful of science or technology. They long for a social system of totalistic and controlled order. Like Guenon, all these thinkers are anti-rational and prone to belief in superstitious deities of whatever origin.

The Traditionalists are all anti-intellectual in the sense that Richard Hofstadter speaks of in his Anti-Intellectualism in American Life.<sup>269</sup> Hofstadter argues for intellectuals who are not seduced by power yet at the same time hold to independent critical thinking and science. The traditionalists are suspicious and resentful of the rational inquiry of the enlightened mind. They hate reason, science and free inquiry, original thinking and open questions of a critical nature. They have no peer review of their outrageous theses. They pass down their knowledge by fiat, cloaked in secrecy: fearful that their prosaic everyday selves discovered. They pretend to impersonal abstract truth and shun close personal analysis or even personal biography.<sup>270</sup> Anti-intellectualism arises because of a rejection of empirical evidence and the need to have truth arise “within”. This essentially romantic need for truth to be an inner reality rather than something found by science or experiment is what explains the irrational hatred of science or evolution that traditionalists have. They deny science and objectivity because they do not

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<sup>269</sup> Hofstadter, Richard Anti-Intellectualism in American Life, New York, Knopf, 1963

<sup>270</sup> Schuon’s Memoirs or autobiography is an exception, published in German the Schuon cult regrets it being a public document. It is deeply embarrassing to them precisely because it is so ridiculous and outrageous in its grandiosity, myth making narcissism and pure fictional flourishes. It also admits aspects of Schuon’s bizarre sexual interests, cult of nudity and his ‘vision of the Virgin’ and other inventions of his perverse imagination. It is where he says that he is the Holy Spirit – and he is not a “man like other men”. It is a deeply pathological document.

want to be accountable. They live by fictions and lies and do not want this to be known. It also explains their attraction to rather primitive notions of symbolism and magical thinking. For them what matters are symbols or archetypes because these can be felt within as imaginary constructs. They do not need to be demonstrated in the world or subjected to any verification. Thus in romantic and symbolist thinking, any nonsense can be entertained as fact, however phony or superstitious. “The heart has reasons, the reason knows not of” is trotted out as an excuse for these delusions

Gold is not god, but it is bright like the sun and to the gullible, the sun is an analogy or symbol for fictional godheads. Gold became god's color, and Schuon has his disciples paint the interior of their houses with Sherwin Williams off-gold colors, believing by process of magical thinking that this is god's color. This sort of erroneous magical thinking tends to propagate further superstitions. Schuon approved gold tone of Polyurethane as applied to wood stairs, wood trim or wood furniture, believing it made their suburban houses sacred, despite the unhealthy off-gases such stains cause. This color is put on gold frames or on the nude Icons of Schuon, who is himself surrounded with gold halos and these silly Icons were claimed to glow in the dark preternaturally. Schuon was an textile designer for some years and basically had the mentality of an interior decorator. He spent large parts of his last years re-decorating the houses of cult members in Bloomington, going from house to house, “discriminating” between shades of cream lampshades and ivory carpets, other chairs and harvest yellow curtains.<sup>271</sup> Cult members listened to each decision as if it were

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<sup>271</sup> Schuon could have had an interior design magazine called “Better Cults and Gardens”, I was enlisted in some of this work and became a sort of cult handy man and decorator. At the request of Schuon's wives I set up a frame making shop in my basement and I made frames for all the icons for cult members. I made endless copies of the same icons at local copy shops to send all over the world. I also painted houses, put up shelves, cleaned carpets and even painted a few full-size hand painted teepees to decorate the suburban lawns of the pseudo-Indians Schuon had

passed down by god himself. All this is ridiculous, but this is exactly what happened in the Schuon cult in the late 1980's and early 90's.

Anti-intellectualism involves a rejection of knowledge obtained by science and an idealization of the past. Anti-intellectualism is a common occurrence in totalitarian dictatorships and helps oppress political dissent. It is generally against education and likes to set up simplistic and dogmatic bibles or Little Red or Green books as the mirror of "Truth". So the Bible or the Koran, or the Bhagavad Gita Mao Red book or Khomeini Green book or some other emotional or irrational text that requires belief becomes the sine qua non, the be all and end all of what is real and not real. For Guenon and Schuon the irrational "Intellect"<sup>272</sup> was alone real, and for them Intellect is irrational belief. So Traditionalism is really a species of romanticism and like the romantics Schuon and Guenon seeks truth "within"--- in their intuition and imaginary religious 'states'. They are akin to the romantic poets and philosophers. Schuon calls himself a romantic in various writings and claims he is not ashamed of such a designation. Perhaps he should have been. The romantic obsession with the "inner secret" is pervasive in Traditionalism. Jennifer Doane Upton writes that

To look for the love of God itself within manifest conditions is always to go astray. We spend our time in the world being

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inspired his followers to be. Every house I went to Schuon had been there before me insisting so and so make this or that change to paint colors or change curtains, put up Japanese lamps or Moroccan pillows. It was all very silly and rather expensive. He could not trust his followers to choose their own ambience. It had to be his ambience.

<sup>272</sup> It is hard not to use traditionalist language here. It is important to realize that Guenon and Schuon misuse the notion of the intellect badly. They use the terms in a way that recalls Ibn Arabi or Aquinas and not Bertrand Russell, Newton, Descartes. When they say intellect they really mean "heart-intellect" "super-rational intuition"—mystical flight of thought, dreams of intuitive quasi "prophetic" insights. In other words they mean by intellect the subjective view of their of their "transcendental" imagination. Corbin's term "imaginal" is more or less cognate with Guenon's "Intellect". It is the organ of delusion, par excellence.

attracted to this and repulsed by that, and all the while we are blind to this one secret love.

Ms. Upton, a victim of the California spiritual fads, crystal gazers and New Age bookstores imagines there is something beyond the “manifest” world. There isn’t, of course. But when you are a victim of a system of mind control or religious indoctrination, it seems as though the imaginary world beyond is more real than this one, the only actual world there is. To watch sunsets, grow old, care about one’s kids, parents, landscapes, animals, stars, chipmunks, for Jenny, is “to go astray”. Life is error and sin to these people. They hate life and really want to kill themselves and escape into the ‘divine’. It is a suicidal narcissism. All that matters to them is devotion to what does not exist. The very things that really matter are reduced to delusion. She wants us to care about abstract symbols, cold imaginary deities, frigid goddesses and religious fictions as if they were real. “To see god everywhere” is really to see nothing at all but the emptiness of narcissistic self-love projected on the universe. I have seen many people pursue this chimera. The actuality of real being is thereby insulted and neglected, denigrated and demeaned. This is the insanity of religion in a nutshell. There is only this world, I’m afraid. The delusion of a world beyond is a horrific failure of the earth and is probably responsible for many of the earth’s ills. As Christopher Hitchens wisely suggests

Against this insane eschatology with its death wish and its deep contempt for the life of the mind, atheists have always argued that this world is all that we have and that our duty is to one another to make the very most and the best of it. <sup>273</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Hitchens, Christopher. The Portable Atheist, Philadelphia, De Capo Press, 2007, pg.xvi

This excellent assessment of the insanity of after-life romanticism is exactly right. Why indeed, don't these life haters just remove themselves from the world and die. Well, some do, as happened in the Heaven' Gate Cult, where 39 people committed suicide for the same reason Jenny Upton cites above. They thought beauty and goodness resides elsewhere than on earth. They killed themselves in order to reach in order to reach what they believed was an alien space craft, who would take them to a better world. The cult leader told them how to think and the magical thinking of these delusions killed them. The same thing happened in the Jonestown cult, where 900 mass suicides occurred for exactly the same logic as is used by Schuon or Jennifer Upton. The other 'beyond' world is better, true love lies elsewhere and this world is garbage and nothingness.

I write this as Christopher Hitchens has just died.(December 2011). Poor man. Those who hate him say he has cancer as a punishment from god for his atheism. That is typical of these religious bigots. They like to blame people for the diseases they tragically get. Schuon liked to say that so and so got his disease because he did not follow Schuon closely or love him enough. Blame the victim is a common strategy of narcissistic cult leaders. Hitchens sad death is a death like anyone else's, and I am sorry to see him go

What I have been saying for years, in different contexts and ways, is that attachment to the "world" is all that matters—this world, the only world there is. This is the very thing religion condemns and equates with evil, or "women, animals and householders". Hari Krishna "non-attachment" is really an insult to life, a denial of what really matters which is "living the things of the world", having sex and children, relationships with others, entanglements, education, going through all life's changes and phases, living to the full. "Hating the world" as Christ, Muhammad or Krishna insist that we do, is monstrous. It is an escapist refusal to go through the amazing and sad journey of a human life. There



are only these kids, these parents, chipmunks, stars, waters, jungles, flowers, kisses and moments before we die. To care for the immediate is what matters. Looking for a “heaven” a Jesus, a Krishna, a Shekinah, a Manitou, a “beloved” beyond the actual world is fashionably Rumiesque, but phony, insane and foolish. There is no such thing. God is the optical illusion the traditionalists suffer from, seeking what is not there. So when Jenny’s husband Chuck Upton writes in his book on Romanticism:

“romantic love, which in its origins is essentially aristocratic (in Meister Eckhart’s sense when he said ‘the soul is an aristocrat’) find any place in today’s world? The truth is, it cannot. The world is too small for it. The place of romantic love is nowhere in this world; its place is in the human soul, whose own proper place is in the eternal self-knowledge of God.”<sup>274</sup>

This is a universalistic vanity and conceit. Metaphysical narcissism and self-mirroring. Effete aristocratic lovers disdain the world and wish to drink poison and die into the imaginary universal beloved, like the Jonestown and Heaven’s gate victims. This effort to spiritualize the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet is inane and destructive. Meister Eckhart’s mysticism is an elitist world denying form of Neo-Platonism. Upton is really sunk in a proud and ridiculous delusion of cosmic proportions. This delusion drove the Upton’s into the Schuon cult.

Schuon’s group in Indiana was very much like the Heaven’s Gate of Jonestown cults. It is very pretentious of an American to pretend to be an aristocrat! Thankfully we drove purple-stockings aristocrats out of America when Jefferson rejected Alexander Hamilton’s aristocratic

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<sup>274</sup> <http://www.sophiaperennis.com/shop/perennis/21.html>

federalism. Traditionalists in America are only welcome as betrayers of the Declaration of Independence and Paine's Rights of Man. Schuon snuck into the U.S. to hide in Bloomington Indiana. He despised the values that made this country. The police were talking about having them deported, since he really did not belong in the U.S. and he had committed a crime here, as has been proven, I think.. The cult had to lie when Schuon was caught committing a crime and say they were all "anthropologists". Here again we have an elitist vision of transcendent narcissism. They had to hold themselves apart in a conclave as did those in Jonestown and Heaven's Gate. Adi Da hides his cult on an Island in the Pacific. The Schuon cult considered that option once too.

The hatred of the world that the mythic Christ recommends poisons many minds and helps ruin the world. This apocalyptic delusion is one meant to glorify a certain group. The hater of the world or Armeggedonist magnifies his or her self or "soul" into bombastic proportions, imagining an "eternal self-knowledge" in a god that does not exist except in imagination.<sup>275</sup> God loves himself when a man loves a woman. This is

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<sup>275</sup> The Upton's, sad to say, were recruited into Traditionalism by Scott Whitacker, an old friend of mine, who also recruited me into the Schuon cult through Huston Smith. Scott was a sad and wounded person who was too cowardly to join the Schuon cult, but pined for it like a lost dog for many years. He was sorely misguided by Huston Smith who used him as a sort of gopher to get him books and other small objects. Smith encouraged him into being a sort of promoter of the Schuon cult. Smith took advantage of Scott's many weaknesses, as did Charles Upton. Scott worked at Shambhala bookstore in Berkeley and sold new age books including Schuon. Scott appointed himself the arbiter of true religion there. The Upton's fell for this, as I did, briefly, but I managed to see through Scott, Smith and the Schuon cult, but the Upton's did not. Another w\who saw through it and were misled by Scott were Charles Reed. Scott was desperately sick with various illnesses and led both himself and others astray. His suffering was intense and self-devouring. He was prone to skin disease that ate his skin down to the bone, a sort of reverse AIDS he called it, where his body reacted to immunity threats with we not there.. Upton declared Scott a "saint" at one point, which is blackly humorous, as Upton used Scott's death as a pretext to promote his own imaginary spiritual acumen. Scott was hardly a saint just as Upton was hardly a Magus. But Upton is full of bombast and bubbly endorsements of the most high-falutin nonsense. He would fight to the death for any transcendental illusion we was sure was "True" capital "T", with the emphasis on capital, of course.... Upton is a self-made magus in the American mode of spiritual snake oil salesman. Upton is not yet a cult leader, but might be someday. The ability of religion to attract followers who will die for the most delusional nonsense

idealistic emptiness. How demeaning to the unique and specific man and woman. The antidote to this romantic and spiritual nonsense is shown in Barbara Ehrenreich's brilliant book, Bright-sided. She shows that bombastic spiritual gurus who wish to destroy democracy with a message of crippling fear and delusional spiritual optimisms are not new to America and it is important to patiently expose them, with objectivity and reason, as the frauds they are.

Schuon and Guenon were anti-intellectuals who hated universities and the followers of these men, even those in the universities hate them too and try to subvert them. Umberto Eco defines this anti-intellectualism as a characteristic of Ur Fascism, which is the same thing I refer to as Theofascism.

Eco says that :

“Distrust of the intellectual world has always been a symptom of Ur-Fascism, from Hermann Goering’s fondness for a phrase from a Hans Johst play (“When I hear the word ‘culture’ I reach for my gun”) to the frequent use of such expressions as “degenerate intellectuals,” “eggheads,” “effete snobs,” and “universities are nests of reds.” The official Fascist intellectuals were mainly engaged in attacking modern culture and the liberal intelligentsia for having betrayed traditional values.

There are many Ur Fascists among the romantics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. T.S Eliot, was a late and decadent romantic. He endorsed Schuon because he sees in him the same romantic delusions. Evola and Jung were attracted to Hitler because Hitler too was a romantic. Heidegger belonged to the Nazi Party;; Campbell was enthusiastic about Nazism in his early years, and had an anti-Semitic disdain for Judaism. Eliade was

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is amazing and still largely unexplained by anyone, though I think Lifton has seen deeply into this.

a practicing fascist in Romania. They all claimed to be elite, aristocrats or the special possessors of the most august, most transcendently immanent, magisterial, solar, highest, esoteric, universal knowledge. “I am not men like other men” as Schuon said, --- all these men hated,--- in varying degrees---- empiricism, objectivity, individualism, modernism, rationalism, and quantification. They all wanted to smear science, ---in varying degrees---- and revive dying systems of dogmatic and irrational belief systems. Obscurantist and occultist romantics, all these men, and many others, endorse a retroactive spiritualism that has fascist tendencies without actually being fully or overtly fascist. I find this sort of romanticism repugnant.

I have come across an example of a woman who appears to have seen through the reactionary spiritual romanticism that is at the basis of theofascism, at least to some degree. Maria Montessori was a scientist who studied education and children and developed a fascinating array of tools and techniques for teaching children. While John Dewey was a great theoretician on the importance of science and democracy an education, Montessori goes far beyond him in practical application of real teaching methods and materials that really get results for children. But despite her many laudable contributions to children education there are lingering accusations that she was a heavy handed autocrat and too interested in power. What is the truth in these accusations? While it is true that in many Montessori schools a school director or teacher with an authoritarian personality and outlook will be able to find in Montessori's works enough that is compatible with her authoritarianism, is Montessori a fascist thinker. I think the answer is no, she is a liberal and I will explain why.

It is certainly true that from 1926-1930 she fell under the spell of Mussolini for a time. It was the biggest mistake of her life. She even accepted an honorary membership in the fascist party, and allowed

fascists songs to be sung in her schools. Her biographer says that she was “apolitical” and naïve about how bad Mussolini really was. Or was she tolerant of Mussolini because she was herself rather autocratic in her leadership style? Her romantic and mystical side was at odds with her rational and scientific side. Her biographer Rita Kramer thinks Montessori was at odds with herself, and was her “own worst enemy” Which side would in?

It is clear that she was prone to mistake her own teaching methods with herself, as if good education did not belong to everyone and should instead be a brand name. Rita Kramer shows in various ways that Montessori was indeed “autocratic”. Kramer concludes her biography that Montessori created a sort of “Church” and her followers were “true believers” <sup>276</sup>. Indeed, I have seen Montessori schools where the directress had a little clique of cult like true believers. Maria herself is partly to blame for this. Her immersion in cult like status tended to generate a certain dogmatism in Montessori education and schools. But it appears that this narrow-mindedness was only a part of Montessori’s complex personality. On the other side she really was seeking to create an open science of education for children and many things she uncovered appear to be true. Science in the end ruled the autocratic part of Montessori’s personality. In the end, whatever romantic and naïve part of her allowed herself to be deceived by Mussolini, the rational and rights loving part of her liberal mind triumphed and she rejected fascism and Mussolini.

I asked Angeline Lillard, the best contemporary author in Montessori education and she observed that Montessori may have been misled into thinking Mussolini and fascism were OK, or at least tolerable in view of her overarching hope of advancing good school in Italy. In short she compromised by questionable regime. At first she was evidently

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<sup>276</sup> Kramer, Rita, Montessori: a Biography, Putnam, New York, N,Y, 1976 P. 379

charmed by this charismatic dictator. She appears to have been seduced by his ideals and became something of a Catholic reactionary and Nationalist for a few years. Rita Kramer notes how misguided Montessori was in thinking Mussolini would help her create a where well educated children who would grow up and create peaceful world. “Mussolini was hardly interested in a nation of independent thinkers, in providing a prepared environment in which spontaneous activity would liberate the child’s potential to the fullest...” What is amazing is that she didn’t reject Mussolini’s world sooner.

But she did not fail to notice that the influence of fascism began to undermine her schools. When Mussolini demanded that all students in Italy join the Young Fascists, she was appalled. And the government insisted on uniform-wearing and fascist salutes in the classroom. She knew it was over and had to leave Italy..

Rita Kramer describes the end:

“Why Montessori drew the line at this particular decision is not clear. After all, she had closed her eyes to so much else. Perhaps the bloom of hope had rubbed off with the accumulation of small frustrations, the daily increment of observable repression and brutality that could no longer be denied. In any case, in a single day Montessori schools ceased to exist in Italy.”

Her training in science, logic, reason and medicine appears to have saved her from the dogmatic and illiberal fascism then steaming around her. She saw through Mussolini after a time and renounced authoritarianism of all kinds. She insists that a teacher be authoritative, “but never authoritarian” in guiding pupils. She closed down all her school in Italy and left the country.

She later had to leave fascist leaning Spain for similar political reasons and ended up in India via Holland, there to be hosted the Theosophical society, evidently unaware how reactionary this group was and how it had done a lot to support fascism and spirituality in Europe. She was unfortunately tempted by such spiritual fictions. But at least she was free of fascism and the survival of her pedagogy is due to its reliance on science and liberal thinking. In the end Montessori is the enemy of war and authoritarian power seekers, cults as well as fascists and militaristic thinking., She was a pacifist and an enemy of the corporate/military model of education. Instead she supported human rights and not just adult rights but even children's rights. In her final years she moved even more to the left of the political spectrum and wrote a letter criticizing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This document, certainly the most important document of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, outlines human rights for victims of war, workers. Women, expatriates and many others. Montessori points out it leaves out the child. She is right about that. It also leaves out nature's rights, which is the precondition of all human rights. This great document could be improved by these emendations.

### **3. Defining Theofascism: in Cults, Religions, Institutions, Fundamentalism and Traditionalism.**

#### **a. Defining Theofascism**

David Hall wrote:

“ there is no doubt that given any kind of power there would be no shortage of traditionalists prepared to make the judgment and put a flame to the kindling. Beneath the neatly trimmed beards and the impeccable manners, the facility with Oriental languages and the deep learning in strange things, there lurks the sophisticated fascist prepared to excuse the monstrous”-----<sup>277</sup>

I was certainly in the wrong place and had made a huge mistake. I was never interested in fascism, my sympathies lying with the poor and the left. But I primped my new beard pretty often when I was in the Schuon cult. They all had primped beards, just like Schuon more or less, the primper extraordinaire. It was the fashion statement of the Shaykh, who was obsessed with fashion in a dandy like way. Nicely trimmed and fastidious, pretentious really, part pretend Vedantic scholar, part wanna be Sufi, part Indian Chief, and part nudist: that was Schuon. He was a pastiche of vestimentary styles, just as his philosophy was a Disneyland pastiche of cultures. He changed clothes to try to fit on different roles, become someone else, indicating the emptiness underneath. I sometimes wondered if really deep down he was gay.

Whatever Schuon did in the cult you were supposed to do too. Total man, he tried to be total model. He mostly hung out in old bathrobes in

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<sup>277</sup> Hall, David aka Ibn al Rawandi. “Esoteric Evangelicals: Islam and the Traditionalists” published in New Humanist Magazine, 1993? Pg 10 -12, This is a very perceptive an intelligent essay, one of the earliest to really begin to question traditionalism and its tendencies.



fact. He would wear them until he wore them out and covered with paint on the sleeves. Maude Murray, Schuon “third wife”, gave me a stinky old ochre or brownish terry cloth bathrobe Schuon wore for years as a sort of relic.<sup>278</sup> I was supposed to wear it and be blessed with his baraka or grace. Yuk. The idea makes me a little bit ill now. Anyway, I had never grow a beard before and didn’t like it all that much and found myself cutting it more and more and eventually cutting off the mustache and the cheeks, it was so itchy , until I had an Amish sort of beard like Henry Thoreau. I only lasted with a beard less than a year. The first thing I did when I left the cult was to shave the little that was left off.

David Hall is right too that there was a concern with Oriental languages, especially Arabic. I studied it with a few younger men in the cult, at Dr., Mark Goren’s house, and learned enough Arabic to read parts of the Koran, which helped me realize I did not like the Koran or Islam very much. However, I will explain my feelings about “Islamofascism” in another essay. Suffice it to say here that what David Hall says above is true. This was a “designer cult” as Cyril Glasse called it, meaning it was a cult that was obsessed with correctness, correct beards, books, wallpaper, correct character and bearing, all of this making up for the empty content of Schuon’s message. Since Schuon’s messages were really just a lot of palaver<sup>279</sup> that amounted to little more

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<sup>278</sup> I tossed this in the garbage in 1991. The notion that relics “emanate” a sort of sacred perfume is ludicrous. Luther was right to condemn the worship of them. I was then speaking with Cyril Glasse who said that he had been given Schuon mattress by Maude Murray just as she gave me the bathrobe. Both of us joked that we should have sold the holy relics for hard cash. The notion of Schuon’s “spiritual fluids” being passed around had a really gross side to it. Maude and other members of the inner circle really thought his soiled old bathrobe and mattress were holy relic which could confer blessings. Schuon himself encouraged such nonsense. There was talk of his icons radiating influences in the dark at night. I was given such an icon myself and it radiated nothing at all except maybe the bad use of oil paint on paper. Schuon often painted on paper, which is neither smart or archival. I gave it back to Maude when I left the cult, disgusted with it. She said she sold it to the cults “spokesman”. She said it was worth ten thousand dollars, I didn’t think it was worth keeping for ten thousand dollars and gave it back for free. I could have sold it back, but chose not to. So much for the slanderous idea that I was after their money.

<sup>279</sup> A typical example being that Schuon says that “Atma become Maya so that Maya could become Atma”, which sounds profound until you realize that Atma is the fiction of the divine self

than grandiose claims about Schuon himself, meaningless things like how you dress and trim your beard became what they cult was really about. To slip up in this regard could have serious consequences. The ‘dignitaries’ of the cult were always watching and assessing behavior and the primary behavior that was ‘essential’ was to worship and extol the virtues of Schuon. I began to feel that I was living in a fascist organization, and indeed, I was.

In order to thoroughly check me to see if I was qualified to be initiated into the cult, I was hired at one point to paint the interior of the house of John and Maude Murray, Maude being Schuon’s third wife while she was supposedly ‘married” to Murray. However, she was not “married” to Murray according to everyone in the cult, who said she was Schuon’s third wife. She said she was Schuon’s third wife and not married to Murray. I was at the house nearly every day for months working and talking with Maude and John Murray. They made me lunch and sometimes dinner. It was not difficult to paint a house that did not need painting. But I did it, even as Maude was winding me into her spool as it were, and telling me more and more about Schuon and how lonely she was as his neglected ‘wife’. She continually stressed how harsh he was and controlling and how no one could be with him for long as he treated his wives as “doormats” or people without rights, as she put it. She started telling me that she was going to give me all the knowledge that Schuon wished to give me but could not as he was too old. That is what I wanted so I went along with her. I wanted to know who this man really was.

David Hall rightly calls the method and discipline and doctrine of the Schuon cult a form of “pious brainwashing”. The processes of brain washing or cult inculcation are very well studied, despite the bogus

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and Maya is actual reality, and so what is really being said is Fiction became Reality so that reality could become fiction, and when it all got really boiled down to actualities, what Schuon ended up saying more or less, was that ‘God became Schuon so that Schuon could become god’.

claims of Scientology and other cults that they are not. I will not go into all the ways that cult members were inculcated here. I merely wish to point out that this cult's obsession with correct thinking and behavior had an inquisitorial aspect to it. Anyone who infringed on the construct that Schuon built around us was considered a heretic. People were thrown out of the cult for not thinking correctly. Some were driven to insanity as Paul Yachnes wrote in his excellent story about how his wife was driven mad by cult officials who refused her apology over and over again because they thought it was "insincere". <sup>280</sup> Imagine saying you are sorry over and over and your accusers say they do not believe you. That is exactly what the Inquisition would do. This happened to Maude Murray too, who records her virtual torture by Schuon and his minions in many sad documents. She tells how her apologies were also not accepted and she was thrown out of the cult for doing exactly the same things Schuon himself had done. Schuon was repeatedly not faithful to her and she in turn was not faithful to him. Why should she be? He punished her because she was a woman. Schuon was a hypocrite. The theofascism of the Schuon cult operated on a very intimate and personal level. As David Hall correctly notes that

"In every single case the formal structure of a religion is a human construct that takes two or three centuries, or even longer, to be fabricated, thereafter anyone who infringes this construct is labeled "heretic" and forced to pay the penalty. ...it should now be obvious what kind of thing traditionalism is and to what kind of mentality it appeals. Anyone who is prepared to talk strait-facedly about 'orthodoxy' and 'intrinsic heresy', even while talking about religion 'as such', rather than one particular religion, is obviously a

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<sup>280</sup> Paul Yachnes's cult name was Sidi Aswan. The document in question is called Safwan's story and occurs in the Dossier of Cyril Glasse

mental relic. All such talk for ever carries with it the echo of the Inquisition and the odor of the Auto-de-fe”

David Hall is very perceptive here and exactly right. The traditionalists are a throwback to the Inquisition and other system of totalism and human rights abuse.

So, let us go back to my original question, when I started doing research on this book years ago----- my question was “Are Rene Guenon and his followers fascists?” or put more broadly, “were or are the Traditionalists fascists?” The simple answer is a definite, yes, they are fascists of a spiritual kind: ---the are theofascists but not secular fascists.- I could equally well say, no, they are not secular fascists but they are theofascists. Both these answers are correct. So the question is not whether do they favor a far right and fascistic from of power: clearly traditionalism is a far-right conservative philosophy that is reactionary and overlaps with fascism in many ways, while go beyond it in other ways. It is a top-down aristocratic and anti-egalitarian organization. So the question is what role does spirituality have in it?. One would have to define what is meant by spirituality. There is no coherent answer to this, since the sort of thing that is referred to as “spirit” is inchoate and appears to have no reality that anyone can define clearly or give evidence of that has any concrete meaning.<sup>281</sup> As Chomsky has noted ‘religion

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<sup>281</sup> Chomsky writes “Do I believe in God? Can't answer, I'm afraid. I'm not being flippant, but I don't understand the question. What is it that I am supposed to believe or not believe in? Are you asking whether I believe there is something not in the universe (or the universes, if there are (maybe infinitely) many of them), and that somehow stands above them? I've never heard of any reason for believing that. Something else? What. There are many concepts of spirituality, among them, various notions of divinity developed in the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic religions. Within these the concepts vary greatly. St. Augustine and others, for example, argued that one should not take seriously the Biblical account of God as an exaggerated human, and other Biblical accounts, because they were crafted so as to make the intended message intelligible to humans -- and on such grounds, he argued, organized religion ought to accept persuasive conclusions of science, a conception that Galileo appealed to (in vain) when he faced papal censure.... Anyway, without clarification of a kind I have never seen, I don't know whether I believe or don't believe in

has no clear meaning' Chomsky outlines a reasonable attitude toward religion. He says "I'm what's called here a "secular atheist," except that I can't even call myself an "atheist" because it is not at all clear what I'm being asked to deny." This is good. But Chomsky's view of religion is rather simplistic and lacks depth. The word 'spirit' is used differently in different contexts. To Schuon it appears to have meant his intuitions, mostly of a rather deeply emotional and often pathological nature. To a Baptist preacher it means feeling or "soul". Of course, they are really talking about the same thing. The Holy Spirit is merely the wind of feelings, the interior subjectivity of the "other" that seems to be inside oneself. Chomsky gets this but unfortunately writes:

"As for the various religions, there's no doubt that they are very meaningful to adherents, and allow them to delude themselves into thinking there is some meaning to their lives beyond what we agree is the case. I'd never try to talk them out of the delusions, which are necessary for them to live a life that makes some sense to them. These beliefs can provide a framework for deeds that are noble or savage, and anywhere in between, and there's every reason to focus attention on the deeds and the background for them, to the extent that we can grasp it." (source: *Science, Religion, Reason and Survival*)

I don't agree with Chomsky here, as his approach to religion is dishonest, elitist and condescending in some ways,--- cynical would be more accurate, as is the case with many of his views. I have met Marxists who view religion in just this way; a fool for their own Marxist religion. He wants to use the religious people he knows to push his views and so

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whatever a questioner has in mind. ...I don't see how one can "believe in organized religion." What does it mean to believe in an organization? One can join it, support it, oppose it, accept its doctrines or reject them. There are many kinds of organized religion. People associate themselves with some of them, or not, for all sorts of reasons, maybe belief in some of their doctrines.

is silent on religion and allows it when it is useful to him. I find such an approach dishonest and opportunistic.

But Chomsky is also saying that religion magnifies motives and religious deeds might have bad or good motives at the basis of them, quite apart from the religious mythology, which is fiction. I agree with him about that. Chomsky says “religion is inherently irrational”. Yes, that is true. Individual people might do good or bad by way of their religion. But questioning the religion itself is a different matter. Chomsky observes:

“Take, say, the core of the established religions today: the Bible. It is basically polytheistic, with the warrior God demanding of his chosen people that they not worship the other Gods and destroy those who do — in an extremely brutal way, in fact. It would be hard to find a more genocidal text in the literary canon, or a more violent and destructive character than the God who was to be worshipped.”

A given religion offers beliefs without argument or evidence. Chomsky’s politics often does that too. Indeed, his politics has religious features in it. When Chomsky leaves the realm of demonstration and evidence, as he does sometimes, he is not too different than Schuon. Different religions offer equally arbitrary beliefs that have no evidence. Schuon compares different system of irrationalism and thinks that is a miracle. But his idea of “transcendent unity is merely a more universal form of fiction, like comparing Japanese cartoons to German cartoons to American cartoons. They are all cartoons and one can make up a “transcendent unity of cartoons”, but that hardly changes the make believe nature of the object of comparison. Religions are very like cartoons for adults. Chomsky writes that it is true that religion is part of

“every observable society,” if what is meant is that every society we know has sought to find some explanation for matters of deep human concern that we do not begin to understand (death, the origins of the universe, etc.), that’s doubtless true. If one wants to call the constructs developed “religion,” OK. I don’t see what that implies, apart from the fact — I presume it is a fact — that people seek answers to hard questions, and where understanding reaches limits (very quickly, in most areas), they speculate, construct myths, etc.

In other words, people make stuff up when they don’t know what is the truth and that is what religion is,-- the record of delusions and human make-believe. Religion is an ossified construct and a hardened fiction. But it is also more than that. In particular ways, it is a method of social control and not at all a method of inquiry. The traditionalists forbid inquiry as do most religions, as does Chomsky when pressed. But Schuon and Guenon are worse in that both hate both curiosity and science as well as science and rational inquiry. The great importance of curiosity as an inspiration for science and progress for humanity cannot be understated.

It is important to understand that theofascism is not fascism. To be more precise about the definition of theofascism: the Traditionalists are not secular fascists of the ordinary kind, such as one refers to when one speaks of the followers of Mussolini, Franco and Hitler. But they are not far from that either. Martin Lings loved Franco and recommends him as an ideal model of a traditionalist approved “principled Autocrat”. Lings posits the “principled Autocrat” as necessary for a traditionalist restoration.<sup>282</sup> Schuon approved of Japanese fascism and Nasr liked

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<sup>282</sup> See chapter on Martin Lings’s version of Theofascism above.

Iranian monarchism which has a strong fascist element. But traditionalists despise Hitler's fascism because it is too modern and scientific, too populist and middle class, in short, too reasonable and enlightened!!.<sup>283</sup> Traditionalist theofascism is a form of intellectual or "spiritual fascism", or theofascists. They are nostalgic monarchists. They want power to reside only in superstitious religious authorities, castes, or Kings that support religious authority. They want to return to the good old days when Kings could kill you for looking funny or for no reason at all. Traditionalist theofascism was defined well, if inadvertently, by M. Ali Lakhani, a follower of the Schuon cult, who says the essential government required by "esoteric" religiosity is one where "the Temporal Power of Might to be wedded to the Spiritual Authority of Right".<sup>284</sup> This is really just a gloss of Guenon's book Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power which is a classic theofascist text. This is a well expressed formula for theofascism of all kinds, though it does not go quite far enough. But this does explain religious fascism of Dionysius the Aeropagite as well as Franco, the Japanese fascists, Plato, Shinto, Muhammad, the state of Israel, Iran, far right Christian republicans in the U.S. and Innocent the III the creator of the Inquisition as well as other spiritual monsters all are included under Lakhani's definition. Religious cults of all kinds combine Temporal Power of Might with the Authority of Right. What is left out of this definition is other totalist systems such as corporate culture or Soviet and Chinese communist systems which act in the same way but are not specifically "spiritual". But theofascism I mean such systems too and not just religions systems. A better definition of theofascism would thus be a 'system of government combines the power of might with ideological right, regardless of violations of human rights, or natures

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<sup>283</sup> Umberto Eco sees Ur fascism as having an element that does appeal to the middle class or populist irrationalism such as was rife in Italy and Germany in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This does not really apply to Guenon and Schuon who were never populists. ON the contrary they hated the mass, and loved only the elite.

<sup>284</sup> [http://www.sacredweb.com/articles/sw8\\_editorial.html](http://www.sacredweb.com/articles/sw8_editorial.html)



rights. This definition would include corporate personhood and communist states. Theofascism thus could also just be called ideofascism . But then Hitler and Mussolini were not exactly theofascists but they were ideofascists. So I mean to make a distinction between theofascism and ordinary fascism, so I will not use the term ideofascism often. <sup>285</sup>

At the same time I want to explore how theofascism is a peculiar kind of what Robert Jay Lifton calls ‘totalism’. These questions about the nature of theofascism and totalism furthermore relate to my deeper inquiry as to what religion is. As I said at the beginning of this book, the new developing field of evolutionary psychology is basically right when it says that religion is a by- product of ordinary psychological processes that developed in human brains to allow children to trust their parents. As Richard Dawkins has suggested in his book The God Delusion, religion appears to be born of a confusion about trust in authority and in-group and out-group dynamics in human psychology. What Dawkins calls the “useful programmability of children” has been misused to justify elaborate mythic belief systems and authoritarian hijacking of whole societies by priests and Mullahs, Rabbis, Popes and Bishops. It is clear that religion evolved as a sort of unconscious cultural phenomena out of the tendency of the human brain to impose obedience on children and perhaps to fall in love in a storm of irrational beliefs. Institutions like the Catholic Church or Tibetan Lamas used human psychology against itself to harness power over peoples.

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<sup>285</sup> I like the term “ideofascism” rather than theofascism as this would eliminate the specifically religious overtones of the theofascist term. This seems legitimate to me. If I were starting this book today I would do this. But then it would be a very different book. I am happy with the critique of religion and am aware the term theofascism implies restrictions, but it will due for now.

While it is unclear how religion came about in evolution it is not unclear to me how this was done in the Traditionalist cultic environment. Guenon pushed fascism into realms where it had never been before, exploiting human gullibility. Schuon, Evola and Dugin and the Coomaraswamys, as well as lesser known followers like Nasr and Lings, Huston Smith and Charles Upton, continue to expand Guenon's ideology in new directions, applying Traditionalist poisons to new fields, globalizing it. Schuon is notable in that he exploited children in the cult directly and not just adult followers.

Fascism could not travel so long as it was merely national. Guenon's theofascism was an invention that survived the failure and defeat of secular fascism during the Second World War. Guenon and Evola created a political religion sufficiently flexible that it could appeal internationally at the same time as corporate globalism was extending itself around the globe. The rise of corporate globalism has some relation to the rise of a bogus attempt to create a "transcendent unity" of the dying religions of our day. Defining how such system of thought as like traditionalism attempt to promulgate and justify a global religious ideology involves making clear definitions. Therefore, since I have defined theofascism, it might be good to consider the definitions of others regarding theofascism, totalist systems, coercive religions, organizations or cults. There are various existing definitions of what I call theofascism or spiritual fascism. I will speak of a number of them here not just in relation to Guenon but in relation to religion and ideological systems as a whole.

### **a. Defining Fascism in Roger Griffin**

Guenon's theofascism goes beyond Roger Griffin's definition of fascism, or rather it only fits part of Griffin's definition. Griffin, a British writer who has written extensively on fascism, its history and nature, states that "Fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism.<sup>286</sup>". Griffin is using the term palingenetic to mean that fascism seeks rebirth, revolution or even apocalyptic change. Guenon was preeminently, even obsessively a 'palingenetic' writer and the whole traditionalist movement is palingenetic. Moreover, Guenon does fit the entirety of this definition of fascism in the 1920's when he was flirting with French Catholicism and had associations with members of Action Francaise, the French fascist movement. But by the 1930 's Guenon has become a practicing Moslem, at least superficially. During this period, in fact, he has created a transnational form of fascism, traditio-fascism, meta-fascism, or theofascism, as I call it. Once Guenon is in Cairo he becomes a universalistic zealot and his fascism is not so much like the Nazis or Italian fascism as it is like the corporate global fascism of the Post World War II era. Indeed, one factor that characterizes most theofascism, though not all, is its rejection of nationalism in favor of a universalist or globalist tendency. But this is not always the case, as in the theofascism of the state of Israel or Iran, or the theofascism of George Bush Jr.

With the publication of Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power (1927), Guenon has defined himself as an authority who is supra-religious, standing over all the religions like a prophet of doom. This is when he becomes a spiritual fascist or theofascist, who is internationalist rather than nationalist. Or at least this is clearly his intention. What Guenon does in this book is to try to use the same old justification used for centuries to excuse and promote unjust power. Clifford D. Conner, in

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<sup>286</sup> See Griffin, Roger, the Nature of Fascism, Routledge, 1993 pg 26

his excellent People's History of Science, shows how unjust societies exploited sciences like astronomy and geography to support upper class interests.

“ the power invested in the ruler must be explained and justified..  
and so ideology is enlisted to justify political power, the sacred king  
and divine emperor trace their lineage to the celestial realm. ...  
they monopolize astronomical knowledge as a primary component  
of political power” <sup>287</sup>

This applies to Guenon. This procedure of bogusly claiming divine origin on the basis of geographic or astronomical facts constitutes some of the earliest abuses of science by unjust powers. This occurs very early in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Mayan and Native American cultures( the Anasazi for instance), indeed the whole shamanistic imposture depends of just this fictitious pretence.<sup>288</sup> This is clear even in modern cultures where the English royalty trace themselves back to Joseph of Arimathea and thus to Christ ( as on the ceiling of Winchester Cathedral in England for instance). It is a bogus claim, but people have believed it. Since Joseph of Arimathea very likely did not exist, much less go to England to found a dynasty, as he was a fictional character,<sup>289</sup> as is Christ, the use of these

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<sup>287</sup> Conner, Clifford, D., A People's History of Science, Nation Books 2005, pg. 67

<sup>288</sup> Shamans in Siberia and Native America pretended to travel to the universe and find the universal tree of some other symbol. They pretended to heal people and sometimes even succeeded, as is logical, given their enthusiasm. They used a form of positive thinking and it helped, occasionally. But it helped very little, in fact. Shamanism is a subjectivist pretence. When European diseases came Shamans stood helpless. I once watched Thomas Yellowtail do some “healings” in the ancient manner, and it was make believe. He merely put Otter skins on people, and it had no effect at all. People thought they were healed when they got better, when they would have gotten better anyway, It had no benefit at all and was sad to watch him pretending to do something he could not do. Indeed, watching his failure was part of my realization that the whole panoply of claims around Schuon were false.

<sup>289</sup> Blake also thought this fable might be the case as was immortalized by him in the lines.in “Milton” ‘and did those feet in ancient times walk upon England’s mountains green”

two myths by the English kings was just propaganda.<sup>290</sup> Beginning with Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power and continuing up until Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times, Guenon tries to do the same thing. He tries to turn all knowledge toward the justification of his particular spiritual system of power. Theofascism combines or wants to combine temporal might with spiritual Righteousness. This exactly that 'theofascism' is all about. He wants a system of knowledge to increase social disparity and to have the elite rule by hereditary dictatorship based on religion.

Between 1927 and 1930 a transition occurs in Guenon from nationalistic zealot to bitter internationalist and apocalyptic guru of this super-religion <sup>291</sup> called 'traditionalism'. This transition is way beyond the imagination of Roger Griffin. Griffin's definition of Fascism is too prosaic and narrow. This is not to say that Griffin's definition is mistaken. It is accurate as far as it goes, but the theofascism of the Traditionalists goes beyond Griffin's imagination. Guenon's international

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<sup>290</sup> Celestina Savonius-Wroth, a follower of Schuon, and, with most of the rest of her family, participant in his primordial gatherings, tries to maintain that Harry Hammond, a far right royalist Anglican and enemy of the English revolution, was one of the "apologists who accorded a new importance to contemporary "folk" religious practices as remnants or "remains" of Christianity in its ancient and pure form." Hammond says that Joseph of Arithmea and not Augustine and the Romans probably brought Christianity to England. This is fiction of course, cooked up by the aristocracy to justify their powers, as one can see plainly in stone on the ceiling of Winchester Cathedral. There one can see the mythic justification of the English Kings. Joseph Arithmea is as much a myth as Jesus and the fiction of "an ancient and pure" Christianity." There is no "pure" Christianity. That is itself a myth. Making a further myth of the divinity of English Kings is specious. What is true is that Hammond was a right wing political writer, like Schuon, who sought to restore an unjust aristocracy, and was willing to resurrect and use bogus myths to do it.

See the miscellaneous theological works of Henry Hammond. Pages 242 and 257.  
[https://books.google.com/books?id=7ygBAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA257&lpg=PA257&dq=Henry+Hammond+arimathea&source=bl&ots=mg8kNcgu1k&sig=a4tJUvVWOj97cAmlB\\_r5BJ5u9c4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=3nsHVeyFAYjToATeuLLQDg&ved=0CCEQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Henry%20Hammond%20arimathea&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=7ygBAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA257&lpg=PA257&dq=Henry+Hammond+arimathea&source=bl&ots=mg8kNcgu1k&sig=a4tJUvVWOj97cAmlB_r5BJ5u9c4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=3nsHVeyFAYjToATeuLLQDg&ved=0CCEQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Henry%20Hammond%20arimathea&f=false)

<sup>291</sup> Charbonneau-Lassay, a Catholic correspondent of Guenon, used this term "super-religion" in a letter about Guenon, he complained that Guenon is not a Catholic and has adopted a sort of a sort of "super-religion", outside the boundaries of the Catholic Church and Islamic rites.

or universal fascism is a political form of spiritualism that can inspire or support multiple fascisms in many places. That is why Guenon's name crops up among French, Chilean, Romanian, Russian, French, English, Italian or American neo-fascists, conservative revolutionists, far right wingers or Traditionalists. Guenon is a proselytizing adjunct of far-right movements in many countries, and seeks to supply a ready-made spiritual ideology to diverse national movements. Schuon even tried to apply this template to tribal movements, with limited success.<sup>292</sup>

Guenon universalized fascism: Guenon subsumes religion as part of a political program masked as a metaphysics: a will to power masked as a search for a fictive divinity. Those who claim that Guenon is apolitical have not understood him, nor how megalomaniacal and personal Guenon's political program really is. Guenon's transcendental fascism is a utopian revolutionary and apocalyptic ideology which attempts to revive a spiritual, global apocalypse and rebirth. To put this somewhat differently, Guenon's fascism is a 'gnostic' fascism, a form of political religion, a revival of the gnostic Platonism with its roots in the apocalyptic tradition.<sup>293</sup> He wants to deify or make spiritual a basic system of elitism, inequality and injustice: theofascism, precisely.

The roots of theofascism can be found in the religions as well as in reactions against the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. The traditionalists reference various antecedents of their politics. They like

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<sup>292</sup> Schuon exploited the Crow Indians first through Yellowtail and later through John Pretty on Top. This is a very poor and sad tribe who were easily exploited because of their poverty. The Schuon cult bought Yellow tail a house and were able to control him by controlling where and how he lived. They even installed a radio device in his house so they could communicate with him often

<sup>293</sup> I am using the term gnosticism here literally, in its meaning as a 'knowledge' system. I do not mean 'gnosticism' in the sense that Augustine meant it, as a term of hatred for a heresy, though Guenon and Schuon did claim some allegiance to a gnosticism of this kind. I certainly do not mean gnosticism in Eric Voegelin's sense, who used the term quite bizarrely, in a similar way as Augustine, but applied to modern thinkers, implying heresy among them. Voegelin is a strange historian who writes as if still mired in medievalism and Christian superstition. Heresy is not a concept that has any meaning anymore. Schuon claimed infallibility and used the word against those who disagreed with him.

the Shinto worship of the emperor. They also admire Plato's desire to have Guardians rule a class-divided chauvinistic city=state and create a eugenic system of elitist overlord supported by slaves, Guenon, Schuon, Evola and Coomaraswamy approve of the Hindu caste system. They also like the Catholic love of hierarchy and a cruel state apparatus to work out the Vatican's will. They also enjoyed Muhammad's love of violence and jihad as well as his constant threat of hell and apocalypse as a way of creating a society that functions on fear--- all these share in the unjust ideology of theofascism as envisaged by the traditionalists.

To express this differently, Guenon despises the physical world and wants to destroy the world that does not fit his ideology of a return to former political religions and fantasies of the Middle Ages. He wants to bring back priestly power, destroy democracy and science, and return to arbitrary dictatorships by dogmatic institutions that serve an elite caste. Those who refuse this backward politics and still embrace democracy, science and Enlightenment values should burn in hell fire or be massacred in a final solution of some kind. He appeals to those who are disillusioned with 'modernism' and want power at any cost. He is particularly attractive to far right ideologues in many countries. Evola and Dugin tried to apply Guenon's ideas politically, whereas Schuon made a little cult and Coomaraswamy acted as a sort of effete theory-man, hoping many would follow and implement his ideas. Guenon believed that the whole world had literally entered into the unfolding of destruction. The events of his prophecy in Reign of Quantity would result in only the elect surviving a gruesome apocalypse.

It is useful to recall that the originating idea of the "apocalypse" appears to be due to the Roman effort to defeat "barbarians". The Roman and later the European need for a Hegemonic empire seems to have engendered large scale, even universal notions of war, fear and poverty. The cruel and violent punishment and dismemberment of those who are disliked by the Romans and Europeans are catalogued in painted

versions of the last Judgment in Van Eyck, Michelangelo and a thousand other artworks done between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>294</sup> Indeed, the apocalyptic idea, which is central in Guenon's work, is really at the basis of the horrendous cruelty of European and Arab conquest, both in the Mideast and the 'New World'. The brutal murder of Native Americans, as well as the atrocities of Auschwitz and Nagasaki have the apocalyptic idea as their distant organizing mythos. The traditionalists have the apocalyptic idea at the center of their ideology because it is such a potent image of power grabbing and theofascism. This would suggest that such apocalyptic fantasies and their influence in history ought to be questioned further. Apocalyptic fantasy often correlates with poverty, and fear of the future.

### **Defining Umberto's Eco's Ur-Fascism**

Griffin's definition of fascism is too narrow since it only applies to nationalist politics. Among the Traditionalists Alexander Dugin, Evola, Andreas Serrano, Hossein Nasr earlier in his career, and a few others and perhaps the younger Guenon could be called nationalists. A better definition of fascism that includes the Guenonian effort to make a trans-national or universal fascism was created by Guido Di Giorgio who considered Guenon not a fascist but a spiritual fascist. The novelist and culture critic Umberto Eco. Umberto Eco came up with a way of looking at what he calls "Ur-fascism." Ur Fascism is deeper and examines the facts behind fascism more completely than Griffin could manage. In Umberto Eco's definition Guenon, Schuon, Evola and Dugin should be called an "Ur-fascist". I prefer the term theofascist to 'spiritual fascist',

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<sup>294</sup> Kenneth Clark alludes to the origin of the apocalyptic idea in his history of the Nude, and suggest Late Gothic paintings of Apocalypse recall Belsen, the German concentration camp. Pg. 518



or Urfascist. Since the German prefix “Ur” is obscure in English.<sup>295</sup> But Ur-Fascism is fine in itself and is more or less synonymous with theofascist .

What the apologists for Traditionalism or “theofascism” fail to understand is that Traditionalism is more, not less totalistic than ordinary fascism. Unlike the Nazis, the Traditionalists do not want merely temporal power. They want to be able to dictate the entire structure of reality globally and not just locally or nationally. They want to dictate how reality is constituted spiritually, intellectually, socially and politically. It might help to explain this by turning to Umberto Eco’s attempts to define theofascism and then comparing Eco’s views with those of Robert Jay Lifton and others, who have done a lot of work trying to define unjust power and how it operates.

In Eco’s language the Traditionalists are “Ur-Fascists”. In an essay titled “Ur-Fascism” (or ‘Primordial Fascism’) in his book, “Five Moral Pieces” (Harcourt, 2002), Umberto Eco lists 14 characteristics of Ur-Fascism. Guenon, Schuon and Evola are guilty of most of them.

There are various aspects of Eco’s analysis that do not involve traditions.<sup>296</sup> to save time I will not discuss those. But most of his main characterizes of Ur-Fascism do apply to traditionalism. These are the characteristic that do apply to Guenon Schuon and the others:

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<sup>295</sup> The prefix Ur was used by Goethe in the phrase Ur-plant, meaning primordial of original plant from which he thought other plants come. In this sense Ur means archetypal, and since I don’t believe in archetypes, much less archetypal plants, I choose not to use the word. Plants evolved from earth, water and sunlight, they did not come from imaginary Platonic, Islamic, Schuonian or Jungian “archetypes”. Some people translate the word Ur as “eternal” which is not too far off since Guenon seems to have tried to create an eternal fascism. In any case, theofascism seems fine, especially since one of Guenon’s followers already had coined the term “spiritual fascism”. The term Theofascism is more or less synonymous.

<sup>296</sup> Eco defines Ur Fascism

by these 14 points. The 14 points of Eco’s analysis are in over simplified terms : The Cult of Tradition: Rejection of Modernism: The Cult of Action for Action's Sake: Disagreement is Treason: Fear of Difference: Appeal to a Frustrated Middle Class: Obsession With a Plot: Cult of Inferiority: Life is Permanent Warfare: Contempt for the Weak: Cult of Masculinity: Selective Populism: Newspeak. Compare these with Lifton’s characteristics of Totalism, there and many overlapping criteria.

The Cult of Tradition:  
Rejection of Modernism:  
Disagreement is Treason:  
Fear of Difference:  
Obsession With a Plot:  
Cult of the Elite:  
Life is Permanent verge on apocalypse:  
Contempt for the Weak:  
Cult of patriarchy :  
Double-speak or Newspeak:

Eco states that any single characteristic is “enough that one of them be present to allow fascism to coagulate around it”. The first one, the “the cult of tradition” is essential to the Traditionalist project.. For the Traditionalists, as Eco suggests “the truth has already been announced once and for all”, there can be no advancement of learning: “all we can do is continue interpreting its obscure message”. Guenonians read and reread his silly books as if they were holy writ. Schuon’s acolytes do the same thing. Eco notes that “Nazi gnosis” “fed on Traditionalist, syncretic, and occult elements”, and he explicitly cites the example of the influence of Julius Evola and Rene Guenon on the new Italian right as examples of Ur-Fascism.

Eco is right to consider Guenon a theofascist. He also notes that a feature of fascism is its “rejection of the modern world”, its disapproval of Renaissance and Enlightenment thought. “Traditionalism implies the rejection of modernism ...The Enlightenment, the Age of Reason, is seen as the beginning of modern depravity. In this sense [Eternal fascism] can be defined as irrationalism.” The Traditionalists are romantic

irrationalists who deny science and want to return to revelations and sacred texts administered by priests or to their own internal intuitions, their subjective “intellect”. Eco specifies that for an Ur-Fascist “anyone who disagrees with them is guilty of treason. In modern culture the scientific community praises disagreement as a way to improve knowledge. For Ur-Fascism, disagreement is treason.” This is exactly right. The Traditionalists brand, slander and anathematize anyone who criticizes them as if they were heretics. I heard Schuon call people “heretics” on many occasions.

Eco also notes that at the “root of the Ur-Fascist psychology there is the obsession with a plot, possibly an international one. The followers must feel besieged.” This is certainly true of the Traditionalists. Guenon’s book Reign of Quantity is perhaps the most plot and conspiracy obsessed books ever published. Guenon sees the entire universe as a plot, and evil exudes from coins, metals, architecture, people, and books: he sees plots and demons seeping out of the Great Wall and everywhere else too. This is true to such a degree that Guenon has classic paranoid symptoms of Narcissism and paranoid schizophrenia.<sup>297</sup> Guenon thought that even his close associates were in a plot against him, that the entire universe was in a plot against all of us.<sup>298</sup> Schuon also anathematized everyone who did not think exactly as he did. Schuon’s cult was rife with imaginary enemies. Schuon thought that anyone who disagrees with them is “evil”. Guenon’s followers see plots everywhere too. Recent Traditionalist writers such as Charles Upton continue this tendency to see plots and

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<sup>297</sup> In Against the Modern World Sedgwick repeatedly refers to Guenon’s paranoia as “mild paranoia”. There is nothing mild about Reign of Quantity, which is a case of classic paranoid projection of a mental illness on the structure of the entire universe. His vision of revenge on the population of the earth for not believing and Guenon believes is very disturbing. He was a sick man

<sup>298</sup> I will discuss this more completely in my review of Guenon’s book The Reign of Quantity.

conspiracies everywhere. <sup>299</sup>

Among the various other characteristics that Umberto Eco cites as typical of fascism, Eco singles out its hierarchic elitism: “[it] is a typical aspect of all reactionary ideologies, insofar as it is basically aristocratic, and aristocratic and militaristic elitism cruelly implies contempt for the weak.” The Traditionalists are full of disdain for everyone except their own members, and even they are regularly subject to constant rebuke and critique. Eco also notes that the elitism of the spiritual fascists results in their promoting a “cult of heroism”, where everyone is “impatient to die”. Eco’s criticism regarding the “cult of heroism” and the elitism of the Ur-Fascists is exactly right. Schuon had a cult of heroism too, and pretended that he himself as a sort of war hero against the modern world. The Traditionalists are obsessed with apocalypse and “joining the next world”. They have a Manichean notion of earthly existence as radically steeped in evil. The attempts of writers like Guenon and Schuon to lay claim to an imaginary “divine intellect” ---really a “pathological subjectivity”--- from which they want to derive all earthly authority involves them in truly dangerous delusions of grandeur, very much along the same lines as the worship of Hitler or Il Duce or the self-worship of Napoleon. However, they go even further than these men. They divinize the anti-modernist, aristocratic and theocratic “Self” and claim supernatural authority for what is really just a right wing platform of repression and arrogant ignorance. They are radical conservatives, as were the Nazis, but they are not Nazis; despite the close sympathies and similarities: there are differences. However, the differences do not negate

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<sup>299</sup> Some Traditionalists imagine that the recent revelations of homosexual catholic priests abusing young boys is due to “Satanists” infiltrating the church. This is a deliberate falsehood of course and another example of homophobia. Even the current Pope Benedict has been shown to be involved in a cover-up of these corrupt priests. The real reason for the pedophilia is that the church, despite its homophobia, has always encouraged homosexuality by its patriarchal misogyny and advocacy of unrealistic celibacy. But the real causes cannot be addressed, so various traditionalists, find a scapegoat to try to cover up for the Church itself, who is the real guilty party here.

the fact that the Traditionalists are super-fascists: rather they underscore that traditionalism is a species of fascism or a religious scaled, and nothing else.

Umberto Eco's definition of Ur-Fascism or my own notion of theofascism, derived from many sources, can be widely applied to Guenon and the other traditionalists.<sup>300</sup> My concern here is only to outline some aspects of the relation of the Traditionalists to Fascism, totalism and colonial Imperialism. I do this as an application of my larger concern, which is to outline the relationship of systems of knowledge to the form and practices of power, which I perused more completely in my book the Empire of the Intellect. Moreover, since the Traditionalists claim to represent the essence of all the major religions, I wish to assess religion as a form of power in opposition to science. I believe that some of the conclusions of the study of this particular movement and the various cults it has spawned can be applied historically to the major religions of the world. The use of doctrines and ideas to legitimize oppressive power structures and hierarchies which I have outlined in these chapters, can likewise be found operating in the major religions on a much larger scale. Thus a critique of Traditionalism ends by being a criticism of religion as a whole as well, and thus becomes a defense of science.

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<sup>300</sup> Eco also criticizes Guenon in other ways. He claims (in Umberto Eco, *Les Limites de l'interprétation*, Grasset, Paris, 1992, ) That Guenon 's works are full of argumentation based on loose analogies, arbitrary comparaisons and symbols, etymologies and phonetic proximities that do not establish facts but rather build a case based on fictions and paranoid suppositions. There is truth to this as I show in my essay on Guenon's Book Reign of Quantity in this book . The traditionalists are basically romantic poets of the subjective, and most of their works try to create an appearance of rationality for things that are inventions, metaphors, pretense and fictions. They are shamans of the pretend. And as Bertrand Russell pointed out, fascism is largely the production of far right romantics.

## **Religion as Social Control:**

### **Theofascism, Totalism and R.J. Lifton**

Roger Griffin and Umberto Eco's views are complemented and augmented by other writers like R.J. Lifton. I will discuss these and other writers on cults and totalism in this chapter, drawing in my idea of theofascism into the mix. One of my concerns in this book is to outline some of the weaknesses of the approach of evolutionary psychology to religion in the hopes of improving it. Evolutionary analysis is the way to go.. I am very much in favor of an evolutionary view of religions but as yet it seems weak. Since religion appears to be a cultural construct akin to politics, it is hard only incidentally suggested by our genetic endowment and easily removed. Lifton's analysis is better in many ways than Boyer or Dennett. Writers like Pascal Boyer, simply do not grasp very deeply the hugely destructive character of so much of religious history or the close kinship of religion to politics. Like politics, religion does not have a directly genetic origin in the human brain. People organize their political and religious behavior based on very different ideas and notions of what is just or fair, true or false. Religion and politics are very similar by-products of human cognitive capacity. Evolution is not yet a very good interpreter of religious ideology and behavior, just as it cannot yet explain political systems very well. To understand how religion actually operates in the real world, R. J. Lifton has advanced theories that augments the otherwise very weak theories of Boyer and others. If we are going to have a scientific study of religion it has to go a lot deeper. Invoking brains science, is essential, but by itself, it is simply not enough yet.

Various people have written me and make the mistake of imagining that this book is about fascism of the German or Italian varieties. They imagine that I am saying that traditionalism is fascism of the Nazi kind. No, this is a misunderstanding. I am not writing about Nazi Germans,

Fascist Italians or the Fascist Japanese of World War 2. Theofascism is not the Fascism of the Nazis and Italians and this should be plain in the course of this book. However, yes, there were real connections between the two very different forms of reactionary systems, however tenuous. Fascism, Traditionalism and religion in general are all about social control from the top down. I am exploring the close relation of religion and politics in order to write a critique of many kinds of authoritarian power systems.

At least part of these 3 books is also about a minor and rather obscure 20<sup>th</sup> century cult of the past, a group of nostalgic religiophiles, wanna-be spiritual masters and delusional self-made “prophets” who tried to canonize themselves as the final word on the ‘great’ religions and civilizations of the past. I am interested in the critique as a way of questioning the role of ideology in evolution. There are those who try to write that evolution is part of culture and thus religion or ideologies must be defined as part of our development. Religion is then defined as part of the human success story. This sort of self-congratulatory social Darwinism is really inappropriate. Boyer says that religion is a “parasite” on the mind, which is basically a by-product theory, like Richard Dawkins. Dawkins is much more forceful than Boyer and says outright that religion is not a good thing and that it is a wayward “by-product” of our brains. Lifton thinks religion is an accidental “by product” of power systems and social inequities and does not look into genetic or brain science very much. I think the truth in both these hypotheses, and they are not opposite but complementary. Though I think the by-product theory is still very fuzzy and unclear.<sup>301</sup>

Human brains are made in ways that make them susceptible to

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<sup>301</sup> Although Darwin implied something like the by-product theory, he does not go that far, and implies much more for adaptation. He implies reason, imagination, and some aspects of language are adaptations, for instance. Chomsky follows Stephen Jay Gould who tried to subvert Darwin with his spandrel theory, which goes far beyond Darwin. I doubt Gould is right. I will discuss Gould and others in a latter chapter. See also exaptation.

ideological constructions, and religious systems grow up in relation to system of abusive power. I doubt that the notion of mental viruses has any use except as an analogy. It is not the case that evolution selected for religion, it is rather that evolution selected for language and culture. While language distorts the mind in one way, culture has often deviated into ideological extremes—delusions---- in order that a given caste or class would perpetuate itself, often destructively, against the benefit of the culture of a people as a whole.

In order to understand religions and their relation to culture at large, It might be useful to look at the arguments about the use of the word “cult” here. Religious studies is clearly an academic discipline whose primary purpose to justify fictional notions of power employed in the various religions. It offers apologetics. There are few cases of the critique of religious powers in the academic world, The word cult comes is from the French *culte* or Latin *cultus*, ‘worship’, from *cult-*, ‘inhabited, cultivated, worshipped,’ and denotes ritual practice. Cults are thus defined by the actual facts of how religions operate. Cults are belief systems that infect groups through ideological systems of control. All religions are thus delusional cults, whether they are publically acknowledged as a good or not.. A destructive cult is one that does harm, like Scientology or the Catholic Church, and many others, too numerous to mention. Religions also act as destructive cults, more so at one time and less so at another. The definition of cult applied only to outlying groups from the status quo of Christian or Buddhist normality is wrong. Buddhist and Christianity are cults too, just much larger ones and ones more widely accepted as legitimate.

The word cult is perfectly valid and not entirely pejorative in common use. Cult and culture are both words that describe common systems of practice and belief. It is pejorative in some usage and that is fine as these are often harmful groups and coercive institutions. There was an unwarranted apologetic movement in favor of cults and religions



created by religious studies scholars of a right wing bent in the 1980's and 90's, led partly by Cesnur but spreading to other academics fairly quickly. It was partly an effort to hold on to their jobs and partly an effort of sanitize a very unseemly growth of dangerous far right cults worldwide. The cult apologist movement was born to try to stem criticism of authoritarian theofascism in movements of many kinds. As it became obvious that there is little difference between destructive cults and the world's religions, an attempt was made to blur any critique of religion at all. This is still very much the case, as, 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment ideas help insulate criticism from any discussion at all.

Indeed, as Timothy Fitzgerald claims the term religion, as used, is indistinguishable from the word 'culture'. Religions are ideologies and psycho-political systems. When an ideological culture gets turned into 'them versus us' groups they are cults, and all the religions are this exactly. People who seek to excuse cults and thus support exclusive and coercive groups they are called "cult apologists" and there are many priests and religious studies professors who are this precisely. I look at a number of such professors in this book, Mark Sedgwick and Arthur Versluis, among others. I therefore retain the use of the word cult and eschew the 'newspeak' term, "New Religious Movement".

This is worth looking into deeper. As you will see if you look into the history of the Scientology cult. It is one of the worst cults in the last 50 years. It has made substantial efforts to influence opinion and case law in favor of cults. It has also influenced many rather dim witted religious studies professors who imagine that delusional and coercive cults are actually "New Religious movements" (NRM). The Scientology cult has used its power and money to lie about religion and push an agenda of religious extremism on the American public. It has also sought to intimidate and lie about all its critics, not unlike the Schuon cult.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> Cult Awareness Network (CAN) listed the Schuon cult as a dangerous cult. But this

While it is true to say that cults are part of history, to see them as part of evolution and thus religion as a necessary part of human development and society seems far-fetched or even delusional. Religion is not so much the fruit of evolution as the aberration that seeks to undermine the facts of nature by promoting acceptance of delusional ideologies. I am using the Traditionalists as a foil against which to assess various cultic systems of unjust power. They thought they were “Lords of the World” in Rene Guenon’s phrase, and had the “divine right of kings” in Schuon’s phrase. Nonsense of course, but interesting for what it says about human beings and how, historically, regimes and individuals have inflated themselves. Group dynamics shows us how those who follow authoritarians will accept their beautiful lies as truth. As much as there have been attempts to abolish terms like mind control or brain washing, it is clear that these are real things and reality always has a way of reasserting itself against apologists and propagandists. Guenon, Schuon and Evola were throw backs to the Middle Ages. Like their mentors the Pre-Raphaelites, their idealistic, even dreamy and unresearched love of that period made them unable to see just how dark the Dark Ages really were.

One important detail I should mention is this. “Spiritual fascism” is not my term, but a term used by one of Guenon’s close followers, Guido De Giorgio, to describe Guenon’s ideology. I define this perhaps too precisely in the course of this book. Spiritual fascism is an apt and pregnant phrase. It was a phrase invented by a Guenonian and I here apply it here to a much wider phenomena, far beyond the idea of historical fascism. But the preferred term here is Theofascism, because it

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praiseworthy organization was destroyed. In 1996 Scientology used over paid lawyers to intimidate and then bankrupted and destroyed CAN. It then bought out the real “Cult Awareness Network” in 1996” Margaret Thaler Singer expressed the opinion that ‘any experts the public would be referred to by the “New CAN” would be cult apologists.’ This is true. Cult apologists, who perhaps should be called “delusion promoters” now constitute a serious portion of what is called religious studies. For more on Scientology see this old story from 60 minutes <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vUPaifSnbq>

emphasizes the use of a god concept as a way to leverage power over the innocent by stealing their minds with delusory images of the divine.

I suppose I could have used the term “totalism” or “totalitarianism”, which Guenon, Schuon and Evola all were to some degree. There are various definitions of totalism. And I said earlier. Robert Lifton’s understanding about social control and totalism is deep and most thoroughly researched. He has written amazing books on Chinese Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism, Vietnam, Nazi Doctors and Hiroshima in America. Lifton’s use of the term “Totalism” differs from theories of “totalitarianism” in that the word ‘totalism’ can be applied to the ideology of groups that do not wield governmental power. But really there is no real difference between the two concepts beyond scale. So I will use the word totalism rather than totalitarianism.

Fascism is one sort of totalism, but there are others, even on the far left. The distinction between totalism and totalitarianism is related to another vague definitional squabble between state terrorism and criminal terrorism committed by smaller groups. Large scale institutions like to pretend they are a totally different objects than other small groups, cults, or corporations. But this is not the case. Osama Bin Laden’s al-Qaeda is not different in cultic structure from ‘Aum Shinrikyo’, the Japanese cult that killed 11 people with sarin gas in 1999 and nor is Bin Laden much different than George Bush, who also was a theofascist, just as was Bin Laden. Bush killed a lot more people than Bin Laden. Nor is the Jonestown cult that killed 900 people in 1978 all that different in basis structure than the structure and belief system of Hitler’s Fascism or Stalin’s gulag system. All these can be usefully compared to Innocent the III’s Catholic Church or Nixon’s war against the Vietnamese. These are all destructive systems of totalism that depend on creating a “Them verses Us” atmosphere and scapegoating individuals outside the group. They employ a system of mind control, indoctrination or misinformation, as well as apocalyptic millenarianism used to justify exclusion and

destruction of others. Even destructive corporations have elements of totalism as part of the makeup of exploitation and control. Yes, there are differences, but the basic outline that justifies killing in all these instances is very similar.

The phrase “ideological totalism” was used by “Robert J. Lifton in the 1950’s to describe these systems of ideological abuse and mind control and this echoes my own “ideofascism”, mentioned in the previous chapter. The purpose of mind control of course, is social control, getting people to behave in specific ways that serves of organizational objective. Lifton is one of the best writers there is on this subject. His early book Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism is ground breaking. Later books elaborated on his early studies. Lifton’s first study of these ideas applied to Communist or Maoist China before and during the ‘Cultural Revolution’, where systematic indoctrination was routine and punishments for failing to conform were horrendous. Systems of power—as well as the intellectual apparatus that justifies systems of power----act in similar ways. Lifton himself applied conclusions drawn from Chinese social control to other societies, including our own. The totalism of Guenon has many similarities to the totalism of, say, Mao or Stalin. Though this is an way of comparing totalist systems looks at many abusive systems at the same time.

Here I’m concerned with one form of ideological totalism and that is traditionalism and its relation to what I am calling ‘theofascism’. Totalism and theofascism more or less overlap, while yet differing sharply in some areas. Indeed, what characterizes traditionalist followers is their arrogance and certitude that their spiritual delusions are the truth and the only one that exists. They are so fallen under the Guenonian spell that they tend to falsely call anyone who criticizes the cult master or his stiff and ossified doctrines, “evil”, “satanic” or “out for revenge”. But to be objective about traditionalism is to recognize its far-right, closed and the cultishly political character of what it calls “metaphysics”.. Karl Popper

defines an “open society” as one that allows critique and falsification to verify truth. Science is a necessity in an open society precisely because it involves open inquiry. Guenon’s and Schuon’s worlds are retrogressive “closed societies”, in Popper’s phrase, which do not allow criticism or even recognize it exists. They hide in subjective dogma and claim to know things they really know nothing about. They live in an insulated nether world that is monitored by a sort of “ministry of truth”,<sup>303</sup> which are actually upper level cult members whose job it is to lie to the average cult members and tell them critics of the group are evil and the great leader is indeed great. They try to blacklist and demonize all honest and innocent whistleblowers To Guenon, critics are the enemy: they were devils and heretics, demons and counter-initiates involved in a diabolic plot against him. The truth is otherwise.

In the early 1990’s, when Rama Coomaraswamy and I had many long conversations about how to bring Schuon to justice and into question we also talked about destructive religious cults in general. We both used the word “totalism” to describe the Schuon cult or his intellectual system. Like Orwell’ 1984, the Schuon’s cult is a closed system with Schuon as its ultimate hero. Orwell’s book reminds me of the tactics of the Schuon cult. It was written around the same time as

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<sup>303</sup> This phrase is used by George Orwell in his excellent 1984, which in fictional terms outlines very well the nature of cult mechanics, unjust power structures and ‘principled autocracy’ as Martin Lings calls his favorite system of torture and mind control. Orwell and Lifton have a similar analysis of power systems. Winston Smith works the “ministry of truth” and figures out that he is a professional liar and propagandist for the unjust state. He starts to do things in secret—namely love someone--- that are against the arbitrary rules of the state and is punished for it by the men in charge of thought control. Big Brother is watching you is a constant refrain of the book, like the god of the Inquisition or the cult monitors in Schuon’s cult, they watch over the followers to insure conformity of thought. Anyone who is critical of the state or its officers must be punished or silenced. Winston falls in love with someone and both of them are tortured until their love is squashed and they betray eachother.

The book reminds me of what the Schuon cult did to Maude Murray: thought control, torture, punishment for love and finally a kind of ugly and malicious banishment.

Guenon's Reign of Quantity and it is its opposite in every way. Where Guenon supports Totalism and arbitrary power, Orwell opposes it, where Guenon hates the individual, Orwell celebrates the individual, where Guenon endorses the elite, secrecy and lying, Orwell wants the truth, democracy and transparency. Totalism is a good term and describes many repressive and unjust systems, religious and non-religious. However, this term misses the peculiarly religious, Universalist and extremist flavor of the Guenon and his followers, while it does describe much of their behavior. Therefore, I am using the terms Theofascism, Spiritual fascism and Totalism in reference to the traditionalists. These are all closely related terms, but they mean slightly different things.

So then, listening to the evidence and being aware of some of Lifton, Griffin and Eco's ideas, Guenon and Schuon are theofascists or religious totalists and these terms are more or less synonymous. They are not fascists as defined by Griffin. I do not say they are fascists either, but only that they share some aspects of it. Guenon and Schuon claimed to have enunciated a doctrine that encompasses the entire structure of the world, which resembles the backward looking aspect of fascism, if not its futuristic cult of modernity. But there is a dystopian cult of the future in the traditionalists in that they are utter pessimists, and the world is going to hell now and will soon be burning in apocalyptic fires. The future for them is the grim reaper and a spiritual life in a upper class suburbia in the next world. Theofascist traditionalists are not nationalists in general, though there is an opening to nationalism in it, as it seeks to universalize at the same time as it tries to honor local customs, interpreting them "esoterically"..

The Traditionalists picture themselves as a 'remnant' of holy men banding together at the end of the world, as Guenon, Schuon and Evola imagined. The truth is otherwise. Rather traditionalism was a

psychopathic reaction to science and modernism. It was an effort to gather the dying religions together to try to forestall the end of religion as a serious and credible force in history. This is obvious in Guenon's insane book, The Reign of Quantity, where evil is far more powerful than good <sup>304</sup> and the entire world is under a deathwatch of threatening evils pouring through the "Great Wall" around the world. Guenon uses the insane imagery of paranoid schizophrenia. Traditionalism ends in a rank effort to resurrect unjust totalitarian political theocracy. Traditionalism ramrods religion back into politics and reveals that religion is really politics by another name

So then at the risk of repeating things the reader already knows, Guenon, Schuon and Evola are three men who embody a certain extreme conservative ideology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mark Sedgwick, in a book of this title, calls this ideology and the men who promoted it "against the modern world" and yes all these men are extreme outsiders. It took me some years to come to any clear conclusions about these men. There was no book about them then and everything I learned I had to gather by my own efforts and through meeting people who knew and research, as well as through my own experiences, which were unique, as I had an inside track that I had not even looked to acquire. But after I left the Schuon group in 1991 and began studying cults, dangerous organizations and destructive governments, I finally determined that what I had encountered was truly a destructive cult. While still in the cult I could tell

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<sup>304</sup> Guenon's very early poems show him to be primarily obsessed with Satan, not with god, and he tries to incorporate Satan into god, somehow, reminding one of Carl Jung's or Jeff Kripal's similar gnostic endeavors to rehabilitate evil as good. This is not a poem that is about reality, it is a poem about Guenon's psychology, which appears to have been a mind that was always under threat from his earliest years. His religious ideas are a perpetual effort to forestall the cracking up of his personality, and the Reign of Quantity is really about that, not our "modern world". Guenon's hatred of anything personal is a defense against his own seething fears and terrors, his own humanity. These fears overwhelm him increasingly as he tries to conform himself to esoteric ideology and orthodox mythologies. This is true of Schuon too, who was a very small man, but who tried to exalt himself using Guenonian formula and religious mythology.

that Schuon was insane, I could see it in his face, but I had no name to call what I saw. I finally figured out that Schuon was a real sociopathic personality. I often had that impression while looking at him. There were occasions where he resembled photos I have seen of glaring-eyed Charlie Manson, the cult leader of Helter Skelter.

Guenon shared many of the qualities Schuon possessed, or rather, Guenon, in some ways, both complemented encouraged and helped form the development of Schuon's psychopathology. I learned a lot from Robert J. Lifton, Margret Singer<sup>305</sup>, Madeleine Tobias, Janja Lalich, Stephen Hassan and others that the psychological profile of the psychopath and the cult leader have many overlaps. It might be worthwhile to go over these tendencies and apply them to the traditionalists in a little more detail. The characteristics of a sociopath or psychopath, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders text DSM IV,<sup>306</sup> Madeleine Tobias, following R. J. Lifton and other thinkers who have studied destructive organizations, defines a cult leader and his cult as existing to promote or "meet the unmet, emotional, financial, sexual and/or power needs of its leader". This is certainly true of Schuon where his four wives served him night and day and his other disciples were encouraged by the wives to worship him as an "avatara". Ms. Tobias notes that "the dynamic around which cults are formed is similar to that of other power relationships and is essentially authoritarian".

Madeleine Tobias defines 15 characteristics of cult or psychopathic leaders. These include: 'charisma', 'manipulative conning', 'grandiose sense of self'; 'pathological lying'; 'lack of shame and remorse'; 'callousness', 'lack of empathy', and various other criminal and sociopathic qualities. Schuon fit nearly all of these characteristics, as do

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<sup>305</sup> For more on cults and Margret Singer see:  
<http://www.rickross.com/groups/singer.html>

<sup>306</sup> Hervey Cleckley was partly responsible for the DSM- IV chapter on psychopaths.



many of the Nazi leaders, as well as other leaders of cults and dangerous states and organizations, from Cromwell to Hitler, Stalin to David Koresh, Robespierre to Constantine, J.P. Morgan to Torquemada, or from Hong Xioquin <sup>307</sup> to the leaders who promoted and executed the Vietnam war. <sup>308</sup> All these men served a “Higher Truth” called god, the free market or the party. Thus faithful to a higher truth they abused, exploited or killed those who did not serve their truth. Totalism seeks to destroy anyone who is in the way. Many of these qualities resonate with Umberto’s Eco’s analysis of Ur-fascism as well as Robert Lifton’s analysis of mind control organizations, cult and states. Eco, Lifton and Tobais show us the profile of a cult leader and the psychology of a fascist movements and these character traits fit Napoleon, Stalin, Schuon, Guenon, Evola, Koresh, Manson and other cult leaders and autocrats quite well. These authors list fifteen characteristics of the psychopath or cult leader. I will only list only a few of these, to be brief, with no intention of being exhaustive here.

#### Profile of a psychopath or cult leader

1. **Charm or glibness**—able to con people, persuade, confuse or convince. Guenon’s kill in service to ultra-rightist ideology created many little groups and cults, followers and off shoots, Guenon’s writings seem pretty awful to me, but many find them compelling. He is able to sell the most ridiculous idea as if it were the real truth. Schuon is not so good at this and Schuon’s writings ere heavily edited by the Guenonians in his early years. Schuon learned to be charming with some difficulty. On the other hand, Evola was able to charm his

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<sup>307</sup> Hong Xoaquin killed millions of people in China. Like Schuon he claimed to be a son of the Virgin Mary. That is interesting. There are not many people who make such obviously psychological claims.

<sup>308</sup> Tobias, Captive Hearts, Captive Minds, pg.77 see also Stephen Hassan's Combating Cult

followers into violent acts. Roger Griffin writes of Evola's abilities to convince others, his lecturing to SS groups in the Third Reich and even after the defeat of Fascism. .... Griffin writes

“For the next two decades he was to maintain his self-appointed role as a beacon of Traditional values illuminating the dark plain of modernity, little known except to small groups of neo-fascist youths such as the Fiasces of Revolutionary Action and the Black Legions whose acknowledgment of Evola as their ‘master’ and ‘inspiration’ caused him to appear before a Rome court in 1951, accused of attempting with his ‘nebulous theories’ to ‘reconstitute the disbanded Fascist party’ ““

2. **Manipulative**--- cult leaders do not respect rights of others, has only accomplices or victims. Schuon did not like children and encouraged his followers to not have them. He was bad to many disciples and left many bitter people behind him, as Glasse records. But he convinced others to support him financially, in great style. Female followers, duped by his aura of power, offered their bodies to him, despite his ugliness, or maybe because of his presumption of guru status. He was a little Napoleon, with a huge ego hidden behind the pose of ‘Shaykh” a Native American headdress or a purple velvet cloak. Guenon was also a manipulator, liar and con man, as I have shown though out this book.

3. **Grandiose sense of self**: Schuon thought he was “the last manifestation of the Logos”, Guenon thought he was as divine mouthpiece a manifesto of ‘pure intellect’. Later in this essay I will show how Schuon and Guenon thought they were both chosen by Al Khadir, a mythical figure in the Koran. Evola Schuon and Guenon style themselves sages of the “Sacred Right”, the unassailable ”tradition”. Roger Griffin notes that “the characteristic trait of all Evola’s writings” is to grant himself “ license to roam through the store-houses of the world’s anthropology, mythology and esoteric doctrines unencumbered by

conventional standards of evidence or ‘objectivity’. Without any outside corroboration Evola assumes “ a tone of unassailable authority in the revelation of eternal truths” . This is true of Schuon and Guenon too, as well as many other traditionalists writers. <sup>309</sup> What is a myth if not “an attempt to rationalize the irrational” Karl Popper writes

4. **Prone to lying**, deceit, cheating. Guenon used pseudonyms, was prone to excessive secrets, often used secrets to try to mystify his spiritual election. Schuon “lied easily and had other lie for him” Schuon’s third wife Maude Murray stated. Indeed, the Schuon cult is based on lies from its inception as are all the religions. The myth of Christ’s resurrection, Schuon’s vision of the virgin Mary, the nonsense about Krishna in Hinduism, These are all “Holy lies” as if putting the word holy before them made them any less lies. Watching Schuon lie to get out of consequences of the legal system was interesting as it showed me that for self-survival all his “principles” went out the window and he was just another opportunistic hypocrite. Getting young girls to lie for him was really something. I saw who he really was.

5,6. **Lack of remorse**. Shallow emotions. Neither Schuon or Guenon seemed to feel deeply about anything except their own intellectual supremacy. Schuon used people openly and discarded them without remorse. This is true in other cult leaders too, such as Adi Da, who abused many of his followers, or Bagwan Rajneesh and Gurdjeiff, who did the same thing.

7. **Incapacity for love**. Schuon wanted adulation but did not love others in turn. He was incapable of being a father or a good husband. He merely gathered or collected worshippers of himself and even his “wives”, who

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<sup>309</sup> See  
<http://www.rosenoire.org/articles/revolts.php>

were not really wives, meant little to him except if they increased worship of him. As Cyril Glasse wrote that “in the late 1970’s and beyond S. Hamidah, S. Aminah. And S. Latifah applied their flatteries to him each trying to outdo the other” Schuon claimed that “ I am not less than Plato” and it was suggested that “ He is greater than Jesus””. To this hyperbole Glasse humorously replies that “it is not known if anyone saluted but it was run up the flagpole”. In other words the wives tried to claim Schuon was as great or greater than Jesus, to try out the idea.

Guenon seems to have required great admiration too, though not as excessively as Schuon.

**9. Callousness lack of empathy.** Guenon is vicious in his books, laying waste to the “profane”, hating democracy, wanting everyone to be reduced to an excessive religiosity that punishes those that do not conform. Schuon even disliked children got mad once when child saved at him when he was in his car. It was “undignified” for the child to do this to him. I never saw him apologize for anything, or admit wrong doing, even when his crimes were put in front of his face, All faults lie with others and never with him.

**13. Sexual behavior.** Schuon was a polygamist and held bizarre gatherings in which the women were expected to press their genitals against him for a “healing”. No explanation was ever given why their wombs were ‘sick” and required healing. The rationale was invented after the fact to justify a practice of passion of his female followers. It was a sexist maneuver, based on false premises of women being “wounded”..

So the characteristic of the psychopath or sociopath and the cult leader overlap and Guenon, Schuon and Evola share some of the characteristics of the sociopath in varying degrees. All three men were very far right eccentrics with deep seated and irrational hatred of the modern world

and a wish to return the world to earlier more repressive and hierarchical models based on caste or totalitarian religious ideas. They all claimed bogus initiations, or to have been born with extraordinary inner knowledge (Jnanic gnosis they liked to call it) but in fact they were autodidactic ‘anti-positivist’<sup>310</sup> romantics with delusions of grandeur.

Madeline Tobias writes of the cult leader that:

“The cult leader enjoys tremendous feelings of entitlement. He believes that everything is owed to him as a right, Preoccupied with his own fantasies, he must always be the center of attention. He presents himself as the “Ultimate One”: enlightened, a vehicle of god, a genius, the leader of humankind, and sometimes even the most humble of the humble. He has an insatiable need of adulation and attendance. His grandiosity may also be a defense against inner emptiness, depression, and a sense of insignificance. Paranoia often accompanies the grandiosity, reinforcing the isolation of the group and the need for protection against a perceived hostile environment. In this way, he creates an us-versus-them mentality

This is all true of Schuon:

It is useful to compare the different typologies of the psychopath and the organizational structure of cults as laid out by Lifton and others. Martin Marty and Scott Appleby, in their series of books, Fundamentalisms

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<sup>310</sup> Positivism is ascribed to August Comte, whose “religion of humanity” is curious. The need of religion in Comte was pretty strong apparently because of his mental illness. I have been accused of being a positivist by French correspondent. It has never occurred to me to call myself this sort of label. I have never read any of the Vienna circle. I like some of Popper’s and Russell’s ideas but don’t think either was a positivist. Comte is a positivist and seems quite reasonable in general, but I never read anything he wrote until today. I like John Stuart Mill, vaguely, but I think I prefer the Russell and even a maverick like Feyerabend, though they are not perfect either, no one is. Feyerabend was mistaken in many ways. So I am not a positivist, though I am very much in favor of science, empiricism and reason and think the hatred of these by poets, artists and the religious is ignorant, and irresponsible. We are all doing our best to understand reality and fighting against the irrationalism of those who hate science and inquiry and would have us live under authoritarian dogma.

Observed, developed similar categories and points that characterize fundamentalist ideology are

1. religious idealism as basis for personal and communal identity;
2. Fundamentalists understand truth to be revealed and unified;
3. It is intentionally scandalous, (similar to Lawrence's point about language — outsiders cannot understand it);
4. Fundamentalists envision themselves as part of a cosmic struggle;
5. They seize on historical moments and reinterpret them in light of this cosmic struggle;
6. They demonize their opposition and are reactionary;
7. Fundamentalists are selective in what parts of their tradition and heritage they stress;
8. They are led by males;
9. They envy modernist cultural hegemony and try to overturn the distribution of power.

This is pretty much all true of the Schuon cult, and most of it is true of Guenon's ideology. The following characteristics are also true of the Schuon cult organization:

The organizational characteristics include:

2. an elect or chosen membership;
  2. Sharp group boundaries;
  3. Charismatic authoritarian leaders;
  4. Mandated behavioral requirements.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> See Fundamentalism Observed by Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby. There are four large volumes in this series so far. Fundamentalisms and the State. Fundamentalisms Comprehended. And Fundamentalism and Society. The books compare Protestant Christian, Catholic Christian, Jewish, Sunni Muslim, Shia Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Confucian and Shinto forms of Fundamentalism. These are interesting books and show further the close relation of religion to politics.

Getting out of such an organization is not easy. Many people have recorded the difficult of getting out of cults and religions. But I succeeded and went on to try to understand cults as a phenomena. When I left the Schuon cult in 1991 I came back to Cleveland and fought a pretty severe depression for a year. I got help from various people who understood a lot about cults and the suffering one undergoes when one realizes the spiritual master was a fraud. This is a very common occurrence and I am by no means the only one to have gone through it. The beautiful lie of it all leading to betrayals, fear, ostracism and being hated and lied about for telling the truth. At the time there was a horrible case in Cleveland by a man named Jeffery Lundgren, who had a quasi-Mormon cult. He thought himself a “prophet” too, as did Schuon, so I paid close attention to the case and read about it. Schuon’s sexual child abuse of girls of young girls in Primordial Gatherings really bothered me a lot. I realized at a certain point that he was not alone in this. Many children have been killed by Christian and other societies due to medical neglect. A study done of children killed by “faith healing” between 1975 and 1995 showed that 172 kids were killed because of their parents neglect, due to their involvement in Christian sects.<sup>312</sup> Moslem faith healing is similar,

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<sup>312</sup> The number of kids killed by “faith Healing is no doubt much higher. This study was done by Seth Asser and Rita Swan. This study is called “Child Fatalities from Religion Motivated Medical Neglect”. “Criteria for inclusion were evidence that parents withheld medical care because of reliance on religious rituals and documentation sufficient to determine the cause of death.”...

“These fatalities were not from esoteric entities but ordinary ailments seen and treated routinely in community medical centers. Deaths from dehydration, appendicitis, labor complications, antibiotic, sensitive bacterial infections, vaccine-preventable disorders, or hemorrhagic disease of the newborn have a very low frequency in the United States.”

The actual number is certainly much higher . The authors note that

We suspect that many more fatalities have occurred during the study period than the cases reported here. Deaths of children in faith-healing sects are often recorded as attributable to natural causes and the contribution of neglect minimized or not investigated. During the course of requesting documents for this study, we were told of deaths of children because of religion-motivated medical neglect that were not previously known to us from public records, newspapers, or other sources.

See:

though in that case it often involves money making scams. Children in Islam are sometimes deformed or made to be deformed and then exploited.

Islam has permitted the child marriage of older men to girls as young as 9 years of age in Iran. The Seyaj Organization for the Protection of Children describes cases of child brides in Yemen. Hinduism allowed prostitution of young girls in temples. Tibetan Buddhism allowed abuse of young girls and boys by monks and Llamas at young ages. Mormon founder Joseph Smith was also guilty of child abuse. He married girls as young as 13 and 14, and other Latter Day Saints married girls as young as 10. Smith was a philandering and adulterous man who liked to threaten women who refused to sleep with him. The Mormon Church eliminated underaged marriages in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the original leaders being some of the worst offenders, but several fundamentalist branches of Mormonism continue the practice.<sup>313</sup> Elijah Muhammad of the Nation of Islam was prone to the same corruption, allegedly having 21 children by eight women . Schuon was not alone in his corruptions.

Calling these dangerous cults “New Age religions” is absurd. I also followed the horrible case of David Koresh, the cult leader of the Branch Davidian cult. He was also an abusive personality, not unlike Lundgren and Schuon, though Schuon did not murder anyone, directly, anyway. I learned about Lifton’s theories from Tobias and Stephen Hassan. Hassan

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<http://www.childrenshealthcare.org/PDF%20Files/Pediatricsarticle.pdf>

<sup>313</sup> Joseph Smith seduced a “married teenager, Zina D. Huntington, who he asked on 25 October 1841 to become another of his multiple wives. Smith informed her (using a line he also employed with Emma and others) that he was ordered to do so by a sword-wielding angel who was threatening to kill him if he disobeyed.” This is blackmail of course of a particularly vile kind. There are many stories like this. It is a wonder anyone stayed Mormon. Smith continues to dupe followers to this day

<http://exmormon.org/d6/drupal/Joseph-Smith-and-Fanny-Alger>



had been a member of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon cult, a Korean millionaire who exploited many people.<sup>314</sup> These people really opened my eyes about the prevalence of human right abuses brought about and enabled by cults, fundamentalisms and “major” religions.

It is useful to compare Robert Lifton’s schema for totalism to that of the psychological profile the psychopath of Madeleine Tobias, the scheme of Umberto Eco and the ideological characteristics of Fundamentalism above. Lifton expands the scheme of the cult leader beyond the individual and his analysis lines up closely with the characteristics of Fundamentalisms of all kinds. Below I apply some of Lifton’s terms to Guenon’s milieu to indicate how well Guenon and Schuon fit Lifton’s totalism model

**3. Milieu Control.** This involves the control of information and communication both within the environment and, ultimately, within the individual, resulting in a significant degree of isolation from society at large. Orwell called this tendency “Newspeak”. Guenonians separate themselves from the modern world as much as they can,

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<sup>314</sup> In the 1990’s he took out a full page add that said “he went to heaven and got endorsements from Jesus, Stalin, Martin Luther”. Even this cult leader recognizes Stalin as a religious figure. Moon brainwashed young people with lack of sleep sugar, sex and easy marriage. Thousands of people were more or less abducted into the group and taken from families and loved ones. The organization had many corporate features and Moon himself was primarily interested in money and power, rather like the Scientologists. His former wife Nansook Hong wrote a brave exposee about him and “characterizing her husband as a womanizing cocaine user” who abused her. Many victims of this cult have written very damning things about the cult. “He also had commercial interests in Japan, where right-wing nationalist donors were said to be one source of financing. He was found guilty of “tax fraud and conspiracy to obstruct justice and sentenced to 18 months in prison, states the New York Times article on the day of his death. The New York times article treats the cult as if were merely another corporation, and a “new religious movement” which is a euphemism for a dangerous cult. Like other charlatans and cult leaders, such as Schuon and Jeffs, Moon called himself humanities great prophet and considered himself persecuted. He often invoked religious freedom as the justification for why he should be able to continue to exploit and harm people. . Like Schuon, Moon combined aspects of the different religions in his cult.

despise those who are part of the ‘profane world’ and encourage an alienated adherence to extreme orthodoxy. In Schuon’s cult this separation was extreme.

4. **Mystical Manipulation.** There is manipulation of experiences that appear spontaneous but in fact were planned and orchestrated by the group or its leaders in order to demonstrate divine authority or spiritual advancement or some special gift or talent that will then allow the leader to reinterpret events, scripture, and experiences as he or she wishes. IN the Schuon cult this was a constant and shifting thing. There were endless meetings, dinners rituals prayers and gatherings in which members were exploited and made to think as a uniform unit.
5. **Demand for Purity.** The world is viewed as black and white and the members are constantly exhorted to conform to the ideology of the group and strive for perfection. The induction of guilt and/or shame is a powerful control device used here. This is Guenon’s books in a nutshell, everything in Manichean terms—
6. **Confession.** Sins, as defined by the group, are to be confessed either to a personal monitor or publicly to the group. There is no confidentiality; members’ “sins,” “attitudes,” and “faults” are discussed and exploited by the leaders. Guenon’s system if basically inquisitorial mocking, disdainful, proud, and demands self-policing of an extreme kind
7. **Sacred Science.** The group’s doctrine or ideology is considered to be the ultimate Truth, beyond all questioning or dispute. Truth is not to be found outside the group. The leader, as the spokesperson for God or for all humanity, is likewise above criticism. Only Guenon or Schuon knows what reality is: both claim to be infallible.
8. **Loading the Language.** The group interprets or uses words and phrases in new ways so that often the outside world does not understand. This jargon consists of thought-terminating clichés,

which serve to alter members' thought processes to conform to the group's way of thinking. This is what Guenon's books intend to do, create thought terminating cliché's--- the modern world is evil, only orthodoxy is good, esoterism is truth esoterism is a means, the modern world is "counterfeit", the ordinary factual world is nothing, only platonic idealizations are real, etc. etc. etc.

9. **Doctrine over person.** Member's personal experiences are subordinated to the sacred science and any contrary experiences must be denied or reinterpreted to fit the ideology of the group. This was a constant process in the Schuon cult as family experiences and needs were sublimated into Schuon's purposes.
10. **Dispensing of existence.** The group has the prerogative to decide who has the right to exist and who does not. This is usually not literal but means that those in the outside world are not saved, unenlightened, unconscious and they must be converted to the group's ideology. If they do not join the group or are critical of the group, then they must be rejected by the members. Thus, the outside world loses all credibility. In conjunction, should any member leave the group, he or she must be rejected also. (Lifton, 1989) In Guenon's groups only Guenonians know anything--- everyone else must be mocked or ridiculed.. looked down on, kept from the silly secrets Guenonians hide. In Schuon's cult or in the Evola groups this was also the case. Only the cult leaders lies, dressed up as truth, matter.

Robert J. Lifton wrote one of the first studies on what he called "ideological totalism" as a result of his involvement with victims of Chinese mind control and torture techniques in China under Mao. But as Lifton himself points out, ideological totalism is not restricted to political and religious entities, but can be found in corporations, cults and in science or the institutions that science serves. Lifton writes:

Behind ideological totalism lies the ever-present quest for the omnipotent guide- for the supernatural force, political party, philosophical ideas, great leader or precise science that will bring ultimate solidarity to all men... [and] the potential for totalism is a continuum from which no one entirely escapes <sup>315</sup>

Guenon and Schuon in slightly different ways would claim to be or to have access to the 'omnipotent guide', be that guide an imaginary figure like Al Khadir, or an equally imaginary god that they assumed favored them above all other men. Both men were led by an imaginary faculty of the mind they called the "Intellect", which was not reason or intelligence in the ordinary sense, but an imaginary supra-sensible organ the "spirit", never defined or capable of being defined since it does not exist. In short, they made stuff up in their emotional imaginations. Theofascism is thus a system of sociopathic totalistic thinking and practice.

Let me define the relation of knowledge and power to atrocity more carefully. The desire to overcome or transcend the world through knowledge, is to participate in what R.J. Lifton calls the "immortalizing" principle. The speculative philosophical, spiritual system comes to seem to the Hegel's, Marx's or Guenon's of the world as an act of Salvation. This is fine in some cases. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the paintings of Rembrandt or the writings of Thoreau, both of whom created something that made them relatively "immortal". They imagined things that were seemingly "transcendental". The neurological capacity for language in the brain allows this excessive imagining to extrapolate and imagine all sorts of things. There is no doubt an adaptive function to this. But one result of this excessive creative use of abstract images and

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<sup>315</sup> Lifton, R.J. Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism New York: W.W. Norton 1969 pg.436

words is an addiction to transcendental delusions. But once the desire to be immortal begins to put ideology before people: fascism or ideological injustice raises its head. When the abstract idea of 'God', the 'Party', the 'Flag' or the 'Great Leader' is more important than actual people or animals, nature or the land, people start to be killed, injustices are excused, nature is abused. Theofascism is a form of totalism where ideology is put before human rights, as I have shown. One can trace the operations of ideological totalism in many historical epochs. For instance, Robert Oppenheimer, hated Hitler so much he became like Hitler. He really believed that the Bomb might save the world, just as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich was supposed to save the world. Both Hitler and Oppenheimer indulged in totalistic thinking to excuse horrible atrocities. Both of them also employed theofascist ideologies to justify their actions. The totalistic thinker wants to create an absolute truth to give to mankind---- a saving strategy that will insure his fame and immortality in the memories of other men and women. Hegel thought that his intellectual system was of such immortal profundity that he believed he had become the "Logos", the principle of universal truth. Schuon thought this too. Marx thought this to, working from Hegel, but changing his apocalyptic beliefs in a different direction. All these men create an abstract idea and then treat it as if it were concrete. They identify personally with an impersonal deity of principle. This is Whitehead's "fallacy of misplaced concreteness" again. The Inquisition killed in the name of an impersonal god it falsely claimed to represent. Marxism led to the Stalinist millennium of the Gulag Archipelago, with its labor and death camps. The German romantic idealism of Herder, Schlegel and Schelling would lead to Lanz von Liebenfels and Hitler and their chiliastic movement to save the world by destroying it. They all involved Inquisitions, torture, abuse of human rights. The needless dropping of the atom and hydrogen bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki are another example of totalistic killing. There is also the famous story of the American army officer who destroyed a

village in Vietnam to “save it for freedom”. Guenon and Schuon are involved in the same tendency to create a salvational system of knowledge/power, a theofascism, which threatens the very world it would save.

Actually what we need to be saved from is the Savors: those who claim to a system of total knowledge and power; those who fantasize the world’s destruction because it does not fit their formulas; those who commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness; the apocalyptic gnostics and romantics who love intellectual or rather “imaginal”<sup>316</sup> truth more than concrete realities, and would sacrifice the entire world for a religious or scientific formula by which they hope to obtain immortality. We need to be saved from the Schuons, Dugins, Hitlers, Stalins, Guenons and Evolas of the world. They are dangerous and hungry for the sort of power than depends on harming others.

To summarize: R. J. Lifton created the idea of totalism to explain dangerous systems of thought and practice. Theofascism, which Guenon adapted from traditional religious myths and ideologies, is one form of totalism. Theofascism needs to be distinguished from the ordinary fascism of Mussolini or Hitler, though there are areas in common. Someone suggested the term “clerical fascism” to characterize the Iranian regime after the Iranian revolution in 1979, as well as Fascist Italy, Croatia, Romania and Franco’s alliances in Spain. But this does not apply very well to traditionalism though there are obvious affinities.

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<sup>316</sup> This term was coined by Henry Corbin (1903-78) who more or less took it from Sufism. The imaginal realm is the imaginary realm of religions, the other realm beyond our world that religion makes up and creates is rituals around. Corbin defines it as “the appearance of an Image having the quality of a symbol is a primary phenomenon (*Urphanomen*), unconditional and irreducible, the appearance of something that cannot manifest itself otherwise to the world where we are.” In other words the imaginal is the fiction of heaven or of “...*alam al-mithal*, the world of the Image, *mundus imaginalis*: a world as ontologically real as the world of the senses and the world of the intellect, a world that requires a faculty of perception belonging to it, a faculty that is a cognitive function, a *noetic* value, as fully real as the faculties of sensory perception, or intellectual intuition.” This is to say that the imaginal does not exist, it is a construction made up by mystics and religions as a world alternative to our world. Corbin appears to share the same “pathological subjectivity” that was the problem with Schuon and Ibn Arabi.

This has some overlap with traditionalism in that they do support theocracies and are prone to nostalgia for the lost aristocracy. There is also the term “religious neo-fascism”, and that has its merits too. It includes Hindu neo-fascism State Shintoism in Japan, Christian fundamentalism in America, and could be applied to European Integralists, which basically is Catholic fascism--- as well as to Guenonist far right Frenchmen who love Benoist and other European reactionaries. But I have chosen to stay with the term theofascism as it applies to all these movements in varying degrees and still satisfies most of the criteria outlined by Orwell, Griffin, Eco, Lifton , and Tobias, among others.

In conclusion, it is clear that religion is attached to humanity in a dysfunctional or delusional way. But it is hard to imagine how religion can be considered part of the evolutionary development of people. It appear to be anti-evolutionary in a fundamental way. Religion is an unfortunate by product of evolution, not a product of it. Lifton was onto something along these lines and looked at religion as part of human sociology or psychology. Questioning religion is not about trying to find how religion is justified by evolution but rather how systems of power are constructed out of ideological falsehoods and perpetuated to serve social classes and castes. The question about how evolution fits into religion has to become more nuanced. Religions did not help humanity become successful, rather it helped given segments of various populations gain unjust powers and exercise discrimination against outsider groups. It gives an ‘elite’ social network a certain sort of control via prayer, magic rituals and superstitious ceremonies, but does so in a way that leads to serious problems hardships and wars. Religion is an enabler and adjunct to political systems and is used to further the interest of those who are already corrupt and in power. To conclude that this is useful to human evolution is far-fetched, to say the least.

## **d. Julius Evola's Theofascist Politics**

To understand Evola's politics it is necessary to first define theofascism. The term 'spiritual fascism' was not invented by me, or by Umberto Eco, rather it is a phrase that is used by one of Guenon's main Italian followers, Guido De Giorgio (1890-1957). Piero Di Vona writes that

"Under the pen of De Giorgio expressions are often encountered concerning the fasces, fascism, and falsification. He also talks about the catholicity of fascism, spiritual fascism, and fascist catholicity[...]. Expressions, and similar ones [...] relate to the sacral and symbolic meaning of the fasces [the axe in a bundle of sticks]. For De Giorgio, fascism was necessarily sacred...." <sup>317</sup>

The "fasces" consisted of a bundle of sticks that were tied around an axe, was an ancient Roman symbol of the authority of the magistrate, and thus the fasces is in general a symbol of authority, autocracy or tyranny. De Giorgio lived in Italy during Mussolini's reign and sought to idealize or "spiritualize" the Roman Tradition to the point of divine worship. He worshiped the transcendence of authority. Fascism is thus in part the

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<sup>317</sup> Piero Di Vona, Guenon, Evola and Di Giorgio p. 234) this is a rough translation



worship of power and theofascism, or spiritual fascism as De Giorgio calls it, is the worship of theocratic power. Of course, the dictatorship of Mussolini was a Catholic dictatorship. The pontificate of the Catholic Church assented to the power of Benito Mussolini, and signed (Feb. 11, 1929) with him the Lateran Treaty that allowed the existence of the independent Vatican City state, over which the pope ruled. The Pope signed a concordat that declared Roman Catholicism to be Italy's exclusive religion. Under Mussolini, Fascism and Catholicism were nearly synonymous. . This was seen as a good thing by such fascists as De Giorgio and Ezra Pound, who had fallen for his own Confucian brand of "theofascism" .<sup>318</sup> De Giorgio's Catholic "sacred fascism." Or "Spiritual Fascism" was a natural outgrowth of Guenon's ideas and is a forerunner in of later Traditionalist Catholic far-right wingers, such as Rama Coomaraswamy; Jean Borella and some of their followers.

De Giorgio was not only a follower of Guenon's but was also a great admirer of Mussolini. De Giorgio insisted that what Guenon created was spiritual form of fascism. This is also what Evola thought Guenon

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<sup>318</sup> Pound's fascism is strange and idiosyncratic. He resembles Guenon and Schuon in that he idealized a traditional culture, the China of Kung fu Tzu—or Confucius and wrote various Canto's about this. His economic theories involve an effort to recall the medieval idea of usury. Some of these ideas are interesting, particularly as he is critical of American corporatism. But he slips into medievalism, and his writing sometimes takes on a Dantean flavor, and in this respect he resembles Guenon's and Coomaraswamy's idealization of the middle ages. Guenon's idealization of Dante's politics has many fascist overtones, as indeed, Mussolini idealized both Dante and Caesar. Pound became a political prisoner, accused of treason, held by the U.S in a mental hospital, St Elizabeth's, in Washington D.C. for 13 years. He left the U.S. after his release and declared "all America is an asylum". He moved back to his beloved Italy and his little town of Rappalo. Scholars debate if he is a fascist poet or not. I would say yes he is, he is an American expatriate who tried to use cultures not his own to promote a right wing conservative and patriarchal message. But unlike Guenon or Schuon, who were incapable of remorse, there is something sad and misguided about Pound that I feel for: he at least began to know he was mistaken as he approached very old age. Though it is unclear how much he recanted his earlier fascism. It is interesting to compare him with Schuon who recanted nothing and continued to try to exalt and nurture the myth of his own high status and election until he died in 1998. I watched Schuon tell many public lies in his last years and saw what kind of man he really was.

had done, and both Evola and De Giorgio were right. Fascism was a reactionary movement that sought to reverse modernism and return to an elite past when the few ruled without question and the many served the few. The many lowly people were barbarians who could ‘barbaric slough’ of poverty and hardship. “The poor you always have with you” said Christ in one of his nasty and elitist moments.

The traditionalists are all bizarre, but one of the more bizarre of them is Evola. Julius Evola (1898-1974) was a man with a “will” in the fascist or Italian futurist sense of a will to power. He had an inflated personal style, with his monocle and impeccable suits that might recall the old regime of the Kaiser or more humorously, the funny Colonel Klink of Hogan’s Heroes, a an American comedy form the 1970’s. Klink also nursed his monocle on his eye as proof of his superiority.



Colonel Klink. Hogan’s Heroes TV show 1970’s.



Evola

Passport

photograph, circa 1940.

Colonel Klink is perhaps an amateur version of the marvelous character of dictator Adenoid Hynkel in Charlie Chaplin’s exceptional movie The

Great Dictator, which shows the true nature of fascism both in its spiritual and secular varieties.



Like Evola and Hitler, Guenon and Schuon, Adenoid Hynckle wants to take over the world. Here the “Lord of the World” played by the great Charlie Chaplin.

Seriously, Evola was another follower of Guenon’s who admired Mussolini. Evola is was shown in the rather self-conscious photo below, suggesting some hidden ‘triumph of will’. It looks like a posed photo of the great hero about the climb the ramparts and save the day for history and god and the pretty girl back home. It is ridiculous, in short.



Julius Evola during World War I

While Guenon had private doubts about Evola as he did about everyone, he publicly approved of Evola wholeheartedly and wrote glowingly of his book Revolt against the Modern World: Guenon writes that his differences from Evola

“ should not prevent us from recognizing, as is right, the merit and interest of the work as a whole, and to bring it in a particular way to the attention of all those who are concerned with the “crisis of the modern world”, and who think like us [my emphasis] that the only efficacious means of rectifying it would consist in a return to the traditional spirit outside of which nothing truly constructive could be validly undertaken. “ <sup>319</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Coomaraswamy was glowing about the book too, despite his minor objections. He wrote:).

“Nonetheless, this book constitutes a remarkable presentation and exposition of traditional doctrine and could well serve as an introductory text for the student of anthropology and as a guide for the Indologist [especially for anyone interested in Hindu mythology and has not understood that, in the words of Evola, “the passage from mythology to religion constitutes a humanistic decadence.” The chapter, “man and woman” was chosen for the translation because of its clear, intransigent, and — we can add — tight peroration of the principles, that are reflected in the institutions and the ideals, such as that of sati, that is often no more comprehensible and that certainly are no longer held dear, even as memories by our politicians and reformers who, “whether by

Evola and Guenon were close and even reviewed one another's books. Guenon published articles in the Fascist newspaper *Regime Fascista*. Evola was an early convert to Guenonian thought. He was also a leading Italian exponent of the Conservative Revolution in Germany, which included Ernst Jünger, Carl Schmitt, Oswald Spengler, Gottfried Benn, and others. Privately, Guenon, a Frenchman, in a rather nationalistic way, accuses Evola of too influenced by German thinkers. He also complains that Evola "even went so far as to describe me as a "rationalist", which is really ridiculous (all the more so since it concerns a book where I expressly asserted the falsity of rationalism!)" <sup>320</sup> when indeed, Guenon's books are first and foremost characterized by an exaggerated rationalistic pose, to make them look reasonable when they are anything but reasonable, as his idea of the Intellect is merely a subjective fantasy. His reason to Evola is a paranoid reaction to Evola. Guenon also had doubts about the orthodoxy of Evola's views on Tantra, but then Guenon did not know much about it either. But these are minor complaints from a man who complains about everyone. But in the main Evola and Guenon got along and supported each other's work.

But here I wish to show how Evola and Schuon express theofascism after the pattern of Guenon.<sup>321</sup> But this will take some time.

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force or consensus, were induced to accept Western models." (The Visva-Bharati Quarterly, Feb-Apr 1940)

<sup>320</sup> letter or Guenon to Di Giorgio, Nov. 20 1925  
<http://www.gornahoor.net/?p=4398>

<sup>321</sup> True to their exclusivist and cultish nature Schuonians have tried to get Evola thrown out of the Guenon school of extremist Traditionalists. The traditionalist groups all hate each other more or less and can agree on little. Of course Schuon writes against Guenon, and Guenon wrote against Schuon and of all of them the most unlike the others is Ananda Coomaraswamy, who actually had a 'real job' and loved gardening, Nietzsche and geology. AKC is the more interesting of the 3 early traditionalists, the reputations of the other two are already fading. Fabbri's arguments are very weak and appear to have been motivated by the hatred of Mark Sedgwick, and his book Against the Modern World which rightly includes Evola, Dugin and others traditionalists, despite their mutual dislike of each other. Evidently a member of the

Many people do not understand how theofascism and fascism are both related and different. I will try to explain this.

Guenon's followers explored the meanings and extent of what Guenon had created. There were some very close ties between Guenon and Julius Evola. Many of Guenon's and Schuon's followers would like to deny that Evola ever existed, ashamed of his fascism. Usually the traditionalists claim that Evola is different than Schuon and Guenon because he was more interested in the "psychic" rather than the "spiritual" realm. But the distinction between the spiritual and psychic is a distinction without a difference. Neither the spiritual or psychic actually exist except in the human imagination the difference between spiritual and psychic is merely a political difference.<sup>322</sup> The psychic is premed to be lower class, more about feeling and less abstract and thus the spiritual is "Brahmanical", less emotive, and more intellectual and elitist. Reality is rather different and feeling is not less than thought or vice versa. A storm in a Teacup, or like cocks in barnyard, these men fight over nothing. The Schuonians hate New Agers because they are "psychic" by which they really mean, they hate the tendency of New Agers to "pick and choose" for themselves and thus have feelings and their own opinions and thus deny hierarchy. "The Spiritual", for the

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Schuon cult, Renaud Fabbri penned this obtuse opinion which can be found here on one of the many Schuonian propaganda websites

<http://www.religioperennis.org/documents/Fabbri/Perennialism.pdf>

<sup>322</sup> You can see this their writings. In his review of Guenon's most important book, *Spiritual Authority and temporal Power* Evola criticizes Guenon on the grounds that he is too weak, with his stress on Intellectual Guardians and the "sacerdotal". Evola writes:

"All this is a true fact. But Guenon's interpretation of the cause of such a downfall [of spiritual power] does not at all win our favour. The cause cannot reside in the upper hand that, at a certain point, temporal power took spiritual authority. How can such a thing be possible in the first place? Should the hierarchy of which Guénon speaks thus be conceived as something so abstract, to the point of admitting that the superior does not **also** have the task of being the strongest? And if this were not the case, how could the inferior have imposed itself on the superior and thus paralysed the irresistible power. Guenon's criticisms of Evola is that he is beyond him and superior to Evola. So it is really just a cock fight and the two men are both laboring under huge illusions but do not see it at all. see: [http://thompkins\\_cariou.tripod.com/id95.html](http://thompkins_cariou.tripod.com/id95.html)."

traditionalists, means that God is far above everyone, and if you analyze this further, 'picking and choosing' is evil because it is a denial of patriarchy, mind control or of the state. They think the king or priests should be paramount – and that means individual initiative is bad. The traditionalists in fact are new agers, but are merely right wing examples of the same escapist tendencies.<sup>323</sup>

Rama Coomaraswamy used to prattle on about the evil of picking and choosing, since the Church is supposed to direct your thoughts for you. Actually religions\ is a construction and a syncretic religion is no less a construction so it scarcely matters if you make a religion up as Schuon did or follow one that already exists.

Alain de Button, in his Religion for Atheists, even recommends stealing from religions in order to help augment and improve an atheistic culture, art, architecture and community. Is his book merely a Trojan Horse of Religion inside the city of reason? It is not very clear what his religious atheism would actually mean. Bach's music is wonderful. Does it mean the same thing once its Christian context is jettisoned? It does not mean exactly the same thing, but it is still wonderful. Yehudhi Menuhin playing the St Matthew Passion, (Embarme dich) is amazing and heart breaking. The crying human voice is even deeper and more profound when you realize there is no god there to listen to it.

Have mercy, my God,  
for the sake of my tears!  
See here, before you

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<sup>323</sup> Most of the people that I knew who left the cult ended by adopting some version of New Age religion, be it California Yoga, The Dali Lama, American Sufism. Eckhart Tolle, orthodox Judaism or some Rumiesque or Buddhist narcissism that leads them into a escapist cul de sac where they cease asking vital questions about reality. Even some of the women who were involved in Primordial gatherings and lied about them to defend the cult leader, eventually left the cult and rather than tell the truth about what they experienced have fallen into other systems of mind numbing religion, be it Islam or Yoga. Such cowardice appears to be one of the weaknesses of human nature.

heart and eyes weep bitterly.  
Have mercy, my God.

This is what the Bach Cantata is actually saying, and it is even more moving when you realize there is no god there to answer this desperate cry. It is all importuning the the invisible god that is not there.

The Christian context was a system of make believe that is not sustainable even in Bach's music. We listen to it because of its beauty not because the resurrection actually happened. Certainly Button is right that there is nothing wrong with 'picking and choosing', Religions are not sacrosanct. But it all depends on what is picked and what is chosen and why. De Button vastly underestimates the ability of science to create and sustain a new view of art and poetry. Science is still relatively young and untested in this regard. Culture is not merely imitative but creative. The architecture of science and atheism has not yet been created. It certainly is not the skyscraper which is a temple for greedy and empty hearted capitalists. Buckminster Fuller started trying to design architecture for science. The future is still open to what science would create that is sustainable and intelligent. Solar houses are getting there, as are some ecological designs, far ahead of Frank Lloyd Wright.. Science has had as yet little influence on poetry and most poetry of our age is very poor and often backwards and too spiritual. Imitating Dante, Rumi or Kalidasa is not going to work. Artists should take anything from anywhere and pick and choose, but there is no point in trying to make a religion of atheism. Religion has failed utterly. But building Atheist temples modeled on Christian cathedrals is not a good idea. Atheism is not a positive form of belief in any case. Science is, but atheism is merely a position relative to religion, and as such rather an absurd position in some ways. Art needs to accept the absence of any gods without any



tragedy. Then science can be used to try to fathom the world as it is. This has barely been done as yet.

De Button has not gone deep enough into the springs of why cultures develop and grow. Science will make its art and culture out of an organic process, not a pastiche of post-modernist fantasies and conglomerate barrowings.. Science is only about 400 years old as a cultural force and only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century did it become widespread. The future is bright with science and this future is not about imitating religion. Button has a valid point that science does not do well helping the vulnerable and suffering.. . Science one day will increase its ability to sustain and console and create communities, as well as foster an ecology and harmony with the rest of nature. But this can only occur when corporate control and hierarchies are denied power.

The spiritual is increasingly a dead concept, the question is, what did human project on it? The spiritual means conformity to totalistic, autocratic institutions, top-down authoritarian Churches, dogma, castes and social hierarchy. In fact, Evola wanted all this too, so the argument that he didn't is just wrong. De-symbolizing the universe is necessary, and doing that without making this a tragedy is also necessary.

The other reason some Guenonians hated Evola is because they say he is a Kashatriya rather than a Brahman caste. Actually both of these are very high caste, and the difference is slight in practice, as is shown by the fact that Arjuna in the Gita is also Kashatriya caste. But the notion of caste is bogus to begin with. So the argument is moot. There is no intrinsic differences between classes of people in India or anywhere else. While it is true that caste is akin to racism, it is not a race issue that is at stake in the outlawing of caste, but rather a system of discrimination akin to racism, that segregates and oppresses people

along economic or class lines. Sexism is yet another form of inequality and discrimination. Caste segregation is a form of apartheid, not unlike the Jewish hatred of Palestinian or the White south African hatred of Blacks<sup>324</sup> or the American hatred of Mexicans. In all these cases there are aspect of race and class that are involved, in varying degrees, but the essential components are all economic. The caste system and its attendant practices have been outlawed as punishable offenses in India, but as in America where racism persists, caste discrimination persists against the laws.. Upper castes complain about lower castes being given unfair advantage, which is hardly the case, just as in America whites complain about “black” “welfare mothers” and other caricatures of lower class individuals.<sup>325</sup> Caste is a political distinction that masquerades as something “spiritual”. The notion that caste is somehow justified by gods or sacred texts merely shows that these texts and gods are fictions that hide political and economic injustices. There is nothing objective in caste or in so called “sacred texts”. It is merely one way of typecasting people though erroneous caricature and generalized stereotypes.

So the notion that Evola and Guenon are somehow different is illusory, They are both Europeans who are employing distorted Christian, Sufi or Hindu ideas to push forward a state form of Theocratic government. Evola is a traditionalist, as much as Schuon’s followers may

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<sup>324</sup> There are no “black people” that concept is itself an effect of racism. There are many shades of brown and cream, sometimes tending to ochre, pink, grey or burnt umber, but never actually black. I’ve done paintings of various “races” and the palette is similar in all cases. It scarcely matters anyway, human are amazingly uniform, despite slight color differences.

<sup>325</sup> The history of lynching in America is interesting, as Ida B. Wells showed. It is not unlike the bad treatment fo animals in the U.S..Slavery left a very long shadow and is still practiced in many areas, as the increasing indentured servitude of students to banks shows. Wells showed how people of color had no real justice and Euro Americans used lynching as a means to control or punish those who competed with Euro Americans, sometimes under the guise of rape charges. This is ongoing, for instance in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, an African American teenager was murdered by a police officer names Wilson and Wilson got off free, proving there is one law for people with darker brown skin than for others. Poor people make up most of the prison population which is disproportionately people of color. CEO’s rarely go to jail but many of them belong there. The answer to both the prison system in America and the CEO problem is the same, get rid of autocratic tyrannies of all kinds, the CEO and the Prisons being prime examples of this.

hate the fact. Both Evola and Schuon categorize people in line with caste stereotypes and bogus typologies. The hatred of low castes or of the “profane” as Schuon called most of the outside the cult, is indicative of repulsive prejudices both in Evola followers and Schuon’s. Essentializing others, stereotypes, caricatures, elitist superstitions, hierarchy: these are the stock and trade of traditionalist discourse. The totalizing impulse in essentialism reduces others to false stereotypes.

That said, I repeat what I said earlier: Guenon’s version of spiritual theofascism is not at all the same thing as ordinary fascism, though the two political agendas have many similarities. I will show here how Evola participated in and ultimately rejected some aspects of ordinary fascism, just as Guenon had earlier. Indeed, Evola was merely following the pattern already set out by Guenon when he created his own theofascist system. This will show just how alike, indeed, identical, Guenon, Evola and Schuon really are.

It is true that Evola was a Nazi sympathizer and participated in ordinary fascism more directly than any other of the Traditionalists. But Evola is really a force after the war, not before or during it. As Roger Griffin implied in a letter to me, Evola had no influence at all on mainstream Nazism in the 1930’s and 40’s, even if a few of them were impressed with him. He wanted to influence to Nazi’s to become Guenonian but failed. It seems likely that Evola has more influence in the world now that at any time in history. Evola is really a contradictory character in some ways. Evola was an internationalist on the one hand, at the same time as he was a nationalist in books such as in his book the Synthesis of Racial Doctrine. Evola echoes Guenon’s racism in this and other books. Guenon wrote,

it is all too clear that to the extent that a man “Westernizes” himself, whatever may be his race or country, to that extent he

ceases to be an Easterner spiritually and intellectually, that is to say from the one point of view that really holds any interest. This is not a simple question of geography, unless that word be understood in a sense other than its modern one, for there is also a symbolic geography...”

This is racism on a global scale and originates in a metaphysical ideology. Guenon rejected all of Europe to cling to medieval Islam and Holy War. This is a move into theofascism. Evola was disillusioned by Nazism and moved into Guenon’s position to the far right of the Nazis. Evola was a poor Nazi in any case, but he was, first and foremost, a Guenonian---namely a theofascist, and the Nazis noticed this about him and rejected him for it. When he left ordinary fascism, after World War II, he remained a devotee of Guenon’s transcendental fascism. His writings differ very little from Guenonian orthodoxy. There are some differences, of course, but not more differences than exist between Schuon and Guenon or Guenon and Coomaraswamy or Guenon and Eliade, for that matter. Evola was a collaborator with Guenon, as well as a regular correspondent with him. In his role as supporter of ordinary fascism, Evola wrote the preface for the Italian edition of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a fraudulent anti-Semitic tract used by many who hated Jews to demonize them. Evola supported Mussolini’s racial legislation of 1938, and he explicitly praised Codreanu’s politics against the Jews as well as the bloodthirsty activities of the Rumanian Iron Guard, which Eliade had also supported. Evola’s dubious claim to fame within the history of Mussolini’s regime is to have written a Synthesis of Racial Doctrine (1941), as I mentioned, and which Mussolini endorsed and thought of a standard text for discrimination against Jews and other races.

After being rejected by the Italian Fascists, Evola sought the approval of the Nazis but the Nazis too rejected him, though he

continued to seek and obtain some approval of the Nazis. He was allowed to lecture inside Nazi Germany, for instance. He thought he could convert the Nazis to the elitism and theofascism of Guenon. Himmler had Evola's books and lectures reviewed and it was determined by Himmler's staff that Evola worked from a "basic Aryan concept but was quite ignorant of prehistoric German institutions and their meaning".<sup>326</sup> Nevertheless, Evola was an avid seeker of power and wanted desperately to convince the Germans of Guenon's ideas.<sup>327</sup> Evola "met with Hitler in September, 1943, to discuss the formation of the Fascist Republic of Salò, after the fall of Italy to the allies".<sup>328</sup> Though this might have been the high point of Evola's life, it appears that it had no real fruit and was rather a failure.

The distinction between ordinary fascism and theofascism is a distinction between a populist fascism and an esoteric, elitist and ideological fascism that would be able to cross national and orthodoxy boundaries. Theofascism is an esoteric template, a metaphysical

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<sup>326</sup> Roger Griffin writes of this book in a succinct and exact way that is worth quoting at length as it shows how thoroughly Guenonian Evola was. Griffin writes that for a time Evola's Synthesis of Racial Doctrine satisfied Mussolini's "need for a version of racism which was distinct from Nazi genetic theories. It also argued that Italians were even more perfect Aryan specimens than the Germans because of their judicious blend of physical with intellectual and spiritual qualities. However, the theory which informs Evola's book is anything but orthodox even within Fascism, for it draws on his alternative philosophy of history which was given its most exhaustive exposition in the 1934 work *Revolt against the Modern World*. A tour de force of radical right eclecticism on a par with *The Decline of the West* (of which it is the Italian counterpart), the book blends Spenglerian, Guenonian and Hindu themes into a vision of contemporary history as the nadir of a protracted process of decline from the hierarchical, metaphysically based imperial order of 'the Tradition', a decline embodied in the rise of the undifferentiated masses, or the 'fifth estate' in modern times. The last pale reflection of this golden age had been the Holy Roman Empire under the Ghibellines when the Continent was still ruled by an aristocratic caste of 'warrior-priests'. After this 'European spring cut off in its first bloom, the process of decadence took over once more' (Evola, 1934, p. 367) leading to the Kali-yuga, the 'black age' of modern civilization. However, the emergence of fascism in Italy and Germany heralds the long-awaited sea-change in history: the rebirth of the true organic, hierarchical state being pioneered by the Third Reich and the Third Rome is ushering in the dawn of a new golden age." Europe for the Europeans. *Fascist Myths of The European New Order 1922-1992* Roger Griffin Professor in History, Oxford Brookes University Department of History, Oxford <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/humanities/staff/europ.tx>

<sup>327</sup> Ibid. pg 190

<sup>328</sup> Fideler, David. Gnosis Magazine #7, Spring 1988 see also Thomas Sheehan, "Myth and Violence: the Fascism of Julius Evola and Alain de Benoist" *Social research* vol.48, pp.45-73

ideology that masks a politics, a dream of revenge created by some very intelligent retro-renegades and bad boys of the far right. It goes beyond orthodoxy while still using it to impose conformity. It lives as a “super-religion” on the bodies of dying religions, trying to make a new religion from the ashes. Theofascists are wannabe returnees to the glory days of Pope Innocent the III, the man who invented the Inquisition. Theofascists are wannabe Brahmins or devotees of Shankara and Vedanta who want to go back to the Inquisition and the caste system as a way of stopping democracy and public education. At the same time they invent new forms and try to create new ways of exploiting others.

The ordinary fascists did not go quite so far in the creation of fantasies of ultimate truth and power. In Guenon’s fantasy, shared by Schuon and Evola, the ultimate, super Guenonian “elite”, ---modeled on Plato’s guardians, Crusading Popes and the caste elitists of India--- would infiltrate and take back some of the world’s power before the world would be destroyed in a final apocalypse. Yet Plato’s Republic resembles nothing so much as Hitler’s Third Reich.<sup>329</sup> It is both meaningful and accurate to compare the Hindu, Guenonian and Platonic systems are to Hitler’s regime. In Plato’s Republic he recommends, like the Hindus, selective breeding, eugenics, social control and a doctrine of mind control that would oversee the intimate behavior and thoughts of all citizens in his ‘utopia’. Like Hitler and the Hindus, Plato devalues or demeans both men, nature and the world to make them conform to a vision of intellectual supremacy imposed through caste. Metaphysical systems are politics in disguise, projections on the universe of claims to unjust power. The Guenonian effort to render all existence ‘metaphysical’ demeans existence, demeans life and makes all of nature merely a cipher and symbol to be exploited for possession. Nature is not symbolic and to force it to be so demeans and helps destroy it. The “metaphysical

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<sup>329</sup> for more about Plato, eugenics IQ and the third Reich, search this book under Plato, eugenics etc., It is discussed in numerous places

transparency of nature” in Schuon’s phrase, demeans nature into being merely a symbolic advertisement for a system of theofascist and totalist thought. The Schuonian concept of “Virgin Nature” is merely a misogynist dream of abducted beauty, stolen as a maneuver of conquest and violation.

The religious concept of the “pure” or “purity” is associated in Hindu, Platonic, Guenonian and Nazi systems with “the very ‘highest’ conceptions of knowledge. All that is considered “impure” becomes anathematized, outcaste, subservient, and degraded in the eyes of those who claim to be righteous in these systems of thought. Purity is a care category as well as a claim to hierarchical or esoteric knowledge. I agree with Neruda who wrote “Some Thoughts on Impure Poetry,” where he advocates

“A poetry as impure as the clothing we wear or our bodies, soup stained or soiled by our shameful behavior, a poetry with wrinkles, observations, dreams, waking, prophecies, declarations of loathing and love, idylls and beasts, the shocks of encounter, political loyalties, denial and doubts, affirmations and taxes....the deep penetration of things in the transports of love, a consummate poetry soiled by the pigeons claw, ice marked and tooth marked and bitten delicately with our sweat drops and usage, perhaps. Till the instrument so restlessly played yields the comfort of its surfaces and the wood shows the knottiest suavities shaped by the pride of the tool”. <sup>330</sup>

Yes, a poetry like that. Not perfect nightingales and the sheer diaphanous nudity of dead women in nether worlds. But the actual grit

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<sup>330</sup> From Five decades Poems, Trans. Ben Belitt.

Here is also an interesting essay by a poet, Lee Upton, on the misery of the idea of purity...  
[http://poems.com/special\\_features/prose/essay\\_upton.php](http://poems.com/special_features/prose/essay_upton.php)

and dust and dying flowers of this world which is the only real world there is.

The concept of “Purity” is the nightmare that the rich visit on the poor, the diamond of monarchy that demands cracking or dismantling. Stephan Mallarme wanted to “purify the language of the tribe” and made little jewel box poems which reflect the world denying confections of the rich. Leni Riefenstahl’s *Triumph of the Will* recalls the terrorism of perfect beauty that one sees in some Chinese or Platonist Greek or Renaissance art. The idealized Pre Raphaelite perfection has a hatred of reality and women in it. The Paradise of the Revelations of St John is diamond and rubies arranged in sterile symmetries, like an international architecture seen in technicolor psychosis..

Ezra Pound wanted to purify the language too. He liked the Confucian notion of the “rectification of names”, which basically means keeping everything properly neat and tidy for the upper classes to go on making bigger profits, while the poor are degraded in squalor. Pound sought to create a kind of purity of aesthetic fascism, like Ayn Rand or Leni Riefenstahl: he admired Mussolini and thought he was the new Confucius (Kung fu Tzu).<sup>331</sup>

Theofascism is just this need to keep everything pure for the rich and to symbolize the status quo of the gods they worship. The Virgin Mary was an image created to exploit the love of children that women have. Mary appears very little in the Gospels and where she does appears it is as a symbol in the Annunciation, where she is the passive agent of his

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<sup>331</sup> Did Confucius exist? That is a problem that is also raised with Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha and others. There are 400 years or so between Confucius and the Sima Qian, the biographer of Confucius. So there are great problems in accepting his existence. He may or may not be a mythical figure. More than likely he is mythical as is the notion of the Mandate of heaven. It appears that the 1000 years between Plato and Muhammad was the time of huge fictions created to sustain large top-down civilizations from China to Europe, India to Rome and beyond. This is certainly not what I was taught, but it appears to be the case. World religions were created to orchestrate behavior in complex agricultural dynastic societies.



deification. Jesus reviles his mother at one point, so her importance is merely as a backdrop for his divinity. Only later is Mary deified herself, as the Theotokos of Byzantine art. Later Mary is exploited as an ordinary mother, giving succor to the poor and the sick. She is so little in the Gospels it is possible to project nearly anything you like on the fictive symbol.

The image of the Virgin Mary is really the creation, over many centuries, of a separate religion inside Christianity. Most women and many men love to see images of babies and women holding or nursing babies. This is totally understandable, given that babies are new life and the summation of the love between a man and a woman. I love such images myself, which is why I fell into this myth deeply and loved it once upon a time. I learned eventually to love real mothers and not myths about them.

To me this is a secular image, every much about the love of actual children, not the love of an abstract goddess. .. The Virgin is clearly a mythical invention. The Church exploited this natural love of women and mothers for a millennia or more. The Church wanted to confuse the love on ones mother or wife with itself, such that people would turn to the Church for help, even if the Church really just wanted money or power. Botticelli and Leonardo in Italy and Gerard David and others in the north, coming out of Byzantine models, created this very sympathetic image of motherhood.



It appealed and still appeals, to both women and men. I bracket off the fact that it is a Church propaganda image and look instead at the fact that it is really love of women that is at the root of it. My favorite images of Mary were actually ones that come from after 1400 or so, when she is softened into a very human and motherly image. The same can be done with especially lovely images of the Buddha, such as the Meditating Bodhisattva (Bosatsu) or the Horuyi-ji Kwannon at Horuyi ji temple in Nara, Japan. These are images of great loveliness and devotion, and can be completely understood non religious terms as images of human and natural peace.



The Church exploited this ordinary mother and child love, as well as men's love in seeing this, in Mariolatry. The Virgin Mary is nearly always dressed like an upper crust, royal-blue woman in Byzantine, Renaissance and Classical Painting.



Ingres

The Vow of Louis XIII (1601-1643), King of France

By: [Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres](#)

This rather kitsch painting by Ingres,-- one of his worst--is meant to justify the Bourbon restoration, following the French Revolution, which it seeks to subvert, and the fall of Napoleon. This is a late and decadent image of the Virgin and Theotokos as justifier of imperial and absolutist kings. It is a ridiculous and artificial painting, a sort of pseudo Raphael, that no longer can carry the meaning it seeks to evoke. It was done at a time when Kings were no longer believable and cannot be taken seriously. A reactionary goddess that justifies the bogus idea of the divine right of kings is, in contemporary American terms a Republican and

anti democratic icon. It is a reactionary and rather idolatrous painting seeking to justify the divine right of kings. Many Renaissance Virgins are not much different and also look rather hyperbolic and silly now.

The primary function of paintings of the Virgin Mary images is to steal womanhood for the Church and the King and make motherhood, babies and women an advertisement for a patriarchy. Mary hardly appears at all in the Gospels and her history is largely the story of politics since the Roman era. Her role in the Gospel fiction is merely as passive witness. She is not given significant status until the Council of Ephesus (431 AD) accorded Mary the title Theotokos. It was an obvious political move, evoking the Roman goddess Artemis, or the Greek Goddess Hera. . Here is one speech in the gospels meant to “magnify” or exalt the fictional King and his Mother, where she is made to say:

For he that is mighty hath done to me great things;  
and holy is his name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to  
generation.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm;  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seats 1.46,55

This is the Virgin of the Inquisition, the Virgin of hate and war, the one who kills for god, like a jihadist. She is much more Mozart’s Queen of the Night here than the diminutive and kindly lover of babies and the sick that one sees later, in the Northern Renaissance ( see the Gerard David above). This is part of the “Magnificat”, and from which my concern with magnification as a fiction partly derives. And it is the political speech of someone who glories in power and violence, not at all the gentle Mary that was created after 1300 as shown in Leonardo or Raphael. The history of the image of Mary is the history of what the Church imagined would get

them more power. The Theotokos is a Greek Isis, who is the Matron of kings. Totally fiction, she is used in many different ways. On the one hand she is imperious and forbidding, Queen of Heaven, and so helps justify autocratic cruelties. The Russian Icon, now in Moscow, called the Virgin of Vladimir was carried into battle as a kind of flag or standard of conquest, and thus functioned much as the image of Athena functioned for the Greeks; to incite male courage for bloodshed. The placement of females on the prows of European ships, or the tradition of giving these ships female names had a similar function. The ships of conquest and trade were sexualized by these symbols. European virility used female images like Mary or a Queen to excite itself and muster courage for atrocities.

The Virgin of Guadeloupe, supposedly the result of a miracle, is certainly another fraud. Its purpose was to picture the Virgin Mary as an indigenous Mexican, so as to seduce the indigenous people, who were Aztec or Mayan, into the orbit of the Christian caste system of the conquistadors.<sup>332</sup> Religions are not fixed things, but changeable systems of social control and these myths are adapted to new needs. The main use of the Mary Image was to try to corral women into subservience to the Church and this is really a medieval religion and not a gospel one. Mary is in many ways a mythic creation of a goddess quite separate from the Jesus myth and yet complementary to it. She embodies a misogyny that is a logical part of Christian metaphysical hatred of the actual world we live in..

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<sup>332</sup> The use of the word Krishna in Hindu religion is interesting for similar reasons. The word Krishna means dark, and the Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita is always represented as black or blue in Hindu art. The implication is that Krishna, by being made to speak in the language and concepts of the Aryan elite, represents the complete assimilation of the Dravidian underclass to the Aryan system of knowledge and social control. This is a political theory of how the Krishna image came into being. If the Aryan Invasion theory is not true, it may still be true that the image of Krishna as black has an assimilationist meaning. The Virgin Mary was a propaganda image, probably the most successful in history, and it still is.



Botticelli

As I have already indicated, the early Mary as Theotokos is cruel and imperious and exists to magnify god and Christ. The later Mary is different. By the time of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153.) she is merciful and gentle and so seems to want to help poor women and men in distress. This is how she is pictured in Fra Angelico, for instance, or in Northern Renaissance art after Van Eyck, who was still painting the Queen of Heaven Leonardo even refused to put a Halo on the woman and



painted her amidst a landscape that is a Darwinian treasure trove of flowers and rocks.



The history of Mariolatry is a classic example of mythic and political opportunism. The image of Mary exploited the gentle facts of motherhood and sold it as an image owned by the Church. Later, in our time, the image is sued as a psychological exploit. The early Mary is an aristocratic Queen who supports her regimes but occasionally helps the power in a sort of noblesse oblige. But by 1400, C.E., roughly, the image of Mary is



softened into a more populist image of comfort and succoring. Even later the myth of Mary evolves into the sweet image of the nursing mother, as one sees in Bernard or Botticelli and Da Vinci. The image of Mary exploits the image of women that most of us love in our own mothers and wives. Women are more likely to be merciful and indulgent, kind and considerate. This is a brilliant creation, and a very moving one. Indeed, I could not resist the poetry of it myself for a few years, at least until I realized that it is fiction and cannot be taken seriously on its own terms. Now I dislike the constant association of any image of women with babies, breast feeding or otherwise, with the Virgin Mary image. I have painted several of these and they have nothing whatever to do with religious propaganda of any kind. The image of Mary steals the beauty of women in motherhood for an institution which is none of the things that this image exploits.

Schuon's Virgins are an updated form of the Mother of the divine right of Kings now become a psychotic exploit.<sup>333</sup> She extends the compassionate willingness to help and talk, at great length, as at Medjugorje, that she showed to ordinary people, like the illiterate Bernadette at Lourdes, into having sex with Schuon, in his heart, or so he claimed. This is really a logical extension of, ironically, the Protestant Virgin of the North and the ordinary woman who negates the Theotokos, which Schuon really did not like. The Symbolist Virgin in Schuon is a sort of divine porn queen, as it were. He was adapting the image of the Archetypal female to his own

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<sup>333</sup> Visions of the Virgin are legion, but the Church only accepts those that are in line with their teachings. This turns out to be very few of course. Schuon's visions of the Virgin were many and happened at times of stress in his life, and are above all convenient to his search for power over others. All such visions are fake, but if they correspond to a social need they are usually considered real by someone. In Schuon's case it is likely his visions were merely imagination of convenience. He had one, one day, on a toilet and I was made aware of it that day, and it was clearly an effort on his part to condemn an individual, Maude Murray. I knew Maude was not wrong in this and so knew his "visions" were bogus inventions. He used the Virgin as a sort of goddess of his personal vendettas.

narcissistic and symbolist drama of being a prophet and a king himself. He tried to get such idolatry turned toward himself and his penis. He succeeded with a small group of followers who could be duped into doing this for him. The symbolist ideology of divine figures becomes merely a bankrupt fantasy of sexual fulfillment and childless lust for power in Schuon. Just as the Gospels were fictions which suggested all sorts of meaning to men who wanted power, the image of the Virgin Mary is a later adaptation of a useful fiction, made to serve whatever subjective fantasy they believe might create, including sexual fantasy.

To return this discussion to the idea of purity, a few things can be said. In fact, the “Pure” “Virgin” is a slap in the face at every woman who wishes to have children or have sex. The notion that a sexless woman is divine is absurd. Indeed, images like that of the Virgin Mary are images of male domination of women, where real women are seen as “polluted” by elitist and sexist men who are grossed out by fertility, menstrual blood and the uterus. The 1854 creation of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is also fiction and that tries to claim that she was free of original sin even in the womb of her mother. There is no such thing as original sin and to claim there is, is to curse every child born outside the Church. Schuon’s contrary vision of the Virgin as divine prostitute is also an abuse of women, as it too is childless, and has as its offspring a decadent con-man, who would take over the world with his ideology if he could. It is elitist denial of life that Neruda was opposed to and I agree with Neruda.

. The Enlightenment was a necessary war against ‘Platonic Purity’ and the monarchy of unjust classicism. Platonism, the philosophy of the effete, is a species of theofascism, as is the Hindu caste system. Theofascism and divine right politics are a patriarchal prescription for violence against the poor, the outsiders, nature and women. Religion and caste systems use religious symbols to convince populations to submit to

patriarchal power to make life easier for the elites. The French Revolution was partly an effort to overthrow the Kings and their symbols, which is why you see images of women that are not Virgins as in “Liberty leading the People” by Delacroix, or the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor.

Guenon was following Plato and Hinduism, and theocratic elitists like De Maistre, in pursuit of a fantasy of ultimate power through ultimate knowledge. Evola is merely following Guenon’s lead. Divine right mysticism is a dead end that these men tried to resurrect to keep the far right political flame alive. In his writings, Evola distinguishes between ‘spiritualist’ racism and the biological racism of the Fascists.<sup>334</sup> The effort to create a race or rather a caste of elitists is the main thing that the Traditionalists want. Schuon takes up this same theme in his Castes and

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<sup>334</sup> What follows are some absurd and neo fascist comments from Martin Schwartz, himself a neo-fascist, found on his Kshatriya web page  
<http://www.juliusevola.it/documenti/template.asp?cod=368>

“In National Socialism, Evola certainly welcomed the racial ideas in one respect, but openly criticized its formulation in the terms of biological materialism. For Evola, the racial soul was of greater significance than the material basis of heredity. This view was clearly connected with his refusal of the so-called "theory of evolution," that materialistic invention of Darwin's, which, together with Marx and Freud, Evola considered as the lowest drivel of the materialistic period. ...Evola was in quest of a national movement that would help the spiritual principle to break through. He and a few friends had tried to influence Fascism accordingly. He thought that he had discovered in National Socialism, with the SS, the attempt to found a new ascetic Order..... Here Evola saw a chance of introducing his doctrine of Tradition, but this met with mistrust and incomprehension. As the records of the NS authorities show it was this concept of soul-race that upset them. They could issue certificates of Aryanism, but in no way could they meet Evola's hopes for the Aryan warrior in the spiritual sense.” .

[my note: all of the Traditionalist despise the theory of evolution, since it divests priests of power and divests nature of god, and Evola was no exception. Evola’s fascism, like Guenon’s and Schuon’s consists in trying to impose on the social order their dream of totalistic spiritual authority. It was this that the Nazis rejected when they rejected Evola. There are rightly few that can expect such fanatical ideology, the Taliban perhaps few Saudi, British or Jordanian princes , or certain far right Israelis.]

Races, a racist book that uses racist and essentializing terms like “the yellow man” or “the red man” to describe Native Americans or Chinese. He likes to characterize people by racist stereotypes, He says for instance that Black people are prone to the “frenetic art of drumming and dancing” and that there is something about them that is of the element “earth” and has a “heavy indifference”. He says the “the Black man has a non-mental mentality”.<sup>335</sup> All of this racist nonsense evokes the demeaning language of the slave driver and the “Master”. It has more to do with racist stereotypes than with reality. For Schuon, racist stereotypes are “archetypes”. He employs 19<sup>th</sup> century racist anthropology and phrenology to categorizes people in ways that are demeaning, even if they were “poetic” to Schuon himself.

Schuon distinguishes between the spiritual castes and the biological castes, following Guenon. There are no such castes, of course, the whole idea of either biological or spiritual castes is a fictional invention meant to serve a self-appointed elite. Castes are constructions of unjust political powers, made habitual by habit and custom( which become hardened into “traditions”). However, these specious categories are important to the Traditionalist perspective. Schuon creates distinctions without a real difference, violating Occam’s razor. By making the caste idea emphasize ‘intellectual’ rather than merely biological power and survival it transfers the tyranny of the blood, as it were, to a tyranny of the mind exercised over time. Guenon and his followers were creating a system of mind control, mental conformity, and intellectual tyranny. <sup>336</sup> As H. T. Hansen has admitted, Evola ” naturally had his hopes for Fascism. He simply wanted to “correct” it and steer it into

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<sup>335</sup> Schuon, Frithjof Castes and Races, Bedfont, Middlesex ,Perennial Books pg. 1980.38-42

<sup>336</sup> Nothing so much characterizes a true Traditionalist as narrow minded bigotry, fanaticism and the inability to see anything in any way unless it is approved by Guenon, Schuon or various other self-important, falsely humble, ideologues such as Martin Lings of Hossein Nasr. Read their books, they all depend almost exclusively, on appeal to authority. But when you look closely at the justifications of this ‘authority” the whole thing crumbles into esoteric blue fairy dust.

aristocratic channels, as we will see him doing during the entire Fascist era.”

Likewise, Guenon and Schuon wanted to steer racism into a form of thought control and tyranny of ideas. How to turn so called “secular” fascism and other right wing forces into spiritual autocracy was the big question. This is still the objective of the latter day traditionalists. Evola wrote that... “We are in open opposition to a certain mythos: the one that wants to turn spirituality and culture into a realm that is dependent on politics. We, on the other hand, claim that it is politics that must be dependent on spirituality and culture.” In other words he wanted to exercise mind control over entire societies. Like Guenon and Shankara. Lao Tzu, Rumi and Jesus, Schuon and the Moonies, Evola wanted to control society by imposing transcendental and imperial delusions on the entire population. The function of saints is to be an example of inner quietude and disinterest, really a kind of self-mesmerism, while the powers that be are unquestioned and go on unhindered. You can see this is Christianity and Tibetan Buddhism, where saints are lined up or down walls of temples or churches, in mass gatherings or standing along transepts, naves or up in apses, looking down and admonishing the crowds of people to behave and conform. Saints are advertisements.

The Traditionalists are not intellectuals but rather anti-intellectuals. Their notion of the “divine Intellect” is itself irrational and anti-intellectual. They do not contribute anything to knowledge. They contribute a great deal to ignorance and superstition, reaction and backwardness. Theofascism is not like Hitlerism. Unlike ordinary fascism, genetics is not the sine qua non for the Traditionalists; intellectual conformity and backwardness is. After World War II traditionalism turns ; into a subtle mechanism of doublespeak and ideological conformity, anti-intellectual dogma and mind control. <sup>337</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> Blavatsky’s race theories were partially influenced by the Social Darwinism of the late 19th

Schuon derives from the idea of “God” a whole complex of caste theories whereby people are judged not only by the usual four Hindu castes but also by the psycho-social designations of “pneumatic, bhaktic and hylic” which mean intellectual types, devotional types and physical types, respectively. <sup>338</sup>By elaborating these complex typologies, Schuon seeks to create an intellectual system of categories that determine ultimate levels of significance with himself and his ideology as supreme. The ideology of the “self” or the “intellect<sup>339</sup>” which creates a Guenonian “super-religion” is the lynchpin of theofascism, both in Guenon and Evola as in Schuon. Ultimately the ‘primacy of the intellect’, in Schuon’s

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century, as were the Nazi theories of race. The elitist racism of Guenon and Schuon was almost certainly influenced by Blavatsky’s ideas as well except that her ideas have been sublimated. The Traditionalists despised Darwin with a rare passion for denial of factual reality. This is partly why they hated Blavatsky so much, who they resemble in so many other ways. Wolfgang Smith’s embarrassing books try and fail to disprove Darwinian evolutionism. Traditionalism shows its ignorance no place as much as in their rejection of evolution. The facts of evolution are so pervasive and extensive as to be undeniable. See essay below on *“On Those Who Hate Science and Reason: Anti-Science and Irrationalism in Rene Guenon, Wolfgang Smith and Other ‘Traditionalists’”*

<sup>338</sup> It should be noted that Schuon was influenced by the racist anthropology of Carleton Coon. In his 1962 book "The Origin of Races" Coon got specific about which regions and thus which races progressed toward modern human intelligence. "If Africa was the cradle of mankind, it was only an indifferent kindergarten," he wrote. "Europe and Asia were our principal schools." Coon believed Africans and Semitic peoples, among others possessed more ‘primitive’ cultural, physical and intellectual traits, a view that is reflected subtly in some of Schuon’s writings. Coon also had some anti-Semitic views apparently. I learned Coon’s influence on Schuon from John Murray, a disciple of Schuon who formerly was allied with Coomaraswamy and Guenon. He joined the Schuon cult in the late 1940’s with Joseph Epes Brown, who he spent time with in prison during WWII as a conscientious objector. I got to know John Murray rather well, and he explained to me on a number of occasions Schuon’s fascination with the racist theories of Coon.

<sup>339</sup> Meister Eckhart’s comment that the Intellect is in its essence is the uncreated substance of God is nonsense. The mind is a product of evolution and religions abstract language and misuse it, via a process not unlike Whitehead’s notion of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Claiming the intellect is “uncreated” is the result of an illusion of the mind thinking its own products are eternal and then magnifying this idea into a “transcendent” fiction. For an example of Scholastic angel counting that demonstrates this sort of tortured metaphysical fiction. see Reza Shah Kazemi’s book [Paths to Transcendence: According to Shankara, Ibn Arabi & Meister Eckhart](#) (Spiritual Masters. East and West) Kazemi is a ‘researcher’ for the Ismaili Institute --- a Moslem think tank in London.

phrase, becomes the ultimate power, higher than humanity, life, blood, race, or caste yet still possessing ultimate power over life and death. Of course, the primacy of the Intellect is nothing more than the self-regarding subjectivism and irrational ideology of traditionalism itself—a “pathological subjectivity”, to use an excellent phrase I found in Maude Murray’s documents.<sup>340</sup> The arbitrary “heart intellect”--- a euphemism for arbitrary self-delusional intuition---- claims power on the basis of the idea of “transcendence” which is nothing more than a self-magnifying mirror. One can see this cruelty inherent in the impersonal claim to embody the ‘divine’ in this quote from one of Schuon’s books

We only have one concern- to express the impersonal and uncolored Truth- so that it will be useless to look for anything ‘profoundly human’ in this book, any more than in those of Rene Guenon, for the simple reason that nothing human is profound; nor will there be found any ‘living wisdom’, for wisdom is independent of such contingencies as life and death. <sup>341</sup>

This cold, Arctic, arrogant and anti-human view of human life is the epitome of the danger inherent in the relationship of total knowledge to total power; human beings become extraneous to the abstract idea and the impersonal, disinterested ‘truth’ of those who falsely claim objectivity. There is no ‘truth’ in Guenon or Schuon, there is only the outrageously and false claim to it. Perhaps this Arctic, spiritually fascist, view of knowledge and power is what led Guenon and Schuon to seek to imitate the part mythical, part real Aryans. Like the Nazis, they believed in a mythical “hyperborean tradition” located somewhere in the frozen north, from which the major religions all descend, but which has since been fragmented by a Satanic design. Guenon and Schuon, Evola and

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<sup>340</sup> Schuon uses this phrase to condemn Murray but really it is true of him.

<sup>341</sup> Schuon Transcendent Unity of religion pg. 15

Coomaraswamy believed they had rediscovered the “primordial tradition”--- something that arose prior to the fictional lands of Atlantis-- - the very idea of which is a 19<sup>th</sup> century fiction---and thought themselves to be leading an intellectual elite, which grows up out of the corrupted “mixed caste” impurity of the modern age. They thought they would supply humanity with a witness to the total Truth, before the world goes up in deserved flames. <sup>342</sup>

The idea of the Self (Atma)----which Guenon, Schuon and Evola claimed in some sense to embody or reflect--- is merely a magnified abstraction, a concept, a self-mirroring conceit. The god idea is precisely this magnification of human self-awareness. This is another important difference between the Traditionalists and the German or Italian fascists. The Traditionalists claim to have the ultimate answer to the universe and to embody the ultimate truth. The German or Italian fascists do not go nearly so far in claiming total knowledge. Of course, thankfully, the Traditionalists have only had power within a small orbit of various cults and political groups. Evola’s groups in Italy did manage to kill some people, Schuon’s cult hurt a lot of people, but has not yet killed anyone, though there was one suicide that might be connected to the activity of the cult.

Evola allied himself for a time with ordinary fascism, just as Guenon had sympathized with Daudet and Action Francaise. Evola saw enough of a similarity between the Traditionalist position and Nazism that he sought to serve the Nazis despite the ideological differences. The two most important followers of Guenon, Julius Evola and Frithjof Schuon, exalted Guenon with a bizarre sort of Hero worship. At one point Guenon called Schuon “my eminent collaborator” and although Guenon and Schuon

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<sup>342</sup> See Schuon's Transcendent Unity 1st ed. ( later editions were altered) for a description of the downfall of the caste system in the modern age (pg.108-109). The implication being that Schuon as head of the "intellectual elite" will lead a few souls beyond the apocalypse.



split in the early 1950's. Guenon accused Schuon and his followers of 'ignorance' and plotting against him. Despite this Schuon continued to see Guenon as a precursor to himself, but at the same time, he saw himself as "a man not like other men", born under the "divine axis" as he says in his Memoirs. How could there have been an influence when Schuon claims to be born divine and to have always been so from youth? In other words, Schuon thought he was prophet or avatar of sorts from before he encountered Guenon. This delusion makes Schuon a sociopath with a narcissistic personality disorder. Guenon suffered from something different, some form of paranoia. In any case, a common paranoid intellectuality and shared hatred of the modern world infuses both Guenon and Schuon.

Evola was also infected with this need of hero worship and elect status. He wanted to assimilate his hero-worship of his spiritual master to his hero-worship of his political idol, Mussolini. Evola, recalling De Giorgio's admiration for the Spiritual Fascism of Rene Guenon, writes of the close relation of the philosophy of Guenon to that of Mussolini:

[One] finds in Guenon's works, which are far removed from particularism and personalism...wide horizons, powerful, pure and unconditional ideas, and new ways to recover that greatness which does not belong to the past but to what is superior to time and of a perennial actuality. I feel this to be the case, since Guenon's "radical traditionalism" is the same as Mussolini's ideal of the attainment of a "permanent and universal reality", which is the necessary requirement for anyone who wishes to act spiritually in the world with a "dominating human will".<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> Evola, Julius. Rene Guenon: A Teacher for Modern Times Trans., by Guido Stucco Edmonds. WA. Sure Fire Press; Holmes Pub. Group 1994 pg.22

In other words, Evola didn't read Guenon books very well. I find them intensely personal, though he tried to hide that from others. In any case, Evola seems to have been looking to Mussolini and Hitler as potential fulfillments of the Traditionalist and Guenonian dream of the Avataric Lord of the World. He envisions a road to past greatness through the ideas of Guenon. The same sort of ridiculous adulation would later be exemplified in the Schuon cult for their 'master'.<sup>344</sup>

In 1980 disciples of the French neo-fascist group GRECE, headed Alain de Benoist, as well as an Italian group, inspired by Evola, headed by Franco Freda<sup>345</sup> and Pino Rauti placed bombs in a

"Bologna Railway station in August (killing 80, at the Munich Oktoberfest in September (13 dead) and at a Paris synagogue in October (4 dead), Fascist ideology the question of their possible connection presses to the fore. To be sure no one would want to lay responsibility at the doorstep of Alain de Benoist, any more than on the Italian parliamentarian and neo-fascist Pino Rauti."

Yet Thomas Sheehan thinks that there is some responsibility here, not directly, but that the ideology of these terrorist acts derives from Evolian (and thus Guenonian) sources. Sheehan says that this ideology of the far

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<sup>344</sup> Examples of this absurd adulation can be found in Martin Lings' Eleventh Hour and Charles Upton's, The System of the Anti-Christ, as well as Nasr's The Writings of Frithjof Schuon and in fact most of the books put out by World Wisdom Books, which is the Schuon cult publishing house. They support it and pay for all its titles. I worked for this company for a time and did a lot of their mailings, so I can attest it is a cult publishing company. World Wisdom is usually run at a loss and largely supported by Stanley Jones and Michael Fitzgerald. Jones inherited a lot of money, as did the Perry's, both of whom supported Schuon, and the cult, in high style. The wives and inner circle of Schuon's cult told him that his books sold large number of copies but actually they sold very few and in very irregular intervals. I took them to be mailed so I have a concrete idea of how many sold.

<sup>345</sup> In 1963 Freda he founded the Group of Ar, based on the philosophy of Julius Evola, and managed a far-right library. Later, when the Group of Ar was disbanded, he founded the *Edizioni di Ar* ("Ar Publishing"), a publishing house that brought out books by Traditionalist figures like Evola and René Guenon.

right “could perhaps underlie these dreadful acts.”<sup>346</sup> Sheehan adds that “Whatever “philosophy undergirds the writing of Italian neofascist Pino Rauti is made up of rehashes and outright plagiarism of Evola’s work.” Sheehan notes also that the far right leader Prince Junio Borghese liked Evola also and saw him “as not afraid to be considered a reactionary, i.e a man of the Right, when he warns that revolution makes sense only when it is a reconstruction, that is, a violent removal of an unjust state of affairs.” This love of violence is very much part of the conservative reactionary model of revolution.

Mark Sedgwick’s view of the influence on Evola on right-wing violence in Europe in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a little more quavering or ambiguous. Unlike Sheehan, Sedgwick has an unclear understanding of just what fascism is and how it connects to religion. Sedgwick does reluctantly admits that “Evola then seems to have approved what was done in his name—on condition that it was done with the proper spiritual preparation.”—which is to say that Evola appears to have approved the bombings—as long as it was done ‘spiritually’. This is a fairly typical procedure for religious justification for violating human rights and using violence, found in Zen Samurai, The Koranic Khidir and Krishna’s justification of violence to Arjuna, and elsewhere.

But Sedgwick doesn’t understand that the traditionalists are not fascists but theofascists. Nor does he understand how theofascism connects them to a politics that pretends to be apolitical. Guenon is one of many right wing theorists with spiritual pretensions in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: Nietzsche, Evola, Guenon, Di Giorgio, De Benoist, Spengler, Codreneau, De Maistre as well as many others and these all, to

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<sup>346</sup> Sheehan Thomas, Thomas Sheehan, “Myth and Violence: The Fascism of Julius Evola and Alain de Benoist,” *Social Research* 48: 1981, pp. 45-73; see also Franco Ferraresi, “Julius Evola: tradition, reaction and the Radical Right,” H.T. Hansen has written a lot about Evola, notably his , hundred-page introduction to Evola's political thought in Joscelyn Godwin’s translation of Evola’s Men among the Ruins. Martin Swartz-- a neo Nazi- likes the Hansen essay very much. Hansen seems to have a right wing agenda as do most if not all who recommend reading Evola.

varying degrees, are against science, reason and equality. They all want to return to an unjust system of spiritual castes or medieval hierarchy. Some of these affect an apolitical stand in order to deflect criticism in a time where they are vastly outnumbered. However, read any of their writings--- saturated with a virulent right wing politics that despises the world, they want to return to archaic forms of tyranny. Evola condemns Fascism as seen from the point of view of Right-wingers, in his “Notes on the Third Reich,”. He criticizes fascism for not being fascist enough. This is also the view of Schuon and Guenon and other conservative revolution ideologues. Traditionalism is ‘higher fascism’. For both Evola and Guenon. In other words, religion is magnified politics, meant to claim even great power than mere kings and dictators. It can only do so as long as people are uneducated and conditioned to make-believe, myths and irrational superstitions .

## **e. How Fascism Becomes Traditionalism and Corporate Culture develops after World War II**

It should be stressed again that Evola’s experiences with the supra-rational are the foundation of his political doctrine.<sup>347</sup>

H.T Hansen

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[https://archive.org/stream/JuliusEvolasPoliticalEndeavors/JuliusEvolasPoliticalEndeavors\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/JuliusEvolasPoliticalEndeavors/JuliusEvolasPoliticalEndeavors_djvu.txt)

As I show later in the Review of Guenon's Reign of Quantity and elsewhere in this book, Guenon's idea of the "supra-rational intellect" is delusional and false. From this it follows that his politics are hidden in his metaphysical doctrines too, if you logically follow out the comment of H.T Hansen above. Let me here return to the discussion about Evola and compare him further to Guenon and Schuon, to show that theofascism does indeed come from Guenon and that Evola, Schuon and other followers are merely followers of the pattern that originally was set down by Guenon.

As I will show in the upcoming chapter on Schuon's theofascism, Schuon rejects Nazism for the same reason that the Nazis rejected Evola. Evola had wanted very badly to serve the Fascist regimes in both Italy and Germany. In a dossier kept on Evola by Himmler's personal staff, Evola is criticized for being a "reactionary Roman". That is, The Nazi's say, Evola's theories would most likely lead to an "insurrection of the old aristocracy against the modern world...His overall character is marked by the feudal aristocracy of old...His learnedness tends to the dilettante and pseudo-scientific" <sup>348</sup> In other words, Evola was too reactionary and medieval even for the Nazis. Schuon rejects Nazism because it is not theocratic and aristocratic enough- it is too modern. The Nazis reject Evola, whose philosophy is roughly equivalent to Schuon, because he is not modern enough and too enamored of the old order of the aristocracy. Evola rejects the Nazis because they bungled the Guenonian revolution that he hoped for. In other words, Schuon and Evola are more to the right than the Nazis and want to return to backward, pre-scientific, theocratic and imperial forms of knowledge and power. It is this fact that makes it easy to equate Traditionalism with Nazism, while preventing one

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<sup>348</sup> Evola, Julius. Revolt against the Modern World Rochester, Vermont. Inner Traditions. 1995 pg.xviii quoted in introduction by H.T. Hansen

from seeing an identity between them. One can conclude from this that the Nazis saw enough of themselves in Evola to consider him for service to the Reich, but they rejected him ultimately as being more reactionary than themselves, and rightly so. It is hard to imagine anything more reactionary than Nazism. However, the Nazis reject Guenonism as being more theofascist than Nazism. This is the logical conclusion to Guenon's Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power, as Evola correctly deduces. There are differences between Evola, Coomaraswamy and Guenon on the exact relation of the royalty to the priesthood, but these differences are more or less irrelevant.<sup>349</sup>.

Evola eventually realizes, as Guenon realized after his rejection of Action Française, that ordinary fascism was not totalistic enough. Evola's later rejection of Nazism mirrors exactly Guenon and Schuon's rejection of it. Evola's right-Wing critique of Fascism is a ringing endorsement of theofascism. Evola writes of Hitler that

“In respect to National Socialist theosophy, i.e., to its supposed mystical and metaphysical dimension, one must realize the unique juxtaposition in this movement and in the Third Reich of mythical, Enlightenment, and even scientific aspects. In Hitler, one can find many symptoms of a typically “modern” world-view that was fundamentally profane, naturalistic, and materialistic; while on the

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<sup>349</sup> Coomaraswamy probably understood the relationship better than either of the other two men. The reciprocal nature of power in the medieval period was shared by royalty and church. potency of religious faith and the influence exercised by the Church was closely embraced by territorial rulers. The coronation ceremony by which a new king's powers were confirmed by the gods was typical in India too, and the arrangements of these powers depended heavily on who was in power at what time. There was a revolving door between them and often sons of a noble became pope or vice versa. There is little reason to say that one or the other is preferred as the arrangement itself was corrupt and delusional on both sides. Evola and Guenon were merely trying to resurrect a dead system in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that was corrupt in its core. Those who argue over which side was to be preferred are merely indulging in propaganda and delusion..

other hand he believed in Providence, whose tool he believed himself to be, especially in regard to the destiny of the German nation...He railed against the “Dark men of our time,” while attributing to Aryan man the merit of having created modern science. National Socialism’s concern with runes, the ancient Nordic-Germanic letter-signs, must be regarded as purely symbolic, rather like the Fascist use of certain Roman symbols, and without any esoteric significance. The program of National Socialism to create a higher man has something of “biological mysticism” about it, but this again was a scientific project. At best, it might have been a question of the “superman” in Nietzsche’s sense, but never of a higher man in the initiatic sense.<sup>350</sup>

One can see here Evola’s hatred of science, shared by all traditionalist anti-intellectuals. Evola likes aspects of the Nazi interest in mystical politics, as did Guenon, but his complaint is that they are not “initiatic”, and do not have a firm grounding in “rites and sacraments”, just as Guenon would accuse the fascism of being “counter initiation”. Evola wants the return of the “divine right of Kings”, the discredited ideology of the “great chain of being” and the caste system, as do Guenon and Schuon. Roman fasces, which consisted of a bundle of sticks that were tied around an axe, was an ancient Roman symbol of the authority of the magistrate. They were carried by his [lictors](#)—attendants--- and could be used for corporal and capital punishment at his command. Fascism is thus a worship of authority and a politics of cruelty. The one all-consuming obsession of the traditionalists is hierarchy, giving the elect a special status. Guenon, Schuon and Evola are religious worshipers of hierarchy and authority, spiritual autocrats. When Evola reproaches Hitler for not being concerned with the “higher man” in the initiatic

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<sup>350</sup> from *Il Conciliatore*, no. 10, 1971; translated from the German edition in *Deutsche Stimme*, no. 8, 1998

sense“, he is saying that Hitler is not sufficiently concerned with hierarchy. Just like Schuon and Guenon Evola criticized the Nazis for not being concerned enough with hierarchy and too concerned with science and democracy. In other words, Evola reproaches Hitler for not being Guenonian or Schuonian. Evola is mad that the fascists are not theofascists.

In his old age, Evola sees Fascism as a counterfeit, as did Guenon, whereas his own formula of Traditional truth is the real article, the authentic fascism and therefore the measure of all power and knowledge. Evola, like Schuon and Guenon, was sure he is in touch with the “real” tradition, and that this “tradition” gives him and those who think like him the right to the world power the Nazis wanted but never attained. Traditio-Fascism or theofascism grows out of ordinary fascism.

This is clear in some later writings of Evola, written after World War II, where he concedes that Fascism was partially in error, but that now that this is recognized it must be understood that after World War II fascism becomes Traditionalism. Evola writes that those that

“have lived through Fascism and have thus had a direct experience of the system and its men, know and acknowledge that not everything about it was in order. As long as Fascism existed and could be considered a movement of reconstruction in the making, one of yet unrealized and uncrystalized possibilities, it was still permissible not to criticize it beyond a certain limit. And those who, like ourselves, while defending a set of ideas which only partially coincided with Fascism (and with German National Socialism), did not condemn these movements, even though fully aware of their questionable or aberrant aspects, did so precisely because we counted on future possible developments”.



In other words, Evola is stating that ordinary fascism had the possibility of becoming like Guenon's theofascism but it failed to do so. Guenon was likewise quiet about it, except for mentioning his disappointment in it in some private letters, like the letter to Coomaraswamy, quoted elsewhere. So Evola says

Today, when that Fascism lies behind us as a historical reality, our attitude cannot be the same. Instead of idealizing it in a way consistent with the 'myth' of Fascism, what is necessary now is to separate the positive from the negative, not just for theoretical reasons, but for practical guidance with an eventual political struggle in mind. Thus we should not accept the adjective 'fascist' or 'neo-fascist' tout court; we should call ourselves fascist (if we feel we must) in respect of what was positive about Fascism, not fascist in respect of what Fascism was not.[...]

In other words, it is a question of making linkages as far as it is possible between the great European political Tradition and discarding what at bottom can be seen as compromises, divergent or even deviant possibilities, or phenomena which were products of the very evils which people set out to take a stand against and fight.<sup>351</sup>

In other words, according to Evola, after World War II and the defeat of political Fascism a new kind of "fascism" is necessary, which Evola identifies with "the ideas and principles based in that Earlier Tradition". In short, fascism after the War becomes theofascism or traditionalism. Fascism migrates into many areas of life after World War II. It became a part of Stalin's Gulag<sup>352</sup> and the American blacklisting of the

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<sup>351</sup> Evola Julius: *Il fascismo* (Giovanni Volpe: Rome, 1979; 1st edn. 1964), 13-17.]

<sup>352</sup> Stalin's fascism is interesting as it grows so much from his personality. He becomes even more authoritarian as his regime moves on. This is partly due to his encounter with Germany, as

McCarthyism. Fascism becomes part of the client-state relationship between the U.S. and governments it favors such as Pinochet's Chile, Peron's Argentina or the monarchist fascism of the Shah of Iran, and in many others states.<sup>353</sup> But defeated fascism also morphs into traditionalism and the corporation and the idea of the "corporate person" which is a metaphysical construction.

Or in other words, Evola is saying that after its defeat in 1945, fascism must be 'spiritualized' along Guenonian lines--- which is to say basically that fascism must become theofascism. Theo fascism is universalistic or "globalized" as Guenon indicated once.

Guenon wants to be the universal man. Fascism must become Traditionalism or the New Right, as a capitalism/religion amalgam, fundamentalism combined with political reaction, much as it has become in the U.S. and Europe. In other words, to repeat myself, Evola was not the originator of Traditionalism's relation to fascism; he was merely following the pattern already set forth by Guenon (and before him Encausse, De Maistre and others). Guenon creates theofascism by moving to the right of Maurras and Daudet, as I will show later. Evola rejected ordinary fascism just as had Guenon and Schuon. Guenon's biography and written works outline a conservative apocalyptic politics that allies Traditionalism to fascism indirectly, as a sort of moralistic and far right correctant. Theofascism has a mirroring or complementary relationship to fascism, it is, as it were, the elite and religious wing of fascism.

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he becomes more and more like Hitler the more he fights him. You can see this transference of autocratic insanity in Robert Oppenheimer too, as he works on the atom bomb and becomes obsessed with Hitler and defeating him with the big bomb.

<sup>353</sup> Salvador Allende was murdered by the CIA, essentially, and the neo fascist Pinochet was installed. This was evidently masterminded by Henry Kissinger, who really is a war criminal and should have been in jail for this.

Clearly, traditionalism resembles fascism in various ways. In addition, clearly, it rejects many aspects of the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini. Thus those who say that Perennialism is fascist are both right and wrong. The words of Guenon and Evola would imply, however, that they were concerned with the fascist movements to varying degrees and put some hope in it, even if they ultimately rejected it in favor of a system of thought even more fascistic, or more totalitarian than the Nazis, Italian or Japanese fascists. Indeed, traditionalism is in many ways the extreme religious side of fascism. They approved of its wish to go “back to the old way”, to Tradition, its invocation of transcendental and inflated myths. However, they disliked the modernist tendencies in it. Whether one calls it Traditionalism “Higher Fascism” or Metaphysical Fascism, Meta-fascism, traditio-fascism or Transcendental Fascism it is all the same.

However, perhaps Guido De Giorgio’s name for it is the most accurate, since he was a participant in developing the basic ideology of Traditionalism. Guido de Giorgio, as I said earlier, was an ally of Guenon and friend of Evola. He developed an idealistic vision of the Roman ideology of the Fasces, or Fascism, which he called “spiritual fascism”.<sup>354</sup> This bore an idealized relation to Mussolini’s effort to resurrect Roman imperialism. Be this as it may, Giorgio’s notion of “spiritual fascism” seen in conjunction with Umberto Eco’s definitions of fascism as well as with R.J. Lifton’s notion of ‘ideological totalism’ is quite accurate and complete as a description of the Traditionalist political/metaphysical project. The Traditionalists reject the Fascism of Mussolini and Hitler, but yet seek to return to the ‘Top-Down’ hierarchical Empires of the past, as Hitler and Mussolini did, but in a much more totalistic and conservative manner, without the modernist additions that Mussolini added to the Traditionalist project. Theofascism is fascism without science and

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<sup>354</sup> Guido de Giorgio (1890-1957) collaborated with Evola in the journals *Ur* and *La Torre*. See Piero Di Vona, Guenon, Evola and De Giorgio

without any Enlightenment values: science, freedom of inquiry, rights and reason. They want to return to the ages of authoritarian Caesar, the Pharaoh, Rome and the Church, Muhammad and the Chinese Emperors, all of them mixed up in a kitsch salad of grotesque reactionary politics and bad history. The Traditionalists are not like the Italian and German fascists, they are kitsch fascists, who yearn for a new age of theocratic dictatorship and anti-technology where priests modeled after Plato's guardians can commit injustices against the poor and children for their own good. This word "Theofascism" expresses very well this wedding cake amalgam of far right nostalgia, hatred of equality, anti-science and anti-human rights misogyny and patriarchal dogmatism. Theofascism is this toxic soup of discredited and rejected cultural detritus. After World War II this repulsive brew replaces the failed Nazis and fascists as a new Traditionalist movement develops pretending to be apolitical.

So, Roger Griffin, Umberto Eco and R. J. Lifton have given me a reasonable definition of fascism which I have expanded on. I have created a hypothesis about theofascism and applied it across a large array of historical facts and details. I have elaborating the historical and psychological sides of theofascism and not merely the political elements. My hypothesis appears to be accurate and to explain a great deal of behavior and history which would otherwise be obscure. I have applied that definition to the consideration of Guenon as well as his followers Schuon and Evola and to a lesser extent, Dugin and the Coomaraswamys, among others. All of these men followed the Guenonian pattern of supporting far-right politics of various kinds but then sought an "Ur- Politics" or a spiritual version of fascism that would be more universal. Guenon was the creator and inspirational for whatever his followers did. To him must go the credit of creating a toxic system of theofascist thought. Schuon was his rather demented follower, as was Evola, Dugin, Huston Smith, Rama Coomaraswamy and many others.

But I have also applied it to religion in general, and religion in general appears to share in the same delusional toxicity . I have gone beyond these rather local comparisons and facts to apply some of these ideas to religion as a global phenomenon. So I have tested some of these ideas against the reality of the history of religions and cultures. It follows therefore that religious experiences with the “supra-rational” are delusional by products, not of evolution, but of cultural and social forces. These fantasies which serve social classes, unfortunately, become the foundation of political doctrines erected upon these deluded principles. Such political systems are toxic and bound to fail, creating injustices in their wake.

So to conclude: ----after World War II the fascist project had failed, but theofascism lived on. The development of the corporation is not the same as but parallel to the development of traditionalist thought. Both were efforts to resurrect the dying aristocracy of Europe. Like Traditionalism the corporations had been developed as a mythical structure and went through a similar process to globalize itself. It also sought to create corporations as quasi immortal “persons”, loosely based on the model of religions, whereby a dead entity that is merely abstract is given personhood, just as the Trinity or Eucharist. Gods and corporations are abstract entities meant to magnify and multiply power of the classes and individuals they serve. These ideological structures, traditionalism and corporations are natural allies. Neither are fascism, but both have affinities with it. IBM works for the Nazi’s and helps them create Auschwitz, while not being Nazi themselves, Evola associates with Nazis and Schuon approves of Japanese theofascism without allying himself with the fascists. These are parallel and not identical developments.

This is why, when Schuon came to America, it was right wing corporate Republicans who brought him here and supported him. Many of the people attracted to Schuon were right wing corporate people, or wannabe aristocrats. He was natural ally of corporate reactionary

politics. The racist advisor of Donald Trump. Steve Bannon, is a follower of Evola and Guenon, for instance. Trump hates democracy, as do Bannon and Evola, and uses racism as a way to get votes, scapegoat the left and incite violence and thus control of the population.<sup>355</sup>

The corporations were created as an effort to create a neo-aristocracy that would continue what was undermined by the French and American revolutions. Traditionalism was also an attempt to uphold aristocratic values and an elite culture. Corporations were created during the period of 'discovery' during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and were central in the slave trade, Beaver skin dealing, the spice trade and conquest of native tribal cultures. The corporation would maintain the exploitation of labor, exploitation of the far east, and animal factories as some of their main sources of immoral profiteering to this day. The later added to this gruesome list things like exploiting the sick, exploiting the oceans and forests and exploiting oil and coal and more recently, exploiting children and schools and the mind itself via electronic devices.

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<sup>355</sup> For more on the relation of Bannon trump and Traditonalists like Evola nad Guenon see Joshua Green the "Devil's Bargain: Steve Bannoon, Donald Trump & the Storming of the Presidency". IN 2014 Bannoon said that ““Julius Evola and different writers of the early 20th century who are really the supporters of what’s called the Traditionalist movement, which really eventually metastasized into Italian Fascism.”

In his Vatican talk, Mr. Bannon suggested that although Mr. Putin represented a “kleptocracy,” the Russian president understood the existential danger posed by “a potential new caliphate” and the importance of using nationalism to stand up for traditional institutions.

“We, the Judeo-Christian West,” Mr. Bannon added, “really have to look at what he’s talking about as far as Traditionalism goes — particularly the sense of where it supports the underpinnings of nationalism.” He tus endorsed the ideology of spiritual fascism.

Quoted From NYT

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/10/world/europe/bannon-vatican-julius-evola-fascism.html>

But these things really don't become what they are now are until after the 1800's with the rise of industrial production and exploiting of worldwide resources, which eventually cause mass extinctions and global warming. The idea of the corporation as a person does not become enshrined into later in the 1800's and doesn't really flower till the last 80 years or so. Corporation are then given quasi divine status as immortal persons.<sup>356</sup> Traditionalist and Republican ideology runs parallel to all this and does not begin to dovetail with it until the last 20 years. Just as Schuon would prove useful to King Charles in England, Schuon and Guenon are useful to the creation of an anti-democratic cult and movements in many countries. Schuon did not like corporations much, but he loved their money and took advantage of all his followers who were rolling in it. He knew his bread was buttered by corporate dollars. The same can be said for many other cults. Cults are closely akin to corporations in American and CEO's are much like the arbitrary dictators one sees in religious cults. Destroying democracy is a major goal of corporate and traditionalist ideology, with a return to top down and imperious autocracies lording it over a globalized world. American protects both criminal CEO's and cult leaders by deforming the 1<sup>st</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to serve cults and CEO. Recently the Hobby Lobby Corporation won an argument at the Supreme Court that claims that corporations are entitled to the same religious freedom protections as

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<sup>356</sup> Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black said, 'I do not believe the word 'person' in the Fourteenth Amendment includes corporations. ' Neither the history nor the language of the Fourteenth Amendment justifies the belief that corporations are included within its protection.' The Fourteenth Amendment is about human rights not corporate rights. It was grossly misused by corporate lawyers. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas made the same point, writing that, 'There was no history, logic or reason given to support that view [that corporations are legally 'persons']. Chief Justice John Marshall did not equivocate in *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* in 1819: "A corporation is an artificial being, invisible, intangible, and existing only in contemplation of law. Being the mere creature of law, it possesses only those properties which the charter of its creation confers upon it." Those justices who maintain the atrocity of the Corporate Person fiction are guilty of helping cause endless abuses of our world. See *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company* 1886. As well as *Citizens United*

people.<sup>357</sup> This again makes corporate culture a sort of super and global religion, a sort of Transcendent unity of corporate culture, in short, a new aristocracy.. In so doing the progress toward undermining democratic values and resurrecting a corrupt autocratic system is encouraged. Evola would be pleased, I think. Evola said he did not want “spirituality and culture.... dependent on politics.” Rather he wanted “politics that must be dependent on spirituality and culture." This is to return to aristocratic absolutism and is totally backwards and destructive. Evola, like Donald Trump, is ridiculous of course. The tendency to create a corporate/religious form of theofascism is quite real and comes with modern corporate globalism, even though it is partly a reaction against this same globalism.. Perennialism is trivial compared to corporate culture, but they dovetail at important points and so it is instructive to compare them. This corrupt tendency should not be ignored, but brought into question and if possible held to account or stopped.

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## **f. Nietzsche, Traditionalism and Hierarchies of Hate.**

Nietzsche said that “God is dead”, and this sounds true when you first hear it. But God never actually lived, and never existed, so news of his death is greatly exaggerated. One cannot kill a fiction, which is not a

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<sup>357</sup> The advertising jingle that should go with Walmart, Hobby Lobby and other corrupt corporations is “ Jesus loves me this I know, because my bankbooks tells me so”. American Christianity is largely based on this hypocrisy. Christians should be helping the poor and taking from the rich, who are supposed to be allowed into the kingdom of heaven. It were easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a Walmart or Hobby Lobby president to even be glanced at by Jesus. There is no Jesus, but their own texts condemn them anyway.



living thing. It merely fades away, as the Greek gods did. No one misses them. What Nietzsche should have said is the illusion is over, the delusions are done. But he clung to his own delusions mightily, as Zarathustra shows. But Nietzsche's idea is right, the god idea is finished. It is not at all a bad thing, that the god delusion has died. The world is not an inferior vale of tears anymore, or a way station between here and the "next world", a place of "original sin" or the field of "samsara" in which all is a dreamy illusion or Maya and the ten thousand things. The world is the only factual place there is and it is our responsibility to take care of it. Religion is dying because we need to care for the world and the religious despise the world. This despising of the world is a serious part of what ails our world and must be overcome. Religions are counter-evolutionary in more than one way.

Nietzsche was an elitist who wanted to create of "master class" and believed in a 'slave morality' for those who were below the masters. He believed in a European version of the caste system and was prone to a biological determinism that overlaps with the Nazi idea of biological determinism. The problem with him is this class obsession and combined with his transcendentalism leads him to endorse cruelty, and this combination does indeed tie him as a sort of prototype for Nazi thinking. A great deal of ink has been used to say he is not a Nazi, and that is true, but he is a proto-Nazi, not unlike the traditionalists, who are post-Nazi far right thinkers.

Nietzsche is in many respects another anti-Darwinist, who sees the 'will to power' as the goal, rather than survival, which in Darwin's view would include altruism. Nietzsche is what would later be called a "social Darwinist" which has little or nothing to do with Darwin himself or the theory of evolution. Nietzsche likes cruelty, whereas Darwin abhors it, rightly, though he recognizes it exists and is part of nature. But he wishes to mitigate it as much as possible. Nietzsche wants no helping of others, but only glory for oneself, and this is very likely to lead not to

survival, but to bloodshed and war.<sup>358</sup> The Nazis were able to use him precisely because of these tendencies, quite apart from Nietzsche's sister, who distorted his work.

The relation of the traditionalists to Nietzsche is complex and ambiguous. But since Evola, while still in his earlier Nietzschean phase, called out for the creation of "a new human type...a being more the subject than the object, one who accepts those aspects of destruction which lead to a surmounting of individualism in favor of a new active impersonalism, towards a "heroic realism".<sup>359</sup> Zarathustra has much in common with the heroic idealizations of the traditionalists, from Guenon to Eliade.

It should be noted that Evola was not the only traditionalist to be influenced by Nietzsche. Ananda Coomaraswamy(AKC) devotes a whole chapter to him in his book Dance of Shiva, Pg. 141)\_where Coomaraswamy writes of the "beautiful doctrine of the Superman, so like the Chinese concept of the Indian Maha-Parusha Bodhisattva and Jivan Mukta". In other words AKC has a very idealized view of Nietzsche and says naively and mistakenly, that the "will to power has nothing to do with tyranny". But AKC is dreaming.

Indeed, in 1916 AKC quoted approvingly this statement of John Ruskin

My continual aim has been to show the eternal superiority of some men to others, sometimes even of one man to all others: and to

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<sup>358</sup> Nietzsche writes critically of Darwin that

"Man as a species does not represent any progress compared with any other animal. The whole animal kingdom does not evolve from the lower to the higher – brutal at the same time, in utter disorder, over and against each other. The richest and most complex forms – or the expression "higher type" means no more than this – perish more easily: only the lowest preserve an apparent indestructibility.(Nietzsche 1968, 363)

He really does not understand Darwin and how art is not negated by Darwin at all. What is negated by Darwin is a devotion to the irrational and brutal, such as Nietzsche admires. Darwin hopes for a species survival and social relations that help keep each other well.,

<sup>359</sup> Evola, Julius Il cammino del cinabro, Arche, Milan 1983 pp. 99 191-192).

show also the advisability of appointing such persons or person to guide, to lead, or on occasion to even compel and subdue their inferiors according to their own better knowledge and wiser will(Ruskin quoted in Coomaraswamy, 1916b: 453).<sup>360</sup>

This is Ruskin trying to mirror the views of the English aristocracy. Ruskin is a very mixed person. On the one hand he is an arch reactionary, hating modern life, democracy,<sup>361</sup> the ordinary, and on the other he was an interesting scientific artist, doing portraits of geological formations and Alpine valleys.<sup>362</sup> But AKC did not grasp these subtleties. He admired the reactionary in Ruskin, the world denying escapist who would go back to Byzantium or the “Stones of Venice”. The will to power that AKC admired in Ruskin is virtually identical to what he admired in Nietzsche. Nietzsche desired eugenic policies and as William Shirer recounts in his The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, Hitler took frequent sojourns to the Nietzsche museum in Weimar... Indeed, Shirer writes:

“There was some ground for this appropriation of Nietzsche as one of the originators of the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. Had not the philosopher thundered against democracy and parliaments,

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<sup>360</sup> This is quoted in Ed Crooks here:

[http://york.academia.edu/EdCrooks/Papers/1235766/John\\_Cages\\_Entanglement\\_with\\_the\\_Ideas\\_of\\_Coomaraswamy](http://york.academia.edu/EdCrooks/Papers/1235766/John_Cages_Entanglement_with_the_Ideas_of_Coomaraswamy)

<sup>361</sup> Ruskin’s relations with Turner are curious. He was Turner’s champion for a time, and loved even works like Turner’s anti-slavery painting, which he owned for over 20 years. But Turner was not a reactionary, being more of a libertine like Lord Egremont, or Lady Elizabeth Eastlake, who hated Ruskin. Turner appears to have loved her. In any case, Ruskin invented the story that Turner said on his deathbed that “the sun is god”. He said no such thing. He merely said to Mrs. Booth that he would like to see the sun again.

<sup>362</sup> Ruskin, Schuon and AKC have curious things in common. They all had a tendency to attraction or young women or pedophilia, they all reject the modern world and hate science and industry. Ruskin and Schuon both had tendencies to see themselves as children. In Ruskin’s case these tendencies came out later in life in extreme psychiatric form, encephalopathy or CADASIL. They are all politically reactionary. I do not know what conclusion to draw from these similarities,. They were all men who were deeply influenced by romanticism and the symbolist movement, and had reactionary an nostalgic and narcissistic tendencies, as well as a certain fascination with sexualized youth.

preached the will to power, praised war and proclaimed the coming of the master race and the superman—and in the most telling aphorisms? (100)”

There are a lot of apologists for Nietzsche, Walter Kaufman and many others, who try to white wash his proto-Nazi attitudes, but actually Nietzsche is quite as bad as the Nazi in many instances. For instance he says that

The party of life which takes in hand the greatest of all tasks, the higher breeding of humanity, together with the remorseless destruction of all degenerate and parasitic elements, will again make possible on earth that superfluity of life out of which the Dionysian condition must again proceed” <sup>363</sup>

This is the transcendental obsession that would lead to Auschwitz and other atrocities. The desire to be or make up a god which so obsessed Nietzsche, is what ties Nietzsche to AKC, Schuon, Jung, Campbell, Rilke and Hiedegger and other romantics. The desire to make or be a god also creates power drives, delusions of superiority and this leads to the desire for destruction. In the above quote Nietzsche involves the very ideology that would soon create Auschwitz and Dachau. So what is

Coomaraswamy thinking when he says at the end of this essay that

“those who have comprehended the decline and fall of Western civilization will recognize in Nietzsche the reawakening of the conscience of Europe”

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<sup>363</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, Penguin Books 1979, pg.81

This “reawakening” of conservative and aristocratic delusions was murderous in the extreme. AKC is invoking the theofascist paradigm. He did not know that is what he was doing and his followers do not know it either and would deny it. But what AKC wanted was that the “conscience of Europe” would “reawakened” to the misconstrued religious fictions of bygone centuries.. Well, anyone who has read AKC knows that what he means is that the medieval religions of Europe and India should be resurrected, the elitist social forms of the Kings and lords should return. He hoped that the Enlightenment be brought into disrepute. The poor should be put down, the rich reasserted as the Masters of Europe and the “parasites” gotten rid of..

All the traditionalists end up being devotees of dream worlds, living in a cocoon of imaginal delusions and supporting holocaustal solutions. Too bad AKC read Guenon and took him seriously. AKC was a mildly interesting man before that happened. He could have been a scientist. He could have been many things, but as Gandhi once implied, AKC ‘was more talk than action’. His son Rama writes to me as says I believe he was with Gandhi on the famous salt marches” AKC went astray because of Guenon. His ideal of ‘contemplation’ ends in allying him with the most reactionary forces. In the 1920-30’s AKC is revisiting the same Blavaskean and Guenonian theofascism that inspired Guenon and Evola and which is dimly involved in Hitler’s own claim to be a superman as well as Schuon’s claim to be an avatar.<sup>364</sup>

Schuon writes of Nietzsche with some affection in his book Having a

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<sup>364</sup> Patrick Ringgenberg notes in his Theories of Art in Traditional Thought, not yet published (pg. 370) that Coomaraswamy’s universalism is hollow and narcissistic. Like Guenon and Schuon AKC worked on the basis of a subjective elitism that is ultimately self-aggrandizing and self-magnifying. He pretends to a selfless universalism that is false and soon reveals itself and a romantic narcissism that vaults its fairy tale metaphysics up into a universal self-mirroring. Traditionalist theory of art and ideology, Ringgenberg says, is “founded on the axiom of a universalist metaphysics, by definition unchangeable and beyond time, this intellectual perspective did not permit fundamental questioning, and contented itself with repeating, in different terms, ... the opinions and options articulated by its founders.” Yes, this is good. Though Schuon’s art is actually an excessively individualistic art, hiding behind ego effacement.

Center. He is, as usual, remarking on his own characteristic obsession with his own delusions of elite status. Nietzsche loved the elite too. He was an extreme individualist reactionary and this is what ironically characterizes many traditionalists. Schuon recognizes that Nietzsche was demented<sup>365</sup>, as everyone must who has read Nietzsche's book Ecce Homo. But Schuon bends over quite far to prove that Nietzsche book Zarathustra was written as a "violent reaction of an apriori profound soul against a mediocre and paralyzing cultural environment... Nietzsche's misfortune like that of other men of genius, such as Napoleon, was to be born after the Renaissance and not before it." Schuon says virtually identical things about himself. Like Hitler Nietzsche and Schuon think they are a "god on a treadmill", as Schuon would describe himself. In short Schuon sees Nietzsche as a man like himself, since Schuon describes himself in virtually identical terms in his Memoirs. Of course he says also that Nietzsche lacks "discernment", which Schuon claimed, falsely, to possess in a superabundant degree. Schuon would not want to be lesser than anyone, of course, since he was such a 'humble' man, as he says in his late poems.<sup>366</sup> But by then he was trying to counter the legitimate criticisms of his delusion of grandeur.

In any case, theofascism is a common factor to Guenon, Schuon and Nietzsche--- none of them are exactly fascists, but they all go well beyond the fascists in their ambitions. They want to move the world backwards into the Dark Ages and claim that doing so will bring us to

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<sup>365</sup> There are arguments about what exactly Nietzsche suffered from, some say syphilis and other say an extreme form of manic depression. Incidentally, may have been homosexual, though that too is uncertain.

<sup>366</sup> Spiritual humility is an hypocrisy. Claiming to be humble to god while you proselytize and brow beat others with the black book is always an interesting behavior to watch. Missionaries go to countries they know nothing about to force others to believe their nonsense and they do it "humbly", like Dicken's Uriah Heap, who is always humble, while he harms everyone around him. .

the light. As M. Ali Lakhani writes in an essay echoing Coomaraswamy great praise for Nietzsche's theofascism, the

"Self that must be understood as the *Übermensch* (the Nietzschean "Superman"), as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy noted in his essay on Nietzsche, not the psychic or sensational self of common parlance or of the ill-termed "Nazi gnosis". The Nietzschean "Will to Power" or its Blakean equivalent of "Energy" (symbolized by the "Tyger" whose "immortal symmetry" cannot be framed) are thus to be understood strictly as faculties of the authentic Self or the "Inner Man", and not as the personal cravings or lower impulses of the "Outer Man". <sup>367</sup>

Lakhani is parsing distinctions without a difference here, as is common among the traditionalists. There is no "Self". That is a Hindu construction that is fiction, like the idea of god or gods. The notion of "higher" and lower self is a fiction constructed by ideology, as elementary brain science has shown. He unsuccessfully tries to defend traditionalism against Umberto Eco's correct charge that Guenon is basically an "Ur-fascist" writer. Guenon *is* an Ur-fascist and one can only prove he is not by either lying and pretending he isn't. Lakhani, who sympathizes with Ur-Fascism, states some basic premises of theofascism pretty well. He echoes Guenon more or less directly when he states "There is no outer order (or Beauty) without inner order (or Virtue), no legitimacy of hierarchy unless premised upon the spiritually-ordered structure of reality, which proceeds from the subtle to the gross, from spiritual substance to material form, in a "great chain of being" ( the GCB). In other words Lakhani invokes arcane, archaic and defeated justifications of aristocratic hierarchy. As Darwin showed, the world is

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<sup>367</sup> [http://www.sacredweb.com/articles/sw11\\_editorial.html](http://www.sacredweb.com/articles/sw11_editorial.html)

not at all like this. This is merely the delusional fantasy of an absolutist. Like all the traditionalists he is obsessed with hierarchy and thus with power, wishing to bring back the defeated power of centuries ago. He claims, humorously, that traditionalists are superior beings by universal fiat--- as did Guenon and Schuon. The reason for the GCB was so that Guenon and Schuon could be greatest and highest among humans, obviously. They are almost glowing angels themselves!

But jokes aside, Lakhani states that “there is no legitimacy of hierarchy unless premised upon the spiritually-ordered structure of reality” – well there is no demonstration of proof anywhere of any “spiritually-ordered structure of reality”, so the idea that hierarchy is legitimate is false. Hierarchy is not a legitimate concept. It is an invention that supports social inequality, greed or class obsessions. If ones studies the notion of “proof” in spiritual dogmas and assertions, it is clear it is based on erroneous analogies and blind assertions that are not proven at all. The saying in the Gospel myth of Jesus that “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” is the final fiat of religion, as this proves nothing at all, and offers rewards for unthinking allegiance and ignorance.

The Great Chain of Being---“GCB”-- is a discredited Platonic and Christian concept that expresses theofascism in a nutshell. It situates the male patriarchal god at the top, descending down a plethora of imaginary seraphim and angels, to man and beneath him, woman. Then snails, and the world condemned by the bogus concept of “original sin” etc. Darwin dispatched the silly idea of the “GCB” over 150 years ago with this Theory of Evolution. The ideology of the “ GCB” depended on the discredited Platonic notions of essences, castes and archetypes, which were proven not to exist when the growing dinosaur record demonstrated that species go extinct and are not eternal. Species also change radically over time and space through the process of adaptation and evolution. Lakhani argument is empty and circular. He does not



understand that most of the writers for his journal, Sacred Web, are far right fanatics and Ur Fascists of the same esoteric fundamentalism of which Eco speaks so brilliantly. They cannot see their own theofascism because they live enclosed in the delusion “GCB”, “Transcendent Unity”, and other esoteric fictions. The “GCB” is utterly discredited. It has been shown conclusively that all living things are not meaningfully classified in a single linear hierarchy.

But one doesn't expect these writers to have any self-reflective critical ability. They do not believe in reason and wish only to parrot the unquestioned dogmas of their Magisterial “great masters”, without thinking too deeply about what these pseudo-masters actually said and did. So when Guenon and Schuon to claim affiliation with Khadir, they are claiming to be beyond good and evil in the Nietzschean sense of a cloaked transcendental narcissism. Schuon's claim to be beyond the law and to follow an “intrinsic morality” is exactly analogous to Nietzsche's theofascism. Evola's claim that Guenon and Mussolini are alike is quite accurate, for the same reason. These are psychopathic men who claim divine rights, and the right to be the “divine executioner” in De Maistre's phrase. They are all puffed up, romantic and ridiculous claims, of course, but they have a sense. What crazy cult leaders and Guenon and Schuon do is indulge what has been called “crazy wisdom” or holy madness <sup>368</sup> and this is basically an excuse for some teachers to engage irresponsibly in self-indulgent behavior, doing harm to others without a hint of remorse.

What these claims really amount to is claims to power, or claims over life and death. That is what their “god” really is. That is what their claim to access to esoteric knowledge through the supersensible “intellect”

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<sup>368</sup> For more on this see Georg Feurstein's Holy Madness

Spirituality, Crazy-Wise Teachers, and Enlightenment. It is a questionable book but has interesting information in it.

really is all about. Guenon says that “intellectual intuition” is the “essential” principle <sup>369</sup>to which everything else must be referred”, and that all knowledge and social relations must be made subject to this claim to metaphysical knowledge through the Intellect so that “proper hierarchy must be everywhere and always preserved”.<sup>370</sup> This is pure bunk of course, since the intuitive intellect is guarantee of nothing but irrational dictates and subjective presumptions. The “Intuitive Intellect” in Guenon, Schuon, Evola and Nietzsche is an imposture, a “pathologically subjective” Guenon is merely grasping at totalitarian power through knowledge. What you get in Guenon and Schuon is irrational dictates and presumptions, and it was this irrationality and grasping at transcendent fictions, which they recognize in Nietzsche, since his book *Zarathustra* is exactly that. The drive for transcendent power leads them all to amorality. This leads them to see others as merely in the way. This hatred of individuals in favor of “principles” and the willingness to destroy those who stand in the way is common to all the Traditionalists. It is this that makes their beliefs poisonous. Evola hopes to achieve this trans-individual greatness, like Mussolini, who tried to imitate the Roman Caesars. Schuon thinks he is Caesar or Napoleon, as well as Plato, Shankara and perhaps Christ too.

Guenon and Evola came to realize that Theofascism and fascism were not quite the same thing at different times. Later in his career, after he has already invented theofascism, -- or ‘spiritual fascism’ as DiGiorgio called it--- Guenon thought that Nazism lacked the same principles

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<sup>369</sup> Chomsky writes that “As for “First Principles,” basing them on divinities is, I think, a very bad idea. That leaves anyone free to pick the “first principles” they choose on other grounds, and to disguise the choices as “what God commands. If it’s the warrior God of the Bible, the First Principles are horrendous ” Or it could be another god, such as the Zen idea of nothingness which as used by Zen priests to justify the massacres of World War 2—and so on. Guenon’s principles are nothing at all , just merely vague mythical generalities that he never makes clear. He creates grand ideas and then has no clue what they actually mean, they are merely glorified abstractions and mythic fabrications.

<sup>370</sup> Guenon, Rene. *The Crisis of the Modern World*. London:luzac 1975 pg. 37

which Evola praises it for. On March 28, 1937, Guenon writes to Ananda Coomaraswamy that “I agree with you [Coomaraswamy] on the subject of Fascism and similar regimes today, which seem to be in opposition to “democracy” but are, ultimately, just as devoid of real principles”.

Guenon was pleased that fascism was opposed to democracy, which he hated,<sup>371</sup> but he is disappointed that it lacks true ‘esoteric’ and ‘aristocratic principles’. Fascism with aristocratic principles would be fine by him, in short. For Guenon, a ‘principled’ theofascism is what is desirable. When Guenon says “principles”, he does not mean anything rational or thought through: he means arbitrary superstitions like Seraphim, “Beyond Being”, the absolute and Atlantis. He means irrational beliefs derived from Plato and caste-ridden Vedanta, Innocent the III and Dante’s sadistic Paradiso. Guenon takes a firm stand on make-believe, just as Dante does, creating a heaven that is as bloated and inflated as his hell is cruel and sadistic.

The difference between Guenon and Evola is a slight difference. Both men were devoted to “principles” at the expense of other humans if necessary. They “drew their line in the catacombs”, as Evola says somewhere. They sided with the non-existent dead against the living, and philosophized out of the Tombs. They take their stand on the ramparts of

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<sup>371</sup> A. Coomaraswamy loves aristocracy and hated democracy too as can be seen in this essay, where he justifies the horror of the Hindu caste system. “The Bugbear of Democracy, Freedom and Equality,” *The Bugbear of Literacy*, (Bedfont: Perennial Books, 1979), AKC hates America and its workers and says of them that “these great proletarian aggregates, whose members, exploited by one another, pullulate in “capitals” that have no longer any organic connection with the bodies on which they grew, but depend on world markets that must be opened by “wars of pacification” and continually stimulated by the “creation of new wants” by suggestive advertisement. “ Though elements of this are true is hardly a fair assessment of people in Boston or Cleveland. Then he notes that the American way of life “ is destructive of the more highly differentiated traditional societies in which the individual has a status determined by his function and in no sense merely by wealth or poverty” and he is speaking of the caste system. It is good that the caste system is being destroyed. What will replace it needs work, that is for sure, but AKC is totally wrong that the caste system was a good thing. He is also wrong about Plato and the idealization of craft. I admire craft a great deal and am a craftsman myself, much more than AKC was, but I would rather have a sewing machine that is well made by machines than a bad machine made by hand.

decayed metaphysical systems of make believe eternal values. They are both ideological totalists, that is, they would be willing to sacrifice anybody or anything to achieve the glory of their narrow beliefs. But they differ slightly on their interpretations of fascism. They both prefer it to democracy, but Guenon seems to have held out for an even more total philosophy of political control than Evola was able to imagine in the 1930's.. Evola is actually more liberal and open minded than Guenon. Evola was a transcendent fascist who was willing to work for the Nazis and did work with Mussolini, but for Guenon the fascists were not fascist enough, he wanted a Super-Duper Universal Spiritual Fascism. These men are only slightly different.

The answer to the question: are the Traditionalists Fascists?- is thus a complex matter because the Traditionalists are clearly related to the fascists in some respects, but not in others, as were Pound, Junger and others. The Traditionalists are 'spiritual fascists' or theofascists and not National Socialists is one way to put it. The Traditionalists are more concerned with creating doctrinal and symbolic forms of power which they hope will be actualized in the political domain, whereas the Nazis and Italian Fascists, using some of the ideas that also appealed to the Traditionalists, seized the social power that the Traditionalists only dreamed of. Therefore, despite the persistent tendency for the Traditionalists to link themselves up with or be associated by others with Fascism they are not Fascists in the ordinary sense, meaning they are not Italian or Germanic Fascists. Guenon claims that fascism is "just as devoid of principles" as democracy, and he thinks democracy is part of a diabolical plot. He wants a type of fascism based on a supra-religious, "transcendent unity" of all the religions., a universal fascism, a spiritual or sacred fascism as it were. Schuon wants this too.

Evola, later in his life, rejected the ordinary Fascist point of view and even condemned it along the same lines as Guenon and Schuon. He

writes:

“If one considers the results, the catastrophic consequences to which National Socialism led, even indirectly, those goals must have been obscure and destructive. One would have to identify the “occult side” of this movement with what Guenon called the “Counter-Initiation.” <sup>372</sup>

This is literally correct and what Guenon did write of it in some letters. But of course, one must ask, so what? What is Guenon’s idea of the “counter initiation” but a perversion of the fact that religions are failing and that is a good not a bad thing. In the Guenonian lexicon the “Counter-Initiation” is a satanically inspired conspiracy against the spiritual forces of “good”, in short it is a political insurrection against orthodox political monarchism. That is a good thing. But for Guenon, virtually the entire modern world is loosely connected in this vast conspiracy to subvert the occult spirituality of traditional ideologies. But since Satan is as much a delusion as God, so what? Guenon’s analysis is specious. To take these mytho-political statements seriously is ridiculous.

So, clearly, despite affinities, the Traditionalists did not become Nazis or Italian Fascists in the ordinary sense, even if some of them were allied with it at various points. They are even further to the right than the Nazi’s. “Theofascism” is a fascism that goes far beyond the very limited and “profane” fascism of Hitler. Those who try to say that traditionalism is not fascism are correct but mistaken. Traditionalism is more than fascism, it is meta-fascism, it is the fascist heart of fascism, as it were, a theofascism, what H.T. Hansen calls “super-Fascist” ---the insane and primordial ‘soul’ of fascism. Again, “Fascism” becomes traditionalism

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<sup>372</sup> From *Il Conciliatore*, no. 10, 1971; translated from the German edition in *Deutsche Stimme*, no. 8, 1998

after world War II. In short the war mongering and human rights hating, Chimpanzee side of Guenon was patrolling the borders of what he thought was knowledge, and he was more than happy to have violence done to serve his need of totalistic power. Darwin explains Guenon quite well. Guenon is merely a political animal, on the one hand, though I hesitate to compare him to animals at all.

Guenon left his fascist friends at Action Francaise and became even more universal in his drive for repressive government and denial of basic Enlightenment values like human rights and democracy. It might be useful here for comparative purposes to discuss Martin Lings' and Schuon's reactionary political-mysticism in a little more detail. It will add to the considerable trove of evidence that shows that Evola, Guenon and Schuon and other traditionalists are all theofascists and there is little difference between them in "principle". So the next two chapters will discuss the politics of Lings and Schuon.

## **On the Theofascism of Martin Lings and his Endorsement of Franco**

Let's look at another example of the meshing of political and religious mentalities in view of justifying cruelty in the metaphysics of power. Martin Lings (1909-2005) is often presented as a gentle, poetical man, saintly and scholarly. It is true he was poetic in some ways, a romantic lost in dreams of spirituality.<sup>373</sup> But he was no saint, or even a

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<sup>373</sup> Lings was important to the formation of the Matheson Trust, a "charity" that was set up in England to propagandize the Theofascist ideas of Lings, Schuon and others. Notable in its

very strong or good person. Before I really understood it, I liked the poetical quality in him in the various long meetings I spent with him over a number of years. But then I saw the other side of him, a side most people don't see. It must not be forgotten that behind the mild exterior was the same ridiculous ideology that Schuon and Guenon followed. Indeed, Lings spent many years with Guenon before spending even more years slavishly attached to Schuon. He was self-indulgent and narcissistic. He was strangely catty too, and turned on people who refused to worship Schuon. Indeed, he was not a "primordialist" but he was quite willing to cover up for Schuon's wrongs and he was a faithful administrator the Schuon cult in England. He was a weak man whose whole being revolved around a need of powerful father figures--- theofascist father figures, in fact.

Lings is the most "quintessential" traditionalist. He spent more time with both Guenon and Schuon than anyone, absorbing their theofascism and love of the irrational. While I think there was a gentleness in his nature before he ever got into religion, his encounter with them made him accept some pretty awful things. He was himself a rather ruthless person, despite the pose of gentleness. Indeed. Lings was a fascist and says so publicly. Just as Schuon supported Japanese imperial fascism (I will discuss this later), Lings supported the Spanish Fascist Franco, whose right-wing dictatorship, exterminated people who dissented against or disagreed with his autocratic reign. I will speak

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publications is the theofascist text of Jean Hani, a far right French Platonist and theofascist.. His book Sacred Royalty: From The Pharaoh to The Most Christian King is a 1984 book. Jean Hani revisits the heroes of theofascism and has been translated by Schuon former autocrat and immoralist Gustavo Polit who has evidently returned to the cult after years of embarrassed exile. Hani is a Platonist a sort of worshiper of Guenon. Hani hates the wise and forward looking naturalistic philosophers of the Enlightenment, which he sees, wrongly, as evil. Hani wants political power to return to sacred theofascists and arbitrary dictators such as Egyptian Pharaohs, the Emperors of China or Japan, the "Kingship" of Christ, Holy Roman Emperor, King of France and so on. He wants public recognition that bogus the power of kings comes from bogus gods. Hani wants to return good old days of Innocent the III the Inquisition and dictators and violators of human rights. As a Christian theofascist it is understandable that Lings's Matheson Trust would publish this book since Lings supported the Christian fascist Franco

about more of that in a minute.

However, before I look at Martin Lings I should say a few things about Lings and Guenon. Guenon is a fiction writer who is not worth reading by anyone who cares about the reality of our world. He is a writer who has a certain charisma, but he is insane and full of magical delusions. I have discussed Guenon with followers of his who knew him, such as Whitall Perry and Martin Lings, as well as Schuon. I have found that many people think these men praiseworthy. But they did not know them or observe them closely. With the exception of Guenon I observed these men closely and in person. They were rather less than saintly and perhaps rather perfidious. Lings, Perry, Schuon and others all spoke disparagingly of Guenon to me, behind the back of the praise they wrote about him in public. All these people were very critical of Guenon and accused him of obsessiveness and paranoia. They had to praise Guenon in public because to criticize him is to cast doubt on themselves, since they believe the same questionable rubbish. In private none of them liked each other much and they bickered and back bit each other. A hint of Ling's dislike of Guenon, as well as his awareness that the man was mentally ill, comes out, despite himself perhaps, in his essay about him. In it he says that

“Guénon was extremely secretive and would not give his actual address to anybody; he wanted to disappear. He had enemies in France and he suspected that they wished to attack him by magic. I do not know this for certain but I know that Guénon was very much afraid of being attacked by certain people and he wished to remain unknown, to sink himself into the Egyptian world where he was.”<sup>374</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> <http://evans-experientialism.freewebspace.com/lings02.htm>



I spent a good deal of time talking to Lings about many things. Like Joseph Epes Brown, Ling's seemingly gentle disposition when you first meet him was deceptive. Brown and Lings were my favorite traditionalists back in the late 1980's and early 1990's. That was before I got to know how perfidious this entire cult was, and how these men would defend their delusions to the teeth. Once I learned more about them and saw they were unreflective followers primary interested in their 'legacy', I saw their apparent manner was superficial.

Lings was certainly not a "saint" as some humorously claim,<sup>375</sup> but of course, I do not subscribe to anyone's notion of hagiography anymore. There are no saints. Hagiography is merely spiritual advertising, ----- that is what all those pictures of saints in Russian orthodox churches or Buddha's in Tibetan temples are all about. St. Francis and Seraphim of Sarov are example of self-mesmerism, beatific quietude that teaches passivity and a certain willingness to accept hierarchy with grace and thoughtlessness. Priests wrote the mantra "Om Mani Padme Hung" on rocks all over Tibet and Nepal and this is all the an advertising formula for a priesthood. There may have been sweet people like Seraphim of Sarov, but such people can appear anywhere minus the myths that are told about Russian saints. There have been sweet cobblers, machinists, river pilots, prostitutes and janitors. Indeed, it is more likely to find people of kindness in the lower classes than the higher ones.

So in any case, it became clear to me over time that Lings lived a very sheltered life from himself. He had been "fired" as Guenon's secretary, by Guenon himself, a little known fact. Guenon suspected him

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<sup>375</sup> I have met quite a few young Muslims who are all too willing to fall into any pattern of cultic praise for people they do not know, such a Lings. Lings was not a "saint", though he was good at certain pretenses and acting certain parts for others. Islam and its cult of Muhammad prepares them for this willingness to fall into adulation. He wrote a book called Sufi Saint of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, which is an attempt to beatify an Sufi teacher who Schuon also exploited as advertisement for himself.

of theft and spying, perhaps not without reason. Guenon had disliked Schuon's rather bizarre view of the Virgin Mary; -- Schuon's Virgin is really a romantic fiction: it is more a symbolist painting of an undressed temple prostitute than 'virgin'. In any case, Lings left Guenon and clung to Schuon. So, he was already living an awkward life trying to silence his own intuitions and understandings about things in order to get along with Guenon and Schuon who were really two Prima Donnas—or men with huge egos. Lings adapted. Like Schuon he thought he was a holy Sufi and claimed the “Sufi is uncreated” and thus more or less a god. Claiming to be uncreated was a way to exalt himself and indulge the characteristic perennialist pride that infects all the disciples of Guenon.

Lings lived his life in poetic fragments suspending himself in between Guenon and Schuon. That was his world and he was fastened to the dogmas and could not be budged. He could not want to face reality of the falseness of Schuon and the fraudulent character behind the poetry he saw in perennialism. I spoke with him at length about his color theories, for instance, which appear in his book Symbol and Archetype.<sup>376</sup> His ideas were derived from Schuon and Rumi and I could see how his mind worked. Schuon's ideas are derived from religious prejudice and essentialist projections. He really wasn't that bright and was prone to dogmatic assertions derived from Guenon or Schuon. He didn't understand color and simply took traditional symbolic ideas about color from Schuon and Medieval periods and generalized about that and in a way that had a certain charm, but which was without any empirical merit. He abused color phenomena as a schema to express dogmatic ideology.

Schuon didn't understand much about color either. They both

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<sup>376</sup> This is a very Platonist book and reveals Lings to be an extremely retrogressive thinker who really belongs in the middle ages. I studied this book in respect of its theory of color which is incredibly backward and wrong-headed, pre-Newtonian and based on many misunderstandings and superstitions.

merely processed bookish, symbolist and abstract ideas and had no concrete understating of color and its actuality. Indeed, they scoffed at color in its concrete actuality and were only interested in its symbolism, which has no reality to it. Archetypes are merely wooden essentializations. The associated color symbolically with virtues and qualities, when it has nothing to do with that. Like Rumi, Schuon and Lings associated color with women and women are all “color and scent”. Or they agreed with the Tao Te Ching that states that “the five colors makes men’s eyes blind”. They made ignorant pronouncements to me about color as being Maya. Color is not illusion. Maya is a delusion and akin to animals. For anyone who has any real knowledge of animals it is not a disparagement to say people are animals. But sexism and speciesism often go together is patriarchal and speciesist males. Lings’ effort to force colors into a Schuonian artificial symbolism is part of the tacit misogyny and speciesism. Color is not at all symbolic. Black and white red and green mean totally different things in different cultures. Color is about life and not about religion. Understanding it begins with Newton, not with religion, which has little of value to say about it if anything at all that is useful. To begin understand beyond Newton is to begin to learn about the amazing factuality of or earth and its many moods. I learned next to nothing about color from Lings or Schuon and talked to them both about it in depth. I have learned a great deal about color form nature, and the sun. Color is not the opposite of light as traditional systems claim, but an expression of light. One can only begin to appreciate color and he beauty of it, when one sees that it is a physical fact and not in any way symbolic.

Furthermore, I came to grasp that Lings was largely ignored and used by Schuon’s entourage in a cynical way. They thought he was a nuisance, though a necessary one, and regularly lied to him. They really despised him though affected to like him. There was a flurry of nasty backbiting in Schuon’s intimate entourage whenever he came to town.

The same is true of Nasr, who Schuon also despised. Lings would come visit Bloomington every year and stay at an extra house the Perry's owned, across the street from Schuon's house. At that point in time, Schuon was spending most to his time and a lot of the cult's money (\$500,000) having his followers build a house his "forth wife", Sharlyn Romaine, which was three or four houses down Schuon's side of the street. In between Schuon's house and Romaine's house (where the primordial gatherings were held), there would be large Muslim gatherings at Stanley Jones' house. Jones had a large room built on his house and this was called the "Zawiah" or prayer house. The Sufi gatherings were held here that were nominally about Sufism, though the women all wore Hindu Saris. Schuon had partly abandoned Islam by now (1991). When Lings was in town, these gatherings were meant to impress Lings and I went to many Majlis as these were called, where Lings was present. He was feted and was duly impressed. These Majlis continued the whole time I was in Bloomington, but Schuon showed up more and more rarely. The cultic center of Schuon's interest had shifted to nudity and primordial gatherings. But when Lings was there Schuon's disciples made deliberate efforts to act as if this 'dimension' did not exist.

The 'wives' of Schuon were all a flutter about how to conceal the reality of secret "primordial" gatherings from Lings while he was in town. I was told explicitly that we must all lie to Lings and cover-up the existence of Schuon's Primordial Gatherings, the "Indian dimension" and Schuon's cult of nudity because Lings was 'opaque', as the wives would say. He could not understand why Schuon was worshipped by nude or semi- nude women in secret gatherings, they claimed. People were told to take down there nude icons of Schuon hanging in their living rooms. Lings would not understand the exposed penis. The more sexual nude Virgin Marys were also taken down when Lings came for dinner. I had done a painting of an Icon of the Virgin Mary copied from the famous Virgin of Vladimir in Russia and Schuon liked it and sent it all over.

Many of the cult houses had a copy of that to put on their wall when Lings or Nasr would show up for dinner at their houses.



On Schuon's insistence, my Icon was thus used as a sort of lie, whereby Schuon's followers could put it up in their houses when people who were not in the cult came over, to make these people think they were good Christians or anthropologists or something. . My art was being used to lie to others. This was a hint of the abusive mistreatment that was to come to Maude and I a year later.

I did not do this work to have it used in this way. It was clear I was supposed to be grateful for this abuse however. I was studying religious art of many kinds and copying was a way of understanding it. I gave it to

Schuon with the intent of sharing this understanding and showing what I could do in view of studying painting with him. He invited me to study with him but gave the painting back as I had done an exact copy of the Vladimir Icon and Schuon did not like that I “imitated the accidents”, namely the worn off gold leaf and cracks on the surface of the icon. So we wanted me to change it. This is the altered image.

It became clear to me though my study of art with Schuon that his approach to beauty was really an exploit.<sup>377</sup> He was trying to set up a rule of power over his followers and the Icons functioned to call them to order and obedience as focal points in their house. His need for them to worship his body was really part of a need to control them. The Icons were an extension of the worship of his body that he demanded at Primordial gatherings. I realized that this power play is what Icons have always done, be they from Tibet or Byzantium.<sup>378</sup>

I did not lie about his painting, but Schuon wanted everyone else

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<sup>377</sup> Schuon says that his Virgin Mary paintings are not just the virgin but “femininity as such” – he did not like the image of the mother, as he explained to me. He saw the Virgin as his lover. And the Christ child in these works is Schuon himself, in his capacity as the pinnacle of the “devotion of all the world’s Prophets” as he says in a poem. In another works Schuon Icons are porno-spiritual images of his own divinity. In later years he tried to hide this behind protests that the Icons not be worshiped when he himself set up the certainty that they would be worshiped. The Icons of Schuon are advertisements of his transcendent delusions, records of delusions of grandeur. The cults later efforts to cover up for the Icons and deny they are object of worship is part of the their incessant campaign of lies and public relations, which I have documented elsewhere.

<sup>378</sup> Even the effort to outlaw Icons as in Byzantine culture is mostly about control of minds. In 754 the “Iconoclastic council” stated that “we declare in the name of the Holy Trinity, that there shall be rejected and removed and cursed, every likeness which is made out of any material and color whatever by the evil art of painters.... Whoever dare to makes such a thing.. shall be anathematized...” This idiotic pronouncement, condemning all art is an attempt to control minds and thoughts, and impoverish the imagination with only those images which serve the priests and churches. This tyranny over images is also a virtual dogma in Islam. It doesn’t matter if images are controlled by exclusion as in Islam or by saturation as in Christian crucifixions or endlessly multiplied Hindu gods. Domination is of one kind of imagery or the absence of imagery, in either case--- it is control that is the purpose of art, reflecting the power to the upper classes. Corporate art, or abstract art, which likewise excludes so much, is yet another form of fanatical control. I saw how this worked concretely in Schuon’s world. It permanently discredited his art for me. I had an Icon of his which was given to me by Maude Murray, which I gave back to her for nothing, when Maude said it was worth 10,000 dollars,--- that is how much I was sure of its emptiness.

to do so. But there were lies Schuon's "wives" told me to tell and I disliked doing that intensely. Indeed, I refused to do so.<sup>379</sup> I once even invoked Thomas More's silence rather than lie.<sup>380</sup>

I disliked Ling's obliviousness to all this too. I think he pretended not to know others in the cult lied to him. He could not be as stupid as he sometimes seemed. Perhaps he was on good behavior, and knew he was being lied too, but also wanted to be in Schuon good graces and so put up with it. He was still in hot water with Schuon.

A few years earlier Lings had given ear to a group of folks led by Cyril Glasse, who had turned against Schuon for various valid reasons. The Schuon group punished Lings for sympathizing with them. A few nasty letters from Schuon were sent to Lings in January 1989, which told him that Glasse's group were in a satanic "conspiracy" against Schuon. This was Maude's idea, which was odd since she had been having an affair with one of Glasse's group for a few years. While being "married" to Schuon she was having an affair with one of his followers.

The inner circle of the cult was very corrupt and Lings must not know about it, was Schuon's reasoning. Lings must not support them. So they risked Lings having to leave the cult. The people that questioned Schuon were branded as satanic and diabolic. Catherine Schuon even

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<sup>379</sup> I was told to lie about various things. For instance I was told to lie to Whitall Perry by Catherine Schuon, because Perry had asked me to read one of his manuscripts. Schuon hated Perry's writing and Catherine Schuon had had a 10 year affair with Perry while Schuon was sleeping with Perry's wife, so there was bad blood between all these people. I read the manuscript and could not really lie about it to Perry. I said what I was told to keep silence about it like Thomas More. This was not a lie and did not fool Perry, who immediately saw I had been meddled with by the Schuons. I was not able to lie. But the inner circle of the cult was so corrupt that it was really impossible to negotiate among all these people without getting into trouble. The whole place was a cesspool of lies, affairs, divorces, cruelty and pretenses. Two of Schuon's "wives" were found guilty and arrested for perjury in 1991, Romaine and Murray.

<sup>380</sup> There is a tendency to picture Thomas More as a saint. I don't think he was. Evidently, he had a number people burned at the stake when he was a Chancellor and was a fanatic against the Protestants. This is not to justify his beheading, but merely to say he was a brutal man caught in a brutal time.

said that they should be killed. I have Schuon's letter to Lings at this time and Schuon writes to Lings that if Lings continued to support these people he could found his own Tariqa or brotherhood. In other words Schuon was trying to blackmail Lings and Nasr into agreeing to shun a group of people who were opposed to rather crazy developments in the Schuon cult. It was a successful bit of blackmail and Lings caved in and shunned those who were questioning Schuon. It was around this time that the nudist primordial gatherings had started. Lings joined the cruel shunning and kowtowed to Schuon, showing he was loyal to unjust authority and not to the truth. He should have left Schuon, as that would have shown character, but Lings was a very weak man and needed Schuon as a sort of surrogate dictator. He endorsed Franco and he loved Schuon: Lings loved theofascist dictators.

What Lings did not know was that Cyril Glasse's revolt against Schuon's primordialism in 1987-89 was well informed. One of the members of the group who openly questioned Schuon also had had an affair Maude Murray, as I said. This led to these men knowing a great deal about the inner working of Schuon's mind and personal proclivities as well as the rather sordid inner circle of the cult and how it really operated. The fact that Maude was sleeping with one of them was really an indication that the cult needed a shakeup. Schuon was unable to care for his "wives" and neglected them, indeed, they were not wives at all. These "mafia" as the rebels were wrongly called, were objecting to the corruption inside the inner circle. As I said they were branded falsely as "evil". Glasse and others close to him went to Lings and Nasr for help. Maude Murray, then Schuon third wife, helped Schuon draft a reply to Lings and Nasr saying that they must either regard Glasse and his friends as evil—or "satanic"—or leave the cult. Schuon despised Glasse because Glasse did not much like Schuon's cult of his own divinity. He had learned from Maude and direct observation that Schuon was mostly hot air and self-aggrandizement. Nor did Glasse like Gustavo Polit a



pedophile who Schuon handpicked as his right hand man. Lings, again playing the coward, complied with the blackmail and shunned Glasse and his friends. Nasr did too. Both of them showed themselves to be cowards who would go along with Schuon's corruptions and covered up and lie for him.

Cyril Glasse and his friends, ( Paul Yachnes, David Lake, Victor and Mary Ann Danner and many others) were all fine men and women. Yes, like me that had been led astray by vain spiritual hopes and superstitions. But they were all used to help solidify Schuon's power over the cult relative to Lings and Nasr and their respective followers. This was a political ploy. Indeed, in Schuon letter to Lings of Jan. 1989 Schuon complains that it is hard 'to be a 'Monarch'. The Poor Prophet, modeling himself on the cruelties of Muhammad, must blackmail his followers into obedience. Indeed, the letters to Lings and Nasr were sent all over the world not just to Lings and Nasr, precisely because Schuon needed to intimidate the whole cult. His persistent delusions of grandeur never quit. He liked having power and acted as thug and threw well-meaning people out of his cult. They could not be allowed to question things he was doing that were clearly unbalanced. There was plenty of reason to question the authority of such a crazy leader and try get real answers to questions about Schuon's very bizarre behaviors. If Schuon had been a decent man he would have dealt with the fair questions raised with reason and openness. The insurrection against him in 1987 was a just one. Schuon was doing crazy things that needed explanation and rather than explain it he tried to brow beat and threaten the whole group into submission by means of lying and blackmail. It reverberated for years to come. Indeed, it was a precursor to Schuon's public exposure as a fraud that occurred in 1991, in which many people were involved, including those who left Schuon in 1987.

Much of the force behind the 1987 reaction against Schuon was really about the inner decadence that pervaded the whole group,

radiating from Schuon himself. There were superficial changes, the trend to replace Islamic forms with Native American things. The songs sung in Majlis or Islamic gatherings were becoming more native American.

Gustavo Polit invented a chant that sounds half native American half Muslim. None of this bothered me but it bothered others. Also, Schuon had been taking other men's wives since at least 1965, probably before. Several of Schuon's "wives" were unfaithful to him because he was an impossible husband, could not be trusted and was more than willing to lie and cover up his affairs. They did the same thing he had done. They took other men just as he took other women. So the inner corruption of the group came forth from Schuon's own confusion and psychology.

There was a man who was in the group that Glasse led in 1987, Glasse had a long affair with Maude Murray for two years while she was married to Schuon. Maude and I discussed this affair at great length. A relationship with Schuon was really one of service rather than love. Maude never really loved Schuon, she "loved" him as a sort of obligatory devotion or service. She called herself a "devadassi, or temple prostitute, speaking of her relation to Schuon. She lived with John Murray but their physical relations had ended years before, and she considered herself divorced from him. So when she had an affair with Cyril Glasse, it was her only real relationship. Schuon's relations with others were dysfunctional, and there were problems in every direction all around him. One of the wives, the first one, Catherine, had had a ten year affair with Whitall Perry. Schuon was incapable of ever discussing his own fallible nature, since he was sure he was infallible.<sup>381</sup> This made him impossible and unable to feel remorse about his actions. Since he could never admit wrong about anything, everything he did was perfect, even if it wasn't. His relationships were clearly a mess, but he alone did not see

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<sup>381</sup> He did say once that he can be "wrong about a menu in a Chinese restaurant" but "I cannot be wrong about principles" This is nonsense, since the "principles" he likes to quote are all fiction anyway.

what a mess it was.

So, Schuon's actual wife was sleeping with his second wife's husband, while he was sleeping with the second wife. The third "wife" was sleeping with Glasse, at the same time and sometimes on the same day she was sleeping with Schuon, according to Maude. What a mess this was. Glasse was learning a lot about primordial gatherings, nudism and Schuon's Avataric delusions of grandeur. Glasse told me he feels guilty for "committing adultery" with Maude. He was wrong to think this. Actually there was no adultery. Maude was not really married to Schuon at all and she was effectively separated from Murray. Glasse did nothing wrong.<sup>382</sup>

She was a lonely woman caught in a terrible cult and trying to find a way to get out. There is nothing to feel guilty about. Schuon was not married to these women and the husbands of these women had already relinquished their wives to sleep with another, on Schuon's insistence. As I said, Catherine, was sleeping with one the cuckolded husbands, Whitall Perry, whose wife had been stolen by Schuon in 1965 as his "second wife", Schuon more or less stole his 4<sup>th</sup> wife from a follower too; and the 2<sup>nd</sup> wife had tried to give her daughter to Schuon as a sexual present. The 3<sup>rd</sup> wife had had two affairs cuckolding Schuon.. In short, the immediate 'esoteric' inner circle of the cult was a cesspool of intrigue and wife swapping.<sup>383</sup> No one really cared about anyone and the whole arrangement was there to support the delusions of Schuon, a sociopath, if ever there was one. The "primordial gatherings" were a natural

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<sup>382</sup> I never felt any jealousy about Maude's romance with Cyril Glasse. I understood why she did it, and how Schuon as not a lover so much as a burden to Maude. Maybe it means I did not love Maude very much, Perhaps, but more likely, all these things were strangely unreal to me, as Schuon lived in a dream world of delusions and all those close to him did too. I was in it very briefly and was lucky to get out so quickly. It was all a bad dream really and those who blame me for anything in this world of bizarre mirrors does not understand what it all was.

<sup>383</sup> The only wife of Schuon's that was faithful, sort of, was Barbara Perry, but then she tried to give Schuon her own daughter as a sexual present, so this was hardly a real faithfulness unsullied by corruption. Giving your daughter to your lover is a very corrupt act.

outgrowth of the inner corruption of the cult. Schuon wanted to claim all the women, but to keep them married to other men, so he would not have to be responsible. All this was kept from Lings who knew hints of it, but averted his ears and eyes and would not listen to the truth, even when he was told directly about it, as I told him about it. Lings was sure that the inner circle propaganda that Schuon was an great prophet and avatara must be true. He even fooled himself and his followers that Schuon was a celibate.

This active refusal to listen became a major part of Ling's career. Hear no evil see no evil. He was a man of no moral backbone at all. So when I tried to tell Lings about the corrupt inner decadence that emanated from Schuon himself into the inner circles of the cult, he could not believe it, and denied it vociferously like a man about to drown in his own self-deceptions. It was an amazing thing to watch just how hoodwinked and brainwashed Lings was by Schuon. I told him many first hand eye witnessed facts and he denied them one after the other like a brainwashed Stalinist. He was so adamant in his will to delude himself. I lost total respect for him and learned what an utter coward he was. Yes, this was the man that loved the dictator Franco of Spain, and held Franco up as what a political leader should be. Lings loved the theofascist who would like to keep power. Franco was like Schuon in many ways. Experiences with minds under deep delusion became very common in my life during those years. I lost many dear friends to their refusal to look at reality.

Martin Lings' servile adulation of Schuon is evident in Ling's book The Eleventh Hour. There he ends to books by saying that Schuon books demonstrate "all the positive qualities that belong to the end of the age" and that also that Schuon is the "light that is primordial as well as

terminal” <sup>384</sup>. In other words, Schuon---- who was really a rather nasty, selfish and deluded old man, who hated science and wants to use women as a throne to admire himself upon,---- is a summation of the ‘primordial light’ as well as the “terminal” light that will come when the clock strikes twelve and apocalypse is unleashed. Lings is claiming Schuon is almost the second coming of Christ, the first and last man, the summit of the human species, as Schuon called himself. This is all utterly ridiculous. I mention it merely to show the lengths to which Lings was willing to delude himself. Indeed, this is what religion is, these willed delusions, these arrogant and unwarranted assumptions in denial of all evidence. This is blind belief as irrational politics.

Lings was living in a poetic dream about Islam and Schuon rather despised that as “sentimental voluntarism”, but Lings could not know that Schuon held nudist gatherings. <sup>385</sup> When I told Lings on the phone in 1991 about how he had been duped by Schuon all these years and explained the Primordial Gatherings to him in detail he showed me his true colors. Facts and evidence did not matter to him. I told him verbatim things I had seen with my own eyes. He denied what I said—he even said I was lying, and said it could not be true, and I made it up. I wish I had made it up. He cowered into a hole. He was locked into the jail of his dogmas and delusions. I could see it around him like the Tower of

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<sup>384</sup> Lings Martin. The Eleventh Hour. UK Quintessentia, 1987 pg. 93. Lings calls Schuon the “restorer” in this book, compares him to Elias and Leo Schaya’s rather silly idea that Schuon has a prophetic function, that he is the last prophet before the coming of Christ at the end of the world. Lings goes even further and verges on trying to say that Schuon is the final prophet before the second coming, he even implies he might be the second coming. This is ridiculous myth making occurs at a very advanced stage of self-delusion. It is worth studying as sort of template of how many religions get started by someone lying to themselves about the cult leader, just as Lings lies to himself here. How many lies were told after the man they called Jesus died? Buddha, Muhammad. In the case of the latter there is a lot of evidence that a great deal of the history about Muhammad is pure fabrication. It is virtual certain this is the case of other religious figures too.

<sup>385</sup> Lings Life of Muhammad is a good example of sentimentality. The book is based on a lot of bogus sources, such as the Hadith, which are known to be forgeries written up to a few hundred years after the person they call Muhammad might have lived. Lings writes as if all the myths about Muhammad were true, when most likely few if any of them are.

London enclosing his brain. He insisted I had not seen with my own eyes what in fact I had seen with my eyes. Probably cult members had coached him to think me insane. They were going around saying I was insane and evil, homosexual and psychotic, as part of their damage control campaign. I spoke calmly and reasonably to him about the truth, but he preferred to hang up on me rather than deal with the truth of it. His blinkered vision triumphed, he protected his ignorance and he kept delusions sacrosanct behind a wall of lies. I got off the phone utterly disgusted with him and totally convinced that the truth does not matter to him at all. I no longer respected him either. I couldn't.

Schuon's blackmailing magic had worked on Lings as on Nasr, Maude and so many others. Lings said he "had high hopes" for me and said he was "very disappointed" to see me turn against Schuon--- as if it were my fault that the cult had lied to him for all those years. ---As if it were my fault Schuon held nudist gathering of thought he was a divine being. He could not face that Schuon had orchestrated lying to him for many years. He had lived in a fictional land of poetry and lying to himself for so long he could not get out of it. He stayed in his delusions until his death. So much of religion is about living in lands that deny reality and float one in a never-land of fictions and delusions.

Ling's public declarations about Guenon are likewise partly myth and fiction. In private he told me he thought Guenon was a highly disturbed and paranoid person. In any case, the combined influence of years spent with Guenon and with Schuon took a terrible toll on Lings' mind. In Ling's book, The Eleventh Hour: the Spiritual Crisis of the Modern World in the Light of Tradition and Prophecy, he speaks of favorite apocalyptic ideas of the traditionalists, implying Schuon is some sort of final avatar, as I said. But further than this, while building up to the apotheosis of Schuon, he voices traditionalist ideas of governance and politics. This is where he expresses his highest approval of the Spanish fascist Francisco Franco, echoing Schuon's ideas and political

interests. Franco was the longest lasting exponent of European fascism. He shows his contempt for democracy and his love of Islamic theocracy in way typical of Schuon and Guenon. After explaining that principled autocracy is the preferred form of government based on Guenon and Schuon's ideas. Among modern leaders, the creator of the Spanish Holocaust, is the one to pick. Lings writes that:

“Franco re-established a principled autocracy. That is, a Christian kingdom with himself as regent, thus saving his country from a communist dictatorship”<sup>386</sup>

Lings and the traditionalists admired this monster of fascism. Hundreds of thousands of people suffered under his dictatorial rule. He thought he was chosen by God to rule Spain. Franco was a right wing authoritarian Catholic with ties to Hitler and Mussolini during the Spanish Civil War and who continued to rule Spain for many years after the war. He was a brutal killer, not just of men, but of whales and birds. He admired the Nazis and tried to imitate them. As Paul Preston show in his biography of Franco, Franco had royal pretensions, hated liberal democracy, was a backward leaning fanatic of tradition and was obsessed with Freemasonry. He relied heavily on executions of his enemies, repression, and control of the press. He was a tyrant, in short. Indeed Franco is the longest surviving fascist of the World Wars. By admiring him, Lings is admiring ‘quintessential’ fascism. Eugenio Pacelli, “Hitler’s Pope” and the favorite Pope of Schuon and Rama Coomaraswamy, had also supported Franco’s fascism in the 1940’s. Pablo Neruda, Federico Garcia Lorca, Noam Chomsky, Ernest Hemingway, César Vallejo, George Orwell, Arthur Koestler and just about anyone sane or reasonable has opposed Franco. The destruction of the left during the Spanish Civil War was a

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<sup>386</sup> The Eleventh Hour: the Spiritual Crisis of the Modern World in The Light of Tradition and Prophecy, "Cambridge UK. Quintaessentia 1987. Pg, 42d

horrendous act that destroyed hope of freedom for many. It is believed that at least 200,000—250,000 people were executed or killed by Franco. Hundreds of thousands more were forced to flee fascist Spain because of this monster Martin Lings loved and admired. If anyone doubts the fascist nature of traditionalist this is absolute proof that they are wrong. Lings, the most mild and gentle of the traditionalists, was a flaming fascist.

Lings liked Franco because Franco was a far right catholic. Lings does not care how many Franco killed. Schuon thought this way too. Lings likes Franco because he created a quasi-Platonic state and because “Plato’s state is in fact a theocracy” as Lings says in another book.<sup>387</sup> Lings wants to combine the virtues of Franco’s fascism with Plato, which is what Evola and Guenon all wanted in slightly differing modes and emphasis. A Catholic state that banned his books and murdered Garcia Lorca, the great Spanish poet, eliminates free speech and supports a fascism state and church---that is what Lings admires. It is impossible to respect a man who has such ideas. This is what I, and anyone who can still reason, should call Theofascism.

Lings considers the murderer, Franco, the exemplar of ‘principled autocracy’. He defines this concept by various examples besides Franco. First, of course, he praises Plato as the inventor of ‘principled autocracy’. Then he praises Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> before the end of his reign because he was “defender of the faith”. Of course Henry becomes a Protestant and creates the Church of England, which probably did not entirely please Lings. <sup>388</sup> Then he describes “Napoleon’s relatively principled

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<sup>387</sup> Lings, Martin. Ancient Beliefs Modern Superstitions. London. Allen and Unwin. 1965 pg 52.

<sup>388</sup> Lings had a romantic and rather absurdly idealized notion of the Elizabethan age. Lings book on Shakespeare is one that makes Shakespeare so unpalatable that I would not wish to see another play by him if I thought Lings were correct. Lings styles Shakespeare as a fawning theofascist and exponent of the “great chain of being” and monarchist noblesse oblige. While this is partly true, the conservative part of Shakespeare is the part we ignore when we read him as hopelessly out of date. Schuon did an illustration of Shakespeare for this book. The idea was to try to get Shakespeare as a precursor to Schuon’s ideas. Fortunately the variety and diversity of



autocracy”<sup>389</sup>. Lastly Lings suggest that “in every free country there is a sector... – which has already been won over to the other side” But in many of these countries there is “a marked stiffening in favor of conservation, .....[which] confers on it something of the function of the defender of principles and upholder of tradition.”<sup>390</sup> By this Lings means far-right wing autocrats such as Thatcher, Nixon and Bush, who were all supported by the Schuon and his cult.

In short, Lings ideal of “principles” is really an ideal of delusions and need of hierarchy based on admiration of brutal dictators. He sets up a pantheon of real scoundrels like the fascist Franco, the dictator Napoleon, or Nixon to be models for his ideal ruler or our world. Schuon belongs in this group too, since he was even more puffed up in Lings’ eyes than the portrait of Napoleon below. It amazes me that small, gentle, quiet spoken Dr. Lings could be in love with this collection of murderers, and not just incidental murderers, but mass murderers. It turns out gentle, quiet spoken Dr. Lings was really a raving fascist inside and longed to see people killed for his narrow and repressive god. Like Schuon he thought “profane people” should all die.<sup>391</sup> Profane people is just about everyone outside the Schuon cult. The gentle, soft spoken man I sat next to in a chair as he sat on a little beige couch in a suburban sitting room in Bloomington Indiana, was really a seething fascist and not worthy of respect. I did not know this then, as his

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Shakespeare’s work is such that Lings’ view of him is very unusual and eccentric. It is a point of view that no doubt pleases and theofascist like Prince Charles. While it is true that Shakespeare was a suck up to royalty, he was so because he had to be. I doubt it was his real nature to be that way. There is no doubt a fawning and theocratic aspect to his world view that ought to be criticized more than it has been. But if that is all there was to Shakespeare he would not be worth reading. Shakespeare has more in him than Lings is able to see. He was also a great writer and a populist, humanist and a street poet, a man of the people and a critic of power.

<sup>389</sup>The Eleventh Hour: the Spiritual Crisis of the Modern World in The Light of Tradition and Prophecy, "Cambridge UK. Quintessentia pg. 49

<sup>390</sup> Ibid pg.52

<sup>391</sup> Lings once bragged to me about someone who disliked Guenon being struck by lightning, obviously an accidental tragedy which Lings gloated on as if his imaginary god took revenge for him personally

pretence to gentleness was so convincing.

David Hall was the first to notice that Lings was an advocate for fascism and indeed one of the first to notice that the whole traditionalist movement has strong fascist tendencies. David Hall (1942-2007) writes specifically of this passage in Lings that Lings is saying that

“it is perfectly acceptable to imprison, torture and kill people, as long as it is done by a ‘principled autocracy’, in the name of religion, or at least a religion approved as orthodox by traditionalists.” <sup>392</sup>

Hall is saying that Ling’s notion of “principled autocracy” is as bad as the dictatorships of Stalin and Hitler, and that is scarcely matters if you do it for god, Marx or for Hitler: killing and torture are wrong. I agree with Hall, Ling’s views are monstrous. Christopher Hitchens may have spoken too quickly when he said that “God is the origin of all dictatorships”, but certainly God is a factor in probably most dictators, most dictators and serial murderers, and there is not much difference, end up thinking they are gods.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> Hall, David aka Ibn al Rawandi. “Esoteric Evangelicals: Islam and the Traditionalists” published in New Humanist Magazine, 1993? Pg 12, David Hall became a friend of mine via mail. ( a memorial site says of David that in the 1980’s

“David then started to explore the world of the Sufis and as usual threw himself whole heartedly into that pursuit, finally debunking elements of that tradition in a book called *Islamic Mysticism* (ISBN 1-57392-767-8) under the pseudonym Ibn al-Rawandi. After his Islamic period, David became a keen proponent of Humanist philosophy, and wrote many articles for the *New Humanist* and other publications. During all this time, we were in touch with David.

In all his different guises, David Hall remained true to himself and a remorseless searcher for the truth. I hope I have done him some service in this book .

<sup>393</sup> Hitchens wittily referred to heaven as a “celestial north Korea” with its thought control and its dictatorship of behavior..

This begs the question: what is the relation of gods to the minds of murderers, dictators and serial killers? The transcendental will to power creates a sort of doubling in the mind, as Robert Lifton would say, and that alienates them from reality, enabling them harm others or to kill with no remorse. Religion and politics are both good at crating this effect of doubling or alienation from immoral actions and violations. Transcendental magnifications are important in creating atrocities, as they remove conscience and enable individuals of groups to act impersonally. This can be seen in large scale atrocities like the murder of Jews by Hitler on in small scale atrocities. The harm Schuon did to Maude had this fascist character of harm done with no conscience, with an abstract removal,- a “disinterest”, like an executioner or the mafia. Indeed, this is exactly that I saw in Schuon, he had no feeling for others, only for himself. The whole cult was devoted to the megalomania and narcissistic solipsism. He saw himself, falsely, as a victim: but everyone else was either victimized by him or was an accomplice. This similarity to psychopaths is very common among cult leaders. , (Adi Da) There was a similar sort of organization in the Franklin Jones, (Adi Da) cult to that which formed around Schuon. To quote form a site that offers evidence on Adi Da:

Adi Da built an inner circle of corrupt loyalists who helped him control what was communicated about him to the general membership of Adidam and to the public. The inner circle was perhaps the most critical piece of infrastructure Adi Da developed to enable his decades-long pursuit of every kind of fulfillment for himself at the expense of others. Inner circle members were rewarded with high status in the Adidam organization and culture, and in many cases were allowed to live off the resources of the group and did not have to earn a living in the “outside world.” The inner circle’s mission, among other things, was to hide what they could of Adi Da’s indulgent personal life, abusive

treatment of others, and psychological issues. What they couldn't hide, they explained away as his method of spiritual teaching, tantric practice...( <http://www.adidaarchives.org/>)

A very similar pattern of a well-rewarded inner circle excusing the “Master” and hiding his crimes was at play in the Schuon cult as well. Schuon managed to convince many of the his followers that his elect status required an extremist censure and autocratic style.

Martin Ling supports Franco, and I think Schuon did too. Franco killed hundreds of thousands under his dictatorship. <sup>394</sup> He admired Nixon too. Nixon murdered a few million people in Vietnam. Schuon admired Napoleon for his delusions of grandeur. Napoleon was in many ways the French Hitler. He tried to conquer all Europe and nearly did so, but got bogged down in Russia just as Hitler did. Many unbalanced people have admired Napoleon who is in a way the patron saint of paranoids with delusions of grandeur. Schuon had a bit of a Napoleonic complex, perhaps because he was short, perhaps because he had an inferiority complex. This Ingres painting of Napoleon as dictator show some idea why



Napoleon: by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, 1806

It is certainly one of the most repulsive of French classicist paintings, well the equal of the portrait of Louis the 14<sup>th</sup> I also find repulsive. Ingres drawings are marvelous, but this is one of the worst of his paintings, though it is technically perfect. Another repulsive painting by Ingres, which also resonates with the cult of Napoleon is the Jupiter and Thetis . In any case, this portrait of Napoleon enables me to completely understand why Beethoven was so disgusted when Napoleon crowned himself Emperor that he tore up the dedication page to Napoleon on his Third Symphony ( The Eroica) and contemptuously said that Napoleon was a typical tyrant, and never thought well of Napoleon again. He knew Napoleon had betrayed the French Revolution, as had Robespierre. Indeed, between the two of them the ideals of the revolution went into

some remission and there were later attempts at restoration of the kings, which all failed.<sup>395</sup>

Schuon liked Napoleon and his puffed up poses and Schuon tended to strike similar poses in photos of himself. He saw himself as a "monarch" as he said in a letter to Lings I mentioned above. "The world is round, I am the king, and I don't know why" Schuon liked to say. He thought he was a prophet and a monarch, but of course was neither. He also saw himself as the "super-pope" says David Hall, Schuon thought he was the "self-appointed arbiter of what is absolutely and relatively true in all traditions, a kind of super-pope, who alone is able to interpret both the esoteric and exoteric meaning of all "true" and orthodox' religions'."<sup>396</sup> This is exactly right. Hall further quotes Zaehner against Schuon. Hall maintains that Guenon's and Schuon's idea of the supraformal "intellect" is "mainly a device for brow beating critics". Hall notes that the idea of the "intellect" is an idea that is used by Schuon and others "because without it there is nothing to save all the divergent species of religious experience from being totally subjective and illusory." Yes this is exactly

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<sup>395</sup> Robespierre had declared a new holiday, the "festival of the Supreme Being" and he led the festival as if he were Moses come down from the mountain, it is said. After killing so many during the Terror, he was apparently now trying to declare himself a sort of god or prophet. He was put to death by Guillotine and died by the cruel method he had sued to make others die. He wrote "Terror is nothing more than speedy, severe and inflexible justice; it is thus an emanation of virtue; it is less a principle in itself, than a consequence of the general principle of democracy, applied to the most pressing needs of the patrie" But this cruel doctrine was his own undoing.

<sup>396</sup> Hall, David, "The Device of the Intellect in Traditionalist Apologetics", 1993 unpublished. collection of the author. This is an excellent essay, one of the best critical works written about Schuon. David died in 2007 and was a wonderful person, a humanist and a skeptic. I thank him here for his deep inquiring mind and his admission that knowledge is a serious ongoing inquiry, not a dogmatic way to spill blood. David's book Islamic Mysticism: A Secular Perspective, written under the pseudonym Ibn Al-Rawandi was unfairly attacked by the Schuon cult. The writer of the attack, Barry MacDonald (cult same sidi Thabit), a cult member in the Schuon group was actually was a sponsor of Schuon's nudist primordial gatherings and held such gatherings at his house, according to Maude Murray and others who told me about it when it happened. Barry's ex-wife, Sharlyn Romaine, (who Schuon more or less stole from Barry) and Barry's second wife Rebecca, both performed nude as "Devadasis", for Schuon's spiritual edification. So of course MacDonald has to deny Schuon's actual doings, since McDonald himself is implicated in them and participated in them. MacDonald write's rather pretentious and make believe poetry in imitation of Schuon's.

right too.

Schuon's spiritual conjectures are subjective and illusory. Schuon erected his system upon thin air, Halls says, because Schuon and Guenon by implication, "wants to preserve the religions in their classical exoteric forms, while at the same time advocating an esoterism that makes it quite plain how hollow and counter-productive these forms have become." Yes exactly again, and thus Schuon's esoterism, is little more than self-aggrandizement—his penis in the primordial gatherings being the ultimate truth of esoterism... and so esoterism is hollow too, empty, childless, impotent, as was Schuon in the end.

What Lings called "principled autocracy" is thus superstitious "esoterism": power erected on thin air and stealing justification from that which does not exist. From this delusional claim to power derives tyranny, theofascism, or monarchist, or reactionary conservatism. Lings served Guenon for some years and then served Schuon for many decades and this is where it led him, into an embrace metaphysical delusions and the fascist Franco. Schuon and Guenon really were teaching a kind of thought control and Lings internalized that. His embrace of Franco's fascism is a political expression of Guenonian and Schuonian metaphysic. Lings was a metaphysical fascist.

To further understand this progression of idea driven political delusions it is useful to compare Lings and Perry. Whitall Perry said to me that that Guenon was deeply paranoid, despite the fact that he had written of him in his Whitall Perry, "Coomaraswamy: The Man, Myth, and History", <sup>397</sup> that he was a precursor to Schuon. He implied in this essay that Guenon was like Elias, who was like John the Baptist compared to Schuon, who was like Christ. All false analogies. Perry says that Guenon

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<sup>397</sup> Whitall Perry, "Coomaraswamy: The Man, Myth, and History", in *Studies in Comparative Religion*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 1977

and Coomaraswamy “ did nonetheless vehicle elements of a prophetic message, being spokesmen for what Leo Schaya calls “the Eliatic current.” This is mythic and elitist nonsense and a good example of how the traditionalists make absurd assertions as if they were facts when really they are merely outlandish and mythic make-believe. Earl Doherty points out that John the Baptist was probably a fictional character who was injected into the Jesus myth as a justifying mechanism. So the whole myth of John and Jesus is itself a fabrication and Schaya myth merely complicates an already mythical fiction. Schuon was not even mildly a nice guy, much less holy man. He was a pretentious snob prone to despising others. Perry had ideas about him that were no doubt influenced by his wife, Barbara, ( Schuon’s 2<sup>nd</sup> “wife”) who thought that Schuon was a prefiguration of the Second Coming of Christ and who wrote hundreds of pages of neo Hindu nonsense calling Schuon the consort of the Virgin Mary. They all spoke of Schuon in the most inflated terms, it was a requirement to be in the cult to do that, they primary requirement. Schuon lived on flattery and needed it constantly.

Schuon thought Guenon disturbed too. However, they were all trapped in Guenon’s worldview and so could not criticize him except in a small way. If the traditionalists did not pretend that Guenon was some sort of prefiguration of Schuon’s magnificence, where were they all? So they all dutifully praise Guenon publicly. That is the way this group worked. Things are very different inside the sect of Schuon or Guenon than outside. Outside they try to look like scholars, anthropologists and holy men , inside they are petty and paranoid, dislike children, wife swap and viciously compete for position and praise, at the same time as they are sure they are the most amazing men in the whole world. Sex and power ruled them, money flows toward the corruption. They not only believe their own myths but they extrapolate even more myths to magnify the absurdities that already engulf them. Those who question the charade are called evil and thrown out. Those who continue to be



seduced by the salesmanship, proselytizing and public relations tactics of Traditionalist authors, stay in the cult. Those who see through it, as I did, leave the cult. Few wish to tell their story when they leave. It is too shaming and embarrassing. Indeed, there is a cloak of permissibility that covers the embarrassing fact of religion in America. It is everywhere permitted because it is enshrined in the Constitution, but everywhere it is an embarrassment and does a lot of harm. But these stories have to be told. There must be efforts to tell the stories about what harm religion does and supply a rejoinder to the endless proselytizing and propaganda. The earth cannot afford the luxuriant delusions of men like Schuon.

Guenon and the Traditionalists are one of the last decadent gasps of old time orthodox and aristocratic religions finally dying off. The end of religion is occurring in our century. It is well and good that the influence of religion die off. No doubt, it will persist in pockets. The Catholic Church is slowly dying of its own corruption; its repulsive abuse of young boys and girls by priests and the Vatican's efforts to cover it up is documented in countries all over the world. Hinduism is being taken over by global corporations. Buddhism becomes a way to keep corporate workers calm and unquestioning. The Jewish state more and more brutal and unjust, and Islam is revolting against its own dictators or "principled autocrats" to use Lings' language. Religion has to adapt to science, human rights and democracy: religion is finally on its way out as a major power in the world. That is to the good.

No doubt, religion will continue to play a social role, propped up by reactionary politics, cult leaders, bad systems of education and a refusal to admit that morality does not need religion to preserve good order. But traditionalism, which tries to hold up archaic forms of religion, is a dying ideology, sad as this might be for those who cling to dying rituals and spiritual methods. For me, Guenon is of interest only as a negative example of the dogmatic elitism and mystagogy that Spiritual Fascism

ends up becoming. With a spiritual fascist named George Bush in the White House and another spiritual fascist who bombed the World trade centers in 2001 it is worth studying Spiritual Fascism more closely. Osama Bin Laden and Bush, Israel <sup>398</sup> and Iran, these states tried to resurrect the period of the Crusades and failed. In the end, no one wants these backwards systems of belief anymore. Religion is dysfunctional and a hindrance to the betterment of our world. Lings was dead wrong. Ancient superstitions will not save us. What he ignorantly called modern beliefs, are, in fact, useful systems of science and understanding that it would be a mistake to ignore or disparage.

## **g. The Theofascist Politics of Frithjof Schuon**

Politics and religion fit together hand in glove, or rather, closer that, like two sides of the same coin. It would be useful to explore the close relation of these politics and religion in the cult leader Frithjof

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<sup>398</sup> Schuon despised the state of Israel, I think out of some displaced racism. He wanted Israel to be in Europe. In fact, Israel follows the ideas of Guenon pretty closely in some ways, as Israel is based on an apocalyptic millenarianism ideology and is a theofascist state not that different than Franco, who Lings admired or Iran. Israel punishes the Palestinians in Gaza and elsewhere with an Inquisitorial zeal that should have pleased Torquemada or any Guenonian. The treatment of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto was not dissimilar to how the Jews treat the Palestinians in Gaza. The bombing of the civilian population in Gaza in 2008 was especially murderous and unjust

Schuon, as I knew him and his cult rather well, much better than I know Evola and Lings. So, I will further develop ideas I began to explain in earlier chapters. My main purpose here is to show how a cult leader like Schuon might typify abuse of power in many organizations. I use him as an example of religious delusion and how it get seamless morphed into a system of social injustice.

We learned from Evola that after the defeat of fascism during World War II, fascism went underground. It went into religion and into corporations. In Evola's estimation, and because it had to hide, fascism become "apoliteia" or seemingly apolitical while yet becoming global and it did this by seeking a "transcendent unity of the religions". The "transcendent unity of the religions" is really just a cover phrase for a political movement whose force is to support the hierarchy and the upper classes so that injustice will prevail. It is a political phrase for a political movement.

I have to laugh when I come across statements by Schuon's followers that he was not political. The cult around Schuon was well practiced in lying about and covering up what he really was. Schuon's third "wife" Maude Murray left a detailed record of how Schuon coached his followers to lie. But, some of them were rather dim and simply did not understand what their 'great master' was really up to. Schuon was a very political animal and was always trying to engineer other people's perception of him. He required extreme adulation by his followers. Indeed, getting into the cult required that one know somethings about religion, but the main thing was the ability to adapt to an environment where praise and adulation of Schuon would occur. If one could not do this, one was accused of being "satanic", "underestimating the Shaykh", or some other nonsense. Actually, real questions about Schuon's sometimes unethical, selfish, criminal and mean behaviors were railroaded in just this way. This is typical cult behavior as R.J. Lifton shows. The political center of the cult becomes the leader's personality

and everything in it is directed toward him. In the Schuon cult, the main method of induction is the appeal to the follower's pride. According to Desmond Meraz the Schuon cult believes that Schuon's nudist followers keep the entire cosmos going:

"The experience of Primordiality afforded by the Shaykh [Schuon] to a small group of disciples in Bloomington causes powerful reverberations throughout the cosmos, serves as an antidote to modern perversions, purifies the world, and serves as a prefiguration of paradise. <sup>399</sup>

This is funny. They are aged now and this must be a rather paunchy and saggy group of hippies, doctors, lawyers and computer geeks. In the past they gathered nude around Schuon, but nothing was said about taking their clothes off being essential to the support of the universe. Now they claim to be holding up the cosmos for us perverted and impure people. They are the pure, of course, in their own estimation, who had young girls and boys at their nudist gatherings and who lied endlessly to get out of court. These droopy geriatrics are hardly the "pure". Us "profane" people do not understand the hidden power of taking off our clothes and saying a formula over and over. But jokes aside, this sort of multilayered lying is precisely the kind of Magical Thinking helpful in keeping the cult going. These claims have no truth in them, as these paunchy cultists hardly hold up the universe for us. The followers have a perpetual need to quote and praise Schuon which is the main purpose of the Schuon cult. It is all myth creation and the lure of fiction, the willingness to be deluded, and romancing the great leader.

The induction strategy of the Schuon cult depends on the nude master being seen as a god figure, which requires considerable lying on

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[http://desmontes.blogspot.com/2015/07/the-confusing-case-of-frithjof-schuon\\_21.html](http://desmontes.blogspot.com/2015/07/the-confusing-case-of-frithjof-schuon_21.html)

the part of the officers of the cult. They have to make heroic and palatable this rather small man, who was prone to anger, jealousy, and had great need of power and delusions of grandeur. They must sell him the last prophet at the end of time. <sup>400</sup>

One of the things that really repulsed me about Schuon before I got to know him very well, was the following. When I had only been in Bloomington a few months, “Mrs. Schuon” and others began to ask me to be a chauffeur for visitors to the cult from other countries. I took them to Schuon’s house and many other places. I spent a lot of time with some of these people and got to know them. A few disciples of Schuon had come from South Africa and I drove them everywhere, had dinners with them and we talked a lot. They favored the elimination of the Apartheid system. One night I had dinner with them and Stanley Jones, one of Schuon’s rich neighbors and a functionary in the cult. He gave a sort of lecture to the South Africans that Schuon hated the anti-Apartheid movement in south Africa and supported the Apartheid system. The

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<sup>400</sup> There is an interesting website called [The Occidental Exile](#), which shows the author rightly, confused and disappointed by the immorality of the Schuon cult. The author, Desmond Meraz, starts to seriously question Schuon’s behavior and his books. He does not know how right he is to do that, but then he gets a letter from the cult telling him ‘Satan’ is haunting him if he does not accept Schuon. They are a Manichean sect obsessed with Satan. He writes that the cult says to him “who am I to question such exalted teachers, paragons of virtue and intelligence”. Actually, Schuon was not someone he should want to emulate. The cult nurtures the delusion that he was the most exalted of men, but that too is a lie.

. It is sad to watch the author of this website be so honest and yet continue to opt for these delusions, even though he is clearly a decent fellow who deserves a chance to look at reality as it really is . But it is unlikely he can see through his own delusions unless he realizes the Platonist and Muhammadean ideologies he has accepted should also be questioned. The acceptance of evidence is a great strength. It is like having babies. One realizes that imposing religious delusions on these fresh and innocent beings is a kind of fraud. Babies are above all biological and physical beings who learn to think. These are the real “primordial” beings that will sustain the world to come. Schuon did not like babies or children much and involved children in these gatherings. The cult is still lying about this 25 years later. There is nothing to be confused about, if you look at the facts. . .

Apartheid system was one of the last vestiges of the colonial system of slavery in Africa. I was horrified. These followers seemed on the surface to accept such views as natural, which was also disturbing, as it seemed to reflect the internalization of the 'Master' ideology.

Indeed, this was the one of the factors that eventually led to my leaving the cult and testifying against Schuon in the case the police brought against him. It was unconscionable that Schuon would support apartheid. Only a monster could do that. The followers from South Africa had darkish skin and it disgusted me that he would insist on reproving such men for having anti-apartheid sentiments. They were themselves potential victims of this system of organized hate <sup>401</sup> I had a close friend from South Africa and understood the subject very well. Schuon's views of it were utterly ignorant. He feared 'atheist communism' in South Africa. He spoke with contempt of the "democratizing tendencies" that could blossom there. He hated democracy. Part of me knew then that this was a bad man

Schuon's system of thought is highly derivative of Guenon's, indeed, there would be no Schuon without Guenon. Schuon became a disciple of Guenon in his teens. Schuon, the epigone, invented very little in terms of ideas. What he did do is apply some of Guenon's ideas and develop them in bizarre directions, using them to colonize native American religions, for instance, as well as adapting Guenon and Coomaraswamy to creating an aesthetic that ended in being a sort of universal narcissism and a cult of "sacred nudity". <sup>402</sup> As far as I know, Schuon did not have direct

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<sup>401</sup> One of these men was named Shaheed Carlse

<sup>402</sup> Coomaraswamy's theory of art is destructive to art, partly because it really is a bitter longing for death and partly because it is a denial of nature. His theory also advocates a Platonic insistence that art serve traditional, impersonal and institutional powers and abjure individuality. He advocates for archaic Church and monarchist art. Very little art of any value has come out of the traditionalist movement, precisely because Icons are irrelevant in a society ruled by corporate icons and logos. Traditionalist art is merely a pretentious nostalgia for the art of repressive and inquisitorial empires. The old empires of Europe and India are hardly realistic

relations with the fascists as Guenon and Evola did. One of Schuon's best friends and disciples, Albert Cuttat, did have close connections with the Nazis and helped some of them escape to Argentina. Schuon did end up supporting Japanese Fascism.

Upon his return from a very brief visit to India, Schuon appears to have rather inadvertently fallen into a position where he had to fight against the Nazi's in World War II. But he was very young then. His thought at that time was almost entirely Guenonian. When Schuon starts defining himself later as a cult leader and writer, he sets up his cult along Guenonian lines. He moves to the extreme right as Guenon did, bypassing the Nazis following Guenon's model, moving farther to the right than even the Nazis. This gives his followers the erroneous notion that Guenon and Schuon have no relation are fascism or are apolitical, but that is incorrect. Schuon's ideas are derivative of Guenon. Guenon created spiritual theofascism, and theofascism is even more reactionary than secular Nazism, not less. Schuon applied Guenon's ideas while adding some of his own and created a cult where he claimed to be an infallible and unquestionable authority, a sort of self-appointed pope of all the religions. Cult leaders create their own societies and set themselves up as dictators.<sup>403</sup> Schuon's claim to be infallible was

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alternative to the destructive corporate empires of today, which really are successors to the abusive powers of Church and Throne. Religion can offer no real antidote to the excesses and harms of corporate culture. Religion augments corporatism. What little traditionalist art that came out of this movement it ends up being an art of delusions of grandeur. Frithjof Schuon's "Icons" for instance are little more than personal fantasies of Schuon's own delusions of grandeur, picturing himself as a prophet or his having sexual relations with the Virgin Mary. In the context of our world a traditionalist art can be little more than a vapid, derivative imitations of iconic models of the past or expression of a universalistic psychopathology, as it becomes in the work of Schuon

<sup>403</sup> I much preferable to be a "fallibilist" as Karl Popper called himself. To be fallible is to admit the possibility of error and to be able to learn. To claim to be infallible is to claim rigid narrow mindedness and creative collapse. Such a man cannot grow or learn.

enunciated in one of the cults documents. Schuon, writing of himself says:

A Shaykh al-Barakah [i.e. Shaykh by grace ---Schuon himself] is infallible not only as regards intellectual and spiritual things, but also as regards all other things for which he claims infallibility. And this claim is itself necessarily infallible. Infallibility is the essence of authority. And the essence of good order is respect for authority. Next to the supreme authority every man ought to feel as a servant....Similarly, one must accept those who the Shaykh presents as persons worthy of respect....one does not have the right to oppose his judgment.<sup>404</sup>

This is a ridiculous tirade written by a man who wants to be a tyrant. Indeed the claim that even his claim to be infallible is infallible<sup>405</sup> shows a man of rare insecurity, indeed, grandiose insecurity. The decadent Catholic Church instituted the doctrine of infallibility to clutch on to its failing power and Schuon echoes this in his effort the hold on to his power. It shows Schuon's madness with admirable clarity: The Inquisitors also insisted "no one had the right to oppose their judgment". "The Fuhrer is always right"--- was also a propaganda slogan used regularly by the Nazi's. Totalism proceeds by fiat and dogmatic imposition of views that cannot be questioned. Knowledge must be

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<sup>404</sup> Text 108. This text was written in 1986, but was back numbered to appear it was written much earlier, according to Cyril Glasse.. It is included in Cyril Glasse's account of the cult, which was privately distributed. Glasse is right that it was backdated, as it has all the marks of being written in 86, when Schuon was upset people were not obeying his "wives".

<sup>405</sup> The doctrine of infallibility has been declared by the catholic Church under Pius the XII in 1870. IN practice the doctrine of papal infallibility had been in place for centuries and some even trace it back to the early Roman Church. It is a doctrine meant to insure the power of the Church and its manifestly absurd character was hard to question given the punishing power of the Inquisition and other threats. It was a trumped up dogma created to declare the equally absurd "assumption of the virgin". the doctrine of infallibility was needed as a stop gap for the fact that the church had been failing for centuries, Schuon needed the idea because his cult was collapsing in the 1980's and declaring himself infallible was meant to forestall the inevitable collapse.



imposed, but when a system of knowledge/power comes under serious threat, its malice and murderous nature bares its teeth. I saw this in Schuon when the police were investigating him. The man who claimed to be the infallible embodiment of pure truth suddenly turned to a lying, deceitful and conniving fraud willing to drop the truth at a moment's notice and get a whole crowd of people to lie for him to keep himself from being found out for what he really was. He was a coward and a fraud, a con man and a pretender. I saw this more deeply than anyone, except perhaps Maude, whose life was utterly ruined by this bad man.

Toward the end of World War II Germany changed its propaganda drive to declare Germany must have "World Power or Ruin". This is substantially the message of Guenon's book Reign of Quantity as well. He wishes at the same time to destroy the world that does not agree with him. Schuon demands total obedience and "respect for his authority" and followers must also respect those who he respects ( his "wives" primarily) and "one does not have the right to oppose his judgment", he says. This shows Schuon's theofascism as a cult leader. While it is true that Schuon did not support Nazism, the whole system of thought and the structure of Schuon's cult was based entirely on spiritual totalitarianism, or theofascism.<sup>406</sup>

However, Schuon does discuss the Nazis in published and unpublished documents. For Schuon, the Nazis are too nationalistic; he

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<sup>406</sup> Guenon also claimed to be infallible in a certain way. He wrote

"Those who are qualified to speak in the name of a traditional doctrine are not required to enter into discussion with the "profane" or to engage in polemics: it is for them simply to expound the doctrine such as it is, for the sake of those capable of understanding it, and at the same time to denounce error wherever it arises... their function is not to engage in strife and in doing so to compromise the doctrine, but to pronounce the judgment which they have the right to pronounce if they are in effective possession of the principles which should inspire them infallibly." RG: Crisis of the Modern World p65

These are ridiculous directions on how to behave as if you were the Wizard of Oz. Puff yourself up, sound like you mean it, quote a scripture or two and hope they believe you. It is a con-man's game. Schuon derived his authoritarian notion of his own infallibility from Guenon.

wants more power than merely the nation. Schuon claims to speak for the entire world, insofar as the world is “traditional”. “All that is traditional is ours”, he writes. Schuon’s book Transfiguration of Man contains an edited older essay called “Usurpations of Religious Feeling” in which he accuses nationalist patriotism, and thus Nazism, for not being religion, and complains that “people fail to see that religion alone, would be qualified, in principle, not to do impossible things, but to do what could and ought to be done”. <sup>407</sup> Thus he wants more not less control than the Nazi’s had, exactly as Guenon had done: Evola also sought beyond the Nazi’s into a “higher power”. This is the basic premise of theofascism which all three men endorse whole heartedly.

Schuon is a theofascist, which is to say he was a theocratic Imperialist and complains in this essay that Nazism, because it is secular, has usurped the right to total power that belongs to religion alone. Schuon would like to return to the medieval tyranny of religion, and he mentions Caesar, Shintoist Japan, the “Middle Empire of China, the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of France” as models of Traditionalist integrity. <sup>408</sup> Actually these were all horrible regimes full of injustices. Schuon despises the Renaissance and the French Revolution. Of course Schuon is assuming that his own totalistic universal religion is the most “qualified” to do “what could and ought to be done”, which would be to restore traditional tyrannies to their “divine right”. <sup>409</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Schuon, Frithjof. The Transfiguration of Man. Bloomington Indiana. World Wisdom books. 1995. pg. 35 The above essay is an edited version of an essay published in Studies in Comparative Religion, which was the primary journal of the Schuon cult. This longer version of the essay is much more telling of Schuon's deeper beliefs. The essay was edited, apparently, after Schuon had been accused of ties to Nazism.

<sup>408</sup> There are interesting comparison to be made between Schuon and the Japanese fascist and homosexual writer Yukio Mishima, who also idealized the Japanese traditionalist state of world war 2. He upheld the ideal of the ‘divinity of the emperor’ even after Hirohito renounced it. Mishima was also a nostalgic romantic for “tradition” and he killed himself by traditional seppuku, a horrible way to die.

<sup>409</sup> The psychology of the 'divine right' idea is interesting. Schuon's rationale is probably typical. The rather loony logic of power in Schuon’s case goes something like this: He quotes Plato that "there is no right superior to that of the truth": Schuon possesses the truth, therefore, all rights

Schuon had no understanding of the barbaric nature of Christian ascendancy during the Roman Empire. How they evidently burned the library of Alexandria or how they murdered Hypatia and many others. He did not grasp the horror of the system of indulgences and the system of inquisitorial mind control that made the Dark Ages so dark. The same is true of Schuon's and Guenon's ignorance of the rapaciousness of Islam and other religions. Both Guenon and Schuon were reactionary bigots stuck in a system of thought that froze their moral sense and made them advocate ignorant superstitions and terror.

As an example, it might be useful to look at Schuon's support and sympathy with Japanese imperial fascism as well as the Japanese adulation of the Emperor. In his In the Tracks of Buddhism. He writes that he decided to write about the importance of state Shintoism because of

“the alleged “abolition” of the divine status of the Japanese Emperor at the time of the American occupation: this blatant and gratuitous manifestation of the anti-traditional spirit and the characteristic folly it enshrined called as a matter of course for the study of traditional context where the imperial prerogative fits.<sup>410</sup>

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belong to him: he is beyond the law. He can do whatever he wants and it is divinely inspired: Truth, whatever it may be, becomes the reason for rights and the power it confers. Richelieu would agree. He said, "what is done for the state is done for God"...and "God absolves actions which, if privately committed, would be a crime". ( McCay, History of World Societies, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1992 pg.611) Schuon calls this doctrine "intrinsic morality". Since Schuon feels inwardly that he knows the truth, he must be infallible, and therefore he cannot do wrong, whatever he does. One finds similar formulas for tyranny in most powerful regimes, states, corporations, and cults. George W. Bush made a classic statement of spiritual fascism when he said when he decided to run for president in the 2000 election, as he confided to James Robinson, he believed that he in fact been called by God himself to he lead the United States: "I feel like God wants me to run for President. I can't explain it, but I sense my country is going to need me. God wants to me to do it." A similar mentality of self-justification can be found among sociopaths and serial killers

<sup>410</sup> Schuon, Frithjof, In the Tracks of Buddhism . London Allen and Unwin. Pg 85 .

Schuon takes the American rejection of the Japanese monarchy very seriously. He clearly has a personal and political vendetta to serve here. If you read his texts carefully he states that the Japanese emperor has special “privileges that are far from arbitrary.... Are attached to every line that is of avataric origin, therefore also to the line of Jimmu Tenino [the first emperor] who incontestably also had the quality of the prophet.”<sup>411</sup> He claims that the avataric line of the emperors cannot be abolished—under the supposition that it is “divine”. It is really just a social construction, like all such systems of power and spiritual ‘authority’. But Schuon would never admit this, self-centered dogmatist that he was. Elsewhere Schuon writes “In Japan, Shinto, for example, was latterly made to serve political ends, but it was in no wise compromised in itself by this fact”. So Schuon basically concludes that the imperial dictatorship must be honored even if it has become fascist and even if it murdered millions.<sup>412</sup> This is fairly typical of Schuonian immoralism, where he justifies horrible things in the name of some arbitrary and irrational ideology such as the imperial state. Schuon would later excuse his own immoral actions on similar grounds.<sup>413</sup>

The same may be said of Shinto. Earlier I quoted Zen Master Sawaki Kodo who said that “if killing is done without thinking, in a state of no-mind or no-self, then the act is an expression of enlightenment.” No

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<sup>411</sup> Ibid In the Tracks of Buddhism pg 107

<sup>412</sup> From Tradition and Modernity

[http://www.sacredweb.com/articles/sw1\\_schuon.html](http://www.sacredweb.com/articles/sw1_schuon.html)

<sup>413</sup> Schuon appeals to the theofascist ideology of murder for the religious state. Schuon’s ideology is mirrored in the Zen support of Japanese murdering during World War 2. Brain Victoria writes of this in his Zen and War that “The reason that Zen is necessary for soldiers is that all Japanese, especially soldiers, must live in the spirit of the unity of the sovereign and subjects, eliminating their ego and getting rid of their self. It is exactly the awakening to the nothingness (*mu*) of Zen that is the fundamental spirit of the unity of sovereign and subjects. Through my practice of Zen I am able to get rid of myself. In facilitating the accomplishment of this, Zen becomes, as it is, the true spirit of the imperial military (Victoria 2003, p.124).” In other words, killing is Zen and one must be like Arjuna in the Gita and murder for god or “mu”.

thinking = No-mind = No-self = No karma. This ruthless impersonalism is theofascism in a nut shell. Self centered “spiritual” cruelty that has no regard for the victims of it at all This is basically Schuon’s attitude too. In any case, Schuon claimed himself as a sort of avatara so the abolishment of the Japanese Emperor is personal matter for him. He supported Japanese fascism because he was himself of like mind.

So what Schuon is really saying here is that the pretence of mythic elitism and power must be preserved because the maintenance of his own delusions depends on it. He clearly has a personal interest in the “prophetic” nature of emperors, since he will himself eventually claim just this divine status. So, as usual, Schuon dictates ideology based on a subjective pathology. The empirical evidence states clearly where he was wrong. In the rape of Nanking alone, in 1937, hundreds of thousands of civilians were murdered and 20,000–80,000 women were raped by soldiers of the Imperial Japanese Army. Evidently Schuon was not terribly bright, he sanctions mass slaughter to justify an absurd mythic Imperial dictatorship. He honors an imaginary platonic “archetype” of the ‘prophet’, while millions of people die in the war between fascist Japan and the West.

Schuon says that the modernism that changed Japan after the Meiji in 1864 should not have happened and implies the Emperor is somehow the victim. Actually the emperor entered willingly into a compact with fascism and signed a Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in 1940. I know Schuon wished to reverse the modernism that inspired Japan in the Meiji and return to the horrors of the Tokagawa period, when the ruthless class of Samurai ruled Japan with arbitrary cruelty. Schuon thought that the emperor was engendered by Amateratsu, a Japanese goddess, who is the “mirror of the Intellect” – and he saw himself as engendered in exactly these terms. I discussed this with

members of the Schuon cult, John Murray in particular, and know that this is what Schuon had in mind.<sup>414</sup> He wanted a return to monarchy in Japan, as elsewhere, and supported the central aspect of the modern fascist state—the emperor (the fascist state was called “kodo”). This again is a clear example of Schuon as a ‘spiritual fascist’ – and he again quoting the Duke D’ Orleans” “all that is traditional is ours”—a statement that meant for Schuon the rejection of everything that came from the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, which he despised for its democratic striving for equality.

The truth is that under the direction and approval of the emperor Japanese fascism that Japan massacred ten to twenty million innocent Chinese between 1931 and 1945. Japan massacred many others in other countries. It made sex slaves of thousands of helpless Asian women. The Japanese Emperor’s belief that the Emperor’s will is the will of the nation is a form as a form of megalomaniacal totalism very much to Schuon’s liking and personal proclivities. Such a system of Japanese totalism left no room in any subject for his own selfish activities. This is religious fascism in a nutshell, and this is what Schuon is approving of. In August 1945, State Shinto was abolished. It was good for Japan that this happened. Though the dropping of the atomic bombs was a horrendous and unnecessary act, since the Japanese were already expressing the need to surrender.

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<sup>414</sup> John Murray was second in command to Schuon in the cult, a position called Naib. I got to know him very well. He was a curious and interesting fellow, understated and played cards close to his chest. He followed Schuon in loving the arbitrary dictatorship of the Ieyasu Tokugawa clan. Schuon liked the strict class or caste hierarchy established by Hideyoshi, Zen is forged in this atmosphere and retains much of the militaristic ritual and naturally adapted itself to corporate culture in Japan and in the west. Schuon liked to immerse himself in the biographies of “great men” hoping to imbibe their aura as it were. He imaged he was like Caesar, Napoleon and many others. His whole life was a “Play of Masks”, as in the title of one of his books. A poseur of perennial delusion, he pretended to be something he was not.

So no one can claim that Schuon did not support Japanese fascism. He did. While he does express doubts about the Meiji, his support for the emperor demonstrates a horrible lack of understanding of history of the time, as well as a lack of sympathy with its victims. As is his wont, he justifies terrible things simply to preserve an spiritual ideal or “principles” that are heartless and mythical, superstitious and based not on reality but on fictive religious ideas and myths. His inability to understand either Zen or Shinto and their role in the cruelties of Japanese history is noteworthy.

Zen as an aesthetic movement that made lovely gardens, flower arrangements and spontaneous paintings is interesting. But that is not really Zen as a spiritual discipline, which grew up as a system of power. Romantic poets like Gary Snyder sell all sorts of Zen nonsense in America but the truth it is was a warrior religion that extolled killing and beating disciples.<sup>415</sup> As Brian Victoria<sup>416</sup> wrote regarding Shinto and Zen

The Zen monastery provided both the physical and mental training that proved to be most attractive to Japan’s military and government officials of the past, but also to Japan’s corporate elite today. “Discipline, obedience, conformity, and physical and mental endurance” as well as the “traditional Buddhist teaching of the

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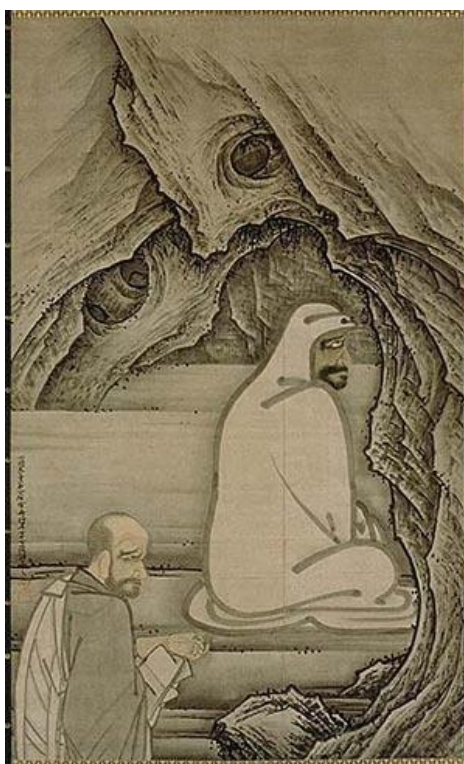
<sup>415</sup> For more on this see <http://www.strippingthegurus.com/stgsamplechapters/zen.asp> This is an interesting book, and though I disagree with Falk on many things, at least he has done some research on cults and cult leaders, unlike most religious studies scholars.

<sup>416</sup> One review of Brian Victoria book *Zen at War* asks “Where is the Buddha Dharma when one hundred million are asked to sacrifice themselves on the bloody altar of nationalism? If enlightened masters can make such a call, then perhaps we need to re-evaluate what the term ‘enlightened’ means. “ Exactly. Buddhism itself is questionable. Elsewhere Victoria says that religion is not the problem, but rather that people misuse it and it is innocent. I do not think this is true. The Inquisition grows right out of Christian notions of exceptionalism. The caste system grows inextricably linked to Hindu ideology and can be found advocated in the Bhagavad Gita and elsewhere. Christ says he came to bring a sword.



non-substantiality of the self” are among the many features of Zen monastic life that has appealed to Japan’s various elites throughout history<sup>417</sup>

One can easily see why. These “virtues” are the virtues of men and women willing to do anything for the leader without question or dissent. Schuon loved this sort of mindless obedience. All tyrants do. Buddhism creates a virtual kind of caste system simpler than Hinduism . Those who are on the “Way” are soon to be beyond desire and those who are not Buddhist and animals and will “suffer” horribly. Zen is a samurai version of this cruelty and fits easily into a war machine mentality.



*Huike Offering His Arm to Bodhidharma Sesshu(1496)*

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<sup>417</sup> <http://www.globalbuddhism.org/5/metraux04.htm> Brain Victoria’s writing analyzing Zen and its relation to militarism should be much more read than they have been. He also discusses the complex relationship of D.T. Suzuki to Japanese fascism.



As you can see in this famous picture of Bodhidharma where he becomes enlightened as one of his followers cuts his own arm off, Zen was closely allied to a violence against reality as the cost of its transcendent illusions about life. Transcendental magnification and violence often go hand in hand, as I show through these books. In other words Schuon's endorsement of the militarism of Zen and Shinto is really an endorsement of an anti-human rights and theofascist agenda.<sup>418</sup> The same could be said for Tibetan Buddhism, which also has a dark and largely unexamined history of cruelty.<sup>419</sup>

Following Guenon exactly, Schuon's politics is not a nationalistic totalism like Nazism, but a transcendentalist totalism,<sup>420</sup> which is just another way of saying it is a "theofascism". In the above essay, Schuon disapproves of Nazism because it is "profane", "civilizationist" and "humanistic" and therefore not totalistic enough, which essentially mirrors Guenon's and Evola's criticism as well. Schuon has written elsewhere that "a religion [or a civilization] is integrated and healthy to the extent that it is founded on the invisible and underlying religion, the *religio perennis*". The "*religio perennis*", of course, is Schuon himself, since he calls himself the "human instrument for the manifestation of the *religio perennis* at the end of time".<sup>421</sup> In other words he is spelling out,

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<sup>418</sup> Schuon also opposed the idea of the Jewish state in the holy land. This bespeaks a rather hidden anti-Semitism on his part, and I discuss this elsewhere in this book.

<sup>419</sup> Victor Trimondi and his wife have begun to examine this bleak and misogynistic history.

<sup>420</sup> Interestingly, Hitler did say at one point that national socialism must one day become universalist.

<sup>421</sup> In the Spring of 1991, the 4th wife, Sharlyn Romaine writes in her essay, the "Veneration of the Shaykh": "how can one doubt that one is faced with an 'Avataric' phenomenon; with a prophetic figure...with a spiritual manifestation of major import?" And she adds in a footnote that the "spirit of Envy", i.e. the devil, cannot abide this "truth". In other words, to doubt Schuon's perennial, Avataric, transcendent, prophetic, central, total and universal status is to be of the devil. Not only this, asserts Romaine, but Schuon has a "mandate", like a Chinese Priest-King, to summarize all the religions at the "end of time": Romaine continues:

his disciples have the right, *in fact the obligation*, to venerate him, to show their awareness of his grandeur and nature...[Schuon combines] the qualities of Shiva

rather obliquely, a grotesque drive for a totalistic world religion based on his principles. 'The world is healthy to the extent it is like me', is what Schuon is actually saying. He not only thinks he is the summation of all the prophets, as I have shown elsewhere, but he also thinks he is the combination of Alexander the Great, who had himself proclaimed a god. Caesar, Napoleon and other "great" characters in history, claimed something similar.. Schuon claims "divine right", on the model of so called theocratic civilizations. This is a natural outgrowth of many of Guenon's ideas. Neither man questioned if founding a society on such grandiose and inflated ideas would be a good thing. A sociopath who is this deluded about himself does not question himself.

In various photographs I have seen Schuon self-consciously poses as the 'great man'. In some of these he appears as a kind of Aryan Caesar, in others as a Chinese Emperor, Great Native American Chief, Islamic Caliph or Saint or Indian Raja, all basically movie scripts in which a frustrated actor poses. In nude photos of Schuon, of which there are

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[the Hindu God of destruction] and Krishna, the Bodhisattvic universality of sympathy [the Buddha], the affinity with the Primordial and the Red Indian; the providential connection with Seyyidatna Maryam [the Virgin Mary] and also in the Semitic world, the affinities with Abraham, David, Christ and Muhammed, are only too real. The different faces of the Logos reverberate again in the Shaykh and are manifested in different ways. Unquestionably, his disciples are aware of this...and that is why his disciples are drawn providentially to that master, love what the master loves and wish to follow him as closely as possible and participate in his reality.

In other words, Schuon is a living encyclopedia of divine manifestations and masks of the logos. He is the kitsch pastiche of all the religions, a sort of one man Barnum and Bailey circus of all spirituality. His disciples have the "obligation" to be obedient to him because he is the quintessence of all the religions. Schuon's handwriting appears a number of times on this document. In one place he writes that he is "the human instrument for the manifestation of the religio perennis at the end of time", or in other words, he is the apocalyptic summation of all the religions. In another place Romaine writes—no doubt copying Schuon's words--- that "the Shaykh is the link joining the Primordial with the last and for that reason embodies a vision that embraces the whole circle [of time and the religions]". She then writes that he is "the Center" which determines and unites all the religions like the center of a wheel unites the spokes. Schuon adds that he "manifests the Center as such". Which basically means that he is like god, the center of the universe and of time, or the "transcendental unity" of the religions at the end of time.

many, he is the embodiment of the pure “esoteric” truth. “Esoterism” is basically the 20<sup>th</sup> century new religion for intellectuals, who can make up their own religion at will. Schuon claims that Caesar, like the Chinese Emperors, or other manifestations of theocratic statehood reflect the “theocratic essence of the imperial idea” <sup>422</sup> This might be satirically humorous, like the puffed-up buffoons in Jean Genet’s great play The Balcony if it were not true that Schuon, like Goebbels, the Roman or Chinese Emperors or today’s politicians and advertisers know, as Goebbels said, that ‘people more easily accept a big lie than a little one’. There are people, committed to a cult routine of ignorance, prayer and self-delusion, which actually read Schuon’s writings and “themes of meditation” <sup>423</sup> and believe that Schuon is the puffed up “last prophet at the end of time”. I met many such people. Goebbels said that his project was to get all Germany “to think homogeneously”, and Schuon wants to do the same thing. His cult is designed as a system of thought control. Echoing the speech of Goebbels and German racist anthropology of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Schuon was still writing in 1990 that

“To be normal is to be homogeneous, and to be homogeneous is to have a center. A normal man is one whose tendencies are, if not

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<sup>422</sup> Schuon, Frithjof Light on the Ancient Worlds Bloomington, World Wisdom ? pg. 89 ?

<sup>423</sup> Schuon's six “themes” are part of his method. The six themes are: purity, spiritual combat, contentment, fervor, discernment, identity—all more or less stolen from the Buddhist paramitas and then claimed as his own in a ‘vision’ of course. Schuon supposedly realized the six themes as six stars in a vision of the inner nature of the Prophet( i.e. himself). The six stars were a spiritual portrait of the Prophet and the Prophet was Schuon himself--- of course (who else?). As a result of this vision Schuon wrote the essay the” Mystery of the Prophetic”. The vision is probably a fabrication, as are most (all ?) of Schuon’s visions. The six themes were basically stolen from the six Buddhist Paramitas. My observation was that Schuon’s spiritual method had no good effect at all upon the behavior of those who practiced it. Indeed, if anything it made them more insular and cultish, prone to magical thinking and excessive opinion about their importance. I practiced the method for two years and it was easy to leave it behind, but not easy to get out of my system. Such methods are techniques of mind control. It took some years before the bulk of the habitual mental processes left me entirely. Even 20 years later parts of the endless prayers or sequences of prayers come back to me in moments of duress or stress. Systems of mind control are very effective in getting into the synapses and the deep memory cells.

altogether univocal, at least concordant; that is, sufficiently concordant to serve as a vehicle for that decisive center which we may call the sense of the Absolute or the love of God.

The tendency towards the Absolute, for which we are made, is difficult to realize in a *heteroclite* soul; a soul lacking a center, precisely, and by that fact contrary to its reason for being. Such a soul is a priori a “house divided against itself,” thus destined to fall, eschatologically speaking.” <sup>424</sup> (emphasis mine)

For Schuon “heteroclite”—a word that is hardly “precise”—its definition is “one who deviates from common forms or rules”—which describes Schuon himself pretty well. But Schuon used to term with a Schuonian sneer—a sort of Germanic and pseudo-aristocratic disdain and snideful scorning. He said words like “swine” or “modern” or “diabolic” or “computer” with this disparaging tone too. To be heteroclite was for Schuon like being a mongrel dog: people who do not believe in Schuon’s “absolute” are mongrel dogs who will go to hell. This is what he is saying. For Schuon “profane” people are “heteroclite”.<sup>425</sup> For Schuon a ‘centered’ man is a man who is centered on an abstract ideology, preferably Schuon’s own, but it could be another fictional religious system of mind

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<sup>424</sup> In F. Schuon, *To Have A Center*, Bloomington. World Wisdom Books, 1990, p3

<sup>425</sup> Schuon’s speech patterns and uses of words sometimes sounds like language I have read used by the KKK. In 1926 Hiram Evans, the Imperial Wizard of the KKK referred to people of different thinking that his as “intellectually mongrelized liberals”. Schuon had a very black and white mind, and his notion of “heteroclite souls” was said with a similar slur to the idea of ‘mongrelized half breeds’. With Schuon, you were either with him or against him. The KKK was like this too. It is not an accident that Schuon was attracted to Indiana, the state where the KKK had the greatest following and a state that produced many cults. It is the most right wing northern state. “for quote see Richard Hofstadter’s *Anti-intellectualism in America*, (pg 162) The chapter ‘Revolt against Modernity’, shows how hatred of Modernity is not just a far right catholic thing but also rife among conservative Protestants. Catherine Schuon found herself in deep sympathy with “right-wing-Bible-thumpers” as fundamentalists are sometimes pejoratively called.. I had more than one conversation with her where this was obvious to me. There is real sympathy between Schuon and the American far right, not just in terms of caste and race questions but also in their hatred of evolution and adoption of anti-rationalism as a philosophical justification for their romanticism.

control. The essential thing for Schuon was belief in an “orthodox” make-believe deity and respect for authority, --meaning obedience to a tyrant. The important thing in Schuon’s self-estimation was that he “never changed”, and was what he was even at an early age. He saw himself as a baby emperor, the Jesus child. This is of course the highest virtue of the European aristocracy, who prided themselves on always being the same and never deviating from the sense of privilege and elite status. For Schuon he is always the highest, and everyone else is beneath him. Those outside his notion of prophetic permanence are divided people who are destined for hell to the degree they are secular and humanists and value change.<sup>426</sup>

This doctrine developed around 1990 with Schuon but goes back to his youth and reflects the racist anthropology of the 1920’s and 30’s. It was around this time too that I heard Schuon say that all the profane people<sup>427</sup> in the world ‘deserved to die’. Racism in Schuon had been changed into something less based on skin color than on ideological conformity.

For Schuon diversity among the religions is fine, as long as they keep well in the confines of his philosophy of orthodox ‘esoterism’. This really amounts to a negation of diversity of course. They must all think alike. Only “esoterists” understand the one true “Truth”, of which orthodox religions are but the partial and relative and minimized expression. This is all nonsense of course. But this nonsense had a point and that was to denigrate others. Religions must conform to

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<sup>426</sup> Actually I think it is a fine thing to be able to change direction in one’s life, based on new information and experience. Schuon claimed to ‘never change’ from his youngest years, which seems an admission of narrow minded fault as well as terribly impoverished. To ‘never change’ is in a sense to never have lived deeply. In the end I came to see Schuon as a small and impoverished fellow, who had few real capacities, and was stuck in so many character flaws he had no business claiming any of the things he claimed. He should not have been involved trying to help people, as he was incapable of that.

<sup>427</sup> Schuon says in a text called “Rules” given to new initiates into his “tariqa” that “one must not have an occupation outside of one’s professional work that entails contact with profane people”

Guenon's and Schuon's criteria or they are "heresy", "profane" and "diabolic" and need to be denounced by those who claim to be arbiters and judges, namely, the Traditionalists themselves. A great deal of Traditionalist writings involves slashing and beating up on those they feel are remiss, mistaken, threatening or profane. Indeed, a good deal of traditionalist writing is devoted to trying to trash thinkers who are close to them but slightly different, Jung, Gurdjeiff, De Chardin, Blavatsky, New Age thinkers and many others. Many of the Traditionalists function as a sort of thought police, branding those who think outside the Schuonian or Guenonian box as satanic modernists, part of the 'subversive "counter-initiation" diabolic or profane. Schuon's and Guenon's followers live in a system of mind control, unable to think their own thoughts, unable to read books outside the canon of the informal and unwritten "index" created by Schuon and his followers.

Schuon, like Guenon and Evola, despises democracy. Guenon, always the paranoid, had seen democracy as a diabolical plot designed by an imaginary Luciferian intelligence to "level" and destroy the spiritual "elite" whose existence maintains the world. For Guenon and Schuon democracy is a slide toward the apocalyptic abyss. Schuon writes in his first book that the great truths of "purely intellectual Knowledge" that comprises the esoteric essence of the religions east and west

" have been formulated-for the first time, we believe, in the writings and books of Rene Guenon"<sup>428</sup> Schuon defines what Guenon knows as having been gathered by "intellectual evidence that implies absolute certainty; but it he present state of humanity such evidence is only accessible to a spiritual elite, which becomes ever more restricted in number."

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<sup>428</sup> Schuon, Frithjof. The Transcendent Unity of Religions New York, Pantheon Books. 1953. pg. 12-13

How convenient! In other words, Schuon is selling fiction as reality. Schuon had no evidence of anything of the kind. This is pure fiction. There is no such things as “esoteric essences” which Schuon and his friends had elite access to. Guenon and Schuon have invented a way of seizing all the religions for themselves “for the first time”. They claim special status of the evidence of that which does not exist and for which no one has a shred of evidence I watched these men and women closely and there was no evidence of any special election at all, they merely thought the same thoughts and behaved in predictable ways.

Schuon claim to have the secret knowledge of the universe was a pretense. It is from this pretense that he derives they idea that he is “infallible” fountain of all authority and hierarchy. To Schuon, following Guenon, democracy is he says, a “rising tide of profaneness”; a tendency to “anarchy”; a downhill slide towards “dissolution”; a descent into the evils of “relativism”, and “relativism engenders the spirit of rebellion and is at the same time its fruit”.<sup>429</sup> Schuon misunderstands the notion of the relative and the theory of relativity, which he confuses with moral relativism. The relative is merely the things that have relations. The relative is our actual lives, our children, our thoughts, the trees in our yard, the forest and skies of our planet--- the relative is everything worth living for: there is no absolute. Schuon merely creates a transcendent fiction. He does so for political reasons. The relative does not provide a politics Schuon likes, whereas the absolute, gives him ultimate authority, since he has defined himself as the supreme prophet of “truth”. The traditionalists hated relativism because it allows “picking and choosing” and they wanted to be able to dictate the structure of reality in absolute terms, where no one can pick anything but must follow empty and arbitrary rules that serve only the elite.

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<sup>429</sup> Schuon, Frithjof. Logic and Transcendence London: Perennial Books. 1975 pg. 16

For Schuon all this—the earth, our lives --- is nothing. He says “relativism ....destroys the notion of truth”<sup>430</sup>. That is pretty silly. Truth is always a measurement and a reckoning, an assessments of facts on the ground, in reality. The relative is all there is, in fact, as all facts are relations. Schuon’s notion of truth is fiction, belief in fictional gods. Schuon says that “relativism of whatever kind kills intelligence”,<sup>431</sup> and like “psychologism”, to which democracy and relativism are akin, in Schuon’s estimation, relativism rebels against admitting “that which exceeds us... and this is the very definition of Lucifer”.<sup>432</sup> In other words, for Schuon, “intelligence” is power and hierarchy erected in service of delusions. He does not talk about “truth” and when he says “real” he means unreal.

Schuon’s hatred of relativism is a confused mess, in short. The relative world described by Einstein, which Schuon hated, is just our world. Hating the world as it is, is, well, just plain dumb. There is no absolute to which all things are relative. The relative is all that there is, everything exists in relation to other things and forces. We exist only because we live on a planet that is a certain distance from the sun. This is an unassailable fact. Schuon thinks that those who do not recognize the delusional “absolute” and fall abjectly before god or gods are “the very definition of Lucifer”. The great sin for Schuon is “refusing to admit that which exceed us”, which is to say, refusing to admit that the unreal is real. This is ridiculous, of course. Gods are fictions so how could they “exceed us”. They are necessarily less than us since we made them. The absurdity of this adulation of fictive authority and the ideological elitism this entails never occurred to Schuon. Schuon thinks all life, which is relational and thus relative—is the ‘definition of Lucifer’. There is nothing luciferian in the existence of birds flying in the air, which are products of

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<sup>430</sup> Schuon, Logic and Transcendence pg.17

<sup>431</sup> Schuon, Frithjof. Castes and Races London; Perennial Books, 1959 pg. 83

<sup>432</sup> IN other words, to deny the fact that the fiction of god exists is the supreme sin for Schuon.



adaptive strategies to our specific planet. Lucifer here is a mythical fiction, as is Schuon notion of the “Intellect”.

Schuon’s hatred of life is staggeringly ignorant.<sup>433</sup> Both Schuon and Guenon misunderstood and misused the idea of relativism. They most often referred to amoral relativism, a really rare idea, that implies, no ethical reality at all: anything goes. There is hardly anyone except a selfish psychopath who believes in that. Moral relativism in extreme form means you have the right to do anything at all whenever you wish, including murder, rape or blow up millions of people. No one in their right mind believes he is infallible and beyond good and evil, except perhaps, Schuon and a few other people on the edge of sanity. Schuon was close to being a moral relativist in his personal life.

In any case, science is not a moral relativism but has a deep ethics, deeper than religion which is highly immoral. Schuon opposed the absolute and the relative, which is a false comparison as there is nothing “absolute”. Nature is defined as relational or relative. Schuon never understood that that science is not a form of “relativism” but rather as Thomas Kuhn said, scientific development is a “unidirectional and irreversible process,” which means that later scientific theories do make improvements on previous ones. Life is not chaos as Schuon implies. Anyone who has spent any time in nature can see a kind of ethical intelligence at work there. There is only the relative, absolutes are fictions, but this does not mean there is no development or progress. Of course Schuon hated progress, and wanted civilization to stay in a delusional state fixated on an imaginary absolute, praying perpetually useless prayers to a god who is not there.

Schuon’s inability to understand the relative world we live in is also a source of his hatred women. Schuon’s deep misogyny is obvious in many

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writings of his. For instance, Schuon says that “women appears as the exteriorizing and fettering element”... woman is “characterized by a tendency toward the world, the concrete, the existential.”, as if this were a fault,, when it is not, it is the best way to live life--- as if being up in clouds of metaphysical madness, like Schuon was —drifting among pompous abstract concepts about “beyond being” and the “relatively absolute” had any real value... ( Essential Writings pg. 417) When Schuon wrote this nonsense about women he had three “wives” and the one he spent the most time with was Maude Murray, who I got to know extremely well. He had a demeaning attitude toward her even though he claimed a right to her based on phony visions from the Virgin Mary. It was very clear to me he did not know her and did not let her be herself around him. He forced her to stay with him even when she made it crystal clear she did not want to be with him. She fought for years to get away from him, at the cost very nearly of her life. She had two relationships with other men while with him. He was cruel and heartless. His notion of women is that they were possessed “symbols” and little else besides. Even in basic texts such as the simple text “Rules” given to new initiates into the cult, who are told that “women in a state of menstrual impurity do not say the canonical prayers, not even mentally: but they may say individual prayers, and the may invoke the Shahadah or the Divine Name..... In principle they do not go to Majlis, but one can make exceptions if facilities permit: but then they are not able to participate in dhikiru-sadr” ---which are chanting Sufi dances done at majlis. This hatred of menstruating women is typical of many male centered religious superstitions. Maude told me that his wives “Do not have rights they only have duties”. In other words Schuon was a chauvinist of a rather vile kind. He takes the misogynist hatred implicit in the Koran and applies it to women he knew personally.

What Schuon never realized or thought through is that science is not “relativism”, in the perverse sense that he means in this word. Truth

is not perception. It is based on facts. There is an outside world beyond the human mind that constrains science to facts. The idea that facts and evidence matter is science--- but the idea that everything boils down to subjective interest and perspectives is merely post-modernist nonsense: and that is what Schuon misunderstands as science. Schuon was afraid that his dream world would be uncovered by science and shown up for the sham it is. That is why he was afraid of science and the relative. Guenon and Schuon shared a rare devotion to make-believe and the revival of make believe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Traditionalism is the effort to restore make-believe to the domination of the world. They created a rare form of silliness that serves the rank narcissism of certain affluent and reactionary people who long for the old days of caste and hierarchy. Schuon's notion of the "intellect" is relativistic in the sense that it really is pathologically subjective.

Schuon falsely equated the relative and the relational with evil or Maya, when actually it is "Atma" and the "absolute" that is the fiction. Those who conflate moral relativism with immoralism or the theory of relativity with immorality are making fundamental error in understanding modern science. Schuon knew little about science. His use of archaic religious terms stranded his mind in the medieval concepts and made him unable to realize how erroneous his understanding of concepts like relativity and the relative really was. Richard Rorty rightly denied that relativism applies to much of anybody, being nothing more than a Platonic scarecrow. Schuon thought materialism was some sort of satanic idea, when really it is just a view of the world as being made of things, which is merely a truism. The world is material. Schuon was afraid of this truism and so branded all 'reductionism' as evil when really it is just a natural fact that observations about reality end up encompassing more facts and creating there a deeper and deeper understanding of the real. Science is reductionist and that is a good thing. With holism one ends up with

glittering generalities that allow all sorts of superstitions to enter into “knowledge”.

The idea of the “absolute” in Schuon is really a construction that comes for 19<sup>th</sup> century romanticism: Hegel, Fichte, Schelling and others. The whole dichotomy in Schuon’s ideology between the Absolute and the Relative is bogus and based on misunderstandings. As Isaiah Berlin said to “confuse our own constructions with eternal laws or divine decrees is one of the most fatal delusions of men.” Schuon and Hegel did this all the time. But that does not make what he said real.

The confusions about relativism are legion. There is also cultural relativism. This is the idea that different cultures are fundamentally different and that scientific truth is merely one kind of truth and it is not to be especially privileged. Science seeks truth across many “frames of reference”. It is clearly nonsense to suppose that different cultures make one immune to disease common to all humans. Vaccines apply across cultural borders and telescopes work no matter what culture one is in. Science is true whether one believes it or not, which is not true of religion. A species description of a Magnolia Warbler does not represent anything but that Warbler. Point by point it tells what it looks like, how much it weighs, where it lives, what it eats, where it nests and so on. The subjective aspect of cultural norms certainly differ from place to place as one would expect. Muslims do not believe what fundamentalist Christians or Shintoists believe. But science is universal. The theory of evolution is not an “inter-subjective” construct but an objective fact and applies everywhere and not just in Europe and the United States.  $F=MA$  is true on the moon, Jupiter or in another galaxy. Jesus is “Lord” only to Christians, and only in their imaginations, not in fact. Jesus is an inter-subjective delusion, and it is extremely unlikely that the guy ever existed as a real man, and if he did, he was certainly mangled into unrecognizable shape by the early mythologists of his religious construction..

The racism and caste obsession of the traditionalists depend on the notion that they are the pinnacle of truth and the apocalyptic remnant of the elite. To understand some of the background of Schuon's obsession with his own claim to greatness it is useful to look at his formative influences. There is Guenon as we have explained. However, Schuon mentions many others. He mentions the

“spiritualist renewal of a Maine de Biran-whose merits we cannot overlook- not to mention the prolongations of ancient theosophy in the case of Saint Martin and Bader, and partially in Schelling”.

These 19<sup>th</sup> century romantics are all seeking to create an elitist form of spiritualism. This need of Germanic transcendentalism and the myth of the holy spirit can already be seen in Albrecht Durer's paint of himself as Christ.



Schelling speaks of longing to be God, and he predicted a ‘prophet seer’ who will unite philosophy and mythology into an apocalyptic mode of action, which will restore the primordial beginning of things by unifying all knowledge. Schuon continues this very Germanic obsession, wanting to be everything, when really he is a small man with huge self-doubts and a ‘god on a treadmill’ as he called himself once. There is a clear need to over compensate here. Germanic transcendentalism seeks for the ultimate as in Wagner’s inflated music or Nietzsche’s Zarathustra. Novalis predicted a “prophet seer” too, and Novalis is one of the rare poets Schuon approved of, Schuon compares himself to the ‘holy spirit’ and claims to have transcended virtually all history to be one of the last prophets at the end of time. What is the reason for this absurd need of

self-elevation? What begins to dawn on me as I look at all these facts is that there is a psychological lack that is being filled by transcendental fictional deities or imagery ideology. This seems to arise in Germany as a result of some kind of national and historical feeling of weakness of lack to authority and inferiority relative to the roman empire and the Roman Church.

Like Schuon and Guenon, Schelling longs for total knowledge/power, or what Schuon calls “objectivity freed of all shackles”.<sup>434</sup>. That means objectivity that has been freed of evidence and objectivity. Schuon’s “objectivity”, like his concept of the “Intellect”, and they are synonymous, is merely a narcissistic mirror on the universe that is colored by Schuon’s subjective opinion of his own omniscience and omnipotence. “Objectivity” is the freedom to impose mind control; the freedom to take total power and claim total knowledge: the freedom to be a “messiah” as Hitler or Schuon thought they were; the freedom to be infallible, as the Popes had claimed, or as Schuon and Hitler both claimed. Amoral “disinterestedness” easily becomes immoral in Schuon and in political leaders like Hitler of the Popes because it hides tacit assumptions behind the pose of neutrality. The pose of neutrality becomes active complicity in a regime of knowledge/power. One can see this in corporate science where greed deforms the facts. Schuon’s ideology is even worse than corporate science. There is no “objectivity” in Schuon---- there is only the confusion of his subjectivity with reality. If Schuon thinks something, it is objective because he thinks it. His thoughts are god’s thoughts. An honest man has some humility, as he knows he is largely ignorant of nature and how the universe works. An honest man knows he is fallible. An honest man attempts to be honest and accurate and admit one’s bias up front. Schuon was never an honest man, he claimed to be infallible..

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<sup>434</sup> Schuon, Roots pg.96

Schuon also speaks of Maine De Biran as an influence. Maine de Biran, a French phenomenologist from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, saw in Hinduism a confirmation of the totalistic concept of the 'divine ego' --- an absolute---which he imagined would achieve a total revolution in consciousness. This symbiosis of German and French philosophy and Hindu and eastern thought parallels the enormous exploitive drive of the Europeans in India, Bengal, China and the Philippines. A similar idea occurs in Hegel and Fichte, with the notion of "absolute self-consciousness" or Fichte's "universal Ego", both of these being hierarchical notions of consciousness that are delusional. Indeed, Hegel's statement in his Wissenschaft der Logic exactly parallels the central concern of Guenon and Schuon's writing. Hegel says that this book presents the "Realm of Truth as it is without veil and for itself. It is possible to say that its contents is the presentation of God as He is in His Eternal Being, before the creation of nature and any finite being".<sup>435</sup>

This modest pronouncement is a good example of Germanic Transcendentalism and the myth of the holy spirit. In the beginning was Hegel, in other words, which is about as sensical as Schuon's claim to be "the glory of the Omega" or the "manifestation of the Logos at the end of time" or the holy spirit itself, as he claims in her memoirs. Both Hegel and Schuon are claiming to have become the Logos, or the principle of total knowledge and universal power. They are "total objectivity" and the total "subject". This is bogus of course, what they really are is total

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<sup>435</sup> quoted in Voegelin, Eric. Order and History Vol. 4 Baton rouge Louisiana State Univ. Press. 1974 pg.57 In this book Voegelin defines gnosticism as " the enterprise of returning the pneuma in man from its state of alienation in the cosmos to the divine pneuma of the beyond through action based on knowledge". Voegelin is a Platonist, and I would differ with his definition, Platonism too is 'gnosticism', in the merely etymological sense of it being a theory of knowledge. The basic thrust of most knowledge systems is to conform the human will to a Symbolic system, which assumes human alienation from a supposed 'higher truth'. Religions do this in obvious ways; science does it through mathematical abstractions. All this could be called 'gnostic', but the term is meaningless, because it does not describe the process whereby symbol-reality becomes a means of oppression or exploiting the concrete world of real things and people. Moreover the term gnosticism is too allied with Christian notions of orthodoxy and heresy.'



subjectivity, expressed in the most inflated hyperbole possible. They embody William James notion subjective spirituality very well.

Schuon and Hegel thought the when they think, they imagine, it is god who thinks through them. This is pure fiction and self-deception on their part. These German philosopher love to exalt themselves and transport or transcend themselves in inflated rhetoric. I have seen this in Wagner's Operas or Hitler's speeches. I can see this same inflated idealization in Fichte, Nietzsche, Schuon, Hegel and many others. I have no idea why this is so, but it appears to be a regular feature of Germanic thought in the last 200 years. I suspect, again, it has to do with an inferiority complex of some kind, as well as the macho bravura of a Protestant nation that was put down by southern Europe in many wars spread over centuries. The excess of the backwardness and defeat of Germany over many centuries led to a conservative revolt which helped produce the high flown excesses of Hitlerian rhetoric, Lutheran identity with the holy spirit, Hegelian transcendentalism or Schuon's need to be all the gods and embrace all goddesses as his own. The effort of Hegel and Marx to create a totalistic "consciousness" that would sweep the world off its feet is not different that the similar effort of Aquinas or Shankara to create and justify the absolute truth that would dominate the world. What these thinkers try to present is a total vision of supremacist consciousness based somehow in a lack of identity, and impoverishment, indeed a pathetic need to be more than human, a fiction, an imaginary thing that does not exist, a god.. Spiritual subjectivity wants to dominate the world in an effort to remake the world over in the image of its delusion.

This drive toward total knowledge/power is at the root of much of the romantic philosophy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Marx aspired to a similar form of ideological totalism, though in a different way. It is this same drive toward a totalistic system of knowledge and power that inspires Guenon and Schuon. Karl Popper was right to see a close relation

between Plato, Hegel, Marx and Hitler, all three of them straining after a system of romantic totalism, with the result that all their systems are prone to cruelty, hierarchy and injustice. Schuon, Guenon and Evola were attracted to the conservative wing of this tendency, which is why they continue to be compared to Fascism rather than Marxism, which they despised.<sup>436</sup> Liberal and conservative, religious and secular forms of totalism are equally toxic,

Schuon also admires Joseph De Maistre<sup>437</sup>(1753-1821), “whose intelligence has great merits” Schuon claims.<sup>438</sup> This is extremely high praise from Schuon who rarely praises anyone except himself. De Maistre, like Prince Metternich (1773-1859) was opposed to modernism of all kinds.<sup>439</sup> He was castigated as a blind reactionary, which indeed, he was. Metternich, Bonald and De Maistre are often linked together as three of the most conservative opponents of the French Revolution. They wanted a return to the rule of aristocracy and the Church. De Maistre supported the Czarist state in Russia during a period of cruel and bloody oppression and Metternich, as a result of the Congress in Vienna, left hundreds of thousands dead in Spain as a result of his policies. Goya’s prints of the “Disasters of War” record in graphic form a protest against the bloodbath caused by the policies of the aristocratic and Catholic reactionaries like Metternich. Schuon and Guenon despise democracy and basic human rights and want to return society to the “Throne and God” of these Imperial religious Dictators, who longed for the world of

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<sup>436</sup> The question that arises here concerns the social function of systems of knowledge, and how these systems justify the claim to total power. An analysis and critique of this phenomena appears necessary. But this is beyond what I intend to do here. But I think it important to outline, however briefly, the fact that in Guenon and Schuon we are dealing with attempts to create an ideological and totalistic system that seeks to function as a dictating paradigm for interpreting past and future history.

<sup>437</sup> I will discuss De Maistre more below Guenon in relation to Action Francaise

<sup>438</sup> Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. The Essential Writings of Frithjof Schuon Warwick, N.Y. Amity House. 1986 pg.259

<sup>439</sup> 15 May 1773 – 11 June 1859 Metternich was a German/Austrian extreme conservative who opposed the Enlightenment, free press and progress.

lost privileges that were gone, but who were willing to kill hundreds of thousands to get their power back. De Maistre wrote somewhere that the banner ideas of the French Revolution, namely, “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity”, must be replaced with the call for “Throne and God”, He also advocated the infallibility of the Pope and absolute power for the King; he writes:

I have never said that absolute power... does not involve great inconveniences. On the contrary, I expressly acknowledge them fact, and I have no thought of attenuating the inconveniences<sup>440</sup>

One finds a similar kind of self-righteous sadism in some of Schuon’s writings. Schuon justifies the concept of Holy war and speaks holy anger, which he defines as equivalent to the love of god, except it is “hate in god”.<sup>441</sup> He claims that holy war is necessary because without the warrior caste “man declines and the whole of society degenerates” a hypothesis for which there is no evidence whatever. Presumably the suffering that is caused by the brutality of holy war is good for man because, Schuon explains, the “sinner needs suffering in order to expiate his faults” and therefore “the abolition of the sense of sin is not only impossible it is not even desirable”.<sup>442</sup> This again has no evidence at all for it and quite a lot against it. Schuon upheld the Native American Warrior as the exemplar to his groupies. The men in the cult like to strut around in Native American costumes acting tough and pseudo-‘aristocratic’. Little was said in the cult about how brutal and unjust many male dominated Native tribes were in the Americas. Tribes tortured each other in the most gruesome manner possible and stole women, raped villages, burned and chopped up bodies in a merciless way

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<sup>440</sup> Copleston, Frederick. A History of Philosophy vol IX. New York: Newman Press 1975 pg.9

<sup>441</sup> Schuon. Esoterism. pg.118

<sup>442</sup> Ibid. pg.160

that is neither romantic or to be pictured in romantic paintings like Schuon symbolist cartoons of Indians..

Schuon thought that we should castigate children for sin. Castigating children for “sin” and punishing them simply does not work, in fact it has been shown to be counter-productive. Schuon did not like children much, except himself as a child<sup>443</sup>The whole notion of sin is ridiculous. Schuon thought “Holy war” is necessary in order to convince the sinners of their need to repent. Schuon does not mention that the spiritual elite profit through the enforced suffering of others. Nor does he mention that sacrifices for god, in most spiritual societies end up being sacrifices for those who have power in the society.<sup>444</sup> Right wingers like to promote “volunteerism”, but rarely volunteer themselves. The want to poor to pay the taxes while the rich let their wealth “trickle down”—when of course it hardly every does. This is why it is always essential to support taxing the rich and regulating them as much as possible in the just interests of the power and middle class.

Power always lives on the “inconveniences” and deprivations of others; it is this precisely that defines power as power. The god idea is merely a rationalizations couched as a myth which helps justify power

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<sup>443</sup> Perhaps Schuon’s unhappy childhood and unfortunate attitude toward children was due to his own father. According to Hugo Bergmann, “Schuon's father was an Anthroposophist, that is a follower of the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner, and as a young man Schuon participated in spiritist séances”. Sedgwick records that “Bergmann described the first encounter as “painful,” as Schuon seemed to him “stilted” and “affected, and” dressed “as a prophet.” Evidently Schuon posed as a great man quite early.

<http://traditionalistblog.blogspot.com/2010/08/hugo-bergmann-and-frithjof-schuon.html>

<sup>444</sup> Schuon justifies the practice of bloody human sacrifice against the victims will on the grounds that “the sacrificer does not act as an individual but as the instrument of a collectivity, which, being the totality, clearly has certain rights over part of itself”. The sacrifice must be “approved, therefore demanded, by God”. In other words it’s all right to kill for the idea, the state or the religion, provided these are all religious bodies. (The Eye of the Heart, unpublished English Translation by Gerald Palmer, p. 135) Schuon says in this essay that human sacrifice exists to pay the “tithe” or tenth of oneself that one owes to god. It is a short step from this doctrine to his latter statement that three quarters of the modern world need to be sacrificed, since the modern world has abandoned god.

relations. Those who desire or have power rarely question their own right to decide how or why others should suffer. In any case, Guenon and Schuon assimilated the romantic and aristocratic elitism of writers like De Maistre, Biran and Metternich and others. In Guenon and Schuon the notions of objectivity, truth and god serve an ultra-rightist, neo-imperial, totalistic, anti-science and apocalyptic vision that seeks to restore ‘traditional’ forms of knowledge/power through a holy war against modern forms of knowledge/power in order to destroy the latter. This is what theofascism. One linchpin of this mode of resistance to the modern world is the idea of a universal Savior, who unites all the religions and ancient imperialisms in a unified assault against the moderns. The “restorer” or “prophet” of this perennial religion is supposed to appear “at the end of time”. Guenon expressed this hope rather fantastically in his The Lord of the World,---a ridiculous book which he ends by quoting De Maistre’s hope for an apocalyptic restoration of the “divine order”.<sup>445</sup> Schuon went much further and decided he was himself the last avatara, or the final “manifestation of the Logos” in Schuon’s words.

This tendency of Guenon and Schuon to assimilate 19<sup>th</sup> century idealistic, and imperialist Egotism to Vedanta and Sufism is probably not a false assimilation. By which I mean that there are deep similarities and affinities in these systems of elitist make-believe.. Theofascism is a modern phenomenon but is based on earlier doctrines and justifications of injustice promoted by previous systems of religious power. The One God requires a totalistic state; this is a truth that goes back to Akhenaton and his cult of the sun-god. The Tao needs an Emperor to

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<sup>445</sup> Guenon, Rene. The Lord of the World Moorcote, U.K. Coombe Springs Press pg.67 Guenon thinks Shambhala is a center of high evolutionary energies located in central Asia. Guenon believes that Shambhala exists and “Agartha”, is there, which is a center of secret initiations. Guenon likens Shambhala-Agartha to a major earth chakra where immense power is concentrated. He accords it the status of the world’s secret government, the source of all wisdom. This nonsense was also pursued by the Nazi’s and by the Stalinists both of whom tried to enlist the Shambhala myth for their own uses. Viktor Trimondi writes that the Shambhala myth is a recent fiction and ties the Dalai Lama to fascism.

impose it by force and bloodletting; Christ is both bloody Judge and cruel King or as Schuon somewhere says “the Sultan is the shadow of god on earth”. The traditional religious doctrines are theories of knowledge which dictate social practices, and this is what the German theorists were trying to create in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; a theory of knowledge that would dominate the world and dictate a cultural paradigm. The thousand year Reich of Hitler was also born out of the same matrix of ideas, though it took a different direction.<sup>446</sup>

Guenon and Schuon, perhaps because of Guenon’s early affiliation with the New Order of the Templars subscribed to a vision of the Age of the Holy Spirit, recalling Joachim of Fiore’s magnified prediction of an age of the Holy Spirit. Joachim was a monastic mystic of the 12<sup>th</sup> century who predicted this base on the spurious book of Revelations. Schuon would claim to embody the Holy Spirit, another spurious or inflated claim. Goodrick-Clark speaks of Lanz von Liebenfels’ belief that the Templars of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, known for their warrior conduct in the Crusades, and for their eventual removal as heretics, in fact were those who sought after the Holy Grail, which is a mythological symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Grail is nonsense of course, pure make-believe: a misunderstanding of the life that is in everyone, even animals. The Nazi attempt to picture themselves as the “Teutonic Knights”, shares the same inflated symbolism. It is perhaps not without significance that nearly a quarter of the SS were Catholics. The infamous SS was modeled on the myth of the Templar Knights as Holy Warriors, which had been developed by List, Lanz, Wagner and others. The symbolism involved here is part of the imperial myth of the Crusades and the war against Islam. ( see chapter below entitled “Innocent the III and Fairy Tales

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<sup>446</sup> It's true that religions sometimes become detached from elite classes and powerful interests, and then come to symbolize protests and grievances, but in this case the language of despair is still the language of the oppressors, and usually does not alleviate the suffering but only serves as a conduit for assimilation. Christianity was used by former slaves in the U.S., in this way, for instance.

The intention of the use of symbolism of this kind is to confer legitimacy on a new practice and form of politics and power. The concept of the holy spirit is an intellectual or emotional fiction, depending on the religious mentality of whoever uses it. It is a mythological construction that channels emotions, thoughts and social behavior. I have watched so called “Holy Rollers” and “Jesus Freaks”, as well as Baptists and snake handlers go into mystical states. These people claim the influx of the holy spirit has flowered within them. What is plain is that these people are not possessed by anything except emotional excess or deceitfulness, transports of imaginary ‘enthusiasm’, as happened too to the shamans of old. I have seen Christians talking in tongues and it is clearly a kind of hypnotic trance or emotional state. When Schuon says in his Memoirs, “The day will come when the divine will call me the Holy Spirit”, he is appears to be saying that he wants to be the standard of all truth and social practice; the paradigm of society, legitimacy and all knowledge and power. But what he is really saying is that he has this transcendental and delusional emotional need inside him and he wants his delusion to be asserted in fact. It never would become fact, it was just a delusion on his part. There is no “holy spirit” there is merely the desire that there should be such a thing, because humans are prone to feeling and can be made to feel excessive waves of inner emotion, given the right combination of alienation, symbols, rhetoric, music, exhortation and preaching. This is partly why Hitler was able to exhort his followers into frenzies of passionate patriotism <sup>447</sup> He evoked the ‘holy spirit’ in them in their suffering, as it were, getting them to feel release and passion and setting up demons for them to slay and take out their revenge upon.

It might be useful to digress a little here and trace the history of the Aryan ideology. The Aryan ideology of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was largely a

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<sup>447</sup> Schuon. Memoirs unpublished

cultural construction that justified nationalist and internationalist Imperial motives. It is derived from a distortion of the conquest of the Dravidian peoples of India by the invading Aryans or Indo-Europeans who moved south somewhere after 2000 B.C.E. The growth of the Aryan myth, beginning with Schlegel and Herder, who largely originated it, seems to have served the function of a Creation myth for the Germans of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps in compensation for an old inferiority complex against the Romans and Catholics, who for so long had seemed to have the 'superior' culture.

The Aryan myth defined the Germans as different than the Catholics of the south. What is important to realize in the cultural battles between Protestant North and Catholic South is that the symbolism of the justifying ideologies is a patina or a superficial cover for a struggle for power. A differing system of knowledge dictates a different form of power which gets embodied in a different symbolism and religious rites. The Aryan myth justified conquest and the resulting atrocities and thus forged both a mentality and a system of cruelties.

So there are family resemblances between the "Aryan" ideas of Lanz von Liebenfels and Schuon. Lanz believed the "Grail was a metaphor for the strict eugenic practices of the Templar knights designed to breed god-men"<sup>448</sup> Schuon says, in comparison, that "without the idea of the 'God-Man', esotericism would be deprived of an aspect of its very essence"<sup>449</sup> For both men the Grail or the idea of the "God man" is a mythological symbol of total truth and thus total power; and thus justifies caste discrimination and cruelty. The New Templars of Liebenfels' spiritual order were also the new Aryans; the carriers of the holy spirit. Schuon claimed to embody the holy spirit himself. Liebenfels writes that "visionary sages will arise from the ancient holy soil of Germany and enchain the apes of Sodom, establish the Church of the Holy Spirit and

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<sup>448</sup> Goodrick-Clark. pg.108

<sup>449</sup> Schuon, Transcendent Unity pg. 143



transform the earth into the “Isles of the Blessed””. Likewise Schuon, who claims to be the last Avatara before the Second Coming, promises his disciples a special sector in Heaven, where they will be with him always. The evil moderns, the profane, the psychologists and secular humanists are Schuon’s : Jews” and they will all be destroyed in the final apocalypse.<sup>450</sup> Lanz and Schuon are thus potential mass murders of a spiritual kind, though they never got to realize their holy and bloody dreams.

Like most Apocalyptic visions, Liebenfels’ vision is a sublimated will to power that compensates for the lack of real power. The apocalyptic idea is often a mythological construction which symbolizes the desire for a change in the social arrangements of power and knowledge. This fantasy is often the result of poverty, frustration and political hatreds. The vision of Liebenfels is very much like the Guenonian and Schuonian visions except that Guenon and Schuon replace Sodom with the Modern World as the place of evil people who deserve to be exterminated. Liebenfels hated Jews become Schuon’s ‘profane people’ This way of thinking was common in economically depressed Germany between the Wars.

The modern world is the “infection” of evil for Guenon and Schuon. Liebenfels did not hate the modern world so much; his hatred was more racial and nationalistic. Schuon and Guenon are not fascists as was Lanz, but theofascists, so their mythology—and their delusions--- are more ‘universal’

Goodrick-Clark explains Lanz’s basic ideology as follows:

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<sup>450</sup> Secular humanism is the only way to look at the world that makes any sense. What secular humanism is a huge thing that ranges from science to the poetry of Whitman to Da Vinci and biology. The other ways are all more or less delusional or wrapped up with fictions

“the principle features of Lanz’ ideology prior to 1918 were thus the notion of occult gnosis {knowledge}, its historical lapse or suppression as an established religion due to a satanic design, and its imminent resurrection in order to secure the cosmos for a new Aryan elite”.<sup>451</sup>

This is also the basic thesis of the Guenon-Schuon-Evola philosophy. As the “Kali-Yuga”, the supposed present period of cosmic decadence, progresses, the Primordial, Platonic and Vedantic “truth” is known by fewer and fewer people, and those who know it are the “elite”. Supreme among this elite are Schuon and his disciples. Guenon and Schuon adapted the proto-Nazi idea of the “god man” which itself grew out of German and French Romantic philosophy and occultism and combined these with traditional religious esoteric systems.

It may be worth mentioning that Schuon’s first book contains references to the Templar myths which were removed from later editions. The shift occurred after Schuon’s split with Guenon in the late 1940’s. Schuon would retain the myth of the primordial Aryans, however, as well as the myth of the God-Man, who is the summit of the pyramid of castes and who embodies the Holy Spirit at the end of time. Indeed, the theory of an Aryan, aristocratic and esoteric brotherhood composed of spiritual Brahmins, which obsessed Liebenfels, and which he saw as apocalyptic agents which would bring about the end of the world and restore “god men” to world power, is very much present in the writing of Guenon, Schuon, and Evola. They are all drinking at the same fictional, mythic trough, as it were. This is nonsense with a political purpose, delusions with an agenda.

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<sup>451</sup> Goodrick Clark pg. 105

So what we see in Schuon is a drive toward a virtual universal power, which is really imaginary but which he hoped would become actual. He really saw himself as a “king”. “The world is round, and I am the king and I don’t know why” he liked to say. This rather insane love of imaginary elite power is very much present in the writing of Guenon and Evola too. Schuon sees himself as the “Restorer”, and he has been called this by three of his main disciples, Leo Schaya, Whitall Perry, and Martin Lings. Lings calls Schuon this in his book The Eleventh Hour.<sup>452</sup> Whitall Perry says in an essay that Guenon and Ananda Coomaraswamy were the prefigurations of Schuon like Elias and John the Baptist prefigured Christ.<sup>453</sup> And Schaya claims that Schuon is Elias.<sup>454</sup> In some unpublished documents distributed to his disciples (authored by Gustavo Polit, written under Schuon’s direction) Schuon makes clearer his understanding of Aryanism. He says:

The human instrument [i.e. Schuon himself] for the manifestation of the Perennial religion at the end of time had to be a westerner; it could not be an oriental and for this there are several reasons. Spiritually considered the messenger who brought the tariqa {i.e. The spiritual elite-Schuon’s cult} to Europe... is more a proto-

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<sup>452</sup> Martin Lings was Guenon's secretary in Cairo in the 1930's and 1940's. Under Schuon after the 1950's Lings was a 'Naib', that is--- a high ranking member of the Schuon cult, author of many books, and oversaw perhaps 75 of Schuon's disciples in England.

<sup>453</sup> Perry, Whitall. "Coomaraswamy, the Man, the Myth and History" in Studies in Comparative Religion. Perry compares Guenon and Coomaraswamy to the two witnesses mentioned in the Apocalypse of St. John. Perry lives across the street from Schuon in Bloomington, and his wife, Barbara, is "married" to Schuon, while still remaining "married" to Perry.

<sup>454</sup> Schuon alludes to this, with approval in his Memoirs. Speaking of a symposium held in Houston, Texas in 1973, attended by many of Schuon's Chief disciples, such as Hossein Nasr, Joseph Epes Brown and others, Leo Schaya, in Schuon's words, "gave an address in which he pointed out that there was a connection between our [i.e. Schuon's] work and the reappearance of Elias at the end of time". Schaya's essay the "Eliatic Function" was the basis of this. Schuon's totalistic message is supposed to prefigure the end of the world. Schaya was one of Schuon's many victims: Maude Murray told me that Schaya's wife claimed that Schuon's cruelty killed him. Schuon was a "friend" of Schaya but apparently betrayed him.

Aryan than a European; but as a European he is a south German deeply rooted in poetic and mystical Romanticism.

This passage is rather obscure, until one reads Schuon's book Castes and Races. There he refers to the preeminence of the white race, which realizes itself only through combining the "messianic and prophetic outlook of the Semites" with the "Aryan Avataric outlook" of the Hindus and Indo Europeans. This turns out to be a portrait of Schuon himself, who is supposed to combine the "first and the last", where "extremes meet"; the last total man at the end of time.<sup>455</sup> This book, more than any other in Schuon's 'oeuvre', evokes the eugenic and race/caste obsessions of the Nazis. The Nazis used such racist designations to typecast Jews, homosexuals and the insane. The Nazis rounded up and sterilized 400,000 of those thought to be insane. They gassed anyone thought to be homosexual. The essentializing language the Nazi's used about race groups is very similar to that used by Schuon.

Later in this book, Schuon states that westerners of a "modernist" outlook due to a "western education", and who criticize the caste system are guilty of a "luciferian insubordination in the face of the sacred".<sup>456</sup> To be educated and not accept hierarchy and subordination is the great heresy for Schuon, as for Guenon. To question the caste system is "luciferian"? What an amazingly ignorant thing to say!! Schuon is following some of the doctrines of the traditional Catholic Church and the Inquisition in these pronouncements. Since Schuon believed he was infallible and "not a man like other men" all others should submit to his idiotic opinions or be accounted as evil, cast into hell or destroyed by god. This is an obscene and unconscionable conclusion of a bad man. There is no possible justification for the evil of the caste system. Caste and Races is a racist book by a narrow and bigoted man.

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<sup>455</sup> Schuon pg.53.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid. pg.8

Refusing subordination is to be praised as part of human and nature's rights. It is seen wrongly as the great crime against the Traditionalists as it was to the Nazis and the Stalinists or any other ideological autocracy. The Traditionalists call this refusal of hierarchy "prometheanism" which they see as the evil fruit of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Prometheus was a mythological story about the suppression of what we now call human rights. To his credit, Prometheus refused to submit to the delusions of grandeur of the gods, who were no more than projections of the drive to knowledge and power of the Greek elite. Prometheus is myth to be proud of, even if it is just a story. He is supposedly punished for this by a bird who continually eats out his liver. Obviously a myth made up by kings, and it is false. Prometheus is an enlightenment hero and deserves no punishment at all.

Schuon took over Guenon's racism about the "West" Guenon wrote that "it is all too clear that to the extent that a man "Westernizes" himself, whatever may be his race or country, to that extent he ceases to be an Easterner spiritually and intellectually, that is to say from the one point of view that really holds any interest." This race hatred against science and democracy is anti-Promethean. As an anti-Promethean, Schuon claims bogus authority. According to his wives, Schuon is supposed to transcend history, since he is a "kulturheros" who brings a new age and new civilization out of the ashes of the old. Schuon claims, as Guenon also implicitly claimed, to be the living anticipation of the golden age that will arise after the apocalypse. Guenon and Schuon both wrote and acted and seemed to believe that only someone diabolic or insane could reject their right to total authority. This delusional sense of transcendental entitlement is characteristic of psychopathic cult leaders.

For Schuon no science is allowable on the "level" of ordinary reality. All must be subservient to an imaginary hierarchy, to the caste elitism of Guenon and Schuon. For Schuon, subordination is the essence of the

social order, because the social order must be built on fictional “principles” which only the “men of intelligence” – that is---only the self-appointed “spiritual elite”, can supply. Schuon believed himself “objective” and “infallible”. In Schuon’s lexicon, “objective” does not mean concretely observed or scientific, as he despised science. For Schuon, objectivity is god, and the “intellect” is what reads what is “real or unreal”. For Schuon objectivity leads one to god and god is more or less made in Schuon’s image. Schuon thought he was himself objectivity and what he thought must be true because he thought it. He claimed to be infallible. What does not lead to Schuon and thus to god is profanity, evil or illusion. This delusional system of self-mirroring or solipsistic and circular justifications is Schuon metaphysical system in a nutshell.

In other words, in Schuon, “reality” is an ultimate subjectivism ‘Objectivity’ in Schuon’s ideology is a fiction, a sort of pseudo-science. Schuon is guilty of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, as Whitehead called it. He makes concrete what in fact is merely abstractly speculative and fictional. When Schuon says that the social order must be built up on ‘objectivity’ he means dictated by religion, not scientific fact, which he despises. Schuon says many absurd things about evolution, which he never understood. He liked Louis Agassiz ideas because they Agassiz tried to deny evolution and ground nature in Platonic “ideas” or archetypes. Agassiz’s support of slavery grew from the same soil as Schuon’s love of caste and elite despising of others. The archetypes were essentializations, or generalized prejudices, which allowed Schuon to categorize people in absolute terms. Schuon Guenon are symbolists above all, realities do not concern them as much as stereotypes or Archetypes.<sup>457</sup> Archetypes, Agassiz thought, even dictate for Agassiz

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<sup>457</sup> In the philosophy of Aquinas and others, a more Aristotelian concept of universals would be combined, rather ambiguously, with the Platonic position. Aquinas unwittingly began the dissolution of Christian symbolism and the rise of science by questioning Plato’s “Ideas”. It was this ambiguity in Aquinas that led to the Realist/Nominalist controversy over the subject of universals and made the question of universals central to the controversy over the nature of the

that so called “black” and “white” people were separate species. Platonistic Arcetypes are racist constructions, essentialized fictions. Schuon separated people into caste hierarchies. Some sacred, some profane, So, just as Agassiz’s Platonism inevitably turned him into an apologist for racism and slavery, Schuon’s Platonism turned him into a caste elitist who despised others and holds himself up to megalomaniac heights. Schuon’s whole system of thought---and this is crucial and also true of Guenon--- is based on the ideology of the subjective “Intellect” and in their system the intellect is nothing other than their own private subjectivity elected into a fictional embodiment of all the religions reduced to a few simple caricatured ideas. In other words the whole basis of the Guenonian/Schuonian system is not just cracked in its foundations, it is based on the subjective delusions of Guenon, Schuon, Evola and the rest. It is an elaborate farce, a masquerade, an elitist pastiche of bits and pieces of broken religious symbolisms and ideas.

Schuon says that the rebellion against the authoritarian Kings and Priests after the Renaissance and Enlightenment was a “luciferian” revolt against the spiritual castes.<sup>458</sup> Actually it was reasonable revolt against superstition, abuse of human rights, horribly unjust economic arrangements, slavery and arbitrary dictatorship. But, Schuon believes that the overthrown of priests and kings led to the takeover of what the Hindus call the Vaisya and Shudra castes, that is, the merchants and workers.<sup>459</sup> These “low caste” people had no right to the power of the

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Eucharist. Science rises out of the failure of the Platonic theory of knowledge and the turn to seeking knowledge based on experience rather than dogma and symbolism. Science begins in the nominalism that trumped Aquinas.

<sup>458</sup> In this context the idea of Lucifer might be a good idea, or at least that is what William Blake thought in 1800. The idea of Lucifer is not an improvement of the god idea. Both are made to believe.

<sup>459</sup> Schuon writes: "instead of throwing overboard the theocratic and monarchical principles, these should have been given their full sense, which was a religious one; this is just what the nobility

Brahmin and Kashatriya, or Priest and Warrior castes, Schuon complains. Hating both Marxists and Jeffersonian democrats he wants to bring back Medieval kings.

Never mind that most ‘priests’ were parasitical and most ‘warriors’ were thugs. Never mind that India is still rife with superstitions of myriad kinds many of which do great harm to women and hurt people who try to escape caste justices.. To quote a recent New York Times article, India is “teeming with gurus, babas, astrologers, godmen and other mystical entrepreneurs.”<sup>460</sup> India thrives on ignorance and those with a vested interest in exploiting it. Schuon fantasized that an evil conspiracy took away the unjust powers and bogus superstitions of the priests and Kings of yesteryear. Kings were cruel men with swords and priests were selling indulgences for profit, and the notion that such thugs or hucksters were better than some blacksmiths, glasses makers or bakers, is quite absurd. Castes are there to protect the vested interests of classes that specialize in certain rituals, and caste protects the powerful who wish to hold on to the inequality of their position. Religion does this too. It is designed to be a certain sort of people in power.

Schuon claims falsely that ‘low’ democratic people have victimized the holy priests and warriors and “celestial values” are replaced by “infra-human” values. He imagines ‘low’, evil people want to abolish caste.

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had neglected to do since the Renaissance”. (In the Tracks of Buddhism. London: Allen and Unwin. 1968. pg. 69) This implies a total theocracy.

<sup>460</sup> For instance on Aug 19 2013, Narendra Dabholkar, a doctor who was fighting against superstition, was murdered in India, apparently by far right religious fanatics. He was good at debunking gurus and frauds. The New York Times reports that

“ If a holy man had electrified the public with his miracles, Dr. Dabholkar, a former physician, would duplicate the miracles and explain, step by step, how they were performed. If a sorcerer had amassed a fortune treating infertility, he would arrange a sting operation to unmask the man as a fraud. His goal was to drive a scientist’s skepticism into the heart of India, a country still teeming with gurus, babas, astrologers, godmen and other mystical entrepreneurs.” (NYT Aug. 24 2013)

It is a shame this man was murdered. He was trying to do good work, badly needed in India, which for so long has been controlled by irrational systems of make believe.



Schuon disliked hard workers and preferred lazy “blue blood” Aristocrats. He disliked women who raise children close to their pants or skirts, breast feeding them, but liked wedding cake like, overdressed wives of slave owning lords who sent their kids to boarding schools for nearly the whole year to get rid of them. Schuon thought that open-mindedness, fairness, abolition of slavery, better medical care, worker’s rights, equality, women’s rights, human rights, animal rights, nature’s rights and democracy were all the devil’s spawn. Schuon explains:

It is not the people who are the victims of theocracy, it is on the contrary theocracy that is the victim...The European monarchs of the nineteenth century made almost desperate efforts to dam the tide of mounting democracy...But these efforts were doomed to be vain in default of the one counterweight that could have reestablished stability, and that could only be religion, sole source of the legitimacy and power of princes. <sup>461</sup>

Schuon writes this grotesque theofascist nonsense without even being aware of the suffering of millions of peasants and lower class people, serfs, slaves, Native American workers who died so that “theocracy” could persist in exploiting them. If “stuffed shirts” had more religion to oppress the poor they could have kept their unjust estates and the Sherriff of Nottingham could take his bath in milk, without being irritated by that up start Robin Hood. The French Revolution happened

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<sup>461</sup> Schuon, Light on the Ancient Worlds pg.31 This effort to paint the theocratic aristocracies as victims is perhaps unique, but not exceptional. De Maistre also tried to paint aristocrats and religious authorities as victims. I note that many tyrants have seen themselves as victims. Stalin and Hitler seem to have had this tendency. Late in his life Stalin did a drawing of himself as a sheep surrounded by wolves. Nixon seems to have seen himself as a victim also. The most conspicuous example of this tendency is the use of the image of the victimized Christ by the Churches, even while the Church was victimizing others, holding Inquisitions, Crusades and becoming deeply involved in the slave trade in the ‘new world’.

because the priests and aristocracy were rotten to the core, greedy, punishing, moralistic and hypocritical: They killed an starved people, taxed them into starvation, beheaded them put them in prisons without charge or burned them at the stake.

Schuon says that “he who says democracy says demagoguery”. Wrong. This is true mostly when the far-right governs and these demagogues hate democracy. It is the party of big business that causes most of suffering, death, environmental loss and human rights violations in U.S. history. Big Business continues the heritage of the aristocratic Ancien Regime, without the pretence of good manners. The aristocrats soaked the poor and middle class with high taxes and exempted themselves from most tax, as the rich do today. The French Revolution was a time of great hope, largely ruined by Robespierre and Napoleon. It was a star of future hopes and we still live under its hopes and struggles. Many of the ideas of Liberals or democrats in the French Revolution have later influenced administrations in United States and indeed, world history. They have liberated people from oppression, such as Lincoln’s Emancipation of slaves or FDR’s Medicare or workers’ rights, Civil rights, as well women’s rights programs. The aristocracy over the world was mostly removed or dissolved. Eventually we will need nature’s rights and animal rights legislation, defined as the precondition of all other rights.

Schuon was ignorant of the importance of aspects of the English, French and American Revolutions, as well as of American history. He recommended that a “monarch or... a military dictator-could have seen to interracial justice” in the U.S. <sup>462</sup> This laughable statement shows Schuon as an immigrant who has no understanding of American history at all. We fought a war to eliminate monarchs from our lands and another war to get rid of slave owners, and there still remains the task of getting rid of CEO’s and their role in corrupting congress and courts.

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<sup>462</sup> Schuon, Frithjof. To Have a Center Bloomington. World Wisdom Books.1990 pg 169

The long fight against slavery was above all a fight against patrician aristocrats and Jim Crow plantation owners who had priests and military dictators on their side, enforcing slavery values even after slavery itself was abolished..

Schuon was the demagogue. Schuon complains that in the modern world, control is not in the hands of religious-military dictators. He falsely supposes dictators would see to “interracial justice” between whites, Native Americans and African Americans. Actually it was businessmen, religious leaders and military men who created race and class ideology and atrocity to begin with. The slave trade and the murder of some 30 million Native Americans, either outright, or by overwork and resulting diseases, were enacted by 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century European aristocratic and theocratic merchant states and monarchs and are contemporary with the worst period of the Inquisition. Upper class and monied interests supported slavery up to and beyond its end. The Inquisition is really about stopping Science, and was the policing arm of the aristocracy the Church. The Inquisition was about policing the world to keep the Church and the Aristocracy in gold But Schuon does not usually trouble himself with history, science or facts, such as the fact that Columbus was just such a military dictator, who sailed for “gold and God” and who, according to Bartholomew Las Casas, killed 3 million Native Americans on Hispaniola and elsewhere. It was Napoleon, whom Schuon admires, who destroyed the first African American state in Haiti in the early 1800’s. <sup>463</sup> Napoleon also undermined all that was good about the French Revolution and set in motion the absurdity of the restoration of kings.

Schuon subsumes all history, all religions and all social order

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<sup>463</sup> Schuon also supported the system of Apartheid in South Africa, on the grounds that it was preferable to communism. He also approved of Nixon, Reagan and the Vietnam War, which killed 3 or 4 million Vietnamese.

under the banner of his absolutist belief in monism or the “One” to which only his august intellect, as well as a few other “elite” intellects, have access. The subjective faculty Schuon calls the Intellect is merely a faculty of self-delusion. Schuon’s followers listen to or read such rubbish and sigh with admiration at Schuon’s genius. However, he is not a genius. He was a theofascist who was ignorant of history. As we see, Schuon’s embrace of the Japanese version of fascism, his confusion about relativity, his abusive ideas of caste, and his embrace of the divine right of kings how him as an entirely political human of a rather harmful sort. I do not care much about Schuon, but he is a good example of how questionable politics has been for many centuries. Thus, he writes: “the theocratic essence of the imperial idea is clearly apparent; without theocracy there would be no civilization worthy of the name”. <sup>464</sup> In fact, he is wrong, theocracy was a system of state terrorism and mind control which established a pattern of atrocity producing systems of government. It did not produce civilization. It produced destructive empires and millions of deaths. Its gradual disappearance over the last few centuries is a good thing and ‘civilization’ survives very well without theocracy. We must be careful to insure that arbitrary dictators , be they kings, corporate CEO’s or cult leaders like Schuon, do not triumph over ordinary people or nature.

The French Revolution is not over yet, at least until war and killing are gone, nature preserved and the earth and all its beings are cared for, honored for the lives they evolved into and no longer used to make men rich and the earth starved and choked with pollution and global warming.

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<sup>464</sup> Schuon, Frithjof. Light on the Ancient Worlds Bloomington: World Wisdom Books. 1984 pg.8

## **Critics of Schuon: His Fictional Marriages, Lying and Polygamy**

**Note: What follows brings some of the history I discuss in this book into the personal realm, to show how the religious ideologies of various religions and a cult had an influence on me and how I got free of it, eventually. It tells of a failed love story and how this love story helped bring down a cult leader and a con man.**

. It is well nearing 25 years since I was involved in the police investigation and court case as a witness against Frithjof Schuon. He was indicted for child molestation and “undue cult influence” and I knew he was guilty as I saw what he did,. So did the Grand Jury, which indicted him. I gathered plenty of evidence to prove it, before and after the indictment.<sup>465</sup> The Grand Jury even tried to indict the prosecutor,

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<sup>465</sup> This undue cult influence is ongoing. In March 2115 Wikipedia itself protests the lack of criticism and removal of critical comments from the wikipedia article on Schuon and notes: “This article is useless as it is. There is no trace of comparative or even historical criticism. As it stands, the article is a pamphlet.” Wikipedia notes that much of the material about Schuon

“is mostly a copy and paste from the World Wisdom Books[Schuon cult publishing company] website biography, which makes this edit a breach of [WP:NPS](#). While WW's publications and diffusion activities may be commendable, their contents in relation to Mr. Schuon are certainly not written in a neutral “encyclopedia” tone and are by far too detailed for the concision required.

This article has a long history and this is not the first time such a pro domo addition occurs, but disciples, students and followers of FS might realize that it is detrimental to

because they were sure his dropping of the case was crooked. They were right to do that. He had created Primordial Gatherings as the crowning achievement of his career. I was told this in no uncertain terms, notwithstanding the cults later denials that these were rituals. These were rituals, not merely recreational activities designed to amuse Thomas Yellowtail as people in the cult have stated. In these Gatherings, Schuon had women dance around him nude or semi-nude and as he embraced each one in a sexual manner he claimed to “heal” women through sexual contact. Yeah, right.

I was not the only one who told about these events. Stephen Lambert described Schuon in these gatherings in which he “embraced each woman in turn, pressing them to himself in full body contact by first clasping them about the upper torso and then about the buttocks. “ as they circled around him. In the larger gatherings the men circled about the women. Maude Murray, and I described these also, as well as variations on it. Ron Bodmer and Aldo Vidali described similar things. These are five direct witnesses and this is certainly not “defamation” but evidence of clear fact. The cult invited children to these events, and then did all they could to lie and cover up these facts, once they were exposed. They are still trying to cover it up, 25 years later.

I knew a great deal about Schuon, more than anyone really, outside of the tiny inner circle of the cult, who have not told the truth about him to this day. The cult had an enormous respect for his man, who was neither very nice or respectable. He had delusions of his kingship and

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Schuon's appreciation to have an encyclopedia article taken over for promotional purposes.”

Criticism of Schuon can be found here:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/soc.culture.iranian/EKtP6julW4E%5B151-175%5D>

And here:

<http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledgemythindex.asp>

see the first two essays

as well as the book by Mark Sedgwick and the Dance of Masks by Hugh Urban

expected others to pamper him like that. I saw through this charade fairly early and found myself in the inner circle looking closely at this man and I did not like what I saw. He was not a king, actually, but they all acted like he was Henry the 8th, or actually, more than that, as if he were the final prophet 'at the end of time', which is what he called himself. Being the only one too see that this fake emperor had no clothes was a difficult place to be,--- terrifying actually--- but it was the truth, he was a nudist and a user, as well as a cult leader an there was no way to pretend it was not so. I am hardly proud of my knowledge and think it more of a burden and embarrassment to have to talk about him at all. But the world has yet to catch up with what I know. I have long felt a responsibility to tell the truth about it.

Certainly the organization around Schuon was and apparently still is a cult. My purpose in helping the police investigate this cult was to expose it and stop the abuses. In this I was successful. Schuon was indicted, rightfully so. It is known by many that something is rotten in Bloomington. The cult was circumscribed and the abuses exposed even if the cult managed to subvert justice and lie to the public. It is well known now that there was deep corruption around Schuon, even if the cult circled their wagons, lied publicly and covered up all that they could.<sup>466</sup> People said that I lost that because Schuon was not convicted. This is not so, no more young girls were molested, and Schuon was exposed as a fraud.

Because it is such a small, regretted, part of my life,-- insignificant really,--- I do not mean this present chapter to make more of the Schuon cult than was there. The fact is it was not that important in my life. But I write about Schuon here merely to tell the truth and continue to educate

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<sup>466</sup> The cult was alleged at the time, by one of the prosecutors, David Hunter, to have somehow bought the influence from the governor of the state, then a man named Birch Bigh. How they did this is unknown to me, but the grand jury tried to stop this and get the prosecutor by the name of Miller investigated and fired. So the corruption in the Schuon case went quite deep. The corruption clearly originated in the cult itself, radiating from the rot at the center of it.

others about what I learned, using Schuon as a foil against which to raise issues about cults, power systems and religions. I was an innocent when I went to Bloomington at age 33. The two years I spent there were under a regime where I was required to act in a certain way and show “adab”(polite submission) to those who claimed to be my “superiors”. I was merely a witness. Most of what happened to me there was not by my design. I watched it all happen with a strange distance, like it was happening to someone else. I went with the flow and learned what I could as I went along. I felt more and more like a reporter rather than a participant in these events. I admire the reporter’s perspective, my uncle was a reporter and I like Joan Didion’s writings.

There was no point in my life where I was more abstracted from myself, more another, more in need to repress who I was to get along in that alien society. I was considered ‘gifted’ and thought of well by the cult leaders and given things, money, and initiations. I was not looking for any of this, I was looking for what was true in religion, and finding out who Schuon was.. It was all very surreal and involved deluding myself, at the same time as I was aware I was required to do that and did not want to. It was very clear that having a “good character” meant flattering Schuon, and having a “bad character” meant questioning or criticizing him. The cult was about adulation of the cult leader. It still is. But as I saw more and more corruption around me I began a gathering of information to bring out of the cult and subsequently I exposed the fraud. The blame the cult tried to fix to me after I left is a typical damage control technique used on all whistle blowers. Once a “good character” I was made into a bad character, when I started criticizing the cults crimes. Obversely, Schuon saw himself as the greatest man who ever lived, but when he was criticized, and the criticism shown to be founded, he claimed himself as the victim, when in fact he was the victimizer. So their attacks on me were little more than fraudulent slanders done in an effort to try to improve the flagging image of Schuon was the greatest



man of our age. Their whole strategy was to try to present me as a crazy, morally deficient, bad person. But I was not that, even if I was far from perfect.. The same people who said I was gifted, suddenly thought I was evil incarnate when their “spiritual master” was exposed to the light of day. Maude complains of this too, and in my hearing I heard all sorts of slanders on Maude character by people in the cult who claimed to know her. She was none of the things she was called, “a loose woman” and nymphomaniac” a mad woman wand so on. Groups of people, cults especially, easily become cruel and slander those who question them.

Schuon’s work and the life of his cult has some value as part of a discussion of religion from the point of view of a how organizations exploit true believers. Schuon had no awareness of his own delusions, much less the delusions of the religions he writes about. He was without question the most deluded man I ever met. I have met street people, people suffering hallucinations, depression, textbook cases of schizophrenia, a Vietnam soldier suffering PTSD, crouched down in the middle of the street in Brooklyn thinking bombs were falling all around him, enemies everywhere--- but Schuon was worse off that all these. Strangely, I was willing for a time to forgo my own sanity to follow his madness, like following the pied piper out of Hamelin with his crazy flute. But this lasted only so long as I did not really know him, but once I got to know him, I was no longer in the cult, even if part fo me was still involved bodily.

He sometimes--- not always--- reluctantly saw the need to have religions adapt to the needs of our world. This is to his credit. What appealed to me about him was that he was open to all the religions and wrote about them rather accurately, most of the time. His book on Islam is quite good as bland description and even many Moslems like it. His essays on Shinto are interesting as are his essays on Buddhism and Native American religion. What I mean is that he reflects these systems of make believe fairly accurately. But his ability to be objective about

these religions or do the intricate work of real scholarship on them is not there at all. The accuracy he did show was in service of huge delusions about everything. He was a deluded man who swam in the sea of delusions that we call the major religions. He passed these delusions onto others and is still doing so now through his books, even though he is dead.

There are more criticisms of Schuon than one finds of Guenon. The paranoia of Guenon, discussed elsewhere in these books, is also in evidence around Schuon, who seems to have patterned his whole mindset obsessively on Guenon's and then later denied doing it. Schuon is not an effective critic of Guenon, but rather a follower. Guenon's criticisms of Schuon are much more pointed. He accuses him of being unorthodox in the following letter:

Guenon writes:

“in Lausanne, the ritual observances have been reduced to the strict minimum, and that most even don't fast anymore during Ramadan; I did not think that it had reached this point, and I see now that I was only too right when I said that soon it would not be a tariqah at all anymore, but a vaguely “universalist” organization,

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But this is merely the mad diagnosis of another deluded man. Guenon is here looking down his nose at Schuon because Schuon and his group are not 'orthodox' enough, which is true they were not: orthodoxy being the ability to follow handed down dogmas and arbitrary rules without any insight or creativity. Guenon himself was hardly “orthodox” and orthodoxy itself is a guarantee of nothing but mindless following of rules. He was a chain smoker, former hashish addict and

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<sup>467</sup> Cairo, October 9th, 1950. *Rivista di studi Tradizionali* n. 33 (1970) and 34 (1971).  
Translation by Denis Constaes

womanizer. Schuon was individualist and eccentric European in the extreme: a dandy, a wine drinker, occasional smoker, liked to eat dinner nude with his “wives”, who were not his actual wives, and none of this is what which you are supposed to do if you are a “good Moslem”. Religions are primarily about thought and behavior control. Schuon called the concern with rules and observances, “exoteric voluntarism” and “orthodoxy” and applied these norms only to hangers on in the cult, or outsiders. The inner people of the cult were immoral wife swappers, nudists and “esoterists”, very unorthodox and syncretic in combining many religions into one. Many people get upset that these men were hypocrites, but few question the value of orthodoxy itself. Orthodoxy is required of those who are beneath us—this was the mindset of the inner circle of the cult.

But though Schuon and Guenon were not very good Moslems, they were still Moslems and did the prayers and most of the observances. The fact that these men were not very good at what they did hardly means that Islam itself is beyond question. Indeed, the involvement of young girls in Schuon’s primordial gatherings has Muhammad abuse of Aisha, at age 9, as its ultimate model. Religious systems are systems of social control and the founders of such systems are often themselves fictions or make believe and the fictional character of Muhammad Jesus or others are often men of dubious character themselves. The willingness of Islam to encourage the abuse of children was exemplified in December of 2014 when Taliban Muslims murdered 100 children and 47 workers in a school. They were opposed to them learning anything other than the Koran and the Sharia. The fictional god comes first and all must be made subservient to that, in Schuon, as in other religious fanatics. Children for Schuon, as for the Taliban or Mormon cults, must be sacrificed for the “transcendent” delusion.

I am not making a ‘value judgment’ about Schuon’s behavior, I merely describe what I learned. These are facts, not value judgments.

Schuon's bizarre "marriages" involved his "wives" being married to other men. I doubt this has any precedent anywhere that I know of, except maybe other cults, infidelities or Islands in the Pacific where such anomalies may have occurred due to lack of men. I cannot find a similar example, which is not to say there is not one somewhere. In any case, women and children are often the victims of such male dominated religions.

Schuon's unorthodoxy in marriages is one thing. His claim to be the sexual consort of the Virgin Mary is another thing. To say it is unorthodox is to understate it, though surprisingly, I found a few other men who claimed this, Hong Xioquin claimed to be the Virgin Mary's son and Da Free John claimed sexual relations with her. The Virgin Mary is a myth, and anyone can claim anything about a myth, like Schuon. .Schuon's claim to be a prophet and an avatara is also unorthodox, though not that unusual in certain institutions for psychological care. Orthodoxy is designed to get small minds to follow mythic make believe with regular adherence and repeat over and over again the same delusions.

Many people have tried to tell me Schuon was not a real spiritual master. This is quite true, but this forgets the fact that there are *no* real spiritual masters and never were, anywhere. There are only more or less sincere people who believe their own delusions and teach them to others. "A "real" spiritual master is someone who takes his own delusions seriously and manages not to hurt too many people because of it. This is rare, admittedly, but no less delusional than people who are rotten and claim to be saints. Schuon tried to embody all the religions, which is no less valid than claiming to embody one of them, since they are all systems of make believe. It scarcely matters if one embodies one or all. They are all fictions. Since Muhammad was probably not a real person and Jesus probably never existed it is rather hard to maintain any notion

of “orthodoxy” since it is all fairy tales. There are people who master the art of delusion making and promulgation of delusions and some are more ‘orthodox’ in going about this than others. Orthodoxy really just means being dogmatic about adhering to one delusion over another.

Further, Schuon’s claim to be a Shadhiliya spiritual master (or Shaykh) descended from Sheikh Al-Alawi was also claimed on false pretenses. Schuon claimed Adda Bentounes of the Alawiya tariqah in North Africa made him a muqadam, when in fact he did not, and then Schuon claimed himself Shakyh one morning after a dream. His followers had dreams too and this was supposed to prove it. The Shadhiliya tariqa denied he had any legitimate standing to declare himself a Shaykh.<sup>468</sup> But what does this matter anyway? All sorts of corrupt people are bishops or Popes, and many cult elders have no legitimate basis to be anything. All the religions are based on fictions and the notion of Orthodoxy is merely the effort to legitimize what is fundamentally illegitimate. Indeed, professional priests, Mullahs, popes, Lamas and others who “profess” their faith are all phony, as they have positions based on falsity and fictions.<sup>469</sup> There is a mistaken assumption that those who have power are more likely to be good, but this is often not the case at all. Correct behavior is not a guarantee of anything.

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<sup>468</sup> Mark Sedgwick discusses this on page 88-89 of his text, with a prejudice toward Moslem orthodoxy.

<sup>469</sup> The notion of “professional” itself is often more pretence than fact and based on bureaucracy and money rather than truth. One wants to have someone do work that is well done, surely, but this easily becomes confused with those who merely get a license. There are many “professional” con men, liars and thieves and we call them professors or doctors, lawyers or businessmen. They all have licenses. Professional men are often those who are likely to steal your pension or commit environmental abuses. “Collison” experts who fix cars are often corrupt gougers who cannot do work as well or as fairly as independent mechanics, for instance. The notion of a profession has a heritage in caste and institutional history. The medical profession is a good example, where the “professionals” are largely a creation of moneyed interests, who keep secret the actual outcomes of their operations. The medical profession is a creation of the 1900’s male misogyny and the effort to profit from the sick. Comparing health care systems in America, Germany, France Britain and other countries quickly shows how “professionalism” in America is largely based on the immoral and profitable exploitation of the sick. They farm the ill for profits. This does not mean that there are no professionals who are competent, obviously there are. But the guild mentality of the manger class should be questioned as sometimes self-interested and unjust.

Orthodoxy is merely the pretence of the right behavior that confers power on a group. Schuon was passionate about having all the religious power he could get. The notion of legitimacy and orthodoxy in religion is suspect. “servants, obey your masters in all things” St. Paul said. (Col 3:22) Christianity is full of justification of the Masters and supported the idea of slavery. The Orthodox in nearly all cases supports the masters, just as most Christians supported slavery up until the civil war.

Unorthodoxy only matters to those who subjectively think that orthodoxy is a true standard. There is nothing at all objective in orthodoxy. It is a delusion. While it may be true that a patina of moral orthodoxy does protect against a few abuses, the idea of orthodoxy itself is highly questionable and brings with it its own set of terrible abuses. It has been orthodox to stone women or to marry nine year olds girls in Islam, but these are violations of human rights. Orthodoxy is a guarantor of nothing but conformist and conventional thinking and conventional thinking often cruelly violates human rights. Guenon was hardly “orthodox” himself and his unorthodoxy is not a guarantee of anything either. His use of Islam was parasitical to the “super-religion” of Traditionalism that he invented. The Traditionalists are not orthodox: they merely exploit orthodoxy as a means to greater power. Orthodoxy, in any case is merely the persistence of habit, literally “right speech”—as if performing certain actions or prayers in a proscribed manner has any real meaning. Orthodoxy is merely dogma and mind control ossified in a system over a long period of time. It is a brain training along the lines proscribed by self-interested and unjust elites. Unorthodoxy, orthodoxy: both concepts are really absurd and harmful. The problem in both cases is religion itself, which has a dimension that is fundamentally unjust and leads to violations of human rights.

It is assumed that because some ritual religious practice, prayer or other magical or superstitious ceremony is passed from generation to generation that it “works” or is efficacious. In fact there is no evidence

that this belief is anything other than magical thinking, usually promoted by a patriarchal priesthood concerned with passing down a pedigree and an institutional power structure and the economic benefits that go along with this. Rituals are outward, symbolic reenactments meant to silence dissent and rebellion. Prayer is meant to do the same thing from the inside. A large part of the purpose of prayer is just this institutional imposition into the subjectivity of the person who prays. Orthodoxy is doing things the way those in power have done it before. The pretence to be a Shaykh or Priest is really the ability to follow the rules of the institution. In. Schuon's case, he set off on his own, and was doubly a fraud, first because being a 'authentic" Shaykh is itself fraudulent, and second because he was unable to follow the bogus rules that would have made him be orthodox. He did claim to be orthodox when he was more of a Moslem and then he claimed to be an orthodox Indian. But neither effort was very well done. The problem for Schuon was that he tried to be orthodox to too many religions, and they contradict each other. These rule systems are largely arbitrary and do not overlap well. Combining systems of fiction merely makes for an even more delusional system. Schuon was thus a polyglot phony, and master of delusions of many kinds. It is hard to see the merit in that.

What I learned from all of the Traditionalists, including Schuon, Guenon and Rama Coomaraswamy, is that the claim to be orthodox amounted to nothing. It was a political pose, a way of forcing others to behave in certain ways. This is true in all churches and religions. Doing it the "right" way insures only conformity and still amounts to practicing superstition and magical thinking. Orthodoxy is was merely a pose to gain power, a strategy --- a dogmatic claim to exclude or condemn others, in addition to a code of behavior, especially one more applied to others and less to oneself. Orthodoxy is merely superstition and make-believe organized over a number of generations, passed down mostly by males, but also by females, who want to exclude others from joining the

club. Orthodoxy is a sort of bogus cultural natural selection, whereby those on the inside exercise prejudice against those who do not conform.

The Schuon cult had its own bizarre orthodoxy that was different from Rama Coomaraswamy's attachment to archaic and outmoded, far-right, Latin Masses or Moslem followers of Schuon who had their Sufi "Wird" or "Hadra"<sup>470</sup> or bizarre systems of dream interpretation. Guenon said that

"I am not surprised, for, from a technical viewpoint, the ignorance of all these people, to start with F.S. [Frithjof Schuon] himself, is truly frightening..."

Guenon felt that the Schuon group was a failure as an orthodox group, which is true. But Guenon's orthodox perfectionism was even worse than Schuon's lack of it. Guenon also thought that Schuon's people were spying on him, and they probably were. But actually Guenon had no real inside knowledge either. He was also a fraud. He thought Martin Lings was reading his mail. He states his paranoia pretty clearly :

I think we must be very careful  
[about]all that F.S. [Frithjof Schuon] and the Swiss might want to have appear in the "E.T." [the journal Etudes Traditionnelles], for it may well be that they slip into some article something that would be directed against us...

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<sup>470</sup> The Wird is a Sufi rosary more or less – a long prayer said in a certain way and Hadra is a ritual dance done at Majlis (gatherings)---, in the case of the Schuon cult they did the Shadiliya Hadra of North Africa which was done with a drum and the dancers chant the name Allah over and over. Schuon's Hadra was rather cold and unemotional. He wanted his followers to experience a sort of intellectual union with an imaginary god both on an interior and exterior level, which really means to completely give yourself to the imaginary deity. .



Well, the truth is, as I saw myself, the Schuon cult *was* against Guenon, on the one hand--- they were all against each other---, but on the other Guenon was very paranoid and suspected Schuon's group, rightly, of being a group designed for self-promotion. In short, this was a nest of vipers and all of them were back biting the others.

There are various critics of Schuon, besides myself, though most of them are unpublished.<sup>471</sup> Schuon's minions branded and publicly tarred anyone who criticized their great "Master" with slanderous appellations like "satanic", "evil" or "intrinsic swine".<sup>472</sup> Schuon himself, who had a mean and caustic mouth, used similar terms. Maude Murray writes to me that Michael Fitzgerald and Sharlyn Romaine lied to the newspapers and under oath and deliberately attacked my character in particular. Maude says in a letter to me that that "they purposely studied and exaggerated your bad character traits and had me do that too."<sup>473</sup> They wanted to picture me as a demon seething in revenge. I was not seeking Maude Murray's involvement with me. She got me involved with her. Actually I was just a guy in the wrong place at the wrong time

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<sup>471</sup> Cyril Glasse, a member of the Schuon cult who led a reasonable effort to question Schuon in 1987, put together an impressive book of criticism of Schuon in the early 1990's. It records the criticism of Victor Danner, David Lake, Paul Yachnes, Catherine Perry and many others. Rather than admit he might be wrong, Schuon claimed that all these critics were in conspiracy against him and that anyone who listened to them was listening to a diabolical plot against a great prophet. Those who criticized him were quite reasonable to question him,. But Schuon's arrogance overcame him and but rather than listen to reason he declared himself infallible. He wrote that even his "claim to be infallibility was infallible". All those who criticized him were forced out of the cult and demonized. This, again, is theofascism in a nutshell. Irrationality is set up as an unimpeachable "infallible" authority and evidence is suppressed and those who criticize the injustice are declared satanic or evil. It is standard policy of the Schuon cult to accuse their accusers to cover up their own faults—the typical strategy of hypocrites.

<sup>472</sup> " that is what Schuon called me in a public video. He said it with a Nazi sort of "Svine", as Hitler called Jews—I have no idea what an "intrinsic swine" might be—I guess something like Wilbur the pig in E.B. White great children's story Charlotte's Web . Wilbur was a pig who is "Some pig", "terrific" and "humble". Maybe I am "some pig" too! I rather like pigs and there reputation for being dirty is not their natural state, but one imposed on them by their keepers. It is their keepers who abuse them when they seek to profit from them. Pigs are merely domesticated

<sup>473</sup> Murray letter to mk, May 1996.

and came out with evidence that I did not even want to have. Maude need not have gone along with them. It is a testament to this cult's rabid tactics to turn a woman who loved a man against him in this way. I certainly have aspects of my character which could be better but none of the people in the cult had any useful insight into me. Schuon claimed that "that it was a dirty love story which I did not approve and they wanted to destroy me." But this is utter nonsense and paranoia. There was no 'dirty love story', except in Schuon's own dirty mind and need of multiple women and girls. He was indeed a dirty old man, and my relationship with Maude was many things, but was not 'dirty'.

On the contrary, I got involved with Maude because she needed me. She was lonely and desperate. It was not at all about love at the beginning. It was a caring relationship in which I did my best to make her life better. I think I succeeded, but it took her a long time to get out of the cult. I got involved with her only because she needed me, I was 33 and she was 50 and it was not a matter of sexual attraction at all, at least on my side, though sex became part of it. She was 17 years older than I. I was 33 or 34 and she was 50. She insisted that we get involved against my resistance to this, and over several months. I felt sorry for her. When I first met her I was not at all attracted to her. I did not even like her very much. She told me that if I thought as Cyril Glasse thought, I could go "jump in a lake". I had no idea how he thought then, and did not know what she was saying. Later, after I painted her house and got to know her, it was pity that led me towards her, and wanting to know who Schuon was. These were my original motivations for eventually giving in to her. Pity continued to be the strongest reason for being with her, as Schuon had treated her so badly and she was in pain. The other motive was reporting what I learned.

Originally, Maude acted towards me as my "spiritual superior". I was obliged in the unspoken rules of the cult to regard her as my superior in the hierarchy of the cult. I had to give her audience. She told

me from the beginning that I was to act as if she were Schuon himself giving me what he would have given me if he were not so old. She had the idea, which she got from Schuon, that charity should go only to those that deserve it and those that deserve it most, are those who follow Schuon and love him best. I did not see right away that this is a formula for all kinds of corruption. She told me I was special compared to all the people in the world and deserved what was given to me. I knew this was false, intuitively, but it was flattering, though I knew that such flattery was not to be trusted. It took me quite a while to figure all this out. I was obliged to accept her at her word, however and did so, provisionally, just because I was curious where it was all going.. She was very insistent and overbearing and I went along with her, even though I suspected she was mistaken, and told her so. I knew she was doing what Schuon did, as one would expect. This became clear with time, but it took time to understand it all. All of it was way outside my experience.

I objected to her effort to give me all that she did at first and resisted it. She wanted to get involved and become intimate. I was originally not attracted to her at all, other than to see her as a “wife” of Schuon, even though she hardly acted like one. But one tends to believe what one is told. I did not know she had done this before, with another man. I even wrote about thirty pages of doubts I had in my journal, about what she wanted to do with me. She asked to borrow my writings and then destroyed these writings, telling me the next day. I had serious doubts about her doing that and was angered by it but did not act on it yet. I let so many thing pass because at least I was progressing in my knowledge of who this guy was. It took over a month for her to convince me to get involved with her. I painted much of the interior of her house during this time and then she started coming to my house.

There were several times that she destroyed my writing like this, 3 as I recall. This act eventually convinced me of her duplicity, but that was just one fact among many others. In the end she convinced me she

was no longer married to Schuon and that she was a free woman, despite the contradictory warnings that she was a pawn under his control. She offered to teach me all she knew about him, since she had been his intimate confidante for 15 years.<sup>474</sup> I saw clearly enough that there was no way to get close to him otherwise, as a man. Women could only get close to him by offering their bodies, which they often did. I saw I could learn who this man really was from her, so I gave in, giving up my original resistance. The cult tried to say that I was an opportunist who seduced her, but this is a lie. In fact, as I see now but did not see then, I was put in a moral dilemma.

She seduced me after a great deal of resistance on my part. Getting sexually involved with Maude might be immoral if she were actually married, on the one hand, and on the other, getting involved with her would give me knowledge of the truth about this man. As time went on, and she showed me she was not really married to anyone, it was clear that there was no immorality in doing what I did. She was caught in an impossible situation with a tyrant who changed whenever it suited him. The cult later tried to claim I was immoral, but this was a ruse behind which to hide their own and Schuon's guilt. This was obvious, but hard to explain to others. In the end it was the knowledge that mattered about the truth, and how that knowledge was gained involved huge suffering, both on my part and Maude's. It cost us both dearly, though probably her more than me. I was protected first by my innocence, and later by a growing indifference and a willingness to be objective about it all.

She slowly initiated me into Schuon's tantric ideas and practices as well as gave me access to observe his daily behavior first hand, without him knowing he was being watched. As my initial objections subsided,

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<sup>474</sup> I had a dream about Schuon when I first moved to Bloomington in which I tried to fly from my apartment to his house in a desire to get closer to him and learn all he had to teach. My desire was very sincere, but I did not know then that no one knows about God because there is no god. He was a fraud. I don't believe in dreams much, but they often do reflect real things in one's life.

and even when she destroyed my writings about my doubts, I went along with this as long as I could, as there were other reasons for being with her. But soon I started insisting that Schuon be told. I got her to write him a letter asking for our marriage, which was published in the Account I wrote Rama Coomaraswamy put out in 1992. Her letter was weak and even fawning. She made the mistake of asking to be “given” to me, rather than insisting that she was already free of him and demanding that she be given respect. By acting so weakly she gave him great and unjust power over her.

So what Maude did was set herself against Schuon in the most personal possible way. I was merely a bit part in this. I watched it play out as if it were a play. I eventually saw that I was merely a pawn in the battle between them. Maude’s willingness to help the cult try to assassinate my character was very disturbing and finally I realized that she was utterly locked into the cult. When I left the cult I could see affection was destroyed in her for me. She saw me only through Schuon’s malice and hate, and he hated me because she had preferred me over him. He was jealous and vicious man, a man of no virtue at all.

Being a pawn in the battle between them was not apart I wanted and I knew early on it was going to end badly. My feelings were irrelevant, and I was made into an objective mirror of the situation wither I wished it or not. I did not wish it, and once the ball was rolling it was a roller coaster ride till the end, with my virtue and innocence the only thing standing in their self-destructive course of their sexual politics. Once I honorably insisted he know that Maude and I considered ourselves “vertically” married, Schuon and Sharlyn Romaine set about trying to destroy Maude. Maude had always lied in her affair with Glasse, which I did not even know about at that point. But with me, I was not a liar and never have been. I was irrelevant to them, and though for a while they tried to respect my position, it was only to get me out of the way, giving me permission to be with Maude. This gave them time to walk away at

Maude mercilessly. They were outraged that someone else would claim the happiness and love they thought they had. They were jealous and envious. Schuon thought any real woman would want to be only with him since he was a “prophet”. His delusions were indelible, irremovable, even though they were false. Adamant in his self-delusion, he went on, day after day, trying to skewer Maude with insults, guilt trips, fake visions and religious prescriptions. He had no sense or conscience about how much he had abused and neglected her as a wife. Any woman who wanted to be free of him must be in “revolt” and thus “satanic”. This dogma revealed him to be a misogynist and a tyrant. In fact, he had neglected her and did not have any real claim on her anymore. She had been free of him for a long time, using the means he himself had used, lying about her affairs. Schuon said Maude was “the first women in history to betray a prophet”. Actually there are no “prophets” in history and the category is specious. No one has any real data and any such beings, Moses, Buddha, Solomon, Jesus and Muhammad all beings who exist only in books and probably never breathed a real breath anywhere. This revealed to me that Schuon’s narcissism revolved around the pivot of his claim to be a prophet. This taught me who Schuon really was. He was a fraud, and a bad character. I saw with certainty he was a self-centered ego-maniac. Maude did teach me who he was, I could see what a bad man he was by his actions. She wanted to leave him and he threatened and beat her up psychologically to force her not to.

He had abused and neglected his “wife” and made her sit and watch him “make love”—in Maude’s words--- to Sharlyn in her presence, 3 days a week for a number of years. She liked to say how beautiful it was, but this was required, it was not beautiful and she hated going. Schuon ruled them all with psychopathic charm and threats. He made them all treat him like a child, even to the point of having them call him( The wives all referred to him as “Shaykhali” which means little Shaykh or more accurately, ‘cute little shayki-poo’!). yet he threatened any of

them that slightly deviated from his impossible expectations. Made was not allowed to say she disliked watching his fourth wife perform sex acts not involving intercourse in front of her. ... At the beginning it fulfilled some lesbian need she and Sharlyn had, mostly Sharlyn perhaps. In the beginning of Schuon's relation with Sharlyn the three of them had sexual dalliances on his bed. But this got old fast. Maude knew she was replaced after 15 years. Then she was glad that Sharlyn had replaced her. She was bored with his self-serving Tantra and his cult of nudity.

She was used and now found wanting and forced to witness what replaced her. Only a completely inhuman, selfish man would do that to someone he claimed to love and not realize he was hurting her. She was right to want to get away from him. I tried to help her as best I could. There was no adultery in this, it was about getting free from a tyrant and a misogynist who denied a women free choice to divorce her neglectful husband. It was a human rights issue. In the end Maude did leave Schuon, broken and crazy. And Schuon was discredited. But it took a long time for this to happen and I was long gone by then. I was indeed irrelevant to the whole thing, just an unwilling witness to their perfidious goings on.

Maude and I loved each other after a fashion and it was a harmless love. What was said of it latter by Schuon and his gossips merely reflects of their ugly need of malice and make believe. They made up slanders to try to protect a bad man. I saw well how the cult worked and how they engineered and schemed to get Schuon vindicated. Even earlier than that, the while event unfolded as a theatrical production. Indeed, I often felt a certain distance from the whole thing, as if I were undergoing a play in which I was not really a participant. When she bought me a house and put a bag full of gold bars on the realtors table it was bizarre, like a play that I was not in. I smiled at it, at the unreality of money to them, at the wealth they had not earned. It was all so crazy. She kept the gold bars in a great chest in her bedroom, next to her bed, on which the

lamp sat. I was in a certain awe of her crazy mind, and the unreality of her life. Everything that happened had a logic but it was the logic of Schuon's and Maude's insanity in which I was merely a witness. Maybe it is not accurate to say I loved Maude so much as I felt sorry for her. I knew it would not last. But I was curious how it would all come out. I knew it was a dangerous game from the start and saw my objections were meaningless to her. I knew increasingly that his double dealing forked tongue would betray everyone. But I wished to know the truth, and she was teaching me what Schuon was really like, in a daily way, where I knew what Schuon was saying and doing on a daily level. I was increasingly horrified by his selfish and sociopathic excesses. The fish bowl unreality of their lives was all around me like an invisible cloak and I watched them act like puppets in a theatre, playing out their pretentious parts with predictable concern for making Schuon look good no matter what. It was increasingly obvious that his selfish world view was the source of all their troubles and no one would ever say that he was the real problem. The problem was never me, not Maude, not anyone. It was him and his delusions of grandeur that were the problem.

Most of my time with Maude was spent comforting her for the terrible ordeals Schuon put her through. Schuon made me a better person not by his teachings, but by making me help a person he so cruelly blamed, tortured and demeaned, proving his lack of virtue. He was hardly an example of anything good and I did not want to ever imitate him. I saw he was no "master" of anything, least of all himself. Schuon did not care about her anymore and she knew it. He knew it too, but the idea of a woman having her own mind was not in his sexist notion of what women can be. "Feminism ist Zatanic" he had told me around this time. Her refusal to be his "doormat" as she put it, was exactly what she hated in him, and he must have known it.

He was a jealous and power hungry guy who wanted all the women in the cult for himself. What he could not abide is that she did not want



him and had had it with him. His truly “dirty” primordial gatherings were such that the cult is still lying about them and hiding their existence years later. Schuon was a dirty old man. He invented the idea of a sordid love story between myself and Maude in his mind. There was no “dirty love story”, there were just two lonely people trying to figure out what was really true and finding comfort in each other in the midst of his onslaughts. It was a sad and fraught relationship for me and even worse for her.

I knew it would lead to my leaving the cult and I accepted this as the price of knowing the truth. It was well worth it to know the truth, no matter how disappointing it was. Not even the public ridicule or the slanders made me regret what I did. The fact was that Schuon could not grasp that Maude would prefer me to him, when he as the “final prophet at the end of time” and I was just an ordinary guy. She would say, like a Mantra, that she was once his only beloved and would always be that, but if he really loved her he would let her go. But I knew this was not real, and deep down, so did she. He didn’t love her, or anyone, he was just using people. It incensed him to such a degree that she had the ability to love others besides him that he thought she was in a ‘satanic attack’ against him. Her rebellion against him required his devoting some years punishing her for it, mercilessly. This is not a good man at all.

I was never jealous of Schuon, as has been falsely claimed. indeed, I treated him very indulgently. I informed him about what we were doing, as was proper and was honest and conscientious. I insisted Maude write Schuon a letter asking to allow us to be together. She asked him in the letter that we be allowed to marry. I knew her letter was too weak and fawning. I was not told “no”, as is claimed but rather was eventually told I “should wish to die for him”, and when this was clearly a stupid thing to say, he adjusted and gave “permission” by to continue with Maude, in writing. Later, I merely told the truth about his phony marriages and his illegal and bizarre nudist practices. It was he who

chose to keep them secret and lie about them. He has always blamed others for his faults and projected on them what is wrong with himself in true paranoid style. He says “I did not know so much wickedness could exist on earth.” But actually it is merely his own wickedness he is projecting on me. As Richard Hofstadter said in the *Paranoid Style in American Politics*,

one of the most valuable things about history is that it teaches us how things do not happen. It is precisely this kind of awareness that the paranoid fails to develop. He has a special resistance of his own, of course, to developing such awareness, but circumstances often deprive him of exposure to events that might enlighten him—and in any case he resists enlightenment. We are all sufferers from history, but the paranoid is a double sufferer, since he is afflicted not only by the real world, with the rest of us, but by his fantasies as well.<sup>475</sup>

Schuon only saw his own need of power and the fantasies that derived from it and was blind to all needs except his own. Anyone who did not agree with his fantasies must be betraying him or in conspiracy against him. Like Guenon he truly suffered grandiose and paranoid delusions, some of which were brought into question by what Maude and I did. He had not thought through his phony idea of “Vertical and Horizontal Marriages”. Maude and I were merely trying to asset our “vertical Marriage” a concept he cooked up to justify his own affairs with multiple women. What we proved is that his idea of this was for himself alone and was a construction that had no reality in it. It was a stupid idea that was merely about his having total control over the romantic relationship in which he ensnared his women. He probably got the idea, either directly

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<sup>475</sup> <http://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/7/>

or convergently, from the “vertical and horizontal integration” ideology of corporate control created by the Carnegies and Fords and other corporate Robber Barons. The purpose of vertically and horizontally integration is first to buy out or own a controlling interest in all the ‘vertical’ suppliers for a given product, say all the parts manufactures for cars and then It to buy out all the competition, thus creating an illegal monopoly.

Schuon notion of vertical/horizontal marriage was meant to give him total monopoly on his multiple relations with women, turning the other men involved into pawns in service of his supremacy. It was merely a self-serving ploy. Maude and I were right to fight against this imperious dictatorship. The whole arrangement of the cult was made in service of his private delusions.

His “wife”, Maude Murray, was not his “wife” to begin with. She believed she was no longer married to him because he was a bad husband, and was in love with another woman. Indeed, he was not a husband at all and he really wasn’t married to any of them, even the one to whom he was legally married. What I realized at last was that I was dealing with a sexist bigot. It was hard to admit this to myself, but the evidence was overwhelming. Moreover, the facts kept pouring in that many of his ideas were really cloaks for reactionary bigotry of many kinds. His willingness to violate simple human rights and freedom left me speechless. I was not entirely just a witness after all, but trying to comfort Maude made me realize what both she and I were up against. I knew I saw it more than she did. It was not my fault Schuon was a cheating husband. The whole defense of the Schuon cult was based on fabricating things about me and lying about things that really happened. They are still doing this, in books and online.

In fact, as has been proven, Schuon was guilty. There were underaged girls and a boys at these gatherings. There is quite enough evidence to prove this. My effort was not to put him in jail but to expose

him as a fraud, and I think I did that in spades. He lied cheated to stop his trial. This fact was independent of what happened between Maude and me. But there is so much more that he was guilty of. Many people think I wanted revenge on him so made up the molestation to get back at him for his treatment of me and Maude. But this is not true: There were multiple reasons to turn Schuon into the authorities, he was doing bad things in just about every direction. He was a philandering husband and a liar, an abuser and a tyrant. They tried to make it all about my supposedly bad character, when really I am not a bad character; I am merely a witness in this case. My own life is quite apart from this story. I am not a perfect person and certainly have my weaknesses and faults, I have never claimed to be perfect as Schuon did repeatedly. But, their characterizations of me were such that I did not recognize myself in anything they wrote about me. I still don't. They did this same thing to Glasse, Maude, Victor Danner and many others too. This is a cult and cults defend their cult leader and cover up his faults by blaming others for their harms and crimes. They do as Hamlet said, they lie, and in lying about others and their own actions they

but skin and film the ulcerous place

Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen. (Hamlet act 3, scene 4)

I quoted this to Catherine Schuon in a letter about them. I do not think I was wrong to do so, indeed, this fact so well described by Shakespeare was a perfect portrait of this cult. Of course, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not at all mean that I was totally reasonable and without feeling about all this. I was not. I was horrified but what was happening and suffered deeply from it for years. It was as personal as you can get. But only part of me was blinded by it all, I could still see clearly while still in the cult and living under the influence of their insane machinations. I knew that I had to be strong and resist my feelings to a

large degree. But I also knew I had to be careful, even cunning or cagey and watch out if I was to survive it.

I reached out to others who had left the cult. There was a whole lot of people who hated Schuon, knew each other and were very welcoming to me. They all knew Schuon was over the brink of sanity. I remember calling Glasse in New York City in 1991 and was a little apprehensive because everyone in the cult had said he was pure evil, totally satanic and beyond the pale. But they lied about him terribly. He was actually very polite and nice, generous and more than willing to answer questions I had. What a relief to learn others had survived this horrible cult. He worked as a tourist guide on a bus in New York City. I learned that Schuon worked overtime getting his people to lie about Glasse. They did this about me too and many others who questioned the lie of Schuon's claim to be a prophet.

Glasse Begins his 570 page Dossier with the following:

“In 1980, Schuon moved to Bloomington with his credibility weakened in Europe, and decadence accelerated towards a full-blown cult whose new center was Bloomington. This decadence came to a head in 1985-1987 and is described in the documents gathered here. There was a shake-up world-wide. Most members considered leaving; very few actually did. Those who remained would not have believed that they would be taking part in orgies in 1991.”

Glasse was brave to put together this damning document. It tells many stories about individual people and their plight and suffering in the Schuon cult. The sad story of Paul Yachness's wife, for instance, and how the cult more or less drove her mad and condemned her in incredibly unkind and judgmental ways accusing her of all sort of things she did not do. Saydah Warda was her cult-name and she did something

minor and apologized to one of Schuon representatives, Jesus Garcia Varela. Varela was not convinced her apology for something she didn't even do was 'sincere' ----so they forced her to apologize again and then again and again, and it was never good enough. She was falsely accused of pride. This was a cruel setup. When this did not make her sufficiently abject, they finally claimed she had a mental illness and in a Kafkaesque charade; they drove her out of the cult for being insubordinate and insufficiently submissive to Schuon's perverse and sadistic "authority".<sup>476</sup> Schuon of course supported and encouraged this sadistic treatment. She later recovered her health and realized that the problem with Schuon's group is Schuon himself and the inner circles inordinate delusions of self-importance. She was right, of course.

This obsession with Schuon's authority would be the source of most of the cult's problems. They consistently denigrated and attributed low motivations to nearly anyone that in anyway seemed to question Schuon or his representatives. There could only be adulation for Schuon, the slightest hint of criticism must be eliminated. <sup>477</sup> <sup>478</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Jesus Garcia Varela, one of Schuon's officers would later be investigated by the Louisville police for trying to develop the nude photos of his young daughters at a public photo development place. I was informed of this by the Indiana Police and shown the report on the Varelas. The photos were in the possession of the police. These were some of the girls who were involved in the gatherings and later made to lie about it.

<sup>477</sup> One can see this most clearly in the many documents and films Maude Murray produced in 1994-96. She clearly blames Schuon, Sharlyn Romaine and Michael Fitzgerald for her miseries, quite rightly, but every time she does so she back-tracks and excuses Schuon especially and to a lesser extent the others. But you can see she has been totally trained to never think an ill thought of Schuon even as she watches him do the most insensitive and horrible things to her. She is in denial about what a monster he really was. Her inability to put blame where it belongs, on Schuon's megalomania leads her into a temporary madness. This obsession with Schuon's 'authority' would be the source of most of her misery. She tries to ape Schuon claim to have been open to the "Intellect" the supposedly infallible source of metaphysical truth. It is quite true Maude was open to it, just as much as Schuon. There is in fact no such thing, what they call the "intellect" is really just an overly trained irrational intuitive state that arises in people who concentrate fiercely on imaginary gods or psychological fictions. Maude's "opening to the intellect" demanded of her that Schuon spiritual cult be brought to justice. She says that the cult must even destroyed if necessary, if it could not be reformed. She was right to think this way. It was a horrible cult that needed to be brought to justice. What she was really getting in touch with is that Schuon had done her huge harm and his whole claim to sanctity was fraudulent and this

Glasse's book is about the gossip mongering in the cult, the disdain, blackmail and cruelty which Schuon and his wives and inner circle often involved himself. It is about the muck and garbage of the cult, the reality of it. It is about the cattiness and backbiting of Catherine Schuon and many others.

It might be useful to digress here and talk about Catherine Schuon a bit as she figures very large in most of the cults' problems. Catherine Schuon (b. 1927) was technically married to Schuon or as Schuon would say, "horizontally" married, rather than "vertically" married. It will take a minute to explain this. This does not mean she spent a lot of time horizontal, but rather that Schuon used the word "horizontal" in a denigrating way. His "vertical marriages" were his 'real' marriages, ---he claimed--- and these lasted only according to his whim, and his whim usually carried with it justifying "visions" which really were just active imaging of his subjective desires. If Schuon wanted a woman the Virgin Mary was trotted out conveniently and gave him a "vision" to justify it, as in the case of Barbara Perry and Maude Murray. So though Schuon was married to Catharine legally, legal status meant nothing to him. He said that he would rather "have a cup of coffee" than have sex with his legal wife, according to Maude Murray.<sup>479</sup> So his legal wife was

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had to be faced. She could not face it so she makes 'god' say it in her 'intellect'. In other words the "intellect" is just a vehicle of sublimations and desires, as it was in Schuon, Muhammad, Ibn Arabi and others.

<sup>478</sup> This is often the case in destructive organizations. Just this month, October, 2015, in New Hartford, New York, a man who claimed to be the leader of Word of Life Church, a fundamentalist cult," beat one of their teenage sons to death and seriously injured another, with help from parishioners", according to a Washington Post news article. 10/15/2015. The head of this Christian cult was unhappy with the behavior of his two sons and had followers beat them both up, killing one. Schuon did not beat anyone exactly, but they were good at making people suffer who did not do as Schuon wanted, and for the same reasons. Religion in both cases was a justifying mechanism for abuse.

<sup>479</sup> She refers to this in her documents of 1995-96 Cult names of Schuon's wives were:  
Catherine= Latifah,  
Sharlyn Romaine =Badriyah

not really his wife and his illegal wives were not really his wives either. All his relationships were dysfunctional. He had servants not wives. Maude Murray repeatedly said that with Schuon she “only had obligations no rights”. She did not like being a “doormat” for him as she put it. Such relationship is not a relationship at all, but a dictatorship. Schuon was a misogynist who really was incapable of a normal relationships with a woman. They had to be sacred whores or “Shaktis” as he called them. His last wife was called a “mahashakti” to magnify her even further. Being just a goddess is not good enough, she had to be a Great Goddess. Schuon did not have relations with actual women--- he imposed on them a preconceived and phony notion of divine femininity: thus, he essentialized women. By doing this, sought to deprive them of basic rights. At the same time, he gave his wives a great deal of power and they used it, with his permission and encouragement, to harm others in many cases. The wives, who were called the “Shaktis” by some, functioned as a wall around Schuon as well as a built in group of gossips and advertisers who promoted Schuon, helped write his books and did his dirty work for him.

Schuon ceased treating Catherine as a wife in the 1960’s or even earlier. Schuon’s house had an office on the lower floor and behind the office was another room with an attached porch and this was Catherine’s domain, where she worked and slept. (you can see this even in the aerial photos of the Schuon house on Google maps, look up 3700 Inverness Farms Road, Bloomington, Indiana) Schuon had a bedroom upstairs, and he regularly visited Sharlyn’s house, indeed, he spent more time there than anywhere else. Schuon first married Catherine in 1949 and in 1965 ‘married’ Barbara Perry (Hamidah), in a ‘vertical’ marriage. That this was a ‘vertical’ marriage is important: Mrs. Perry was still married (in a ‘horizontal’ marriage) to her husband, Whitall Perry, at the time. In

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Barbara Perry =Hamidah  
and Maude Murray = Aminah.



1974, evidently tired of Perry, Schuon “married” Maude Murray, who was his ‘primary wife, as it were, for 15 years.<sup>480</sup> Keep in mind---yes this is very confusing----- that Maude “vertically” married Schuon while remaining ‘horizontally’ or legally married to John Murray, until Maude divorced John in 1991.<sup>481</sup> These make-believe categories were taken seriously inside the cult, but obviously mean nothing in fact. She had been spiritually “divorced” from John for years and claimed she threw his ring in Lake Geneva, Switzerland. She later denied this in some legal documents, evidently aware that throwing a ring out does not mean she was divorced, any more than Schuon’s spurious ‘visions’ means she was married. To further complicate all this, Schuon was lying to outsiders and saying that his original marriage was “platonic” and his subsequent marriages to other women were celibate or platonic too. So the whole marriage thing with Schuon was based on lies and fake visions of various kinds..

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<sup>480</sup> Barbara Perry was so jealous of Maude when she came along that she tried to give her own daughter to Schuon as a sexual present.. Barbara real husband, Whitall was sleeping with Schuon’s wife Catherine. The attempt was made by both Maude and Barbara to enlist Barbara Perry’s daughter in the sexual ménage a trios then going on. The daughter, Catherine, wisely refused. ( Her cult same was Mariah) Later Schuon tried to seduce Catherine in a hotel in Morocco. She refused Schuon’s advances. Word was let out about this and there are various denials of this by cult members and this is reflected in the Glasse documents. The daughter has since admitted that Schuon did indeed try to seduce her. She was evidently in love with Schuon to some degree, as is to be expected when Schuon was held up as a sort of god in the cult. All of these relations verge on incest and indicate the corruption that spread through the whole inner circle around Schuon emanating from Schuon himself. More recently, Catherine ended up being attracted into the cult like orbits or Eckhart Tolle, the Dalai Lama and other new age religions. She was raised in the cult and was never quite able to leave it totally. Life outside a cultish environment is hard for many ex-members.

<sup>481</sup> Maude says in her documents that during her times of great suffering due to being shunned and sued by the Schuon group John Murray offered to court and marry her again in 1995 or so, but that the cult prevented him from doing that. That was kind of him, one of the few kind acts anyone in the cult showed towards her. Too bad he was too weak to actually do it and caved into a cult mentality. Someone in the cult sent her an anonymous envelope with 6 one hundred dollars bills in it when she was about to starve. It was probably Stanley Jones, a decent guy at heart, if only in secret. Notice that the cult had fulminated such hatred of her, that it had to be done anonymously.

Maude was Schuon's main 'vertical' wife until 1989. It was never celibate of Platonic. In 1989, Sharlyn Romaine was encouraged by Maude to become the fourth wife.<sup>482</sup> Indeed, I learned at last that Maude chose Sharlyn to get out of Schuon's life. She really did not want to be with him anymore and regularly said so to me. Maude could no longer stand being Schuon's "vertical wife" and wanted out of her in words. She "wanted to get out of the center of things".. The fourth wife became exclusive and Schuon ceased to show interest in Maude. Maude wanted desperately to get away from the grizzly old buzzard. She had to go see Schuon and Sharlyn a few times a week, and Maude writes that Schuon would "make love to her in my presence"<sup>483</sup>. But Maude was no longer a participant in the 'manage a trois' as she had been in earlier years, when there was lesbian activity too. , She was of two minds about this newer arrangement. She liked being further from Schuon, who she found to be too harsh and extreme. But she did not want to be treated badly or excluded. She and Sharlyn had had something of a lesbian relationship going and Sharlyn was a jealous woman. She demanded Maude be absolutely faithful to Schuon. Schuon demanded it too, and it came as an unwelcome surprise that Maude no longer wanted Schuon as she once did and had gone with another man.

Maude had arranged for the affair between Schuon and Sharlyn and came to think that they would be happy to have her be with another. She knew he did not care about her anymore, as she was menopausal, though why that should matter since he never wanted children anyway, is beyond me. There were fierce rules for others, even if Schuon accorded himself nearly absolute freedom to do whatever he pleased. The injustice of his choices never dawned on his selfish mind. Maude could not see

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<sup>482</sup> In various writings Maude refers to Schuon taking Sharlyn Romaine from her previous husband Barry Macdonald as being cruel, --- Schuon wanted her and demanded to have her and Maude arranged for Barry to marry Rebecca Polit ( Gustavo's ex—remember Gustavo had been unfaithful to his wife with a 16 year old) as a sort of "compensation"

<sup>483</sup> Maude Murray documents.

why she should not be able to do the same things he did. She was right, of course. Schuon's imagined superior status made him imagine he was exempt from the rules he made others follow closely. This double standard behavior is often true of cult leaders and the same thing can be found in Franklin Johns/ Da Free John and many other sociopaths.

It would be well to ask what that "vertical" marriages means—for Schuon it meant the Virgin Mary and God's blessing on his sexual desires. He thought that his "unions" were of deeper and more profound significance than marriage of the usual contractual sort. Maude regularly said that vertical marriage was any union "that leads to god", though she would not have recognized gay marriage, as Schuon hated gays. Civil unions was a meaningless concept to the Schuon cult, as they despised western law and only recognized religious legal ideas approved by Schuon, and that was whatever served him, essentially. So Maude's real civil marriage to John Murray was moot. Schuon thought he was a prophet and therefore all his unions were chosen by god and the Virgin Mary. This is ridiculous, of course, but this is the sort of delusion that was daily fare for Schuon. However, these terms – "horizontal and vertical" are meaningless terms of convenience invented by Schuon to justify his polygamy.<sup>484</sup>

I was married "vertically" to Maude for six months or so, and then given "permission" <sup>485</sup>by Schuon to be with his "wife" provided I swore on

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<sup>484</sup> In her documents Maude condemns Schuon many times for lying about his marriages in an Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> letter to "Sister Veronica". Maude says "his legal wife wrote a letter to Sister Veronica which was full of lies". In this letter Mrs. Schuon is made to say ( Maude says the letter was actually written by Romaine and Schuon) that the marriages were "spiritual"( by implication not physical) because Schuon is a man "without passion". None of the marriages were without passion. Romaine and Schuon put lies in Mrs. Schuon's mouth. They also say that Sharlyn was an adopted child of Schuon. Romaine was 38 or something at the time! You can't adopt 38 year old woman. The inner circle tended to think with one mind and lied easily about many things. For years Schuon lied to many people about his life being without "passion", when the opposite was true. Schuon's speech is really about pretence and perception, he rarely tells how things actually are.

<sup>485</sup> "permission has been exceptionally granted to you" the document says giving me this permission to be with Maude. I had asked if Schuon was going to take this back and he replied in

the Koran to never tell anyone. Evidently god told Schuon this was OK. I was supposed to keep quiet about this, as I suspected and later confirmed, so that they could later lie and say he was opposed to the relationship the whole time. Actually he was not opposed to it, he was opposed to anyone finding out his “wife” did not want him anymore. It was really all about his ego. It remained an ambiguously “vertical” relationship with her that was and was not a marriage. Later Schuon absurdly claimed the right to dissolve that same permission, once granted forever, in a heartbeat. He had promised that this permission was “lifelong”. But by then I had broken the agreement and already told the facts to people outside the inner “family” of the Schuons. I broke his arbitrary “ruling”. Yes, he had presented all this to me as his “ruling” and this was equal to coming from “god”. He was an arbitrary dictator and ambiguous communicator, even though I had been told in writing that he is not an “ambiguous communicator”. But both the “vertical marriage” itself and Schuon’s dissolution of it were meaningless in fact. In one sense I was married to Maude all that time and I really enjoyed that. My relation with Maude was stronger than he was, and that was interesting to me. I could see we had something that was not his, and this made him very angry. He had no real power over us, except if we gave it to him, and at first Maude was strong but later she was willing to believe in his lying fictions and I was not. I no longer believed in all this rubbish, when she gave in to his fictions about marriage and even went through a bogus divorce from him, when really she was never married to him. The divorce consisted only of Schuon announcing they were divorced. There was not divorce it was all fakery..

Marriage is mostly about companionship, friendship, children and

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writing that he is “not an ambiguous communicator”. So the arrangement was legitimated by Schuon himself., as if that really mattered. There was no “dirty love story” there was only Schuon’s inept abilities as an “authority, his jealousy and his inordinate self-regard.. He could not deal with his own bogus marriages much less advise the relationships of others.

family. It protects the women from other men and the man from other women. Above all it is a good place for children to be loved and protected. Schuon was utterly incapable of most of these meanings implicit in the marriage idea. It is important to stress that Schuon's "marriages" were utterly delusional, there is no such thing as "vertical marriages", it was a phony idea Schuon trumped up to justify his own numerous sexual infidelities. Marriage does have elements in it that derive from natural selection, since, more often than not, it helps the couple raise their children. Schuon wanted nothing to do with children. Also marriage is a civil union, even among gay couples, and the reason behind that is that the couple does better financially if two are recognized as mutually supporting each other. Schuon betrayed this trust and let her fly in the wind when he "divorced" her. I gave her more than half the money I had, in contrast, because I felt sorry for her.

The whole argument between Maude and Schuon was about his supposed superiority and exceptional status. Why should vertical marriage be only restricted to him? There was no decent of moral reason why. Maude was trying to do exactly what he did, and she had the right to do that, in the context of the cult. So did I. She was claiming the same rights as he had. Why not?, his rights were utterly arbitrary anyway. Later, in letters from 1995 or 96, she would claim to be a "prophet" herself. God had called to clean up the lying and corruption of the Schuon cult, she says. Why not, if vertical marriages could be had by anyone, why not prophet status too? She was not wrong to do that either, though obviously, it was a delusional belief she was laboring under. They both were.

Prophets are fictions, and so is vertical marriage. Maude was wrong about marriage because Schuon was and he was by far the worse of the two. Her outrage at the injustices, lying and corruption of the Schuon cult was very real. She was using his means and methods, whereas I had jumped ship and did not believe in all that nonsense anymore. His

outrage at her effrontery to claim what he claimed was not totally misplaced. I am not excusing Maude here, I am just showing that Schuon was the one in the wrong. I was only a pawn in all this, and a very unwilling one too. I put road blocks up all along the way, and strained all his “rulings” to the breaking point. Part of me knew it was all absurd.

His marriages were a sort of Schuonian voodoo, which is to say he made up these concepts to justify his own perversities and desire for polygamous relations. His marriages were fictions. He wasn’t married to any of these women and the one woman he was married to, Catherine, he no longer treated as a wife, indeed, he had ‘given’ her to Whitall Perry years before. He thought he was Krishna and Solomon, both fictions. My marriage to Maude was a fiction as was the dissolution of it by Schuon later. None of it meant anything real and everything revolved around the madman at the center, who pulled the strings for his own crazy benefits and whims. I had put myself in the middle of a storm in a teacup, though at the time, it was a real tornado of pain and suffering.

I never thought I wished to marry Maude in a real court with a judge. It is 25 years ago and I do not remember thinking about this, though I may have. I suppose this is a measure of how much I knew the whole thing was fake. If it had come to getting a real marriage with Maude, I am not at all sure I would have done it, if for no other reason than she could never have children, and I have always wanted them. I entered into the whole arrangement wishing more to see what would happen and wanting to know who Schuon really was than anything else. This rather journalistic interest, or need of objective knowledge, probably saved me. The way the whole thing unfolded was really a test of Schuon himself, and I could see very clearly what kind of man he was, and what his relations with women were. I was no longer just hearing from others who he was, I was seeing with my own eyes what his actions and words were and what a phony he was. This is not at all to say I was doing this only

to find out about Schuon. I had strong feelings for Maude, not at the beginning, but as I came to see that she was being harmed by Schuon and needed my help. I could see that he did not care about her at all, he wanted to harm her because she did not live up to his notion of himself as the supreme man on earth, every women should want him. I was enjoying the idea of being married, but I was unsure that it was a real thing. I doubted it and found myself having to fight for it, so to that degree I was sort of provisionally married to her, in fact.

No one in ordinary society could have done what Schuon did. There are real laws with teeth against polygamy and child endangerment. These are good laws. I agree that multiple wives is an offence against women's rights and making children do adult things of a sexual kind is wrong too. Schuon would be guilty of both if the real facts of what he was doing were known. My effort was to get these matters known. I figured they would all lie, and they did, but the truth was out, never to be put back in the secrecy box, though Nasr and Lings and many others lied about it all for years.

The whole confusion about marriage had been created by Schuon, Maude and I were showing just how false the concept of vertical marriages really was. My 'marriage' to Maude seemed real to me for a time—6 months or so—but it had no reality to it, any more than Schuon's 'vertical' marriages were real. I was not wrong to be angry at this betrayal. I was innocently 'married' at least. Yes, for a short time, the seeming realness of it was wonderful. I had never been married before and was glad to be married, even if only experimentally, as it were. I believed for six months or so that it was real, though part of me knew this was all a fiction and cockeyed, not because Schuon said so, at that point I knew what he said was self-serving poppycock. But within the miasma of the Schuonian madness, Maude and I had created a little haven of peace for a while. and I enjoyed it. I do not feel any guilt about it.

As it all went sour, quickly in retrospect, I watched it all unfold with a strange disinterest, knowing inside one day I would have to tell this weird story. I could not write anything down that was serious because Maude would read it and destroy it. She destroyed many things I wrote. Maude claimed to have come to me from Schuon himself. She said she was herself his gift to me. She said she was going to give me "all his secrets" and convinced me for six months or more that we were married in a "sacred vertical marriage", just as Schuon had convinced her and other women of the same thing. I was given all his secrets, but that was no blessing, but rather a curse of sorts. I knew more about the inner circle of the cult than anyone. They were excellent liars, and very good at making a false image of Schuon to force feed followers. But I no longer wanted to know what I knew. It was a marvelous ploy to offer me what I wanted anyway, and I was lonely and wanted to believe it. But once I knew, I was horrified, and did not want to burden of telling others exactly what I knew. It was and is a sordid story.

But I doubted all that she told me and insisted that she tell him we were involved. She said "he was too old to know and would only have understood when he was younger". I did not like this secrecy, even if Schuon practiced this sort of thing all the time. It was wrong. I insisted many times over a few months and she finally told him, requesting, much too passively, "to be 'allowed' to marry me, meaning a "vertical" marriage. Her fear of him made her put things this way when she should have simply announced our relationship to him and made him accept it. It was not up to him in any case. He was meddling in something that was not his business. He had clearly let her go anyway. He had no interest in her at all. Rather than recognize that he had neglected Maude, taken other women and had betrayed her, he refused her request and said he had to control our relationship himself. I knew what he was doing was wrong and could see it was all about his ego and power. If he was at all a decent man he would have seen he neglected her, and had no claim to



her. He was with another woman now, and should let her go with his good wishes. But he was not decent, and she had to be punished for not loving him and not wanting to die for him. He wanted her on all fours if possible, and said that to her. The hatred of animals and women he had was disgusting in itself, quite apart from his need to abuse Maude, which was bad enough.

As I said above, I was given an equally unrealistic “permission” by Schuon, after his initial insistence that we split up, which he retracted in 24 hours.<sup>486</sup> He was horrified that his possession had been taken from him. Reason prevailed after his initial tantrum. He told us we should want to die for him. But then I was given “permission” in writing. “permission has been exceptionally permitted to you” he said. I was to be with Maude as a sort of virtual marriage that lasted another six months, though I was told it would “last forever”. In Schuon’s world, nothing really means what it seems to mean, everything is afloat in a changeable chimera of his mental delusion and falsehoods. The notion that this was some “dirty love affair” as Schuon later called it is totally the invention of his smutty and jealous mind. He said that for public consumption later, in the press, to make himself sound virtuous. He was horribly jealous of me, worried others would find out that she did not love him, but I wasn’t at all jealous of him. There was no reason to be.

Schuon was prone to denigrate and slander others. When Maude left, 3 or 4 years after I left, he had others attack her character ruthlessly in the most vicious way imaginable, as is recorded in detail in her letters. It was put out that Maude was a loose woman and an “adulteress”, when she was nothing of the kind. She was not married to Schuon; in fact, he was the one sleeping with other women. The problems with Maude’s relationships with other men all stemmed from Schuon’s perverse and phony marriages. He was the adulterer, and on

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<sup>486</sup> I was offered my pick of the women then available for marriage in the cult, This seemed absurd, as if it were up to Schuon or anyone but the women who would marry whom.

numerous occasions and with multiple women. The only “dirty love stories” in the Schuon cult were his sordid relations with multiple women and children, his smutty wet dream with the Virgin Mary and his Primordial Gatherings where his followers got to watch him stare at vaginas and press his penis against multiple women. There was nothing good in this. It was merely a man who wanted power and sexual contact.

Schuon was always underestimating me and ascribing to me motives and actions I didn’t have. He says for instance that I wanted to “destroy” him. He destroyed himself, I had nothing to do with it. It was he, together with Maude, Barbara and Sharlyn, who designed Primordial Gatherings and invited young girls and a boy: and it was he who insisted on being married to multiple married women; it was he who allowed a pedophile to sit at his right hand and run the affairs of the cult. It was he who had wanted to sleep with the daughter of one of his “wives”. I was merely there as a witness and said what I knew. I was not a cheat and not a liar and I took nothing from anyone. I was honest and told the truth

Anyway, for some months, I wrongly thought all this nonsense about marriages was real. Maude thought it was real too, but as Maude found out to her dismay and eventual mental illness, Schuon’s notions of marriage were utterly crazy and unworkable. Everything was unreal around Schuon. The only thing that was real was Maude’s and my relationship, which he wanted to destroy for all the wrong reasons. True paranoid, he accused others of that which he was guilty. All of the marriages in Schuon’s inner circle were phony and corrupt.

To him women were only symbols. He did not like real women. So his wives lied to him all the time and pretended they were little icons of beauty and peace, and if they did not he would have a tantrum or an asthma attack. When I made Maude assert herself and her own needs he utterly freaked out. He was jealous of me. I was never jealous of him at all, as I said. I saw what a phony he was and how badly he treated people. Indeed, in his last letter to Maude he accuses her of not being

the “person he knew”. That is exactly right for a change, he did not know her. He was a tyrant and everyone was so afraid of him they all lied to him and presented to him a false persona designed to flatter him.. He only knew the Maude that he created out of his sick brain. She was a ‘jewel in his throne’ only, or in her words a “door mat”. In Maude, he only knew a woman who lied to him for years because he made people lie to him, just as he lied to everyone in turn. His whole spiritual organization was based on pretence and lies.

I finally figured out that Schuon was a deeply corrupt man, indeed the whole inner circle around Schuon was a cesspool of corruption and lies. They all justified it by the myths they accepted, the Myth of the Virgin, the Myth of Schuon’s sanctity and prophethood, the myths of Sufism, and Native American religion. I remember well the last time I saw him at the primordial gathering on May 17, 1991. Everyone was watching Sharlyn do her sexual dance before him nude and I was not watching her, I was watching him. I could see he was utterly demented, wild with a distorted subjectivity, crazy with power. His eyes looked like Charles Manson’s eyes, almost psychotic, crazy with an intense need of power and drunk with all the adulation and nudity. I saw him 45 minutes later leave Sharlyn’s house with her and I could see what a pathetic little man he was. A fraud, a fake, a cult leader. This was a madman I had to get away from. I knew I would be leaving soon, and the only question that remained was what do about Maude. I started sending my mother documents and photos. I knew I was in danger. What I knew, put me in danger. All that I knew about this guy was a huge burden that I did not want. But I had no choice, it was time to tell the truth to myself and then to others.

The narrative the cult tells about me is utterly fallacious. They say I was jealous and Schuon ended the relationship with Maude. Not true. I was never jealous. My relationship with Maude was designed by her, not by me, and I felt all along it was not going to last. As I learned about

Schuon's corruption day after day, I was much too repulsed to ever feel jealous of him. I chose to leave Maude and the cult in late May and early June 1991 and traveled first to New York and then to Ohio to consult with people I trusted. I discussed with friends outside the cult how to go back and pretended to still be a loyal follower, go undercover, and make the effort to try to get Maude out. My mother helped a lot, a friend named Roy Gonsenhauser helped, Mary Ann Danner, Rama, Wolfgang and Terry Moore helped. This was not easy and very scary. I will tell that story shortly, but it was I who left Maude and failed to get her out. I was already out of the cult when Schuon revoked his "permission". I made him revoke it, the whole ploy of pretending I was not really involved with Maude was a lie I would not go along with anymore. Maude wanted to stay in the cult, and the truth mattered more to me. I left her and the cult because it was the right thing to do. It was hard to leave her, not to leave him. That was easy. He had long since lost all my respect. The notion of his being a "master" over anyone was absurd.

Prior to being told I must separate from Maude, which I myself provoked, I returned to Bloomington after talking to many people with the purpose of trying to get Maude out of the cult. I stayed a week or more in Bloomington, trying to subtly and gently coax her out. I had to pretend to be someone I no longer was. I no longer believed all the prayers and rosaries, but said them anyway. I did not like the Koran but recited it. I did not like or any of the trappings and methods and had to act as if I did. I felt like a secret agent or a spy in a dangerous country. It was not fun, and not me at all. I have never been a liar, but I could see this pretending was necessary to get her out. This cult had a dangerous tendencies and I knew it. It was clear this was a criminal organization and I had to treat them as such.

However, I saw after a week that this effort was utterly impossible, she was so completely brainwashed. I decided at last that it was hopeless and I should break off all relations. I knew that to do this I had to

announce that Maude and I had a vertical marriage. I called up someone in the cult deliberately to say that I was involved with Maude. I knew that this would bring the “authorities” down on my head. I had been told by Schuon as a condition of my relationship to Maude that I must swear on the Koran and never tell anyone about our “permission” and secret relations. Schuon’s main fear was anyone finding out I had permission for a romantic relationships with Schuon’s “wife”, who was anything but. For them perception was everything and they carefully designed all the lies they lived by. Projecting the notion of Schuon as a saint, when he was not, was all that they cared about. I didn’t not wish to swear on anything, as my relation with Maude was really none of their business. I thought it absurd and was glad to finally undermine that absurd prescription. I deliberately broke that promise as it seemed an utterly corrupt thing of him to make me promise that.

The ‘authorities’ came down on me as predicted. I knew the ‘authorities’, were a big joke anyway. I did not recognize their authority as they were a couple of clowns, and I laughed at them when two of these men, Stanley Jones and Mike Fitzgerald<sup>487</sup>, came to my house and I demanded I never see Maude again, as if it were their business. I had already broken off with Maude. They did not know I had already given her up in my mind. I had already accepted with great sadness that I

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<sup>487</sup> Stanley Jones, Michael Fitzgerald and Jeffery Willsey among others, created a company called Sunrise Greeting Cards in the 1970’s. They had “met in a course called "The Religious Traditions of the North American Indian" taught by Joseph Epes Brown. Schuon was evidently attracted by the money of these men and came to Bloomington to head the cult enclave there. Fitzgerald actually accompanied Schuon to America and a symbiotic relation developed between cult and the business. There is a photo of Fitzgerald accompanying the Schuon entourage to America in 1980. In the photo appears the word “sucididad”. Schuon felt very insecure in Europe and hoped to find security in the U.S. . But for a man with a basically criminal mind like Schuon no place was secure.

Source: <http://www.allbusiness.com/north-america/united-states-indiana/273841-1.html#ixzz1hiiFMuO4>

would not see her again; she was too far under the possession of Schuon's system of mind control. I made them leave my house in disgust. I ordered them out and was glad to see the backs of them. They were fools who neither understood Schuon nor the kind of group they were involved in. They were not worth talking to. That was the end. Once I got my head strait, I knew I would be going to the police and telling them what happened. It was the right thing to do. I had talked this through with my mother and others and knew what I was doing. She supported me all the way and helped me do what was needed.

Maude later tried to come to where I was living, but I knew she would not stay and we argued about the corruption in the cult. She tried to entice me back into the cult, and promised me all sorts of things: money, someone else to marry. She left when I told her how foolish the whole thing was, how her offers made no sense, and what a fraud Schuon was. I was not after money, houses, or even Maude herself at this point. I had had it with the whole thing. I was at last free of them and glad of this. Turning Schuon into the police was the next logical step and not an act of revenge. It was an act of clarity, this man had to be exposed, whatever the cost to me. I could see clearly what and who he was. The cult tried to say I did it because a relationship was denied to me. Not so, I was already out of it on my own.

Schuon had Maude wrapped up in so many delusions she was not sure if down were up or up down. I rather foolishly thought my love would get her out of the cult. My romantic streak took over and I followed it, and this was good because it did have the result of getting her out of the cult eventually. But I was young and naïve and I did not see that Maude was as corrupt as Schuon in many ways. The whole situation with her was really just part of the skewed sexual chemistry between Maude and Schuon. I had been gathering evidence about the cult for a year or more. I knew there was something terribly wrong, but wanted to

know what and how far it went. The packages I sent to my mother's house had evidence I gathered months before I actually left the cult. I knew I would be leaving. I had never been in a situation like this and was very scared. Everything I did had to be done carefully and with forethought. I made mistakes, of course. There was evidence that I could have gotten but didn't. I had photos of Schuon with other nude women, Mrs. Garcia Varela in particular, proof that this was not just a matter of a few mistakes he made but a systematic tendency in the cult of Schuon philandering tendencies, taking other men's wives. I should have tried to take photographs of primordial gatherings but was too afraid to do it. Only one man took photos of these gatherings and he was as corrupt as the central core of the cult. But a certain love of Maude kept me going.

I even painted an Icon of her, during that last few months, which is absent of all symbolism involving Schuon—he typically painted himself as the Christ child and I refused to do that again. I did this last painting as a sort of final tribute to her, enshrining my own delusions. It now seems an absurdly idealized painting and I am not proud of it. Though it has documentary value. It shows how my romantic streak had transferred whatever love I had for the fiction of the idea of a spiritual master into the love of a woman. But actually it was a dead end love and I refused to see that for a time. Indeed, when I did realize how foolish I had been to trust in this love, I destroyed the painting. The original painting no longer exists and I only have a few photos of it. But it has historical meaning. The painting is a memorial to a delusion and a foolish false marriage that I thought was real. The feelings I had were certainly real. I know she loved me and risked almost everything for me. But in the end she gave into the cult and its powerful pull and money, partly and only saw slowly how corrupt it had all been. The painting is an idealistic image---a beautiful lie. Or to put this the other way, I wanted to think it was an image of real love that was undermined by an old man's jealous megalomania. But that is not really true either. It was

a mistake, everything had been a mistake. I had been duped by all of it. I saw my own mistake clearly and was deeply shamed by it. It was clear that all this followed on my own acceptance of myth and religion and religion was itself a lie. It hardly matters to me anymore, Maude is long gone and the world has gone on its way. I have long been free of it, except for the old responsibility to tell about it, which I do again here.

I was still in the cult when I did the painting of Maude: Schuon saw the painting and commented that it looked like Maude's body, which of course is correct. It does somewhat and I meant it to. He liked it and did not see how it is really a violation of his aesthetic and my declaration of independence of him. He really was not very discriminating, as was claimed of him endlessly. Indeed, it is my farewell to symbolist painting in general and the beginning of a return and new embrace of realism. It has a certain cartoon like quality as does all of Schuon's art. It is the end of my interest in the ideas I first encountered in Ananda Coomaraswamy.

My original impulse was to destroy all these works, as I find these works embarrassing, even repulsive. I did destroy a few. But I kept some of them , because I knew they were important to explaining the pathology of the Schuon cult. I was aware when I was doing them that I was an outsider to the group and that my observations were somehow important. I was more journalist than seeker and more witness than participant. I let things happen to me just to see where they went and allowed myself to be in places I might not have chosen, except that I wished to see what I could learn. Indeed, to this day I am still the only person to tell the truth about the inside of this cult. A few have let things out, but few knew what was going on at the center of it all, or how corrupt it all really was.

After I left the cult, Maude returned to her former cult self and was easily adopted into an active campaign to denigrate and discredit me by



deliberate exaggerations and slanders. That was a coup for the cult, to have even Maude condemn me publicly, as if it had ever been about me. She admits to being sucked into slandering me in letters. Everyone told her she made a mistake, when really she didn't. She had let the truth out about his corruption, lies, bogus marriages and so much else. But the social force against her was overwhelming. She admits to be used by the cult to denigrate me in her documents. It had been her business for years to denigrate anyone who questioned Schuon too closely, so it was easy to slip into this, even if she had once loved me. I expected it, and took her betrayals as inevitable and painful. However, I had told the truth and never claimed to be perfect. They tried to paint me as a psychopath and homosexual, embezzler <sup>488</sup>and whatever else they thought might stick. They could only discredit me by lying, which they did in excess. I realized at last how shallow her interest in me really was. I really was just a pawn in her long argument with Schuon. She did not know me any more than Schuon knew her. Indeed, the whole cult was a machine for his exaltation, which meant that anyone who questioned him must be skewered.

It took me a long time to get over this betrayal, but I did. I saw well enough how shallow she was. The journalistic distance that I always felt

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<sup>488</sup> The biographer and cult propagandist for Schuon, Jean Baptiste Aymard, writes slanderous lies about me and says “<sup>115</sup>In addition, the plaintiff was prosecuted for misuse of property and embezzlement.” I was not prosecuted for anything. Maude Murray admitted in writing that the civil case she brought was more or less forced on her by Fitzgerald to try to discredit me for telling the truth about Schuon's primordial gatherings. It was a frivolous harassment case that was dropped.. In the civil case I quickly proved with evidence the house was a gift., and proceeded to give Maude Murray more than 38,000 dollars because I felt sorry for her. I need not have given her anything. Proving first that the house was mine made them drop the case against me. There was no case. Then to turn around and give her more than half the money showed that I cared for her. So the cult once again lies and fabricates things that are not true. I sold the house, legally, gave Maude more than half the money, paid most of other rest to lawyers, kept a little so I could go back to school, and was done with it. The truth is that Schuon was guilty of child molestation and lied about it. Trying to make it about a house, was just one more of their lies and distractions.

helped a great deal. I tried to get her out of the cult but could not. I had left her after all and the cult. I was clear headed when I left and there was no doubt it was the right thing. There was a growing joy in leaving actually, though it took months to feel it. I was at last free of religion, and I knew why, I was not sure I could explain it, but I knew it was worth trying. I never turned back and have never regretted doing what I did. I knew what my mistake was and I knew what I had done right. My first and last response to Maude had been to start writing down everything I learned, and I kept doing this all along, even after she destroyed notes and poems I had written. I knew I was in a strange and unique situation and that it should be recorded. Explained and compared to other religions.

It is painfully obvious in Maude's documents, as it was in her daily life with me, that she just could not see out of the web of delusions Schuon had placed over her. She thought she needed these delusions to go on. This is how religions operate, stealing trust, they cling to people like spider webs in their hearts. She could not see what a flawed, corrupt and imperfect man he was, a trust thief. He swam in delusions like a fish who needed a whole school of deluded fish to follow him, held to his lies by strings of self-deceit. Like other members in the Schuon cult she had regressed into blind adoration, spiritual narcissism, sibling rivalries, mirroring and parroting of the so-called master. She thought he was infallible and could never do wrong. She knew otherwise in her heart, and acted against him almost against her will. She was inside the cult, I was outside, and I could see her mind stuck in the illusions and mind control of this cult. It became impossible to talk to her. Of course I still loved her, but her duplicity, insults and viciousness toward me made it easier to give her up as lost

In the last days I was in the cult, Maude created a ruse of having a woman who had MS call me to help her and while I was helping this

woman, Maude entered my house and took my love poems, notes of conversations and some photos and destroyed them. I realized then how deeply immersed in the cult she was. She destroyed some fine rhymed love poems I wrote her, lovely things I had written to comfort her in her misery. From that point on I pretty much knew it was over. I was aware now that this was a dangerous cult and understood how sick the whole organization was. I had written those poems out of love and to comfort and amuse her. She destroyed the true thing, the one sharing and comforting thing, that had closely tied us together.

It took maybe a year to get over mourning her. It is said in various books that Schuon broke up or ended my relation with Maude, but that is utterly false. I broke it off at the same time as I abandoned him and his cult, all at once, weeks before they told me I could not see Maude any more. Indeed, they told me I could not see Maude after I had already left her and the cult. What fools they were. They were merely posturing, making up a false story for damage control. They created this phony explanation as part of their campaign to vilify me. But the truth was otherwise. I provoked their reaction on purpose to put a final end to the charade. As I explained, I had begun to network with others to bring the Schuon cult into question weeks before I left the cult. I called Terry Moore, who was a duplicitous insider. I called Rama Coomaraswamy, Cyril Glasse and Wolfgang Smith. I had consulted with my mother about it and a friend in Cleveland and another in California, seeking advice about how to go about getting Maude out of the cult and if I should go to the police about young girls being involved in the gatherings. I did not tell Maude where I was or that I had left the cult. They all helped me get out of the cult and encouraged me to go to the police. The case against Schuon was laid out with the police. This was all done partly before I was told to leave Maude, and partly after I left. Indeed, I chose the moment, and the moment I chose was one where I had already left Maude and was about to leave Bloomington for good. I drove back to Bloomington

knowing it was dangerous for me there, knowing this was a dangerous cult and knowing I might not succeed. I wanted to get Maude out and hoped I could.

The effort to get Maude out was very serious and planned by me and others. I want to labor this subject yet further, since I have not quite explained it. I returned to try to get Maude out and failed, as I said. In four or five days it was clear she was mentally ill and could not see the truth of the disaster that would await her if she stayed. I knew it would probably fail but had to try. It was a brave and daring action on my part to attempt to infiltrate the cult and deceive Maude and others as to my real intent. I could not tell Maude I had left the cult if I was going to get her out of it. I had learned to play as they played and used their own methods against them. It was not lying to return and try to get her out of the cult, without telling her why, but I knew I had to proceed with great caution and it was dangerous to do what I was doing for her good. That took all the strength I had at the time.

I have never had to do anything of the kind again, thank goodness. But I when I saw I would never be able to get her out, that was when I made some phone calls and told cult members I was involved with Maude. I knew would bring the house on my head. I let the house fall around me, figuratively speaking. I was in control, not them. I was myself again and free. I was free of religion and all its deceptions and terrors, fictions and ecstasies, controls and shames. I saw a member of the cult run by my house pretending he was jogging by on a street none of them ever visited. I packed up my things and drove to my mother's house, who helped me more than anyone to get out of the cult. Mom understood how dangerous these people were and how corrupt. When I did not arrive quite on time she called the cult and threatened them. I was proud and moved my little elderly mother could so frighten them. She had a big brave-heart and was strong. As a result of that they closed down their illegal store where they sold copies of Schuon's uncopyrighted paintings.

They sold these photos to people from all over the world, probably invalidating any claim to copyright they might now claim.

In any case, I saw clearly how corrupt Schuon and his inner circle was and how deeply Maude was wrapped up in it. I saw how much he had neglected and now abused her. I desperately tried to get her out. I failed. For the next five years Schuon and Romaine mercilessly tortured Maude and then threw her out of the cult in a heartless and despicable way. I will write more on this in a minute.

To bring this back to Catherine Schuon, who was supposedly Schuon ‘real wife’—or at least publically she is treated that way. The truth is otherwise. In fact for a time she was ‘vertically” married—or at least vertically ‘involved’ with Whitall Perry, or rather as Maude writes: Schuon “opened the Quran<sup>489</sup> about letting Sidi Abdul Quayumm( Whitall Perry) see Saydah Latifah once a week and he found “that is a mercy for you”--- she writes. The mercy was that Schuon could stop feeling guilty for stealing Perry’s wife Barbara from Whitall by swapping his wife Catherine for Barbara. In any case, according to Maude, Schuon “let them see one another for 10 years and be naked together and not kiss on the mouth or have sexual union”, which means they could satisfy each other but not by intercourse. She told me this in 1991 and I’m glad she put it in writing. Schuon’s silly idea was that if sexual gratification was accomplished orally it was not really sex. This is absurd, but there you are, that is who Schuon was, counting naked angels on he heads of pins. In any case, the important thing here is to notice that Schuon was interested in controlling the sex life of Catherine and Whitall Perry—and many others. He did this and with a certain Roger Gaetani’s underaged

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<sup>489</sup> Schuon and Maude used this irrational practice a lot—they would pray and then open the Koran with a given question in mine and wherever their finger fell that was supposed to be god talking to them. Utter nonsense. This magical chance operation has no real basis in fact and easily provides crazy answers to real questions.

daughter and Gustavo Polit, encouraging statutory rape thereby. Aldo Vidali gave testimony about this.<sup>490</sup>

I was told in writing that I had an extraordinary “permission”, exceptionally allowed” to me, to be with Maude and we had to live together on the same terms as Catherine Schuon and Barbara Perry. I finally realized that such terms were just a power play by Schuon. But for while I accepted it, not yet completely aware that Schuon was power-mad and somehow got off on controlling other people’s sex lives. It took me time to figure it all out. Schuon was utterly insane—he sought to control the sex lives of the inner circle in cult, everyone’s except his own. He created all the wife swapping, Primordial Gatherings, children being involved in secret rituals and all of that. Once I realized this I left the cult and never turned back. Indeed the bad treatment of children by the cult

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<sup>490</sup> Rodney Blackhirst wrote a humorous poem about Schuon that goes:

#### FRITHJOF SCHUON

Frithjof Schuon is now long gone  
From Bloomington Indiana  
Where his vertical wives lived vertical lives  
In the Schuonian manner.

His tariqah was just bizarre  
Although you’d never know it from his books  
Which elevate and emanate  
His stern Teutonic looks.

The barakah went a bit too far  
Out there on Lakota land;  
His Virgin Mary verged on scary  
In delusions that were grand.

The primordial seemed so cordial.  
It unites what’s shared between us.  
But when the veil was rent,  
we saw what he meant:  
To have a center is to have a penis.

was a sign of the global decadence of the group.<sup>491</sup> I turned Schuon into the police. It was the right thing to do and I have never regretted it. Those who say I made it all up or did it out of revenge are just wrong. That is not the way it was at all.

OK <sup>492</sup> then, back to critics of Schuon and the tendency to lie that was essential to Schuon's 'esoteric secrecy'. So some of this extreme decadence and foul play of the Schuon cult is reflected in Glasse's documents. Glasse supplied me primary documents, letters, texts accounts that show concretely what Paul Yachnes calls the "the inner groups systematic contempt of all others". It is about how Schuon, his wives and Gustavo Polit acted destructively towards individuals such as Victor Danner and his wife Jacqueline or Saydah Warda, Cyril Glasse or anyone else who had totally legitimate questions or criticism of how Schuon and his minions behaved. Let's take just one of these stories briefly look over a little of Glasse's documents teach us about Schuon and his cult.

The Danner story is about Schuon coming to America in 1980. He wanted Danner out of the way and sent Mrs. Catherine Schuon from Switzerland to the Bloomington, Indiana, which was then an outlying branch of Schuon cult. Catherine was rude, overbearing and autocratic with the Danners. She told lies. She felt her authority threatened and tried to cover up for her lies. Her lies are recorded meticulously enough

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<sup>491</sup> In the inner circle of the cult, the treatment of children was horrendous. Child abuse of various kinds was sanctioned. One child died due to neglect and fighting caused by cult meddling and manipulation of a boy who shot himself in Morocco. One of Schuon's wives, Barbara Perry tried to give her daughter Catherine as a sexual favor to Schuon. Whitall Perry was evidently abusive towards his children in alcoholic binges. The 3<sup>rd</sup> wife had her tubes tied because Schuon disliked children. The fourth wife was too involved with herself and Schuon to have children. Schuon painted various nude pictures of young children and involved them in his secret sexual gatherings. He could not abide the idea of having children because he was the only child allowed in his family of pseudo- wives who really were not wives but adorers.

<sup>492</sup> Schuon hated to use of OK and similar colloquial expressions in English as common and "un-aristocratic". I use them with a certain relish now as they really are my culture, not his. His wooden use of phony 19<sup>th</sup> century pretentious speech does not interest me.

in the Glasse documents. Schuon was back in Lausanne, Switzerland, and heard about this and therefore felt *his* authority threatened. So the Schuons and the inner circle of the cult set about setting Danner up for a huge humiliation, engineered as a sort of mafia style hit or false accusation and denunciations, that shook him to his roots and forced him and his wife out of the cult. A certain Sidi Istevan would later say that the Schuon cult is “like the KGB, the former Soviet secret service. Schuon got all his followers in American to denounce Danner in writing. The fault here was the Schuon’s. Danner was accused of not sufficiently appreciating the “celestial representative” of Schuon, namely Schuon’s rather self-important ‘wife’, Catherine, about whom there was more of the gossip than the goddess.. The notion that either she or Schuon was ‘celestial’, whatever that may mean, is pretty silly. Jacqueline Danner rightly deduced that Schuon’s treatment of her husband proved that Schuon was a vicious and power hungry man. Jacqueline Danner writes in the Glasse file that

“A question arose in my mind: How can [Schuon] who has condoned the lies of Catherine Schuon ( however trivial they now seem) and dammed us with such violent anger for finding in her certain imperfections, to the point of saying we plotted against her, while he lets others accuse my husband and accuses him himself, --- [how can] a man who forces his disciples to accept lies and deny the evidence of their heart ( although not without their consent for one’s free will never disappears even under torture) [how] can such a man be a true spiritual master.”



Obviously Schuon was not a spiritual master-not that anyone is, it is all smoke in mirrors, in every religion. <sup>493</sup>Catherine Schuon called all the evidence against her lies, when there was overwhelming evidence. This is typical of this cult, that truth in marginalized and egotism is paramount. Rather than recognize that his wife made serious mistakes, Schuon scapegoated the Danners. He shows himself as a vicious opportunist. Jacqueline Danner rightly states in an amazingly courageous letter of Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> 1978 that Schuon claimed to be “infallible” and since he is infallible, he claims his wife must be infallible too. The whole thing started in fact because Mrs. Schuon lied about herself and her treatment of others. In point of fact none of them were infallible and Jacqueline Danner was right to condemn Catherine Schuon for “denying the evidence and telling lies” and she was right to leave the Schuon cult over this horrible affair. It also destroyed her marriage, one of many marriages destroyed by Schuon. I talked to Jacqueline in 1991 and she was still upset about it all, but felt she had done the right thing to leave the monstrous Schuon and his corrupt cult. Jacqueline told me that Schuon had made sexual advances toward her. It is no wonder she did not respect him. Victor Danner made the mistake of kowtowing to Schuon’s irrational demands for apology. Apologies were never good enough for Schuon. As Glasse rightly said in his commentary of the Danner Affair, in the Schuon cult, “recognizing one’s faults... is a formula for anathema”. The Schuon cult basically stoned the Danners, as he did Glasse and Maude and many others back in time.

I got to know Catherine Schuon pretty well and she could be quite kind and a good painter on occasion, even if he work tends to look like Christmas cards. But she was manipulative, gossipy and meddlesome, not all that smart, and rather backwards and provincial in many of her

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<sup>493</sup> Mrs. Danner told me she thought Ananda Moyi Ma was a real spiritual master. But I think she was dreaming or just met someone very charismatic. The idea of there being a real spiritual master is itself suspect, as the whole realm of the “spiritual” is suspect.

views. I watched her encourage people to lie a number of times. Both she and Schuon lied easily and well and they insisted that others lie on their behalf. Maude Murray, Schuon's third "wife" admitted in the 1990's that the entire cult lied to get Schuon off the charges

"We lied in the hearing about polygamy and broke many legal rules to protect Mr. Schuon. Our lawyers cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars and we lied to them to...I had been told to lie as we all had."..... "there were lies under oath and on T.V....I lied too. The Jury knew we were lying -- they even knew we would lie before we got into the court room".

I told the Grand Jury they would all lie in concert. They did. Maude writes further and repeats that "the Shaykh lies and has others lie quite easily". So on Schuon's behalf, Michael Fitzgerald and Sharlyn Romaine orchestrated the conspiracy to subvert justice and sought to discredit witnesses against Schuon by exaggeration and lying. Maude gained this inside information when she was still inside the cult. Maude Murray writes that the cult members all met outside their houses at night in 1991, because they had the utterly paranoid idea that the police bugged all their houses. Only a guilty group of people would do that. An innocent group of people would not do that. They were an extremely secretive group with a cult leader, with delusions of grandeur, who was used to lying easily. Maude writes that Schuon thought he was "beyond the law and I could agree that it does not matter if he lies, but his disciples have come to lie like streams flow downhill". Thus, lying was a regular practice by Schuon and his minions and Schuon sanctioned this practice. Those who think this dirty, lying old man was a saint are sorely deluded. Maude writes in letters and says

“Over twenty people were forced under cult influence, to lie to Grand jury under oath, to protect Schuon. [Murray indicates that Michael Fitzgerald and Sharlyn Romaine] orchestrated this conspiracy to obstruct and subvert justice. [Murray claims that] Schuon lied on TV and elsewhere. "...the Shaykh lies and has others lie quite easily". [Murray admits that] "Michael Fitzgerald... lied in court under oath, lied to his lawyers and led a spiritual community in a very expensive lawsuit that was won, but with a substrata of lies". [Murray reveals that] Michael Fitzgerald "took charge" of the cult in 1991, and on Schuon's behalf, orchestrated a conspiracy to subvert justice.[ In a film she made for Schuon called "Colors of Light", she reports that] Michael Fitzgerald, "took charge" and "led the entire group to lie in court under oath...and to our lawyers" to protect Schuon against the charge of child molestation. [She also claims that Schuon's 4th wife, Sharlyn Romaine, assisted Fitzgerald] in the obstruction of justice. She writes that Romaine "engineered this thing... which was for lying to the court". [Murray says of Romaine, who is Schuon's 4th wife that] "I actually think she would murder someone if he [Schuon] gave the slightest reason for it".

In a cult mind control systems lying to the cult is not unusual. In the Bhagwan Rajneesh cult, one of the inner circle women did orchestrate a murder. I told the grand Jury they would all lie under oath. I knew these people well and knew how they would orchestrate getting Schuon off the hook. They did lie under oath and Maude and Sharlyn were accused of perjury based on a tape I gave the court in which Sharlyn discussed the “vertical” marriages they had with Schuon. This was a convenient notion that Schuon had invented in which marriage could be entered into, like Indians, he said, as long as such a marriage led to God. But when push came to shove, Schuon dropped all this fol de

rol about freely entered into marriages ( with Native Americans this also meant that either party could freely dissolve the union) and started talking like those who deny gay people the right to get married. It turned out that only Schuon could have “vertical” marriages. Being married to a prophet meant that only he could decide when the marriage was over, not the woman. Again it was convenience for himself that mattered. with Maude.

In 1991 the case against Schuon was mysteriously dropped because justice had been obstructed, against the will of the Grand Jury, who correctly tried to oppose the dropping of the charges and wanted to indict the prosecutor, Robert Miller. It is now clear and can be proven, I believe, that Schuon, Fitzgerald and Romaine and perhaps others led the cult in a conspiracy to obstruct justice. Murray claims that evidence was "fabricated" by Fitzgerald . A few of the underaged girls, the daughters of William Wroth and Jesus Garcia Varela were trotted out before cameras to lie about not being at the Primordial Gatherings, when they certainly were. For Schuon everything depended on young girls being made to lie for him.

This tendency of people in the cult to lie was not new. The Schuon cult was organized around a group of families, the Fitzgerald's. Polacks, MacDonald's, Arbogast's, Varela's, Fluri's. Gaetani's, Jones', Casey's Murray's, Polit's, Perry's, Reynold's and many others. They were kept together by constant prayer meetings at each other's houses. They regularly ate lunch out, often at each other's houses. As a close knit group that denied any value to outsiders, they were constantly reinforcing each other's loyalty. It is no surprise that of the 70 people that were present at Primordial gathers they would all lie about it, except a few, me, Lambert, Catherine Perry and a few others. To tell the truth would have implicated them since most of them allowed their own children or witnessed their friends children at these gatherings.

Jacqueline Danner observed Catherine Schuon lying years before, as he says in letters in the Glasse file. So it was quite silly for Schuon to claim Catherine Schuon was a 'celestial representative' who would never lie when Danner merely said she is an ordinary woman who made a mistake. Danner was being kind and for that he was blacklisted and run out of the cult, simply because he described exactly what Catherine Schuon was like. The problem with delusions of grandeur is that no one can ever praise you enough, and Schuon had that problem in excess. In the end Schuon was surrounded by not very bright flatterers, unable to think for themselves.

I don't agree with everything Glasse says about Schuon in the Glasse File, but I know the circumstances of why he did what he did. Glasse is a Moslem and Islam is a tribal religion with war, honor, moral blackmail and killing to create an empire at its core. But, Glasse was not wrong to question Schuon and his relation to Sidi Junayd <sup>494</sup>. It seems

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<sup>494</sup> Gustavo Polit's cult name was Sidi Junayd. Glasse's documents provide a lot of detail about how Schuon set him up as a sort of personal front man to do dirty work for Schuon. Aldo Vidali records in a long letter (July 4, 1992) written to Schuon that

"Your favored disciple, S. Junayd, told me that you gave him permission to do anything he desired sexually to (a deleted name of a young female cult member), then a girl of sixteen years, except entering her - which restriction he disobeyed repeatedly. That was not the advice of a wise man, but of an amoral if not immoral man, a man who has no understanding of the souls of the young nor of their right to be protected from sexual intrusion until they have reached maturity. Your advice most likely caused the mental crisis the [girl's mother] mother and makes you an irresponsible man. It confirms the molestations you committed against minors, acts you instructed others to deny before the grand jury. We have spoken to witnesses who confirm all you were accused of and more."

This is exactly what was arranged with Polit, just as Aldo tells it. Polit's interest in young girls and women appeared and was not stopped by Schuon, Schuon allowed it, evidently because Schuon had a similar interest. Schuon's favorite artist was Hodler, who had a similar interest. Schuon's own Native American and Virgin paintings contain young girls nude. Maude Murray succeeded in talking Schuon into getting rid of Polit 3 or 4 years after Glasse was thrown out of the cult. A lot of the behind the scenes manipulations such as this were organized by Maude, with Schuon's approval. Schuon was a very devious man who employed inner circle members to do

that Schuon chose Junayd because he wanted someone cruel and hard. Schuon told people, evidently quoting Machiavelli or Caesar Borgia that he wanted to be “more feared than loved”. Schuon’s delusions of grandeur led him to read books about tyrants like Napoleon and Ieyasu Tokagawa, both of whom he tried to imitate. Glasse was not wrong to question the initial stages of the Primordial Gatherings or Schuon’s misuse of Native American religion. Schuon’s understanding of Native Americans involved an imperialist nostalgia. Schuon was an absolutist and imperialist, but tried to foster a nostalgia for them by intellectually colonizing them in his own way, as an example of his domination of religions. But Glasse was a Moslem and was trying to question Schuon as a universalist and syncretistic charlatan. There was much more to Schuon’s delusions than merely his syncretistic tendency. His view of religion was mostly about having transcendental power. Moreover there was someone in Schuon’s inner group, Maude Murray, who was out to get Glasse, after he years long affair with him, succeeded in convincing Schuon that Glasse was mentally ill and paranoid, when really it was Schuon that reacted in a paranoid manner.<sup>495</sup> Glasse was thrown out of the Schuon cult and branded as evil when he was not evil at all. But the paranoid and power hungry dynamics of this destructive cult spit out Glasse and his friends very quickly. The one imperative in the cult was praise Schuon or jump in a lake.

In any case, Glasse gathered an impressive series of documents about Schuon. They record Schuon’s obsession with authority over

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things he did not want to do himself. Polit was shipped off to California rather than turn him into the police. The Schuon’s paid for his way to go back to school. Catherine Schuon complained to me about giving him huge amounts of money. That is where Aldo got to know Polit and gathered evidence about him.

<sup>495</sup> Maude’s affair with Glasse, which lasted 10 years, and which was kept secret, was certainly part of this effort to malign him, inspired by a sort of hypocrisy on Maude’s part. Notice however how the sexual politics between Maude and Schuon already did great damage to Glasse, as it would later to me. Maude and Schuon were poison together and brought out the worst in one another, but rather than visit that on each other they spread it through the whole organization. This again shows what a bad leader Schuon was.

reason; and Schuon and his wives tendency to create a Kafkaesque world of duplicity, irrationality and false accusations all in service of hyping up Schuon unrealistically grandiose ego. Glasse shows how superstitious and ignorant many of the members of the cult were. He records silly visions that the group believed and falsehoods they worshiped. Schuon's need of power leads directly to abuse of others. This is not to say that the Glasse documents do not have problems. There are not well organized and they are insufficient explanations as to what is being said by whom. They are in several languages.

The Glasse documents support a rather orthodox view of Islam which I do not agree with. I am no supporter of Islam. They tend to support the idea that all the religion are valid, when clearly there is little real difference between a cult and a major religion other than scale. They also tend to encourage the idea that Schuon was a real spiritual master. He was really an authoritarian sociopath. There are no real spiritual masters. There are only more or less convincing fakes. Glasses' documents should be public eventually so scholars can start to dissect the Schuon cult accurately. There are useful in showing that many people, not only me, thought Schuon a fraud. But for now they are still private. There are amazing primary documents from a religious cult.

Glasse observes that Schuon and his wives regularly talked about European disciples of Schuon as being second class, or even "worthless". Hossein Nasr was likewise included in this group. I heard such talk myself. Nasr was looked down on by Schuon, and Nasr came regularly to Bloomington eager to lap up any of the crumbs that fell from Schuon's able. Glasse observes that European disciples of Schuon failed in "not recognizing [Schuon's] greatness, infallibility, [or the] incomparable sanctity of a spiritual master who has a strange penchant for going into rages in restaurants over the question of seating or the garlic in the bread". ( Schuon forbid garlic eating in his cult) Glasse points out that

even at dinners it was obvious that Schuon was a narcissist who demanded constant adulation. Glasse says the “wives” were central in getting this for him. Indeed, to not supply Schuon with this adulation would get one on the “list of enemies, the classification into which one can fall simply if ones lives far away and has not appeared for guru worship in a long time” <sup>496</sup> What Glasse says here is completely accurate to what many others experienced in Schuon’s cult.

To give an idea how afraid people are of the Schuon cult, Mark Sedgwick lists 8 anonymous informants <sup>497</sup> who gave interviews against Schuon in his Book Against the Modern World. They were all scared of

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<sup>496</sup> Glasse commentary to a letter from Schuon , written by Glasse in June 1987. Dossier Glasse

<sup>497</sup> In Mark Sedgwick’s book Against the Modern World. Sedgwick’s records critical views of ex- followers of Schuon. Some of these views are wide of the truth. Sedgwick records that Victor Danner thought that “Schuon was an authentic Shaykh” but that he was “surrounded by mediocre and even wicked people”, (pg. 177). I met Danner’s surviving wives and Danner was misled by the whole deceitful entourage of Schuon. The notion of Schuon being an “authentic Shaykh” is false, not just in Schuon’s case, but in anyone’s case. The whole notion a spiritually chosen people is fiction. But putting that aside---it must be said that among Shaykhs, Schuon’s claim to be one is especially absurd. Many people expressed the view that Schuon was holy and his followers corrupt. But this is just cult brainwashing and wildly false There was nothing “holy” about Schuon in person, on the contrary. Actually the followers and the leader were corrupt. The cult was arranged so the wives of Schuon hid Schuon’s real character. You can see Maude doing this in her documents. Followers and outsiders only saw the fake Schuon who was trotted out for gatherings and private meetings, initiations and Majlis. In private Schuon was a very corrupt man who had many difficult and perverse things in this make-up. He was prone to excessive anger, paranoia and megalomania, and had real delusions of grandeur which turned into rage when brought into question. He was a polygamist, despised others, had excessive pride and was profoundly paranoid and superstitious. He was a dandy who liked to dress up in bright blue velvet cloaks and pretend to be a king or royalty. In association with the grandiosity, he also was prone to a certain infantilism that I think was part of his narcissistic personality disorder: He encouraged a certain worship of himself as a child and painted himself, bizarrely, as the Christ-child embraced between the spread legs of a nude Virgin Mary. I spent a lot of time—nearly two years--- in a position where I could watch Schuon’s behavior on a daily basis, something only a few of his “wives” could do. The notion that he was saintly or not involved in the nasty things that went on in his cult is just mistaken. He was involved in most of the things that went on. He designed the Primordial Gathering and the paintings: he created a cultic system and ran it as a sort of tyranny. The gullible who loved him were encouraged in their absurd adulations by a cult mechanism that was designed to make him appear virtuous and faultless. The cult mechanism is still intact in Bloomington, trying to sanitize the dirty old man. You can readily see it on the “World Wisdom” website and other cult venues



retaliation by Michael Oren Fitzgerald and the legal mafia the Schuon cult has sent out trying to do damage control after Schuon got arrested. Schuon was caught masterminding lying to Grand Juries and showing himself off nude to nudist followers. Young girls were involved in these gatherings as has since been proven. The Schuon cult has hurt a lot of people and many people know this. Mafias hurt people because they want to spread terror to others who might step forward. That is why there are so many silent followers and former followers of Schuon. Of the many that could talk about what they know about Schuon's cult very few will.

There is also an assumption perhaps tacit, that America supports cults because of the first amendment in the U.S. Constitution. The first amendment prohibits the making of any law "respecting an establishment of religion", impeding the "free exercise" of religion, as well as infringing on freedom of speech. The Schuon cult tries to silence critics and has managed in some cases to curtail freedom of speech. Due to misreading of the amendment, Religious freedom became a high value priority in some areas. Destructive cults and religious institutions are given too much leeway to abuse and exploit. The Schuon cult demonstrates this in their efforts to use courts to silence critics. During the indictment of Schuon for child molestation the Schuon cult lawyers tried to pretend the cult was being persecuted for their religious beliefs. Hardly. They were trying to hide Schuon's crime behind the first amendment. <sup>498</sup>

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<sup>498</sup> The hatred of the world that involves many cults has a positive factor in that they at least are seeking alternatives to the inhuman power of capitalism, which is so cruel and unforgiving to nearly everyone. But the result is almost always worse than the capitalism cults seek to supplant. For instance "Heaven's Gate was an American UFO religion based in San Diego, California, founded and led by Marshall Applewhite (1931–1997) and Bonnie Nettles (1928–1985). On March 26, 1997, police discovered the bodies of 39 members of the group who had committed suicide, in order to reach an alien space craft which they believed was following the Comet Hale-Bopp, which was at its brightest." Says an entry on Wikipedia. I followed the development of this cult and saw many analogies with the Schuon cult and Guenonians.

When I gave evidence to the police about Schuon in 1991 other people came forward too. Many testified against him. Mary Ann Danner, the wife of the late Victor Danner who was so damaged by Schuon, wrote about Schuon at the time and said:

“He has willfully and wantonly destroyed marriages, smeared reputations, drove some followers to nervous breakdowns, harassed members, and engaged in adultery and child molestation. Because of his self-inflated role and position, he is not only immoral but also amoral. Consequently to have no awareness of proper conduct and hence no remorse for his actions or the pain he has inflicted on others. By a kind of casuistry he manages to twist circumstances and situations ... uses pseudo-metaphysical arguments to have the final say. Moreover, he threatens those who may disagree with him should they upset him . . . , Schuon appears to be a kind of schizophrenic who after many years of being surrounded by brainwashed sycophants has lost touch with reality—and by extension so have some members of his group, particularly those closest to him “By their fruits you shall know them,” and Schuon’s mark on them is unmistakable. As for those who choose to leave, they are explained away as not intellectual enough to understand his teachings, doctrine and method have “lost their intelligence” as it were, or they have betrayed their master. The fault always lies with the follower and never with Schuon. Even the most flagrant violations of behavior are either blamed on his closest companions or denied. Lying is characteristic of the of the group and eventually leads to mistrust among them.”

In 1991, after news of Schuon's molestations of young girls came out, Schuon even got the girls that were involved in the molestations to lie to TV cameras about what happened. They claimed to be out of state, which was not true. They were set up by the cult and their parents to lie so as to get Schuon help off the hook. Schuon had done the same thing years earlier when he tried to seduce young Catherine Perry and then the cult made her lie about it.<sup>499</sup> It is darkly humorous that Schuon, who wrote so much about the virtues, would enlist young girls to lie for him to protect him from prosecution for sexual indiscretions. But this hypocrisy is typical of a psychopath. Schuon even tried to blame the press for his crimes. Other critics of Schuon have been demonized by Schuon and his minions in awful ways. Some of the people so demonized were myself<sup>500</sup> and Aldo Vidali, Maude and others. When a group demonized you in this way you learn the sting of what cults really are and why they are dangerous. Religion is political and it lies to further itself. Aldo wrote a book about Schuon called the Feathered Snake, a rather bitter and occasionally humorous satire, which the Schuonian so hated that they spent over 250,000 dollars trying to suppress it, using lawyers. They even came to Cleveland to harass me, rather uselessly, since Aldo had done nothing wrong. But it was all about trying to sue the courts to intimidate people, like the mafia. They were successful. Aldo had to move to Hawaii to get away from their legal harassments.<sup>501</sup>

Schuon, through lawyers, proved his willingness to abuse his "wife", and forced Maude to sign a confidentiality agreement more or less

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<sup>499</sup> Aspects of these lies are recorded in the Glasse documents.

<sup>500</sup> I was called a homosexual and was accused of crimes I did not commit. They twisted and altered the truth to make me sound as horrible as possible and did all they could to slander and lie about me. Schuon was guilty and they knew it, so they tried to make me the scapegoat of his crimes. It hurts badly when this happens and it let me know how bad people can be, and how cruel. One begins to see who people are the cruelest of earth 'species.

<sup>501</sup> The cult lawyers and Michael Pollock came to Cleveland in 1992g from California and spent a lot of money trying to enlist me in their harassment case against Aldo Vidali and I had to sit all day answering inane questions about him. It was harassment against me and Aldo, as well as Aldo's family because he criticized them.

abolishing her freedom of speech. In the process she lost nearly everything and was forced into poverty. He and his cult were brutal and cruel to her. She tried honestly and openly to get away from his bogus “marriage” to her. In response he punished her with law suits and poverty. Only a very bad man would do this. Rama Coomaraswamy was also sued for his effort to tell the truth about Schuon. Mark Sedgwick too was attacked by the cult for trying to tell the truth about them. The cult was furious that Sedgwick allowed some of those who have no voice to speak out against Schuon, even though they refused to let him use their names. I’m sure they are grateful for this. The cult does not want the truth about them out in public, that is plain. They have systematically tried to destroy any free press or critical review of Schuon. Ziauddin Sardar wrote an essay in the magazine Impact International – called “Man for all Seasons”.<sup>502</sup> Peter Wilson writes

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<sup>502</sup> See

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/soc.culture.iranian/EKtP6julW4E%5B151-175%5D>

This essay is quite good, An excerpt of it follows:

” Nasr writes that

There is “much more to the "genius", {of Schuon} who unlike any other "single human being", surpasses all in "both metaphysics and plastic arts". The absurdity of Nasr’s views became quite evident in the Winter of 1991. The Herald Times of Bloomington, Indiana, reporting on the front page of its 15th October 1991 edition, declared: [Leader of sect indicted: Sexual abuse alleged in rites]

The 84 year old leader of a religious sect living in Inverness Woods southeast of Bloomington

has been indicted on felony charges of child molesting and sexual battery in connection with alleged sexual abuse of three teenage girls during the sects rites... Fritjof Schuon of 3700 Inverness Farms Road was the chief target of three indictments issued by a Monroe County grand jury...

Two days later, State Police Detective, Sgt. Jim Richardson, told the Herald Times that during his investigations he had interviewed 30 people in connection with the case and concluded that Schuon is a powerful, aloof man who was "obsessed with nudity", and who "led his followers who wore American Indian garb, in rituals during which he pressed himself against bare breasted women while placing his hands on their hips". Search of Schuon’s house had "turned up photographs of nude and semi-nude members of the group participating in ritual dance". The same day, Schuon refuted the

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notion that he was the head of a cult but admitted that he was the Shaikh of a Sufi order called Tariqa Mariamiah, "a spiritual society for prayer which exists for those Sufi followers of my principles" (17<sup>th</sup> October 1991). Defending Schuon, Nasr told the Herald Times of 20<sup>th</sup> October that "he belongs to a different world. He is very much a premodern man". On 21<sup>st</sup> November, the paper reported that Prosecutor Bob Miller dropped the Schuon indictment claiming lack of evidence. "In a furor of accusations and counter accusations his deputy, David Hunter, submitted his resignation.

Whatever the merits or demerits of the indictment, the investigation revealed certain important features about Schuon. He has established an hitherto unknown tariqa revolving around Virgin Mary. Nudity plays an important part in the rituals (zikr?) of this tariqa. And despite the language and terminology, Schuon's innovation had little to do with Islam or Sufism.

The case against Schuon was brought by Mark Koslow, a former disciple and member of the Tariqa Mariamiah. Koslow was initiated into the tariqa in June 1989. "was given", he says, "the fifth and sixth themes of meditation, the Alchemy and the Primordial Dance, as well as the sexual alchemy in rapid succession. He studied painting with Schuon and painted 5 icons under his direction". While a member of tariqa, Koslow believed that Schuon was "a prophet, an Avatara and the equal or more of Solomon". But his eventual disillusionment as well as involvement in a love triangle with Schuon and one of his wives forced Koslow to leave the sect. His "Account of the Schuon Cult", says Koslow, has been written "for cult members to help them get out".

Koslow reveals a wealth of unsavory detail; but most of what he has to say correlates directly with what Schuon has himself written and what Nasr has revealed in tantalizing, albeit neatly camouflaged, glimpses. For example, Koslow says that Schuon is an authoritarian figure who claims to be able to read people on the basis of physiognomy. Both inside and outside the sect, people are classified according to the Hindu theory of caste: "priestly types, warrior types, merchant types, manual laborers, casteless «chandala» or according to the gnostic categories as pneumatic, psychic and hylic". But we can gather all this by simply reading Schuon's Caste and Races (Perennial Books, 1982) where he suggests that caste is the cosmological principle of the universe and Hindu caste systems is based on "natural properties of humankind"; that races have distinctive human and natural characteristics and that people's physical features reveal all. It is not unnatural for a man who believes in social hierarchy to be a divine principle to actually structure his own sect on a strict hierarchy. Koslow claims that Schuon insists that his disciples "define history as leading up to Schuon". Well, Nasr himself says so in so many words as I have shown above! Koslow says that Schuon insists that the members of his sect should only read his books no other books are worthy of attention. Well, have you ever met a Guru who says otherwise?

The bible of Tariqa Mariamiah is "Memories and Meditations" of Frithjof Schuon. Disciples get portions of the "Memories" according to their station; and only the top officials have the complete book. But it is an ever expanding work that serves not only as a guide to behaviors of the sect but also for theory building. As Schuon's behaviors becomes more and more outrageous, as his claims become more and more absurd, metaphysical justifications for them are developed in the "Memories". It is in a section entitled "Sacred Nudity" that we learn of Schuon's experience of Virgin Mary: "On my way to Morocco in 1965, when I was suffering from asthma and feeling ill to the point of death . I experienced a blessed contact with the Heavenly Virgin. And this had as its immediate result the almost irresistible urge to be naked like her little child; from this event onwards I went naked as often as possible, indeed most of the time." This Great Vision, according to Koslow, is explained as follows: "the Virgin descended down upon him,

against Schuon in his book Sacred Drift. These last two examples were not attacked, so far as I know. Wilson is an interesting writer, but still confused about religion in elemental ways. He comes out of a Beat tradition and still tried to make some headway as a Moslem in America. I don't think his effort was very successful, though he did have some insight to question some things.<sup>503</sup>

Maude Murray wrote that

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naked, and she comforted his misery by consoling him with her sexual parts which she exposed to him inside of him, comforting his heart". It was thus not just a spiritual vision but also a sexual one. Since then, Schuon has had other visions. A second vision occurred on Christmas Eve, 1985: "He heard on one side of him the Ave Maria being sung, and on the other side Ya Maryam alayk'l salam ya Rahman, ya Rahim being sung. He was like a child; he felt the breasts of the Virgin touching his back. Her legs were spread and she straddled him from behind. He put his hands on her thighs." Ya Maryam ... has become the prayer of the cult: it is there behind the contents page of the SUNY edition of Nasr's Knowledge and the Sacred but has been removed from the Malaysian edition of the book. There have been other visions in which Schuon claims to have met all the prophets, Buddha, Kali and Pte San Win, the Buffalo Cow Woman of the Sioux Indians who is credited with bringing them the sacred pipe: "the Pte San Win was in a mihrab (of a mosque). She was naked and he rose up with her, embracing, into the air". "Memories and Meditations" describes these visions and explains what they mean for Schuon and his disciples."

"After the "Memories", it is the paintings of Schuon that become the focus of the cult's meditations. According to Koslow, the paintings are "presented to the fuqara in hierarchical order". The classifications are: (1) paintings which everyone can see; (2) restricted paintings which not everyone may see; (3) esoteric or tantric paintings which only the elite or inner circle may see. "The most esoteric paintings are those which picture Schuon naked so that one can see his sexual parts, especially those paintings where his sexual parts are the focus of the paintings." Another category of the "most esoteric paintings is that of the Pte San Win, the Buffalo Cow Woman of the Sioux, and Lallah Yogishwari, a naked Hindu saint". Disciples, say Koslow, are required to meditate on these paintings and followers pray to portraits of Schuon for "barakah" and to have their prayers answered....."

<sup>503</sup> See also William S. Burroughs Vs. the Qur'an  
By Michael Muhammad Knight

“I find it doubtful that the Shaykh could be all that he thinks he is: that is a Nabi ( a minor prophet) of the Religio Perennis, who will open a new paradise; a pneumatic: a saint: a sage: a Sufi Master: and the greatest one alive: a perfect metaphysician, like Shankara or Plato, a man with right’s like Krishna’s and a man whose body radiates benefic influences for good people”.

I never saw Schuon radiate anything except for poses of grandeur, pride and disdain for others. He liked Plato and Shankara--- two rather effete and over rated writers who hate practical work and love slaves and caste.

I will discuss some other critics of Schuon below in a chapter on Fringe Traditionalists. But Maude Murray is in many ways the most interesting of Schuon’s critics and perhaps the most unwilling and tragic. Many people have demeaned her, such as Nasr and Devie, but that is mistaken. She was far from perfect, but she had a good heart and tried to tell the truth, most of the time. She wrote some various pieces about corruption in the Schuon cult, and she was right about that.. She also made some videos about them and was viciously attacked,. She writes that the cult figuratively “stoned” and “lynched” her, and put her in jail 3 times as well as sued her to try to make her keep her mouth shut.

Maude writes about her “marriage” to me that

“Believing that I was no longer married to anyone and that God had given me to someone who would be my discreetly secret spiritual husband henceforth, I had a secret “marriage” with him. It is extremely difficult to keep one’s head about what is and isn’t a

marriage when one is the third wife or a Moslem [Schuon] in a Christian country and when one is spiritually divorced from the man one is legally married to [John Murray]. To top it all off there were lies about these marriages too. When my “marriage” to Koslow came to light everyone blamed me to such a degree that nothing I could say as an excuse was considered. Finally not even one person would talk to me, not even people I’d known for 40 years. When I said that Mr. Schuon was hardly noticing me people said I was blaming him for my faults.

Actually all the blame was Schuon’s. She was right to blame him for his neglect of her. He only wanted her as a slave of his whims. It was his character faults that were the real problem all along. He was a sordid angry fellow who had attracted and created a group of people who served his power and sexual needs, which were immense and delusional. I have never seen such a selfish man in my whole life, and his followers are like little robots who hang on every word that comes out of his mouth. Murray lists some of the people in the cult that have shunned her. In each case, she mentions good things she did for them and how they now treat her with cruel indifference. Because of gossip and shunning by Schuon and the inner circle Maude records that her best friends shunned her: she says for instance:

“Barry MacDonald has dropped me totally as a friend without having heard a word of my side of the story” She says the same for Rebecca MacDonald. Of Deborah Willsey, now Deborah Casey<sup>504</sup>, Maude says she “has not spoken to me since Sharlyn

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<sup>504</sup> Deborah was jilted by her husband, Jeffrey Willsey who openly wanted to marry Aldo Vidali’s sons’ girlfriend. He managed to pry her away from Vidali’s son Ari, and Deborah married the man across the street evidently, Patrick Casey, who evidently divorced his wife too, the sister of the wife of Michael Fitzgerald. This was an incestuous in-group of people. But is the typical soap opera in the Schuon cult. Divorce, Musical beds. Ari was enlisted by the cult to



[Romaine] took over “my case”.

”Mrs. William Wroth<sup>505</sup> has not spoken to me [in four years] one day I saw her at Jo-Ann fabrics and she ducked behind a pillar and put on dark sunglasses”. That is the mother of one of the children whose child abuse occurred with her permission and she was embraced by Schuon primordial gatherings.

Vivienne Reynolds—“her mother died recently and I was heartbroken not to be able to see her two children and their two husbands”.

Heidi Stoudman, ‘I told her I could not survive another month due to lack of money and I received no answer’. Barbara Perry, ‘I appealed to her over and over but I finally gave up’

Whitall Perry: ‘I risked my life to get his long lost daughter back to him and I failed... When he was in disgrace I went to see him once a week.. where is he? I needed someone to include me when I was left out.’ <sup>506</sup>

“My father, Samuel L. Harrison,... does not have long to live and no one will speak to him either. People turn their backs when they see him in town and Mrs. [Catherine] Schuon lied to him about

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sue his father by means of a bogus legal case involving a boat. Aldo disowned his vicious son. Few of them have children because Schuon did not like kids. Four wives and Schuon could not have a single kid!! His wives were expected to know he did not want children and one of them got her tubes tied for him. The great prophet could not share time with little chips off the old block, He was much too narcissistic to share his time.

<sup>505</sup> This is the mother of one of the girls, (Carmel Wroth) who was made to lie about her involvement in primordial gatherings. Maude Murray later admitted that this young woman and other girls were indeed involved in the gatherings, as I said in 1991. Other evidence also showed that young people, both male and female were involved in these gatherings. See my essay on evidence against Schuon on my website

[http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/frithjof\\_Schuon.asp](http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/frithjof_Schuon.asp)

<sup>506</sup> Maude leaves out of this why his daughter was lost to him, I have discussed this elsewhere I this book. The Perry family was broken by the Schuon’s with Barbara trying to give her daughter as a sexual present to Schuon and Frithjof trying to seduce their daughter, and wife swapping among all the adults. Maude was enmeshed in all this decadence too. The tried to rope Catherine into it.

several things” “Mrs. Schuon told me... to be patient, that people would forget and forgive me that it would take time ...I have waited four years and it got worse all the time. I asked to see the Shakyh [Frithjof Schuon] no reply. Again and again.”

This all shows the scapegoating and guilty skulking about this group does in its effort cover up for Schuon’s crime. Schuon was guilty of molesting children and the cult treats Maude as a pariah because Maude exposed the truth about Schuon. Schuon was a hypocrite who wanted to blame Maude for his crimes. Their ill treatment of her is yet more proof of their guilt. Maude Murray was forced by Schuon to suffer because she told the truth. Maude was the real hero in this whole affair. She exposed a fraud, perhaps not meaning to, but in fact, she did.

Maude writes

“when I was about to be put out into the street and had literally .76 cents, I went to Inverness Farm Road [the compound/ or fenced and area where the cult members reside] and I just walked – until one of my former friends got a protective order filed against me.<sup>507</sup> I sold all I had and moved in with my very poor and ill father. I broke the protective order on purpose by making some phone calls in order to provoke any kind of reaction to break the total deadlock in communications. Later, in court, (after trying to

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<sup>507</sup> Maude says in another document that on this occasion “walking on this road” actually meant something else she says: “when I when I was literally about to become a homeless person I went to “picket” in front of Mr. Schuon’s house”. I don’t know what the sign said she picketed with. It is delightfully American and working class, that she tried to do this like a brave union member protesting the evil CEO.. Indeed a lot of her efforts are almost like Martin Luther King civil disobedience. She even thinks of herself as someone being “lynched”, which refers to what was done to blacks. The use of these terms shows she was at least unconsciously aware of the sexist prejudice or misogyny that was in operation against her. Interesting that she felt herself a certain identity with victims of racist prejudice and hate. Schuon was a sexist and a racist and her protests have a lot of sense in them.

sue various people [in the group] for 1 dollar each} I agreed to agree to everything anyone could possibly want in order to get “them” to show the Shaykh [Schuon] a video I made called the “Colors of Light”. By doing that, I proved my faith in him to solve the problem. But that only made things worse. He wrote that I was pathologically subjective, more or less crazy, etc. etc. Now I couldn’t believe he could be so opaque and inhuman and mean, so I didn’t believe it! I wanted to see it and prove it to get his honor exonerated forever. So one day before dawn I walked for hours in briars and streams to come into his yard from the woods. I sat down in his lawn and called out to him for mercy. [Sharlyn’s Romaine’s] watchdog charged me (but left me alone) and they called the police who handcuffed me and took me off to jail”

“The way things are now; this appears to be a degenerate cult which is capable of destroying the life and sanity of an innocent person”

She finally grasped what I told her 4 or 5 years previously, the last time I saw her, when she came to Cleveland. I told her Schuon was a pathologically subjective and a degenerate cult leader. This is a “degenerate cult” and Schuon was a fraud. She did not want to believe it, and condemned me instead and went through terrible suffering before she could let herself see it.

Let’s look at these facts. Maude had requested that Schuon ‘divorce’ her in 1991 and he obliged, as if a non-existent ‘marriage’ needed a ‘divorce’ – His mere whim sufficed to divorce her, which means the marriage itself was a whim and a mere wisp of meaningless fiction. He put this woman through years of misery for nothing. Why? This shows Schuon to have been a cruel and heartless man of rare persistence. He let her suffer mercilessly for over five years when he could have easily stopped it. This is more than merely a mean man.

When I read over these 500 or so pages of Maude's testament I see that a good proportion of them are devoted to trying to excuse all the harm that Schuon is doing to her. Her writings are rather like certain slave testimonies where slaves assume the point of view of the oppressor, Maude cannot bring herself to finally see what a vicious man her idol is. Her devotion to Schuon had a strong dose of masochism in it: Maude identifies with her torturer.

One of her main functions in the cult, when she was "married" to Schuon, was to excuse and justify his bad or cold behavior to visitors and cult members. Schuon ran a tight ship and the 'wives' were a major part of preserving the illusion of his magnificence, sex appeal and wisdom. They talked him up all the time, that was their job and the maintenance of the cult required it. Initially, just about everyone who came into the cult falls for this hype. I used to drive people to see Schuon at his house for an audience. These people were coming from various parts of the world. The wives and "dignitaries" would lather on the goopy praise for him in the thickest possible way. Little did the visitors know what a selfish, mean old goat he really was. I didn't know either until I had been in the cult a year or so and watched him very closely. They read his silly books and did not realize how these books really say awful things hidden behind the big words, long sentences and fancy Guenonian terminology. They didn't know how to read them with critical insight. I saw how he actually wrote them, with various people's help and how his writings cloak a very reactionary and deluded man.<sup>508</sup>

But over time, some learned to see through the cult and how it manufactured Schuon's image carefully and with a lattice of lies.<sup>509</sup> They

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<sup>508</sup> See my essay on Schuon's books here: Scroll down when you get to this site [http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/frithjof\\_Schuon.asp](http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/frithjof_Schuon.asp)

<sup>509</sup> Lying to Schuon was a major function of the wives. I wrote in my Account of 1991:

"I recall one day last August or September (1990) when Maude came over on the day of her visit with Schuon. Whenever she came over after these visits and she came over after all

extensively used damage control techniques to control brush fires that inevitably developed given the wide variance between the truth and the phony image put out about Schuon. The wives were all about damage control, lying if necessary, or at least manipulating the network of inner-cult gossip to try to get their way.

Maude had been in this cult so long she just couldn't give up the bad habit of praising this monster at every turn, submitting to his abuse and then seeking yet more excuses for him. Indeed, the source of her madness in these documents is Schuon's ill treatment of her, his inability to forgive her, his bad character and his lack of virtue. The one thing that sticks out in Maude's document is her willingness to go through the worst suffering for this jerk. I already thought his many times before Schuon even knew about Maude's and my "marriage". She would lie on the floor of my kitchen naked and pray for hours, weeping, to a rather gross nude portrait of Schuon. She would hold the Icon to her bare chest and weep and invoke god's help, as if that would actually happen. She prayed to this jerk who had no care for her at all, and who had merely used us as a prop for many years. I came to realize that Schuon then that a callous man, and a tyrant.

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of her visits, I would lie on the couch with her, and begin to ask her, what did he say, what did Sharlyn [forth wife] say, what were they painting and so on. With all my questions, her descriptions would sometimes take up an hour. During one of these times she told me (as I mentioned earlier) that Sharlyn showed him some pictures she had taken of him. He was wounded to the core by the poor appearance of his own image and in a fit of vanity he got asthma. Both Sa. Sharlyn and Maude had to quickly comfort him, run their hands over him and tell him how great and handsome he is, how majestic his body looks, how he is a prophet and how grace or baraka pours out from his body. This had to go on for a 1/2 hour or an hour. The extreme excess of his reactions to these photographs is quite typical of him, and also typical is the reaction of the two women. This is their primary function: to keep Schuon constantly aware of his greatness and spiritual sublimity. I neglected to add that Schuon threatened the two women who were comforting him with stopping the primordial gatherings since he thought his body ugly and old, and that no would wish to look at him. They had to talk him out of doing this." This shows again that the primordial gatherings were nearly as much their creation as his.

She was in total distress for years about him. Many people in the cult had the erroneous belief that this guy had extrasensory capabilities, (a common superstition in the cult, many of them thought this to Schuon's delight. Schuon encouraged this belief by saying he could read his wives thoughts at distance and see what she was doing. Actually he had no special capabilities at all. Maude thought Schuon could hear her, so she lay there begging him to let her be married to someone else. She really didn't think she was married to him and in fact she wasn't. Once he guilt-tripped Maude by saying that he talked to the Virgin Mary for a few hours and she said the devil was in her. He had the fourth wife tell her this. Nothing of the sort happened and he lied, as all his visions were lies. If Maude had thought it through she could have said she had a vision of the virgin herself. She could have had the Virgin say that Schuon's pride is a devil and he needs to give Maude up as he holds onto her out of false pride. But she was incapable of this kind of lying, to her credit. His whole bizarre system of multiple bigamies was an outgrowth of his insane need to control and entrap others. He had enormous power over her and her real 'crime' was to resist that power. She prayed to his 'icon' at night and would go see him during the day at her usual three day a week meeting with him and Sharlyn. She would beg him to release her and he refused, like a tyrant jailer.

In the end my marriage to Maude was proved to be a sham, and I fled from it, and from Schuon in disgust. It was not a sham because Schuon said so but because Maude herself was so much a part of Schuon's insanity. All that happened was really just a long argument between a Maude and the cult leader. The 5 year struggle between Maude and Schuon was the thing that did more than anything to bring Schuon down. She refused to be treated as a "door mat", as she said to me. He accused her of insubordination. She was right to resist his imperious tyranny.. I saw with certainty that Maude was right and Schuon wrong. Maude was telling the truth and Schuon was a liar and a

tyrannical psychopath. He was a jealous man who was possessive and selfish. I tried to do the right thing as a human being and did what I could. I was young then and did not know entirely what I was doing, but as the facts became clear I saw what a big mistake I had made and I high tailed it out of there.

Does all this suggest an extreme masochism on Maude's part? No, perhaps not, just a woman confused by her emotions and needs. I could see how someone might say she was a masochist to stay there. I have thought this myself—that she was masochistic---, but I don't conclude that--- I never noticed that in her. More likely it is a guilt complex of considerable depth. She was a woman who needed a strong father figure even if, secretly, unadmitted even to herself, she hated him. She betrayed Schuon twice, and was all the while actually married to someone else. But Schuon had told her marriage to Murray meant nothing. He let her stay married so he would not have to be daily responsible for her. The whole confusion was Schuon's fault, not hers.

It was clear to me that she really did not want to be with Schuon and did not like him much. Her real father was a kind hearted old gentleman and not at all a tyrant. In the letters to her that Schuon writes her after she has been thrown out of the cult he says that her primary fault is to have stood up for herself, to have been proud. She failed to subject herself to him with sufficient lowliness. She writes that Schuon and Sharlyn Romaine wanted her to "hang her head so low it would be like walking on all fours". They want her to be an animal which they see as lesser than human.<sup>510</sup> Why would they want such a horrible thing for her? She was to be made an example of by a cult that had a mafia mentality. He did not want her, he only wanted to destroy her.

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<sup>510</sup> For Schuon being a woman is like being an animal, unless the woman realizes herself by proximity to an amazing "theomorphic" being, such as him. For Schuon women are only symbols, "metaphysically transparent", like the houris in the absurd heaven invented by the writers of the Koran. Schuon told me he thought all feminism evil. He did not see women as having rights, only duties, Maude said. Schuon was a misogynist.

I was told “it would be good if Maude wanted to die for Schuon”. I have talked a lot about this, but it might do to elaborate more on it. They were always talking about people dying for them, but they would not die for anyone. They would lie to protect themselves. They hid behind elite bureaucratic pretensions and organizational parameters, initiations, hierarchy. They also hid behind carefully constructed myths about Schuon’s own biography as well as religions myths of many kinds. Those who were critical of him, as Maude was, in a passive aggressive way, could be punished by various means. Schuon wanted Maude to die or to at least be more miserable at first, and then hounded out of a cult, shunned, homeless, friendless, sick and half mad with grief and loss. Maude keeps repeating over and over to herself like a parrot throughout the 500 pages she wrote that Schuon has “no faults” and is a perfect man. The myth cannot be questioned, Sharlyn compared Maude to Judas--- another totally ridiculous mythic comparison. One day when I spoke with Sharlyn she said “she is in rebellion against the Shakyh and must be punished”. What is this--- the Inquisition, I wondered.? Maude should have left years before she did.

Maude compares Schuon’s treatment of her to a “stoning”, which has a Moslem flavor to it, and the right misogyny. Yes, Schuon wants Maude to suffer because she refused to stay married to a “prophet” who neglects her. She is not allowed to divorce the prophet” but must stay married to him by force or suffer endlessly. You cannot force a woman to stay married to a man against her will. Schuon was violating her human rights. Maude was a Moslem woman who has done exactly what Schuon did, which was to claim a “vertical” marriage. She has the same rights to do this as he has. He convinced her by a sort of fraud that she did not have this right. But the truth is Maude has done nothing wrong here. If he were a decent man, he would have let her go. He did not. The truth is that Maude did not “marry” anyone— she was not married to Schuon or me---it was all a fiction--- just as Schuon’s other fake marriages were



fiction. Even his real marriages was a fiction. So why punish Maude so horrible for 5 or 6 years?

Schuon's disciple Gustavo Polit took a 16 year old girl—a felony crime that Schuon both permitted, excused and enabled--- and all they did to him was send him off to college in California and paid for him to study homeopathy or some nonsense. This is a horrible double standard. But Maude, who really did nothing but try to maintain her humanity, must be destroyed and stoned. They tell her she is evil. They tell her it would be good if “walked on all fours” and if she “died weeping”. Who says such things to people but the Gestapo or other torturers? Only a psychopath would say such things to a woman who suffered as much as Maude was suffering once she was kicked out of the cult. The whole horror of the Schuon cult is in this 5 yearlong sadistic torture of this woman who really did nothing. This is what I mean by the coined term ‘Theofascism’ is, the absurd ideological claim to transcendent election at the same time as occurs the insanity and violation of human rights, this enjoyment in hurting someone else. The need of an overarching, abstract power that violates and abuses others is what theofascism is all about.

Maude was in the cult for 25 years and you can see what it did to her mind. Schuon, a man who could not feel remorse, could not see that he was selfish in the extreme, cruel, made love to other women in front of Maude and hurt her. He had no notion of the sad effect of his actions on her and did not care. He shared the misogynist hatred of women that is so common among men in Islam.<sup>511</sup> Schuon was excessively proud even

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<sup>511</sup> A good example of this is the murder of a woman in Kabul named Farkhunda Malikzada, on Dec 25 or 26 2015. She was falsely accused of burning a Koran, and then beaten, stoned and burned to death by men. The times also did some articles on the struggle of women's shelters in Islamic countries, especially Afghanistan.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/27/world/asia/flawed-justice-after-a-mob-killed-an-afghan-woman.html?src=me&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/27/world/asia/flawed-justice-after-a-mob-killed-an-afghan-woman.html?src=me&_r=0)

to the point of megalomania,-- and not only this, he had no compassion for her even when she gave up all pride and screamed for mercy outside his window late at night. She cried for him laying naked on the floor in a kitchen for hours on end, begged and prayed to paintings and photos of him to spare her. I watched her do this many times and even thought to photograph it as others should see how much he made this woman suffer.<sup>512</sup> But I was too afraid to do that. She stayed up nights praying endless prayers he would stop making her suffer. She faced starvations and homelessness; slept in the Salvation Army homeless shelter, was handcuffed and hauled off to jail for wishing he would be less hard on her. She picketed him on his street, even when she sold all she had to get an agreement to watch a sad film she made about how she loved him, he still refuses her and lets her go to jail, lets her go hungry, lets her spend her last dime. He hated feminism, but yet feminism is exactly the thing that stops chauvinists like Schuon from having so much power. I wanted to know about Schuon and the more I learned the more I disliked him, and the more I was on Maude's side and not his.

This is one very bad hard-hearted, cold monster of a person who does not deserve the time of day. Never mind him being a 'spiritual master' and all that nonsense,-- all that was false pretence---he was a bad man who was "pathologically subjective" He believed he has 'divine rights' and was too full of his self-importance to see he is doing grave harm to a woman who has said she was sorry six million times.

Maude's letters show this very clearly— she writes that Schuon is

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<sup>512</sup> There was a glass sliding door in my kitchen and I would go out for a cigarette, -- I was still smoking off and on then--- and see her doing this. It was terribly moving to see Maude trying to reach this man who cared so little about her and very sad. I knew he could care less. He liked to pretend he could see his wives telepathically, but I could see that was bunk. Sharlyn had an extreme proneness to magical thinking and could imagine Schuon watched her everywhere. He didn't do any such thing, but claimed he could. Lying was habitual for him. Here this woman was weeping over his portrait and he was totally oblivious, and if he knew he could care less. Eventually he did know and he did care less. This was a man who only had a heart when it served him.

“pathologically subjective”, a man who cares only about himself and his delusions of grandeur, and posterity. Maude let out the truth about what Schuon really was, and that is why they sought to punish her so endlessly and sadistically. Really, it was heroic what she did. Schuon’s favorite idea was that there is “no right superior to that of truth”, and now truth is arrayed against him. He wrongly thought that he was the truth and therefore he had infinite rights. But, actually he was a liar and believed in a lot of delusions, so his rights were merely fictive injustices imposed on others. Maude’s suffering was the truth and Schuon abused her for telling the truth and that recoils upon his own head. There was no need to revenge him at all, all I needed to do was to tell the truth about what I saw.

Poor Maude. She lived under the cult mind control of Schuon so long I realized fairly early that even though I loved her, our relation was not going to last long. It was doomed. I had to swallow my feelings and hold myself back. She was a broken vessel. I watched her tragedy helplessly unfold with a Shakespearean logic. I tried to stop it from hurting her too much, but in the end I had to get out myself. I could not stay in the cult around all the lies and corruption, bogus rules, hierarchy and leadership. I went back to try to get her out and failed. I did all I could to get her out, but it could not be done. She had participated in his decadent life style so demeaning to women, for too long. She had internalized his misogyny. Schuon and Romaine had so abused her by making her watch, dressed, their unfair ménage à trois, forcing to watch them paint nude endlessly delusional paintings of their imaginary love. Then Schuon and Sharlyn launched jealous rages, threats of fear of hell, accusations of being Judas; *ad hominem* character assassinations against her. I knew that Maude could not take the pressure. My main function during the last 6 months of our relation was to comfort her for the abuse they heaped on her. I did that day in and day out. I tried to keep her at my house as much as I could because the more time she

spent with them the more she suffered. I wrote her many rhymed poems to try to cheer her up. These poems were at the heart of our relationship and it was a good thing, my effort to comfort this tragic woman.

One day, when I had returned to try to get her out of the cult and it had become clear wit was not going to work, Maude had a sick friend of ours, a woman who had MS, call me up and ask for help. When I got there I saw she did not need help at all and it was all a ruse to get me out of the house so Maude could steal things from my house. She pretended she had fallen in her wheel chair in her bathroom, but a man from the cult, Keith Arbogast, had done nothing to get her up so the whole thing was a ruse. More lies, more games. He could easily have lifted her up. When I got home most of the love poems I had written her were stolen and destroyed as well as photos of her and other writings. I had been keeping a chronicle of what had been happening. I was trying to record it all so as to tell the truth. I still have some of this chronicle, though she destroyed most of it. Later I learned Maude destroyed the poems and the writings—she admitted doing it. They were burned. That was the end for me, she destroyed the very thing that was best between us. She wanted to destroy the objective facts I had written down. It finally dawned on me that I could not help her, she was going back into the cult to fight it out with Sharlyn and Schuon. She lost. I could do no more. I was free and out of the cult at last. It was terrible and good too, to be free. I was both desperate and relieved. I packed what stuff I could in my car and drove away. I knew I would go to the police, I knew it was not yet over, but I was at last free of a monster and I wanted to tell the truth about what I knew. It was never about revenge, it was about telling the truth as best I could.

I'm not sure exactly what happened in Schuon's mind at the end. He was used to cover-up and fabrication. His public persona was everything to him. I knew he would fight to preserve the delusion he had spent the last 50 years foisting on followers. Eventually he consulted

with other inner cult members and they cooked up a bogus defense that is mostly lies. I decided to leave. He did not end my relationship to her as was often claimed. I ended it. I left Bloomington. She even came to Cleveland to try to get me back, but there was no going back. At this point I really did not want her back. She could not get me back now. I was free of her too. We spent the last night together in a hotel at the airport and she went to get a plane, when she saw I was hopeless. I could never be brought back into the cult. They no longer had any sway over me. I told her he was a fraud and that he abused children and herself. She was in denial about all that happened. I could see that there was no option but to walk away from her. She would have to suffer terribly to get out. She was so sunk in the mind control she could not see out of it. It was a sad moment to see her go, crying, down the hall to her airplane, flying back to the cult, which would soon reduce her to ruin.

I realized it was all a fraud, as everything around Schuon was a fraud. I felt sorry for her. Schuon was welcome to Maude if he could be good to her—but more than likely he would destroy her. His win was her loss. It was my loss too. I did not want to lose her. But now I saw how things were and that this was a very bad man. She was a very confused woman and I had done my best to help her.<sup>513</sup> She had deliberately seduced me at the beginning and I exposed what she did to Schuon, and

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<sup>513</sup> As I said earlier, when I first got involved with Maude she destroyed some of my writings in which I expressed 30 pages of misgivings about her claim that she was teaching me all that Schuon would teach me if he could know about it. She claimed Schuon was too old to know, it would “kill him” she said. Her wish to destroy anything that came out of me that was true was very disturbing and was a measure of just how deluded and owned by this cult her mind was. Schuon had destroyed her integrity. This was a woman that had been so deeply corrupted by Schuon that I was utterly flabbergasted by her duplicity. When I think of Maude now it is never as a love of my life, but rather as a tragic accident that really had little to do with me. She did not try to know me but merely used me as a tool in her desperation to get Schuon out of her life. My role was mostly as a witness of this. My real life lay elsewhere. That is why I was decimated by this experience for a time, but rose out of it eventually, after a great deal of suffering, with a clearer mind and stronger heart than before I went in. I had the right to protect myself. The play was over and my part was really just as witness and not as a participant. I was there just to watch the tragedy unfold in its crazy way.

then it became clear his relations with his ‘wives’ were about power and not love. In the end it was a battle between Maude and Schuon. I merely got in the way of an ongoing feud between them, and left the cult in disgust with all of it. Maude’s unconscious feminism won in the end, and Schuon’s religious hatred of women lost. But I doubt Schuon ever knew he lost, even when they were taking his fingerprints in the police station and taking his photo as the criminal that, in fact, he was. In the long run it was Maude who had the truth on her side and Schuon who was the bad guy who ought to be discredited. But she did not know that yet.

When I left Bloomington I realized, sadly, at last, that this woman had no interest in the truth, and had used me rather badly. My original intuitions of her were correct: she was an opportunist, and a con woman in her own right, even if my heart went out to her warm and human sides.<sup>514</sup> Schuon was a Svengali like con-man who had her under his spell. The truth for her was the delusions that Schuon lived under. I knew he would destroy her, since the whole reason she was with me was because he had severely neglected her and she was desperate to get away from him. She thought that his promiscuous relationship to women could be replicated and like him she thought that this was esoteric open mindedness. She used to say that Schuon liked to say that participating with multiple religions was like taking multiple women, or in her case multiple men. Her conscious mind admired this nonsense, but her unconscious knew this was misogynistic bunk. Religions enshrine a hatred of women, even when they pretend not to. I was spending time with her only to comfort her for the harm he did to her. I had realized much earlier that she didn’t really love me for myself anyway, what she wanted was a “discreetly secret spiritual husband”---a little puppet of sorts--- just as Schuon wanted Sharlyn as his Shakti—a ‘celestial china doll’ l who would perform for him like a primordial marionette.

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<sup>514</sup> By this I mean that she did various mean and underhanded things to lie to me, steal poems and writings of mine and to try to undermine my witness by lying.

I did not like being forced to stay in a house and have a secret relationship with a woman who dictated all the terms and who did not love me for myself. She was using me as a “door mat” as I said to her more than once. I was locked into the system of lies that Schuon had infected them all with and did not like it. I could say like Rimbaud, “ I went through a woman’s hell over there” and not be wrong. She came to me using her power as Schuon’s supposed “wife” to say that I must not tell anyone what was going on , and she must do it this way because Schuon was too old to know. All that sounded crazy to me. I felt like a kept man, a thing, a sort of male mistress, a doormat, precisely. I realized that she was doing to me what Schuon had done to her. I could see it with dispassion and still go through it in view of going beyond the humiliations and pain of it. I felt sorry for her for what he had done to her, and it was easy to feel sorry for myself for the same thing. I could see what she had suffered under him. Indeed behind all the smoke and mirrors of the Schuon cult I saw that I alone really knew what kind of man was wearing so many masks. There was a greed for power and a need of adulation that was endless and could only evoke certain hysterical and oracular figures in 20<sup>th</sup> century history that are both pathetic and powerful. I saw how Schuon had treated his illicit wives, with a long period of secrecy, deceit, pretending to something that was not true. I didn’t want this. I saw it was a bad thing,

Maude was competing with Schuon, making the same claims he made, using her “spiritual authority” to extract compliance and silence from me. I was not allowed to protest Schuon’s abuse of her, I was not allowed to protest her abuse of me or protest her keeping me from speaking about what was going on. Schuon hated her for her attempt to do exactly the same things he had been doing for years. He was a hypocrite. I was young and did not know what was being done to me at first. But it became clear with time.

A month after I left the cult, I talked to her on the phone and she

insisted I never saw him at primordial gatherings and girls were not present. She tried to convince me I was deluded. I was deeply shocked she would lie like this, to my face. I wasn't deluded at all, and knew exactly what I saw.<sup>515</sup> She and I had even talked about it at the time it occurred and said he had done wrong to have young ones involved in this gatherings. She was trying to get me to lie to myself and I could see this woman was totally brainwashed, trying to regain her former standing in the cult. The cult had poisoned her mind, not mine. He condemns her later and says he "does not know her" in his last letter to her. But that is because he finally saw she was not his "symbol". She was his delusion as all his women were a delusion to him. How could he know her when he had made her keep so many secrets he could not remember all the ones he asked her to keep? She did not think she was married to him. Why should she ?

I didn't think it was fair to keep me as a secret from him and I did not like lying. That is why I insisted we tell the truth about it to Schuon. I knew the truth would force him to look at himself. I knew the truth would bring the whole lie of the cult into question. If he could not admit that he needed to let Maude go than there must be something wrong with him. It was terribly obvious she needed to be released from him and with kindness. She was so desperate, almost insane with a desire to be free of him.. It was obvious his marriages were phony. It was the telling of the this truth that turned a mirror on Schuon's face and he hated to look in mirrors. I saw that right away. It was the truth he that wanted to negate, the truth about himself and his phony cult that he had been trying to

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<sup>515</sup> Later Maude admitted that children had been involved in the gatherings. She said they were involved but that I had my dates wrong. Actually only one date was wrong and it was not the date I gave the police but rather I had given them a series of possible dates because I could not remember the actual date of the gathering that took place in December, when the Wroth girls were there. The Fitzgerald boy was also at one of these. So her attempt to try to force me to deny the existence fo the gatherings was a typical cult maneuver that she had been taught by Schuon to use to silence opposition. There are other examples fo this in the Glasse documents, for instance, against Saydah Wardah in the Yachnes account.



hide all those years. He could not abide hearing that Maude had any needs or rights, or that she was a person who had any other purpose but to serve his inordinate pride and egotism. She told me she felt like his door mat. She didn't want to be that. I did not want to be either.

Something had to break in this cult and I knew it. I did not want to know what I knew, but I had to tell the truth about it eventually. I was not looking to be the whistleblower on this, but I had no choice. I had to face it. I had to speak out against it. I knew I was wrong to fall into all this, and I was humiliated to have been so duped, but once in it I could see that the only honorable way to exit was to tell the truth about it.

So there are various theories I have about why Schuon tortured Maude for so long and with such ruthless cruelty after I left. The obvious one is that Schuon was a bad man and hurt her because the group of people there was a close knit, incestuous bubble and he needed to show his power by her pain. Maude had no answer for this because she could not give up the idea Schuon was a blameless saint. She clung to that absurdity even as he abused her further. Maude's critique of Schuon is perhaps the most incisive and horrific. But she is so confused and up and down, back and forth between accusing him and indulging in the cult flattery of his ego that she speaks too freely and in stream of consciousness, continually, without thinking, out of habit. This makes it very hard to read her account. So, one theory is that that it was basically an act of misogynistic hatred of women by a "pathologically subjective", guy who thought he had divine rights, far beyond the rights of anybody else. There is certainly truth in this.

But there is one other theory, similar but slightly different. Maude says in her documents that Schuon was very upset that I wrote so many of the intimate details of their lives in my Account. This implies, of course, that Schuon recognized that I told the truth. I am glad he recognized this: I wanted very much for him to have to face himself. Indeed a lot of what I did then was designed to make him see himself

objectively as much as is possible for a man so hopelessly subjective . I did tell the truth as best I could . My primary motive was to get the truth out about him. I was not seeking to ‘win” in court, get revenge or put him in jail.---. I don’t think I ever thought he would go to jail. I knew they would all lie. But I did prove that minors were involved in Schuon’s Primordial Gatherings and I proved that these Gatherings existed, and I showed what kind of man this guy was and how the cult functioned. Court was not the main thing, truth was. People have blamed me for only going after Schuon for the involvement of children. But that was not my main objection, it was one of many. People who have never had children do not know how parents suffer to keep their kids safe. The cult was rich enough to stop the court but money cannot stop the truth coming out. Schuon did abuse children at the gatherings and he did many other harmful things besides, as I have shown to exhaustion..

The main thing was to expose a fraud and to liberate Maude if I could. Schuon’s cowardly response was to punish Maude, a weak and defenseless woman. He punished her rather than admit his own guilt in factual matter. He punished to hide from himself. He proved he was basically a bad man who could never admit that anything was his fault. He ended up in court because he was a criminal, not because I was or Maude was. I was and am innocent in this matter. So was Maude. In the end , the cult tried and failed to prosecute me for a house Maude and I bought.<sup>516</sup> The house had been largely a gift, as Maude herself said in a letter, although I put some money into it too. I first proved with

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<sup>516</sup> The Bloomington Herald Times had an article in April 21, 1992, which stated that the “Lawsuit against Koslow in Schuon case dismissed”. It was merely a malicious lawsuit. Murray says in letters that the lawsuit was initiated by Fitzgerald to try to discredit my witness against Schuon. I told the truth about Schuon’s gatherings but the cult needed to lie about it and deny it and the key to that was to try to discredit me. Actually Schuon was guilty, as has been proven. The cult is largely dead or dying due to the weight of their own lies. The more they defend themselves the more they lie and the more they lie the clearer it is they are guilty

documents that the house was a gift<sup>517</sup> and was indeed mine and then, once that was proven in a legal setting, I gave Maude more than half the money from this house out of pity for her. Various letters from her prove this. I wanted to help her. Most of the rest of the money from this house went to pay lawyers and to get people out of the cult. I spent a little to go back to school. I took nothing from anyone. The cult tried to claim that I embezzled money for them in a typical effort to lie and fabricate falsehoods. Indeed, they are guilty of slander in this regard, and I could have pressed charges but I am not litigious.

Maude says in her letters that Fitzgerald concocted the plan to try to slander me by lying about my house and claiming I stole it. They were always using money to facilitate the needs of the cult leader. No matter, the truth is that I did my best to help Maude up to the very end. The cult

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<sup>517</sup>I need not have given Maude more than half the money from the house. Indeed. Rama Coomaraswamy, Wolfgang Smith my mother and many others were saying I should keep the house or the money from it. I never asked for this house. But I owed nothing to this cult that had treated me so badly. The cult had bought houses for Polit and Romaine and helped others with money for many years. Murray brought a bag full of gold bars down to the realtors office and dumped it into the middle of their table. Who does that? I was amazed by this and watched with curiosity. I knew it was bizarre. But I was curious to see where this was all going to go. I was in a strange world and had a sense of adventure. I did not imagine it would end in disaster yet, but that would soon dawn on me. When I left Bloomington I thought to give the house to charity, and I did give some of the houses contents and some of the money away in charity. In any case, one must understand that Schuon had been living off his followers for years, buying houses with their money, creating little cult enclaves in Switzerland and then America. The cult was awash in money from rich followers all too eager to support the cult of personality that engulfed Schuon. There were a lot of weird and illegal financial things going on in the cult. According to David Hunter, who researched the cult extensively, some of their money came from followers, some from questionable financial deals, some from businesses, off shore investments, shadow or bogus companies and Swiss banking. He even thought they might be running guns, but I don't think he had any proof of that. Other stories were told to me by others of drug deals and deadly threats. I knew there was deceit and cheating of many kinds, but could not verify most of the many allegations. Maude said Schuon's idea was that money should only go to those who deserve it and his followers obviously deserved it more than anyone, and therefore they invested their money in followers. I was helped so long as showed the correct adulation, and as soon as I stopped, I was falsely accused of all sorts of lies. I certainly was no embezzler, the question was, should I sell the house and give all the money back or part. I elected at last to give Maude more than half the money, and that seemed the wise thing to do. I felt sorry for her and that is why I did it. The rest went to lawyers, was given in charity to help those getting out of the cult and a few thousand went to get me started back in college. It was fair, compassionate and the right thing to do. I regret nothing..

did not help her, but I did. I was true to my word with her and did all I could to help this troubled and persecuted woman. In retrospect that was the my main involvement with Maude. It was not at all an illicit affair, but a sad story of a man who helped a women who was being abused by a cult and a cult leader. I helped her out of the cult in the end anyway. In any case, all my efforts to help her did not at ultimately succeed as far she was concerned,, though I think I did lessen her burden for a time. There was love in doing that much for her.

Schuon continued to torture Maude for 5 years. She was kicked out of the cult by 1996. That was the last I heard from her directly. A friend told me they heard from her a few years later in Indianapolis, where she lived at a mosque who felt sorry for her. Some years after that, maybe in 2005, I heard she had died. Radcliffe college, where she went to school, put up an obituary. Glasse told me he thought it was certain she had died. I did not believe it and wrote Radcliffe but could find out no more about it. Then I heard from someone that they had gotten letter from her and she was in Pakistan, and there was other news from Pakistan that suggested this too. She hoped to adopt a child in Pakistan.<sup>518</sup> I doubt this is true but it is just crazy enough that it might be. Maude has a wild imagination and deep emotional needs. But it was unlikely anyone would let an unstable woman of 70 adopt a child. I hope she found a child to love there even if she was not able to adopt. I like to think of her going to a market and buying vegetables, holding a child's hand. Like me she was free from Schuon and the cult at last. Of course, others said she lives in Bloomington, having been bought by the cult, who pays her bills and keep her silent, and this could be true too. I also heard she is supported by the cult as long as she keeps quiet and living

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<sup>518</sup> She had had her fallopian tubes tied for Schuon who never wanted kids. She gave up her female prerogative for him, and never told him what she did, She did this because, she told me, he could not be bothered with such mundane matters as contraception. This again indicates a huge egotism and a selfish view of the world and nature. Male centered metaphysics matters, women and their bodies and children do not.

in Plainfeild, Indiana, near the ISNR mosque there. She was free of Schuon at last, perhaps. The cult likes to create indebtedness and to control followers by that means. It would not surprise me if this is what happened to her either. I do not know. She may no longer be alive. She certainly deserves a great deal of credit for bringing Schuon down and exposing traditionalism as a fraud, even if she did not mean to do it. I suppose this essay is partly a memorial to her, both the good part of her and the confused part of her.

When I moved to Bloomington I wanted to engage Schuon---to be part of his life, to embrace him as closely as possible and see what he was really made of, and what god was made of.. Huston Smith had told me no one is closer to god than Schuon. Huston Smith claimed to know. I believed this rubbish. But I saw what he was made of, things Huston Smith never knew about and did not want to know about. I was horrified and turned away from him in utter disgust.

Schuon wrote an essay in his book Logic and Transcendence called the “ The Problem of Qualifications”. There he discusses in pompous terms how people become qualified for spiritual organizations. The only qualifications necessary to get yourself into the Schuon cult is the ability serve and flatter the ego of the cult leader, Schuon. One must despise others, hate all those Schuon hates, which is just about everybody, praise his books, hate science and suck up or pander to authority—and the only authority is Schuon. This is what is really meant by being “qualified” . You can see all the gullible, unoriginal and archaic-minded but “qualified” cult followers, writing in various venues like Sophia Magazine, Sacred Web, Studies in Comparative Religion or Connaissance de les Religions. There is not an original idea among them. They all serve the egos of charlatans and pontificate fictions. They are a throwback to the dry arrogance and intellectual vacuum of the Scholastics. Comparative Religion went bankrupt in esoterism, just as comparative

philosophy ends us in a vague create your own world view, all points of view are equally valid and so none are really valid. Reality becomes a construction, not a fact of existence. Science escapes all this and is based on evidence. World views are best assessed as part of myth and fiction, ideology and social structures.

So here I have explored the deforming effect of religion on women and personal relationships. I show how a woman lost her mind to a cult leader, and how he damaged her. Schuon was a typical cult leader of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. My psychology, whatever it may have been, was irrelevant to this whole story. I did not make anything up, was never jealous and in fact left the cult on my own, having seen how corrupt it was. It was a good stepping stone to consider all forms of ideological control and that is what these books are about. I am not writing secret texts trying to praise religion in reverse, on the contrary. My concern is to critique many forms of power and ideology and if this is not obvious, the reader is misunderstanding what I am doing here and should stop reading what I write, because they have missed the point. I now turn to consider some aspects of the role of woman and nature in religious myth and ideology and then, various academic writers who promote religion. So I will be questioning the role of religion in our universities too.

**Metaphysical Misogyny and Nature Hatred in Tantra, Buddhism, Christianity, etc..**

Why are so many religious traditions misogynistic and express hatred of nature and animals? Metaphysics is a mostly male affair and tends to denigrate all things female, animal and natural as inferior or weak. “Humans”, defined as men, are supposed to be superior and have the right to abuse and dominate other species. The mistaken assumption that women are irrational and men are rational is sexist and false. Nature is not about one sex or another. Animals are not less than humans in the Darwinian understanding of how living things evolved. In Hinduism women are seen as a “fettering” element<sup>519</sup> and men are lesser beings if they fall for women and become “householders”<sup>520</sup>. This terminology is prevalent in Hindu texts. In Christianity it is the same. Nature and women are seen as the source of “sin” from which we must be saved by the myth of God or Jesus. There is an assumption in religions that the “contemplative” is superior because he has escaped the “round of existence”, which is nature. Metaphysics is the codification of subjective states into dogma and doctrine. It is myth made into a social and intellectual system. Women are the center of the ‘round of existence’ and men ( or women) are presumed superior if they contemplate fictional gods rather than have a family. Women are said to be only able to escape the round of existence if they become like men. This has ruined countless lives of nuns and monks who have believed this nonsense. Living a life bubbled into these fictions is, in ways, a waste of life, however persistent the illusions are maintained in the brains and

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<sup>519</sup> Prabupada, founder of the Hari Krishna movement was a traditional misogynist and thought women have small brains. He likes the Hindu quote that “The woman is beautiful when she remains as a slave to the husband.” “And it is recommended they should be married at very early age, then the wife will remain always chaste and devoted to her husband. At such young age, from the first night onwards, she can never for a moment forget him, being still a child and unspoiled, therefore she becomes the perfect chaste wife, and in those times the wife was so much devoted to her husband that she would voluntarily die in the fire of his cremation, unable to live without him. Myself, I was very young when I got married, and my wife was 11 years only.” (Correspondence, 1972)

<sup>520</sup> The Gospel of Ramakrishna is full of this prejudice, as he looks down on householders almost as an inferior caste.

feelings of the postulant. A good deal of the world's philosophy and literature is just this: intellectualized mythic magnifications

The persistent illusions (see third book in this series) of religion and politics is built into the structure of most metaphysical religious systems. Herodotus's Histories is a very good source book for delusions about animals in early religions in Egypt, Greece and the Middles East, for instance. He discusses animal sacrifice at great length, and how some animals were protected by religious ideologies, such as Egyptian cows. But reading Herodotus' rather foolish assessments of these rights is itself an opening into the history of speciesism and how it developed alongside of and perhaps partly because of religion and agriculture. I include Marxism in this assessment as it is a religion as much as Free Market ideology is. Marx said

- "The realm of freedom...can only consist in socialized man, the associated producers rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind force of Nature, and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favorable to, and worthy of, their human nature..."<sup>521</sup>

• This is the Christian hatred of nature put in the blandest bureaucratic terms, anticipating of State controlled Stalinism and Soviet and Chinese communist hatred of the natural world. This is capitalism too.. Nature, again wrongly seen as female must be "brought under control". All people including women must work for Big Brother or the corporate state.. In Tantra, sexual relations are also defined in misogynistic ways, the woman seen as merely a vessel for the completion of male spiritual exercises for purpose of withholding and building energy. The

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<sup>521</sup> Karl Marx, Capital, Volume III, p. 820.



Upanishads suggest that the desire to have children and women is evil, men are not held responsible at all and evil is projected onto women. This is common in Christianity too, where women are held to be the source of evil(original sin), while men do as they please. This is obvious in the Adam and Eve myth. Or Paul's justification for patriarchy: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church." <sup>522</sup>Understanding the sexist tendency in most metaphysic/political systems helps to clarify how religion is anti-natural. It helps to see how metaphysics turns reality upside down, based on fictional projections and misreading of natural facts. Religion has lied about nature and life on earth for many millennia.

The metaphysic/political system of Rene Guenon, who affects to express all the religions, is backwards and upside down and he is indeed, typical of many religions. To Guenon, all the archaic major religions are "real" whereas the 'actual world" or nature, is an illusion, Maya or Samsara. This equation of existence with illusion is radically false, but ubiquitous in the major religions. This is what makes Guenon so insane and leads him to be destructive of our actual world. Guenon takes seriously many of the basic inversions common in the religions of old. The toxic doctrine of Buddhism, for instance is well exemplified in the work of the supposedly great Padmasambhava, <sup>523</sup> who states that the way to freedom and the Dharma is to expel "the evil spirit of fixation on concrete reality." A sentence like this pretty much discredits the credibility of Padmasambhava. Why should one expel the understanding of Whales, botanical facts, Shorebirds, photosynthesis or be made to feel guilty for admiring the physics of simple machines? Hating nature and ordinary

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<sup>522</sup> A sample of other misogynist statements in the bible: (Ephesians 5:22–23) and "These [redeemed] are they which were not defiled with women; . . ." (Revelation 14:4); and from the Jewish Torah or Old Testament we find "How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" (Job 25:4)

<sup>523</sup> Dakini Teachings, Boston Shambhala, 1990 pg 66

reality is only possible to one who wishes to escape into delusions. Those who are devoted to delusions do not want anyone to fixate too much on the real and the actual. The hatred of reality is common among those who profit by selling the unreal. Christ is made to say that one should "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (1 John 2:15) Hating the world in this way helps make the world a worse place than it is already. The myth of Christ ruined the world for millions during the Dark Ages. Christ and Padmasambhava are selling a misogynistic metaphysic and a hatred of ordinary life. It is our lives they hate, the lives of those who are actual and hungry, living and struggling. Why despise us so much and who made them so much better than us? They were not better, is the answer, not by a long shot.

In Guenon's ideology he expresses hate for what he calls "ordinary reality". He wants to teach people how to hate reality and love fictions. Abstract impersonal systems are made mostly for men by men to justify class difference and ideological conformity. A child with a toy matters far more than Wall Street or the Catholic Church. This disparagement of the ordinary is what all the major religions do. Pascal Boyer does not talk at all about the effects of this hatred. But Patriarchal metaphysical systems create a reality that acts to keep men in positions of power and put women and nature down. One must first get people to accept make believe and then get them to accept that all that does really matter in fact, does not matter at all. This is how religions are systems of mind control.

David Hall notes that for Muslims, "believing a fantasy is better than knowing the truth or admitting ignorance."<sup>524</sup> Hall notes that William Chittick and Hossein Nasr think that historical scholarship, which relies on evidence, means nothing. All that matters for William Chittick is "Muslim's perceptions of the Koran's significance". For

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<sup>524</sup> Hall, David. Islamic Mysticism, A Secular Perspective. Prometheus Books. Amherst New York. 2000 pg. 92

Chittick if 1.62 billion adherents think that red is green and  $2 + 2$  is 7, than it is so. The deluded followers alone know what is the case. This is William James' subjectivism all over again. This denial of reality in favor of fictions is characteristic of the religion as a whole. Chittick and Hossein Nasr both deny that modern historians have anything valuable to say about the Koran. Actually modern historians have shown that the belief in the divine origin of the Koran has no basis in fact and Chittick and Nasr, stuck in fundamentalism, deny the obvious. I will show that a similar analysis of Christian origins yields a similar result and it is very likely that Christ never existed. Creating fictions which serve as truths and which favor a given class of people is what religions and ideological system do best, even though reality is structure quite differently.

The concrete reality of our world is all that matters. It is useless to think of high metaphysical principles to save a sick baby, but medicine might help. It is only by addressing the concrete realities of the earth that we can heal the earth of all that ails it. But this cannot happen with the Guenonians,--- since they deny reality to concrete reality--- so they end up supporting what is delusional and reactionary in our world and look forward to world destruction.

This schizophrenic view of the world is the basis of the traditional hatred of everything having to do with reality. The hatred of the actual the "world of the senses" ---"concrete reality" in short, extends to hatred of all things "material" natural and scientific. This is ubiquitous in religion. This results in a bizarre love of abstract ideas and ideologies which are imaginary and unreal. The "Science of the Real" as practiced by Schuon and Guenon is actually the science of delusions—or what they call "metaphysics". So the hatred of the physical become hatred of the body, unless the body is somehow made over as a dream object—reconstituted as a spiritual virtuality. So, in Schuon's obscenely silly

portraits of himself<sup>525</sup> in sexual contact with the Virgin Mary or in Icons of himself as exemplar of the total truth of all the religions, what one sees is a body transformed into a “theomorphic” body, to use Schuon’s meaningless and undefined term. These badly drawn bodies in these paintings are not a body in the ordinary sense, but the body of a great avatara or prophet. It is this ‘theomorphic body’ that was supposed to “heal the wombs” of the nude women and young girls who press their “yoni” against his “lingam” in primordial gatherings-----to use the preferred Hindu terms used by the inner circle of the cult. In this inverted dream world of the traditionalists, what is real is unreal and what is unreal is real. How this mysterious healing was supposed to occur was never spelled out. Indeed, Schuon’s explanations of the Primordial Gatherings were ad hoc, arbitrary and inflated, evidently invented to appear plausible. No one was ever healed of anything, it was not about that, such language was merely part of the con game, the window dressing, the lure to get people in .

Schuon said that if one wants to know if he is guilty or not guilty of the crimes for which he is accused, one should read his books. In 1991, at the time that Stephen Lambert and I witnessed the events described, Schuon wrote articles which describe his view of Primordial Gatherings. In the writings from 1990-91 Schuon describes himself and his role in the Primordial Gatherings, in slightly veiled prose, as the “deified man, who thus is central.....with regard to the multitude of ordinary men. The

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<sup>525</sup> Schuon pictured himself as the little Christ child in these paintings and I saw at least a hundred of these works. ( one of my jobs in the cult was to copy and frame them in addition to my studying painting with Schuon) It took some time to understand this bizarre image. Why picture himself as the Christ child when the images are so sexual? He disliked the image of the Virgin Mary as “Mother”, yet he captures himself as her consort as child. That is very bizarre and psychological. It indicates an illness that is partly a sort of infantile sexuality, with a hint of incest and a pathological need to be the ‘baby prophet’ having sexual contact with the Virgin Mary, thus indicating a very sick delusion of grandeur. Schuon’s wives were encouraged to see him as a boy or young boy and one of them, Maude, had a little shrine to Schuon as a boy in her bedroom. There were little pictures of him as a boy and candles and the nude virgin all mixed together.

'believers' are like the Gopis dancing around Krishna and uniting themselves to him; whereas he—the 'motionless mover'—plays his saving flute". The sexual symbolism of the 'saving flute' isn't too hard to figure out, nor is the reference to Aristotle definition of god as the "motionless mover". The Gopis are described as "uniting' with Krishna", and this is a reference to what Schuon does with the women at Primordial Gatherings. I was aware on a regular basis of Schuon's conversations in 1991 and he worked out these analogies to Primordial Gatherings with his wives, especially Murray and Romaine. In this same essay, in a footnote, Schuon compares the Primordial Gatherings, implicitly, with the circumambulations of the pilgrims around the Kaaba in Mecca, which, he claims, was originally done nude. He goes on to multiply the analogies, as if to exhaust all the possibilities that might exalt himself and his Primordial ritual even further.

"The movement is circular like the revolution of the planets: another example is the Sun Dance around a tree representing the axis 'heaven-earth'; the movement is alternatively centripetal and centrifugal like the phases of respiration, which takes us back to the dance of the Gopis with its two modes of circumambulation and union, precisely. (The Play of Masks pg. 42)"

As will be noticed, Schuon is here describing in his usual abstract and coded language the circling of the women and his "union" with them in the Gatherings. The "union" Schuon describes here is described by Romaine as "more intimate than words". In the same book, Schuon observes that "sexuality is determined by the which constitutes man's prerogative as is attested by the theomorphic form of his body."(Ibid. pg. 49) He continues in the same passage that the "human body itself, not in some diminished form—is a symbol-sacrament because it is made in the image of God: that is why it is the object of love par excellence. The body invites to adoration by its very theomorphic form, and that is why it can be a vehicle of a celestial presence that in principle is salvific".(Ibid pg.

89) Schuon is here setting up a hierarchical notion of bodies, his body, of course, being a superior “vehicle of a celestial presence”, and not a body “in some diminished form”. In the Primordial Gatherings Schuon thinks he is providing salvation to the women by embracing them with his “theomorphic body”. All this seems quite logical to Schuon and the members of the cult, who somehow convince themselves that this old man really is the “Center as such”, like Krishna, the Kaaba, the sun in the middle of the solar system, the Sun dance Tree and other superlatives. Schuon’s style of writing hides his personal life behind loaded abstractions and sparkling generalities. I know that the above passages refer to specific developments in the history of Primordial Gatherings because I was on the scene, and discussed these matters with his wives. I was told Primordial Gatherings go back to the 1950’s in rudimentary form, but earlier references to Primordial Gatherings are obscure for lack of personal references. Earlier references to Primordial Gatherings are less grandiose though tending towards the delusional grandiosity of more recent years. One can recognize the familiar rationalizations for ‘primordial sexuality’ in the following quote, written in the 1970’s:

“Woman is unveiled — in certain rights or certain ritual dances — with the aim of operating a kind of magic by analogy, the unveiling of beauty with an erotic vibration evoking, in the manner of a catalyst, the revelation of the liberating and beatific essence.”

This is Schuon’s version of Tantra in a nutshell. In a footnote to this passage, Schuon speaks of the unveiling of the Queen of Sheba and of the Virgin Mary. The virgin’s veil “opens because of mercy”.(Esoterism as principle and Way, pg. 61-62) This is an obvious reference to Schuon’s vision of the virgin as well as his obsession with vaginal imagery. In another book Schuon points out the Arabic word for “mercy” has its root in the word ‘Rahim’ “which means womb, and this corroborates the

interpretation of Rahmah [mercy] as Divine Femininity.” This relates back again to Schuon’s vision of the Virgin mercifully comforting him with her sexual parts. It was well beyond Schuon to grasp the sexual organs as natural way to get pregnant and have children, a process he abhorred. Schuon saw the sexual process as one where he would be deified and women be his harem. The idea of the womb as Rahim also relates to the Primordial Gatherings. Schuon speaks elsewhere of “the Divine Beauty manifested in earthly beauties”. The essence of the ‘prophet’ has a feature, which , Schuon writes, “could be called ‘Solomonian’ or ‘Krishnaite’”. The Prophet, that is Schuon himself, has the ability to find

“concretely in woman all aspects of the Divine Femininity...The sensorial experience that produces in the ordinary man an inflation of the ego, actualizes in the ‘deified’ Man extinction in the Divine Self. (In the Face of the Absolute pg. 221)”

In other words, Women are not people but mere adornments for his ego. Women are merely symbols and sexual desire leads a man like Schuon to god- that is to a symbol. Schuon’s desire is not like other men’s desires since he is, “not a man like other men”, he claims (Memoirs). This is vainglorious doublespeak of a high order. When Schuon has sex it is god having sex with himself, therefore he is innocent of any desire. So too, when he desires a woman, it is not an ordinary act since he is not an ordinary man, but a “deified man”, hence having sex with a woman is to participate in divine unity, not to be lusty, even if he is lusty. This transcendental narcissism is absurd, obviously, but for Schuon it was deadly serious. His whole ego depended on this nonsense. Schuon’s sexuality proves to him his own transcendent importance. He is beyond all laws and the chosen vessel of god on earth. Therefore, Schuon can press his naked, or near naked body, against under-aged girls in the Primordial Gatherings because Schuon’s desire is god’s desire and he is Primordially innocent, even if he breaks the law. Schuon can do this, he

thinks, because the women are not women, but examples of Divine Femininity—mere symbols. Their individuality, and thus their human rights, are dissolved in abstraction or essentializations. They are reduced merely to archetypes or symbols. Schuon exploits real women by ignoring their reality and seeing them only as symbols. He was a romantic misogynist of the very kind one sees in the Symbolist Art movement, in Knopff, Klimt, Rossetti and many others. The purpose of the Primordial Gatherings is to join Schuon who is the Logos and the Holy Spirit to the 'Divine Feminine' or the ordinary women at the gathering. All of this is supposed to result in "healing" and "salvation". In the words of one of the cult's songs. Schuon is the "All — Holy" and the "All Holy is a healing for the wombs". In the words of the second wife, Barbara Perry this means that, "the radiation of the Avataric body (i.e. Schuon's body) heals the wombs", and she interprets the word "wombs" to mean "souls". If "souls" is meant why not sue the word souls, well, obviously it was not souls that Schuon really wanted to "heal" . It was not about healing at all but about using women as sexual adornments. This peculiar hierarchical and demeaning attitude towards women as being merely manifestations of "archetypes" and thus only secondarily individuals with rights explained by Schuon as follows:

"A distinction should be made between a polygamy in which several women keep their personality, and a princely 'pantogamy' on which a multitude of women represent femininity in a quasi-impersonal manner; the latter would be an affront to the dignity of human persons if it were not founded on the idea that a given bridegroom is situated at the summit of human kind. Pantogamy is possible because Krishna is Vishnu, because David and Solomon are prophets...It could also be said that innumerable and anonymous harem has a function analogous to that of an imperial throne adorned with precious stones; A function that is analogous, but not identical, for the throne made of human substance — the



harem, that is — indicates in an eminently more direct and concrete manner the real of borrowed divinity of the monarch.(Esoterism as Principle and Way. Pg. 133)”

In other words, in Schuon’s mind the Primordial Gatherings<sup>526</sup> in which he treats the women as a harem is “not an affront to the dignity of persons” because he is “situated at the summit of human kind”. This premise is absurd. Schuon was a short German guy who had delusions of grandeur. Moreover, the idea that women in the gatherings or in his harem—or any harem--- are like a “throne made of human substance”, an especially disgusting image, a true “affront to human dignity”--- recalling Nazi lampshades made of human skin. Schuon claim to be a “monarch” over a group of dehumanized women is supposed to prove his divinity. Actually it just proves his pathetic grandiosity and need of abusing persons to sustain it. He reduces women to the image of “a throne made of human substance” in order to exalt himself. He claims to

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<sup>526</sup> Sgt. Jim Richardson, who was the primary investigator of the Schuon cult said that: "A search warrant also turned up photographs of nude and semi-nude members of the group participating in ritual dances." These dances were extensively recorded or suggested in the hundreds and hundreds of photographs turned up, as well as an investigation of where these gatherings took place. The cult has been denying these gatherings for years, but Charles Upton is the first associate of the Schuon cult to admit the existence of primordial gatherings publicly: Here:

“**Schuon** was apparently able (though this remains open to question) to integrate both Native American spirituality and Hindu spiritual eroticism and sacred nudity into his own plenary esoterism, as expressed in the "primordial gatherings" he conducted, in no way establishes Shamanism as a normative aspect of esoterism in our age, nor sacred eroticism (to say the least!) as a normative aspect of Shamanism; what is possible to the great spiritual Master is often impossible to others, particularly after the Master in question has passed on. **Schuon** himself characterized his primordial gatherings as the expressions of a personal predilection, not an integral aspect of his spiritual method; and after his death Martin Lings offered the opinion that the time for this particular manifestation had passed with the passing of the Shaykh. To take the exception that proves the rule as a rule in itself has been the origin of all too many heterodox and anti-traditional movements over the centuries. “

<http://traditionalstudies.freeforums.org/critical-review-of-schuon-biography-by-upton-t20.html>

Actually, Primordial gatherings were presented as the sine quo non of Schuon’s life and method, Upton is mistaken. The effort to deny they exist and then, when that fails, to deny their importance is standard PR in the Schuon cult. They were the expression of “pure esoterism” and “the grace of the Virgin Mary”

be the “summit of the human species” and arrogate himself the rights of a tyrant who can turn people into objects to glorify himself. He proves himself nothing so much as an utterly repulsive psychopath gathering trophies for a grandiose ego let loose of its sanity.

Schuon continues the above passage by saying that his own preferences are not indicated by what he has written, but this is merely an evasion or the result of what he calls in his *Memoirs*, his “inevitable and habitual dissimulation” which he was forced to practice from an early age. (*Memoirs*, pg. 50) In other words, it is the world’s fault that Schuon perpetually lies, since he is the last great prophet. Being perfect, “in every respect”, any blame attached to him must belong to someone else.<sup>527</sup> “The Fuhrer is always right”, it was said of Hitler. Schuon claims to be infallible on almost everything too. Anyone who criticizes him is therefore and axiomatically guilty. He claimed to be infallible, therefore all his critics are evil. This is the logic of madness.

For Schuon, there are no real women, there are only symbols of women, and women in fact are embodiments of Schuon himself, in disguise. As he says, “the opposite sex is only a symbol, the true center is hidden in ourselves, in the heart intellect”.<sup>528</sup> This reduction of the opposite sex as people is utterly demeaning. He got this idea partly from the Symbolist movement, Gauguin, Hodler, Knopf and others, as he once told me himself. The symbolist movement was misogynistic too, and like Schuon saw woman as goddesses or whores.

The universal Narcissism that is implied by everything being a

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<sup>527</sup> I have only read excerpts of the biography of Schuon by Jean Baptiste Ayamard and it is bad ‘embedded’ journalism---exactly as one would expect from the Schuon cult. It is pure myth, mostly with little accuracy or actual history. There are slanders of those who question Schuon and excessive praise for this man who really was not at all impressive in person or in action. It is a good book to read to sense the cultish atmosphere of irrational slavish praise that surrounded Schuon. In person Schuon was actually rather a frightened, reclusive and grumpy old man with an anger problem and inability to smile, in addition to his poor treatment of women. I only mention a small amount of the evidence about primordial gatherings in this essay. There is much more.

<sup>528</sup> (*Essential Writings* pg.394)

symbol means that the whole universe is reduced to Frithjof Schuon. “Thou art that” is just speciesism run amok. This “non-dual” awareness is Schuon’s fundamental error. Schuon’s theory of sexuality is hierarchical. The deified man has sexual rights the “ordinary man” does not have. Schuon has four wives and a harem in Primordial Gatherings and he can do this because he is a monarch and an Avatara who only can see things and people as symbols. I am dwelling on this because to prove the legal case against Schuon, it must be proven that he pressed himself against young girls to satisfy his desires. To prove this, one must enter into the fantasy world where Schuon’s desires cannot be like other men’s because he is “not a man like other men”.

Schuon has publicly denied that he has had any desires. He said, in a public relations video, made by inner circle members, Michael Pollock and Michel Fitzgerald, that “it is psychologically impossible that a man like me could have a passionate pleasure”, and he says soon thereafter, “to ask if I am guilty or not is a waste of time... read my books, look at my books to see if I am guilty or not”. Yes. Read Schuon’s books carefully and you will see that this is a man with serious delusions of grandeur. Schuon’s sexuality was closely connected to his delusions of his own magnificence. Women and girls are only symbols so it does not matter if he does them harm all that matters is him, other people have no rights and really do not even exist. It is this that made him able to violate the human rights women and young girls and this that enabled him to counsel members of his cult to obstruct justice and lie to a Grand Jury. This is exactly the point: Schuon’s books indicate he is guilty.

I remember feeling ill and queasy when Maude Murray told me she thought all Schuon’s sperm she drank over 15 years of her affair with him should give her a special spiritual body that radiates blessings to others. She was sure his sperm was symbolic because he himself had said it was. She said she was giving me the gift of this spermy beatitude. I found the idea repulsive. Indeed, tantrism is repulsive in general as it

tries to turn sexuality into a spiritual exploit, however “disinterested” it pretends to be.<sup>529</sup> I have come to object to this entire way of thinking. Symbolist thought involves the effort to make something over in the image of what it is not. A nation is not a bird and the killing off of the bald eagle shows that. The bird is real, the Nation is a fiction. So likewise Kali is not India, and the divine did not inhere in the ‘buckets’ of Schuon’s sperm Maude said she drank. Abstractions kill people as Kali kills for India and for Brahma. The Hindu view of life that sees Maya as a wonder is a horrible view of life. Life is not Maya and Kali is an utter fiction.<sup>530</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> Maude taught me Schuon’s tantric “science” and method, which she learned from him better than anyone. It was symbolist nonsense and had no merit at all. It was merely voyeurism and intercourse as an adjunct to prayer. Further research showed me this is true of tantrism in general. Sexuality is exploited by an ideology and made to serve a template of artificial and invented meanings. Hugh Urban has written about tantra and the exploitation of the goddess Kali by Hindu nationalists, though his critical assessment of this movement is rather thin,. Examining Hinduism from a Foucault inspired point of view is interesting but very limited. Foucault had no real insight into religion as is shown by his obscene endorsement of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Yes, Kali is an image of political power, but to say this without much critical insight into Hinduism, caste, male dominated metaphysics and the fictional symbolism it created is not ultimately very interesting. Kali is also an image of Hindu misogyny as well as an image of the Hindu hatred of and demeaning of life. The Hindu doctrine of “Maya” the atrocious idea that life is an “illusion” is the basis of the Kali image: hence Kali’s eating of men and women. The implicit despising of life in this image is only possible in a society that sanctions social cruelty and stratifies hierarchy so such a horrendous degree as to create social injustice, including crimes against children and the poor

<sup>530</sup> I first saw Tibetan iconography in San Francisco in 1977 and was fascinated by it without knowing why. I took me 25 years to figure it out. I went to the Tibetan museum in the early 80’s and “practiced” their religion in ‘86-87. As I learned more about it I began to see that the violence against bodies implicit in this culture was due to a metaphysical hatred of reality, common to the major religions and expressed in Christianity in the crucifixion.. I used such imagery in drawings from that period, but stopped doing that once I understood what it was.



Kali

Once I saw through all this imagery as the exploit of priests trying to capture minds in nets of manipulated symbols. I was free of Schuon and Kali, the Eucharist and Tao. Really, there was nothing special in Schuon's body or his sperm. Indeed, his lack of children after having four "wives" is a notable act of extreme narcissism, and indicates his dislike of children.<sup>531</sup> I spent time in Schuon's private rooms with Maude. They

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<sup>531</sup> Catherine Schuon put out a book for children of her paintings in her old age, perhaps indicating some regret the years of childlessness as Schuon's wife, as well as a token of regret for

were small rooms and he had a rather ugly, lime green bathroom, with his primordial negligee hanging on a hook in the same bathroom. His primordial negligee was a see-through costume he wore at primordial gatherings the purpose of which was to reveal and not hide his penis. He designed it himself. It was utterly ridiculous. Schuon was a troublesome and difficult little man who went to the bathroom, like everyone else, was prone to tantrums and paranoid fits, disliked children, was superstitious and hated science. He was prone to delusional states and fictions. The notion that he was in any way the “summit of the human species” is a good joke. Schuon denied to Maude that his sperm gave her any special election, thus denying he had any special prophet’s body that oozed “spiritual fluids”,.... Schuon had made up the term to get women to embrace him at primordial gatherings. His nude body was supposed to emanate to them. It did nothing of the sort. In any case, the whole deception of the primordial gatherings rested on the pretense of Schuon’s sacred body oozing these fictional tantric “spiritual fluids”.

I saw through the fiction of Tantra, indeed, I saw its perfidious need to deform reality in the interest of abstract symbols. Spiritual ideas are deadly when there are efforts to pretend that they are real. The effort to make fiction reality always requires violence and that is what one sees in Tantra or in Kali cults as well as in the Crucifixion. The Crucifixion in fact probably never happened because Christ did not exist, but the fiction is potent and implies violent destruction of the body and cannibal rituals, drinking the gods blood and eating his body. Dismembering reality and trying to destroy the world is what religions do best. There was nothing to Primordial Gatherings except empty rituals that were about sexuality and abuse of power, involving both women and underage girls and boys in the cult. Symbols justified the exploit. This is no different than Hindu or Tibetan Tantra which is also an exploit. The

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the abuse of children which occurred in the Schuon cult. Religious books for children are always about proselytizing too, trying to rope them into the delusions early.



abuse of power grew from Schuon's sexual fascinations and his effort to impose his fictional ideas and delusions of grandeur on actual women. That is all it was about in the end, a dirty old man and his gullible cult followers. You have the same thing in Aleister Crowley<sup>532</sup>, Kalu Rinpoche, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche,<sup>533</sup> all of whom abused their followers. You see it in

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<sup>532</sup> For a rather typical example of sensationalist writing which panders to the "esoteric" and gnostic elitism of religious studies scholars, see Hugh Urban's rather silly effort to extoll the virtues and vices of Gnosticism's ridiculous bad boy, Aleister Crowley. It is pretty clear that Urban identifies himself with this character to some degree as he does with the Michel Foucault too, who was also prone to love of power and narcissistic transgression. This essay shows once against the irrationalism, cult apologetics and promotional tactics of esoteric studies.

[http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeV/Unleashing\\_the\\_Beast.htm](http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeV/Unleashing_the_Beast.htm)

<sup>533</sup> Trungpa, head of Naropa Institute in Colorado, which was a mecca for many poets and writers, as well as seekers, was involved in various crimes, pedophilia, drunken orgies, and all around bad behavior. All justified by "Tantra" and "crazy wisdom". Indeed, finding about the decadence of Tantra and Trungpa and other gurus led to my growing skepticism about Ginsberg as well as Hinduism and Buddhism. I saw some of the harm Trungpa and Ginsberg and his circle did to very young men when I lived in San Francisco in 1979. Similar harm is done to women and girls in Indian Temples and elsewhere under the guise of Tantra. Geoffery Falk discusses the idea of "Crazy Wisdom". He writes

"In general, I think that nearly all of what passes for "crazy wisdom" and is justified as "crazy wisdom" by both master and enraptured disciple is really cruelty and exploitation, not enlightened wisdom at all. In the name of "crazy wisdom" appalling crimes have been rationalized by master and disciple alike, and many lives have been partly or completely devastated."

This is true in the Schuon cult as in many other cults and religions. The catholic exploitation of boys is the same thing as Allen Ginsberg's exploitation of them in the name of Buddhist or Hindu Tantra. Trungpa and his student Thomas Rich, allegedly infected some of their students with AIDS. Trungpa died of this disease in 1990.

Quoted in <http://www.strippingthegurus.com/stgsamplechapters/trungpa.asp>



Ginsberg and Trungpa

Ramakrishna, who also exploited some of his followers. Ramakrishna's exploitation of the young was not unique to him. In India, sexual exploitation of boys and girls at Temples and major pilgrimage centers is pervasive. Children have been exploited by Hindu priests and rich supporters of temples for centuries as servants, prostitutes, and workers of menial jobs. The devadassi are called 'deuki' in Nepal and though there have been efforts to outlaw this horrendous practice it is so much part of the religions of Buddhism and Hinduism that it is hard to get rid of. To this day this awful goddess is the object of deaths of uncastrated male animals like buffaloes, goats, sheep, pigs, and chickens, and even human children, are sacrificed to her fiction. The word 'thug' is often used to describe a violent criminal, without any remembrance of its origin. One source I read claims the word "Thug" comes from the 'thuggee', "a widespread sect of Kali worshippers who, in her honor, strangled travelers on the roads of India". In the nineteenth century, a child abuse for Kali occurred every day. For Kali and child was killed every day at the Kali temple in Calcutta. In 2002 a three-year-old and 15-year-old boy were hacked to death illegally by their parents in a secret ceremony for Kali. The reason for these hideous crimes against children was to appease the transcendent Goddess so that they parents might



have an easier time with their remaining children. In any case, the Hindu tradition is sometimes erroneously said to be kind to animals. While this might be true for some sects of individuals, it is not at all true of Hinduism as a whole. The notion of Karma partly about denigrating animals since if you misbehave you might reincarnate as a lower animal.

Similar to the practice of animal sacrifice for Kali is the rituals of Sati, or burning a widow in the cremation fires of her dead husband. Animals and women are often conflated and disparaged in ancient Hindu texts which are male centered. Sati, along with the Kali cruelties, are both examples of Hindu religious cruelty that grow from the misogynistic doctrines of Shankara, the Bhagavad-Gita, Vedanta and so on . These practices were put to an end by the British governors while India was under British rule, but continue informally.<sup>534</sup> So British rule in India was not all bad.

Coomaraswamy liked the misogynistic ritual of Sati. In the Schuon cult there was a lot of talk about “Sacred Nature” but none of them knew much about actual nature, birds, trees, evolution or biology. They only liked backdrops for their ritual deification of the cult leader. In the Schuon cult women and girls were used for Schuon’s power needs and entertainment. The cult claimed a Tantric Primordialism that “to the pure all things are pure” but I can assure you none of them were pure---least of all Schuon himself. Indeed, the only one that saw what was going on at these gatherings appears to have been me and few others that is why I went to the police about them. I am not generally crazy about involving police in matters, but when children are being abused, it is the right thing to do. I have never claimed to be “pure”. But I do my best to try to tell the truth. The rest of those who were there spent the next twenty years lying about what they saw and they still are. I sometimes

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<sup>534</sup> <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,322673,00.html>

wonder if they will tell the truth before they die.

Once one understands the excessive and delusional nature of Guenon's and Schuon fantasy of self, it becomes clear why they despised nearly everyone and hated nature, women and the world. The traditionalists, reviving medieval forms of inquisitorial blacklisting, tend to accuse all those who question Traditionalism as "profane", "diabolic", "satanic", or as originating from the subversive "counter initiation". This way of speaking of others as subhuman or evil 'others' is a kind of hate speech, akin to racism. All cults and religions do this. Rene Guenon's world is a world of 'Them Versus Us' where hate and caste dominates, though this hate is not necessarily obvious on the surface. It is sublimated through cold, intellectual rationalization but these rationalizations are all based on fictions, superstitions and false suppositions based yet again on phony initiations and imagined results of passed down rituals. <sup>535</sup>

I wrote in 1991

"The women circle around him clockwise, shoulder to shoulder. From the center towards the periphery, Schuon goes up to each woman in turn and gives them a kind of embrace, pressing his chest and stomach against the breasts and abdomen of the women. In another dance he puts his hands around their hips and backsides. In yet another dance, he sits on his bench to the side of a lodge and as the women circle the lodge, each woman as she approaches a few feet from Schuon, directly in

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<sup>535</sup> Silsila is the word in Sufism for the chain of transmission from master to disciple. These chains guarantee nothing so much as a similar mind set. When one looks back at the transmission of a book like the Koran, which has many variant versions, mistranslated Arabic words, verses missing or added in later years, or that even more questionable hadith—sayings of the Prophet---which were very likely just pure invention of later authors—one realizes that religions and constructions of many people, not truth handed down, but merely a code handed down about how to run a given cult or pretend to a holiness that is purely imaginary.

front of him, stops and does a 360 degree turn, giving him an opportunity to look each woman up and down back and front. The women are holding hands with one another as Schuon reaches around and grabs one of the women's buttocks to pull them to him and press his penis against their private parts, their "yoni" as Schuon called it. "

The women continue to circle around him until the next woman reaches him and he does the same thing to her. Meanwhile another 20 or 30 men dance in the opposite direction outside the circle of women, watching the man who thinks he is "divine" embrace their wives and daughters. While the whole thing had an erotic flavor to it--- how could it not?---it clearly demonstrates that Schuon had huge delusions of grandeur, as he compares these dances to the circulation of the planets or the Sundance or the Gopis ( Hindu dancing shepardesses) dancing around Krishna with himself in the role of sun, Sundance tree or god. It was the high point of Schuon's life and thought. He created the "transcendental unity of religion" first and later in life he created the transcendental nudity of delusion.

There are three or four independent and detailed descriptions of these gatherings, as well as numerous corroborating details and facts--- many of them from Schuon's own books--- all of which cross check and agree and prove beyond a reasonable doubt both that these events took place and that young girls and boys were involved in them illegally.<sup>536</sup>

Schuon's rituals have been accused by Native people of being an

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<sup>536</sup> To see some of the short version of proof regarding Schuon's Primordial Gatherings and the involvement of children in them, see [http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/frithjof\\_Schuon.asp](http://www.naturesrights.com/knowledge%20power%20book/frithjof_Schuon.asp)

abuse of their culture.<sup>537</sup> Schuon's sociopathic and paranoid mentality made him see himself as a victim, when in fact he was the victimizer. He and his followers have whined for years in Latin that "Audiatur altera pars", which means 'you must listen to the other side', while they try to silence, intimidate or eliminate the other side from speaking. What autocratic leaders wish to do is silence critics, not listen to them. They have never listened to any other side on anything. Schuon never listened to anyone, and I watched him closely for some years. He was a narcissistic autocrat, who lived with delusions of a subjective nature and barely ventured outside this solipsistic cage. He spent a lot of his time in private slandering and mocking of everyone in his cultish entourage. He mocked those beyond the cult as well. He had no real respect for anyone except himself and even then he required constant adulation because his self-esteem was always dipping below zero. This is the real "message" of his hopelessly convoluted work.

Indeed, the Schuon cult has continued lying and never answered any of their critic's actual evidence. Glasse put together a 500-page book about the cult and they never answered his charges they only called him "satanic" and slandered and attacked him personally in a systematic ad hominem way. They did this to Maude Murray, Aldo Vidali, and many others too. They attack people personally rather than admit the overwhelming evidence against them. The critics of Schuon have told the truth as best they could and have no reason to lie. The cult is

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<sup>537</sup> This occurred both in Avis Little Eagles marvelous expose of Schuon's abuse of the Lakota culture in The Lakota Times, 1991 and in the pan-tribal condemnation of phony Sundances which stated:

**"WHEREAS** sacrilegious "sundances" for non-Indians are being conducted by charlatans and cult leaders who promote abominable and obscene imitations of our sacred Lakota sundance rites; and...---

---We hereby and henceforth declare war against all persons who persist in exploiting, abusing and misrepresenting the sacred traditions and spiritual practices of our Lakota, Dakota and Nakota people." This refers to Schuon and many others who use native culture for ulterior motives

<http://www.aics.org/war.html>

hypocritical and accuses people who tell the truth about them of slander and libel when really it is they themselves who slander everyone who refuses to adulate Schuon. This hypocrisy is quite notable and characterizes the whole group.

They tried to stop Mark Sedgwick from publishing a book about them; they muzzled Maude Murray and d and many others. They have lied to newspapers and in court and sued people who criticized them, as well as stopped publication of photos and writings about them. Schuon could never brook the slightest criticism and required constant and perpetual adulation, and even the excessive adulation he got was never sufficient. He was utterly opposed to free speech, except for himself of course, and he pontificated endlessly. Schuon claims he is a victim of slander, when in fact, the charges against him are true, and so there is no slander or libel. Slander depends upon untruth. However, this is how it is in a cult. Cults do not like to admit wrongdoing or answer the evidence against them and will do anything they can to do damage control and stop those who speak against them. They never address facts or evidence and when pushed against the wall they lie and cheat. I have a great deal of personal and intimate knowledge of how this cult does that.

Schuon thought he was the “last manifestation of the Logos at the end of time” – a prophet in other words--- the last one before Christ’s supposed return--- so his followers believed this nonsense and worshiped him. This image of him semi- nude with a transparent cloth over his penis embracing his many groupies is one I have trouble getting out of my head, since I was unfortunate enough to witness it. I wish I had not. But I got to know how mentally ill this little old man Schuon really was. He really believed that by pressing his penis against lots of women’s private parts, he, the great prophet—would “heal the wombs”. .... Who said they

needed healing?<sup>538</sup> Nobody did. And why did he not just touch them on the earlobe with his pinky finger, since after all, the Virgin Mary was supposedly impregnated through the ear in the Immaculate Conception. However, Schuon did not like prim motherly virgins.<sup>539</sup> I was told this repeatedly by Schuon's "wives". They said he did not like the Virgin as mother but only as lover. He wanted his Virgin Mary to be a temple prostitute, a devadassi,<sup>540</sup> as he liked to call some of his wives and nude Icons of his "Virgin", as well as women in the cult who he found attractive in a certain way. He tried to assimilate this "vision of the Virgin" to the mythos of the Virgin herself, about whom nothing at all is known historically, so everything written about her is fiction, including the gospels and the Immaculate Conception myth. Schuon's "Virgin" is

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<sup>538</sup> Schuon claims in some text that the womb and the breast of the Virgin are about enclosing the 'contemplative' in mercy—which is imaginative. But if he was so profoundly moved by the Virgin enclosing him in her womb, why replicate this need to obtain a really rather selfish "mercy" with so many women's wombs, as Schuon did at Primordial Gatherings?. Hmmm? Why paint the same womb and breasts over and over and have your fourth wife paint more wombs and breasts too? She painted these as Schuon reclines on the floor contemplating Sharlyn's "Yoni" or womb as she paints. There is something more going on here than mere self-comfort or a narcissistic need of mercy. Schuon's mental illness had a strong aspect of obsessive compulsive disorder. He tries to justify his sexual fascinations with elaborate symbolisms. Schuon is a sort of dictionary on why symbolist readings of the world are untenable and lead to the absurd.

<sup>539</sup> Renaud Fabbri, a cult follower of Schuon's, wrote an essay called the "Milk of the Virgin". It is one of many essays written by cult members that are notable only for their lack of originality and slavish suppression of any intelligence. So in this essay not otherwise of note, or worth reading other than the title, I draw attention to the title and note a mistake. Schuon disliked the whole notion of motherhood and milky breasts as well as the stress of Catholic Church on Mother. He paints the Virgin Mary as a sort of divine hetaera who gives herself to Schuon like a Fin de Siecle Salome, cruel as the Magnificent, sexual and his personal goddess to do his bidding. . He never had children and did not like children. He stressed this to me personally several times, as he did not want me to paint icons of mothers. He objected when I did so. He had no knowledge of babies or of the marvel of breast feeding and such things when they were considered at all were considered merely as symbols. So the premise of Fabbri's essay is already a misnomer, and shows a lamentable misunderstanding of who Schuon actually was. Schuon and some of his wives used to advise women in the cult to have their tubes tied. One of Schuon's wives, Maude Murray, did have her tubes tied. What Fabbri should have called this essay was the "Milking Schuon's Delusions for what they are worth"

actually a combination of the Koranic Virgin, the Symbolist Hetaera or courtesan, the Christian Virgin and Luke's, which in some ways is a mythic hymn to power or "justice", in Roman terms. It is thus a literary projection of Schuon's own psychology and not a real entity.

Various versions of Schuon's Tantric images have been made by an anonymous Frenchman. These are watercolors done as very loose versions of the Schuon original paintings, not at all a direct « copy »<sup>541</sup>. They are evidently still available to be seen under certain conditions.

The concept of the "devadassi" was applied to two of Schuon's wives in particular, the third and fourth: Maude and Sharlyn. The misogyny of this concept has a long history. In Indian history the Devadasi were actually a troubled and abused group of girls and women who priests used for sexual purposes and when they were worn out often were more or less cast away.<sup>542</sup> Devadasi were supposed to attend the gods, fan icons, honored it with lights, and sing and dance for the god's amusement— but in practice Schuon liked these ideas of women existing to flatter a man's ego== he wanted temple prostitutes to perform for him as in the Sanskrit poem Gitagovinda where its hero, the god Krishna, is circled around by women who want to have sex with him. This was the model for Schuon's primordial gatherings and Schuon

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<sup>541</sup> These could be seen at this address: <http://cret.blogspot.com/album/schuonneries/page1/>. They were put up by Dominique Devie, but then taken down or hidden behind the need to sign up to his site. The picture at the bottom of the page and the 5<sup>th</sup> up from the bottom show Schuon's vision of the Virgin in art works similar to what the original look like, while being somewhat different. The third one down from the top shows Schuon's nude self-portraits, done by Romaine and Schuon.

<sup>542</sup> Maude Murray used to laugh uncomfortably when she mentioned her playing of this role for Schuon, and indeed, like the women in India, Schuon eventually threw her out of the cult and divorced her for doing exactly as he had done, ---she took a lover and believed the love she had was 'blessed by god'. Schuon was a sexist hypocrite who did not believe in equal rights for women.

identified himself Krishna. He used the female members of his cult as Hindu upper caste men used devadasis. Tantric abuse of children was very common and there are references to children being preferable as sex consorts for priests in various tantric texts. This was ritual child abuse or priests abusing children. Children do not argue back and priests could abuse them with little complaint, as Catholic Priests have tended to abuse younger boys, for similar reasons.

According to Human Rights Watch:

“Once dedicated [ to a temple], the girl is unable to marry, forced to become a prostitute for upper-caste community members, and eventually auctioned into an urban brothel. The age-old practice continues to legitimize the sexual violence and discrimination that have come to characterize the intersection between caste and gender. The patrons of the devadasis are generally from the higher castes because those from the devadasis own castes are too poor to afford to [pay] for the rituals\_ In many cases a patron kept many girls and the number of girls used to be a yard stick of the status of that man. ....Thousands of untouchable female children (between 6 and 8 years) are forced to become maidens of God (Devadasis, Jogins<sup>543</sup>, a Hindu religious practice in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka State, Maharashtra, Orissa State, to mention only a few). They are taken from their families, never to see them again. They are later raped by the temple priests and finally auctioned secretly into prostitution and ultimately die from AIDS. It is estimated by NGOs that 5,000 to 15,000 girls are auctioned

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<sup>543</sup> This word refers to another name for temple prostitutes. India is full of this pernicious practice of women s exploitation in Temples. See Women, Religion and Tradition the Cult of Jogins, Matangis and Basvis by Lalitha, Vakulabharanam



secretly every year”.<sup>544</sup>

The context of the abuse of young people in India is the awful conditions on the street and slums there. Vijay Prashad write of Mumbai for instance that

“As you go through the congested lanes, threatened at all times by the sewage brimming in open drains, you will pass onto an open field – a park that anchors the slums and has not been encroached upon as a result of the vigilance of the residents themselves. It is where the boys and girls play, where there is a small temple dating from the 1930s, and where the elders absorb the sunlight and the fresh air. It is where there is some respite from the struggles of everyday life, and so this is where I often like to go”<sup>545</sup>

The context of the abuse of children in India includes these slums and temples. Religion can supply an escape and fresh air from the very things that religion helps cause, the caste system and the terrible poverty. Religion almost sounds like a good thing, at least until you realize that it is a major part of the problem too.

There is a similar abuse of women and girls in Buddhism. June Campbell expounds on the sexual abuse male Tibetan Buddhists dealt out to their female “disciples”. She describes in her writings the corrupt Tibetan priest Kalu Rinpoche<sup>546</sup>. I did not know he was corrupt but he was surrounded by large numbers of women --- and it now turns out he was found of abusing them. What Schuon did to his female disciples is not dissimilar. Campbell writes that misogyny is fundamental to Tibetan Buddhism. She says that “ In the very popular text of Milarepa’s life

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<sup>544</sup> See [http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/india/India994-09.htm#P1695\\_354939](http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/india/India994-09.htm#P1695_354939)

<sup>545</sup> <http://www.zcommunications.org/india-slums-students-and-resistance-by-vijay-prashad.html>

<sup>546</sup> I entered Buddhism through Kalu Rinpoche in 1987. I had no idea he was so corrupt, just as I had no idea Schuon as so corrupt, Kalu surrounded himself with lots of women too.

story-which all lay people and monastics read—there are many expressions of ambivalence about women: how women are polluting, how they are an obstacle to practice, that “at best women can serve others and at worst they are a nuisance”.<sup>547</sup> Abuse of boy and girl children by monks in temples in Tibetan culture goes back for centuries,

Schuon’s abusive attitudes toward women have their source in the ubiquitous misogyny of all the major religions. This misogyny is common in Tibetan, Islamic, Hindu and Christian cultures. It is also present in various cults from Mormon cults to Bagwan Rashneesh, Da Free John<sup>548</sup>, Prabupada’s Hari Krishna cults<sup>549</sup>, L. Ron Hubbard’s<sup>550</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> June Campbell makes her case against Kalu Rinpoche in "In Search of Female Identity in Tibetan Buddhism" and in Traveller in Space see <http://www.trimondi.de/EN/deba02.html>

She was forced into an abusive relation with him and then told she would very likely die if she told about it. “Just the way child abusers deal with their victims: "If you tell, something bad will happen to you." This was done to me too in the Schuon cult, where I was made by Schuon and Maude to swear on the Koran to never speak of the sexual permission he had given me to be with his “wife”. I was kept in silence and encouraged to lie about the truth. Schuon’s insistence that I lie for him and cover up the truth was one sign among many of his corruption.

<http://www.american-buddha.com/klosetkalu.emperortantricrobes.htm>

<sup>548</sup> Da Free John, or Adi Da---also known by other names--- was born as Franklin Jones. (November 3, 1939 – November 27, 2008). He also was prone to polygamy and exploitation of women,. He said that “a true guru is a bastard.. dangerous”. He bought an Island with the money of followers in the south pacific, where he abused children and adults and at one point he had nine wives. He claimed, like Schuon, to have had visionary sexual relations with the Virgin Mary. . He is yet another charlatan who demands that others sacrifice their ”egos” to him. There is nothing wrong with having an ego--- one must have a sense of self to live--- and one should be suspect of any teaching that enjoins you to die to your ego. Jim Jones of Jonestown also demanded everything from his followers and 900 committed suicide for him. These “crazy gurus” all have a great deal in common. See this site for more of this cult <http://www.adidaarchives.org/>

<sup>549</sup> See writings of Nori Muster online. She also wrote a book about cults that abuse children. Child of the Cult.

<sup>550</sup> Ron De Wolf ,Hubbard’s son, says of his father that Hubbard “conned people out of their money, used black magic, distributed drugs, and took advantage of the church’s female followers, participating in private orgies with his father and three or four women.” De Wolf said in a recent magazine interview. "It got kind of far out, culminating in a variety of sex acts. Dad also had an incredibly violent temper. He was into S&M and would beat his mistresses and shoot them full of drugs.....The women serving L. Ron Hubbard, says his son, "were very good at doing the dirty work, at running money or drugs back and forth. They were very good in *any* of the dirty tricks-

Scientology, d<sup>551</sup> and many other cults.<sup>552</sup> Ken Wilber is another quasi-cult leader who was influenced by some of Schuon's ideas<sup>553</sup>. It might be useful here to look at a few of these cults in a little more detail.

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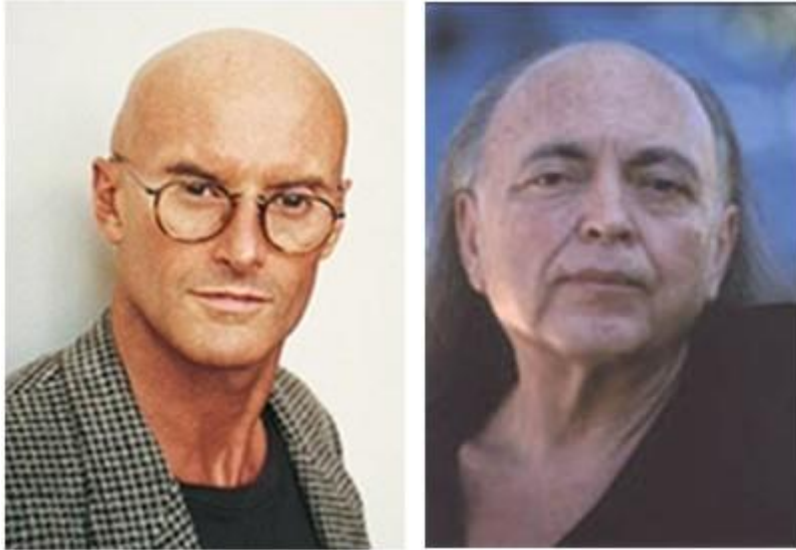
department, because they had absolutely totally *slavish* devotion to L. Ron Hubbard.” Schuon's relationship to women did not involve drugs but there is a similar pattern of exploitation as well as slavish obedience on the part of wives and close followers.. DeWolf believes the entire superstructure is crumbling under the glare of publicity and incontrovertible, documented evidence that Hubbard repeatedly has lied about himself ... Schuon also repeatedly lied about himself . Indeed, these patterns of abuse are quite regular and repeated over and over in many religions and cults.

<sup>551</sup> Andrew Cohen was a cult leader who has been exposed by William Jenner and he and “ his colleagues have produced a riveting cautionary tale on the dangers of authoritarian spirituality,” <http://americanguru.net/>

Yenner writes on issues about cults. The book “deals with—relinquishment and recovery of autonomy, spiritual naiveté and the abuse of authority,,,,,The authoritarian structure—whether it arises in a church, a political party, a family or a cult—is a closed system in which information is strictly controlled, there is little room for dissent, and prevailing ideas about the leader are rarely questioned or examined, serving to solidify his position of dominance and to maintain the subordinate roles of his followers.”

<sup>552</sup> The Hari Krishna cult was started by Swami Prabupada (1896-1977) and its appeal partly due to the Beatles, specifically George Harrison, who got wrapped up in this cult. Harrison led many into the cult with his Album All Things Must Pass. Prabupada's death in 1977. 11 of his disciples became initiating gurus, many of whom committed various abuses against children or stole money or brainwashed followers against their families and friends. Some of this behavior is followed by successor groups to the original cult as well. The cult has misogynist features and destroys the individuality of its members, blurring them in an orange robed mass of dance and song and garish flowers and ‘prasadam’. One can even buy a doll, with accessories called the “Hare Krishna Zombie” which one can put on the shelf at home. The doll suggests that common wisdom is partly right as cultists do tend to become mindless zombies in a system of mind control. I have seen a number of people lose their minds and hearts to this cult, undermining their personalities. See more here <http://www.rickross.com/groups/krishna.html>

<sup>553</sup> Wilber's notion of “levels” is derived from Schuon and other sources. There are no levels in consciousness. That is one of many fictions in his theories. He endorses a version of the great chain of being which is also a discredited notion. For some fairly superficial criticism of Wilber as a fraud see Frank Visser. But Visser is pretty close to the cult leader, so there is not much there. Someday we will have a better critique of Wilber.



Ken Wilbur and Da Free John<sup>554</sup>

Kevin Shepard writes of Da Free John or Adi da that

“The most obscure of Da’s habitats was an island in Fiji, which became a refuge after the lawsuits filed against him in the mid-80s. The Da was accused in one lawsuit (filed by Beverly O’Mahoney) of fraud, intentional infliction of emotional distress, brainwashing, and sexual abuse. That list of charges is not exhaustive. The accuser here stated that she had been forced via alcohol consumption into sexual orgies during her seven years as a devotee of Da in California and on the elite Fijian island. The media described her as a sex slave, and that does not seem an undue exaggeration in view of some details afforded. See the relevant 1985 report “Guru hit by sex-slave suit”... The Daist community resorted to elaborate justifications and evasions in a manner that has been increasingly recognized as the hallmark of cults. The legal claims were settled out of court.”

Within the Adidam organization, Adi Da built an inner circle of

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<sup>554</sup> In his *Stripping the Gurus* Geoffrey D. Falk. Falk correctly compared Wilber, Schuon, Da free John and other cult leaders, all of whom seem to look curiously similar in appearance. The cult leader is a psychopathic or extremist individual who wants to live outside the norms of the surrounding society. <http://www.strippingthegurus.com/stgsamplechapters/aftertheordeal.asp>

corrupt loyalists who helped him control what was communicated about him to the general membership of Adidam and to the public. The inner circle was perhaps the most critical piece of infrastructure Adi Da developed to enable his decades-long pursuit of every kind of fulfillment for himself at the expense of others. Inner circle members were rewarded with high status in the Adidam organization and culture, and in many cases were allowed to live off the resources of the group and did not have to earn a living in the “outside world.” The inner circle’s mission, among other things, was to hide what they could of Adi Da’s indulgent personal life, abusive treatment of others, and psychological issues. What they couldn’t hide, they explained away as his method of spiritual teaching, tantric practice.

The Schuon cult was similar to the Adi Da cult, in many ways. Like Adi Da, Schuon crated an intricate inner circle of followers who thought little for themselves. Schuon, like Adi Da had a serious narcissistic personality disorder, with real delusions and ‘visions’ that justified his various needs. He often had convenient “vision of the Virgin Mary” or other gods or goddesses, who would justify his need to be unfaithful to his wives or make his desires sacrosanct.<sup>555</sup> Schuon also had psychopathic tendencies, the definition of which is a little different than Narcissistic Personality Disorder. In any case, someone with Narcissistic Personality Disorder is someone that has “a pervasive pattern of grandiosity, (in fantasy or behavior), need for admiration, and a lack of empathy.” That is Schuon in a nutshell, in my experience and the experience of many others.

Religion is based on delusions, whatever particle of truth might be in it, and goes in and out of insanity. Schuon’s marriages were really bizarre. Like Warren Jeffs, the convicted Mormon cult polygamist, Schuon arranged marriages for himself that were not legal or civil

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marriages. Jeff was guilty of child abuse as were many cult leaders. Both Jeffs and Schuon despised the ‘outside law’ of civil and democratic institutions. Jeffs called his marriages “spiritual marriages” and so did Schuon. They obeyed their “inner law” derived from reading fictional texts like the Koran , the Bible or book of Mormon. Schuon and Jeffs had marriages that were defined as such by the cult and were binding inside the cult where “god’s law” and the cult leader’s law were one and the same. The prosecution presented evidence that Jeffs had 78 wives, in addition to his legal spouse, and that 24 of them were under the age of 17. Jeffs bragged to have the “power to destroy all the world with my full godhood.” One of the followers he harmed, Flora Jessop said that “he’s not only a hypocrite, he’s a criminal. He’s a liar. He’s a pedophile,”<sup>556</sup> Schuon was prone to lying, polygamy and pedophilia too. But Schuon only had four wives and access to a few of the daughters of loyal cult members.

Like Jeffs, Schuon dictated relationships, broke marriages and claimed to have insight over their personal psychology. But Schuon was even more bizarre than Jeffs or Muhammad in that he insisted on allowing his wives to be married to other men, and gave ‘permission” to those who had a quasi ‘marriage’ with his wives. The men in question were thus kept under Schuon’ control too, but into a perpetual state of cuckolding. What Schuon would not tolerate was these relations being made public,-- I was forced to swear on the Koran that I would not divulge publicly my relation with Maude, one of Schuon wives, for instance, even though Schuon had given me “permission” for this relationship. But I could never reveal I had been given this “permission”. But when I broke the lie of the code of silence imposed on me, he got angry and reclaimed “possession” of his “wife”, who was pleading to be let go, only then to set about trashing her in the worst possible way and

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<sup>556</sup> Read more: [http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/local\\_news/investigations/Warren-Jeffs-sends-Arizona-Attorney-General-Tom-Horne-revelations#ixzz2ebkDn6BB](http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/local_news/investigations/Warren-Jeffs-sends-Arizona-Attorney-General-Tom-Horne-revelations#ixzz2ebkDn6BB)

throwing her out of the cult. He wanted her back only to try to ruin her and he largely succeeded in this. She became terribly unbalanced and poor. From his point of view, Maude and I were monsters and the cult tried to presents us as adulterers in the press, but this was not accurate in the slightest, as Schuon had already dumped his third wife and taken a fourth. I was told she was no longer married to anyone, and this was indeed the case. Marriage was always at Schuon' convenience, as I will show later.

Schuon loved to break social norms but only if he were in control of the breaking and it was for his benefit. Schuon was merciless with those who broke rules not designed by him, so really it was all about ego, his ego. Maude Murray, his third wife had 'vertical affairs' just as Schuon did. But when this was found out, Schuon was hypocritical in the extreme and viciously condemned her for the very things he had himself been doing for decades. I deliberately broke his injunction to not speak of my relationship publicly in order to expose his fraudulent marriages and unjust treatment of people. It was not about revenge but about telling the truth about a fraud. People said I was mad at Schuon because he destroyed my relationship with Maude Murray but that is not true. I myself broke the relationship with Maude and with Schuon and left the cult all on my own. It was they who wanted revenge on my for telling the truth about them.

Schuon played the victim but he was anything but that. It was another one of his many poses, a play of his many "masks" I knew exactly what I was doing. I wished to expose a fraud. I went back into the cult, secretly, still pretending I was loyal, and I tried to get Maude out of the cult. It was stupid of me really. I had never done anything so difficult before. I went back into the cult after having left it and knew I was in danger to do so. But I failed. She was too broken by the system of mind control Schuon had imposed on her for 25 years. I had left the cult and

went back into it as a sort of spy to try to get Maude out. I failed but it took a great deal of courage.

One of the reasons I rejected religion and became totally skeptical of all religion, an “atheist”, perhaps, though this term is problematical<sup>557</sup> was my horror at the abusiveness of religion toward both humans and animals. The Christians drink the blood and eat the body of their Christ in bizarre semi-cannibalistic ceremonies where they devour the “real substance” of Christ in an act of “transubstantiation”. Rama Coomaraswamy and Wolfgang Smith had tried to get me to go to Christian rites in 1992 after I had left the Schuon cult. I went a few times and found the traditional Catholic ritual repulsive. The fanaticism of these men about this rite was also disturbing. These men had helped me and they assumed I would somehow repay them by accepting their fanatic Catholicism. Eating Christ as symbolic meat is not for me. This ancient rite enshrines a gross bit of psychological blackmail. It gets you to drink human blood and eat human flesh—really horrendous acts, actually, and you are supposed to think it the holiest thing you ever did, and if you don’t you are going to hell. I found this quasi-cannibalistic rite disgusting, whether the host is metaphorical or not. I did not like the blackmail involved in it. I became a vegetarian, like Da Vinci, as I researched just how religion and “traditions” promulgated hatred of animals and nature under the guise of ‘the metaphysics of nature’, or what Schuon calls “the metaphysical transparency of nature”. Nature is nowhere “transparent” to abstract human symbols. Nature is not god or like Muslim houris, glistening nude behind shimmering veils. This sexist projection of male dominance on ‘virgin nature’ is ridiculous and must

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<sup>557</sup> I’m not sure atheist is a correct term, since one does there is nothing real in being a “Theist”, or believer in the a mythic god--- so why reject the thing that does not exist. It is not so much that I am an atheist as that religion is totally irrelevant in my life. Indeed, this book is really a sort of catalogue of dead systems of knowledge that keep living, zombie like--- due to the delusions and excitement of the superstitious and the ignorant and those cult leaders, ministers, priests or religious studies professors who exploit them



stop. The whole notion of “virgin nature’ is ridiculous. Wild nature is fine as long as there is a realization that that wildness is in humans too, as it is in everything the evolved by any means. The current abuse of nature by Chinese, Christian, Islamic and Hindu societies has a firm grounding in the metaphysics of the Church Fathers, the Bible, the Koran, the Upanishads or Confucius and Taoism. Nature is nowhere a symbol or symbolic. It is not ‘samsara’, Maya or delusion. It is samsara and Maya and religious thought in general that is delusory. Nature belongs to itself and is its own, as Darwin showed us. From nature issues the facts of evolution, facts which no one has proven to be mistaken. No religion possesses nature as a symbol of their doctrines. Science comes closer to nature than anything else does. Nietzsche was right when he says in Zarathustra that “all gods are poet-symbolizations”, and that brings into question the use of symbols by poets.

A typical example of religious denigration of nature or the cosmos is a favorite sentence by Schuon that “existence is a sin to which no other can be compared”. This is also a disgusting idea, akin to the Eucharist. What Schuon says here--- echoing basic Sufi ideology --- is utter nonsense. Nature is existence. So called “esoterism” denigrates nature. Another typical sentence showing a metaphysical hatred of nature is this one by Plotinus:

“Certainly no reproach can rightly be brought against this world save only that it is not That.” (Plotinus, *Enneads*, V,8,8)

For Plotinus “That” or ‘god’ is everything, therefore the world is nothing. He calls earth “base” and considers that the base nature of earth and the body is to be “transcended” by the “intellect” by which he means not reason but feeling or intuition. The “That” is the ultimate fiction, the Tao, or Nameless Beyond Being. This is deeply disgusting and wrong. While

he himself says he is not as bad as the “gnostics” <sup>558</sup>he is clearly in line with Dionysius the Areopagite in this hatred of the “base” earth. It is an aristocratic and escapist monstrosity that he is creating.<sup>559</sup> The escapist metaphysics of these two thinkers is not surprising at the end of the Roman Empire, a time of despair and pessimism, just as the Dark Ages are beginning.

Actually what Plotinus calls “base” is really all that matters. He images a fictive pure realm beyond. This repulsive hatred of nature and earth leads to all sorts of atrocities and injustices. This is a large part of the “insanity” of religion”. All of the major religions set up this awful dichotomy between an imagined transcendent realm and the actual world, with the imagined world being supposedly more real than the actual world of daily life, which is lesser and denigrated. This is true even in Buddhism where the void or “emptiness” becomes the locus of otherness and alienation from the world of the hated “ten thousand things”, or samsara. This is a psychopathic bachelors religion made by men who never bore children. The importation of Buddhism into China followed the Warring States period (481 B.C.E. to 221 B.C.E.) in China, where 8 states fought for control of China for a few centuries. The Qin rulers had a philosophy of ‘Legalism’, which justified harsh control, forced labor, and subservience to the emperor. Buddhism appealed to many because it allowed of a mental escape from the brutal and harsh reality around them. Harsh realities are indeed what created Buddhism, not the mythical figure of the Buddha, who probably did not exist.

One can find the same hatred or terror of existence in Sartre, who writes in his Nausea

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<sup>558</sup> He attacks the “gnostics” in his Enneads.

<sup>559</sup> Mark Sedgwick, an apologist for Islam as an antidote to the Enlightenment that he hates, tries to make Plotinus, the world denier, to be the originator of Sufism. Platonism actually is merely a symptom of far right world denial, and has its origins in Plato. Sedgwick does not understand how he has hung himself over the world's end like an old coat on a stick, full of holes. Sedgwick, Hannegraff and Kripal are the three big dealers in delusion, these days, pushing their carte of esoteric lies into university hallways.

The roots of the chestnut tree were sunk in the ground just under my bench. I couldn't remember it was a root any more. The words had vanished and with them the significance of things, their methods of use, and the feeble points of reference which men have traced on their surface. I was sitting, stooping forward, head bowed, alone in front of this black, knotty mass, entirely beastly, which frightened me. Then I had this vision.

It left me breathless. Never, until these last few days, had I understood the meaning of "existence."

Sartre uses very Christian words to describe his horror of the tree, like "naked", "bloated", "obscene" "flaunting" "beastly". This is a vision of the prudish and anti-life "intellect" divorced from nature in an artificial way. I have always found this book of Sartre rather adolescent and silly. His vision of nature as "beastly" and sexual is the vision of a misogynistic and alienated city dweller who knows very little about existence as it really is. Like Buddhism or Christian notions, Sartre erects a horror of the real, physical world as a principle of disgust.

Thoreau is much more intelligent on the subject of existence, and though once or twice he is horrified by it he realizes horror is merely a fraction of it. But he resolves the difficulty and saying the famous chapter 6 passage of the Maine Woods "Talk of mysteries! — Think of our life in nature, — daily to be shown matter, to come in contact with it, — rocks, trees, wind on our cheeks! The *solid* earth! The *actual* world! The *common sense*! *Contact! Contact! Who are we? Where are we?*" <sup>560</sup>He sees

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<sup>560</sup> This passage begins where Henry descibes himself being "shown some star's surface, some hard matter in its home! I stand in awe of my body, this matter to which I am bound has become so strange to me. I fear not spirits, ghosts, of which I am one, — *that* my body might, — but I fear bodies, I tremble to meet them. What is this Titan that has possession of me? Talk of mysteries! — — Think of our life in nature, — daily to be shown matter, to come in contact with it, — rocks, trees, wind on our cheeks! The *solid* earth! The *actual* world! The *common sense*! *Contact! Contact! Who are we? Where are we?*" It is clear he is speakiin of the strge fact of our materiality. Religion tends to mystify and mythify this rather than to

that he is part of it and that it is terrible and amazing both. His later journals are a testament to the marvel of this realization, ---he has become an anti-transcendentalist--- and he becomes more and more a scientist of perception and facts, one of the best the world has produced in fact.<sup>561</sup> Thoreau becomes a Darwinian and an ecologist, far from the Platonic dreams of Emerson. Indeed, Thoreau appears to be the first American to thoughtfully read and understand Darwin's Origin of the Species.

Barbara Ehrenreich battles with the facts of existence in her book, Living with of A Wild God, in which she records a visionary experience that is midway between Sartre's Nausea and Thoreau's acceptance of existence. Thankfully she is not ultimately one to reject or denigrate existence like the Sufi's and other mystics liked to do, though in earlier years she comes close to this. But her struggle with a "vision" of a and need to create a "separate reality" is very interesting. More interesting is how she deals with the contradictions of having had such a "vision". And echoes many things I am saying in these books.<sup>562</sup> She struggles with the natural destruction created by copper mining in Butte Montana, or killing of mice in a lab where she works, as well as the Vietnam war and her own conscience about her close relatives. She even denies the

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merely describe it, as Henry does. He is the most interesting of writers who slowly escapes from religion. Indeed, his later journal is a record of how to disentangle oneself from religion.

<sup>561</sup> If I had to pick the best books of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, I would include Thoreau's late journal (after 1850) as one of the first, along with Van Gogh complete Letters, and Darwin's works as well as Dickens..

<sup>562</sup> Her 'vision' is interesting, as it is rather like Annie Dillard's 'nature as fire' vision in Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, but without all the spiritual associations Dillard imposes on her vision. Though Ehrenreich is tempted to make those associations she doesn't do this, which is amazing. I did impose spiritual interpretations on my 'vision of the veil', but later retracted these imposed ideas. It shows again that these visions have a psychological base, and if they do refer to reality, they do so tangentially, as they include aspects that are true to something in the world at the same time as they are heavily subjective. The "something" that they refer to is bio-physical as well as aesthetic, and this combination is very hard to define. I call it nature's rights, but Ehrenreich seems to still need to project human ideas on animals and make quasi deities of them. .. ,

Cartesian view of animals, admitting intelligence and consciousness in animals, which is very refreshing, as that is not done in the rather narrow Chomsky circles she sometimes travels in. In this respect, Ehrenreich evokes the women in the last century who have bravely stood up to count animals as part of nature and consciousness. Jane Goodall and Val Plumwood, among others, also are to be commended` for this.

My only criticism of her new book is that she is too uncritical of William James and his Varieties of Religious Experience, into which she plugs her own experience. She creates, rather oddly, what she calls a “Zoomorphic god”<sup>563</sup>, which presumably is the “wild god” of her title, which is merely another fiction, caused by thinking too much about her experience. There is no such god, and she almost admits this, but does not have the means to say just what she experienced. Since I have made the same mistake myself, I understand her dilemma. The meaning of her own early “vision” is really an aesthetic experience, like Thoreau, which suggests her later love and awe of nature. Nature itself does contain the wonders she saw in her vision, indeed, to a much greater degree than could be expressed. But she makes the mistake of leaping to deities out of that, suggesting falsely for instance, that some dolphins she sees must be gods too. This is very naïve, but understandable, as culture supports these artificial constructions and helps people make them up as part of the Jamesian idea of the spiritual marketplace, which encourages eccentric spiritual ideas and images.

The mystery she evokes is more than enough explained as an experience of nature in its actuality, perhaps expressionistically seen, as in the fiery late paintings of Van Gogh. Indeed, all the amazing sections

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<sup>563</sup> The animal style in art goes back to Chauvet and the early cave paintings and then forward into early Celtic, Viking and Pazyric, Altaic and Chinese culture. During the period of my philosophical drawings I was trying consciously to evoke this aesthetic motif. But in the end is really just a system of symbolic analogies, and thus based on a misuse of language and an associative skill. It is compelling as Ehrenreich imagines, but that does not make it “true” it is merely a “useful” analogy in William James parlance.

or her book can be explained as an aesthetic reactions to nature and its many moods and realities, compounded by an unwillingness to refuse to jump to theomorphic or “zoomorphic” conclusions.. That there is beauty and wonder in nature is hardly deniable. That the beauty and terror corresponds to who we are is not surprising as we too are of nature. Gods, even animistic gods, are something else entirely. These are aesthetic creations born of language, symbols and analogies. She toys with the idea of a god in nature and that is the weakest part of her book. Gods might symbolically express aspects of nature, but it is important to be aware that symbols are not the actual things. Much of religion derives from symbols imposed on nature or evoked by nature. But this is a misuse of language. The beauty of her book is in the fact that her early vision ends up being about reality and not fiction, about nature and not gods. Her atheism, at least for me, leads her into reality and nature again at last. She celebrates a life of activism and asks deep questions about why are dolphins so conscious and what is the meaning of physical reality. But her willingness to posit gods as an explanation is not tenable. Also she uses the mistakes of evolutionary biology as if there were facts. Boyer implies humans are inevitably fated to have god making propensities as part of the genetic makeup, to “ give airy nothing a name”.. I don’t think this is true at all and is one of Boyer’s big mistakes, as it is in Ehrenreich. .

Ehrenreich wants to celebrate existence even in its terrible aspects. But this is not always possible. The history of the treatment of existing beings by religions is very gruesome. 100,000 so called “witches” were burned or killed during the period from 1550-1650. They were killed largely because they were midwives and medicine people, who helped the poor and workers in the ordinary classes. The medical and church elites wanted them eliminated, partly because they did better work than the ‘doctors’ many of whom were butchers and bleeders. The religious hatred

of existence has helped fuel incredible violence against life. Some Muslims think that if they blow themselves up in a holy war ( jihad) they will go immediately to an imaginary heaven. “Fight until your sword is broken” some Mullah wrote into the mouth of Muhammad in the Koran. Other Moslem’s think it all right to cut off people’s hands if they steal, kill people who leave Islam or stone women for adultery. After all the character called Muhammad killed thousands of people in his various wars and reprisals. Hindu notions of Atma, Karma and the Divine Self in the Bhagavad Gita justified the horrors of the caste system. Christian Popes try to hide pedophile priests from public scrutiny. <sup>564</sup>The Inquisition tortured hundreds of thousands of people to exact bogus and forced confessions. Killing people for the Emperor was a duty for Samurai warriors. Zen was the religion of Samurai Warriors who were the aristocratic and warrior class of medieval Japan. Their outlook was like the Nazis, was to be warrior mystics who fought for the divine leader. Eugen Herrigel, a writer on flower arranging, was a Zen adept, and evidently recognized the similarity and joined the Nazi party in 1937. <sup>565</sup> The Nazi ideal of selfless killing was also the Bushido or Samurai ideal. The Zen of “no Mind” is easily mindless and marches as ordered. Some Zen Master said “If ordered to march: tramp, tramp or shoot: bang, bang.” This is the manifestation of the highest wisdom or ‘Enlightenment’, it is claimed. The mindless surrender to the will to the

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<sup>564</sup> In many pedophile priest cases all over the world Catholic Church officials conspired to endanger the safety of children and actively concealed their knowledge of priest's offenses, lied to parishioners and the public. These abuses and cover ups go all the way up the hierarchy to the Vatican and the Popes. It is clear that the problem is worldwide and across most Catholic institutions, churches, and schools. The causes are cultural to the whole institution and involves centuries of misogyny and male centered culture due to the fact of celibacy being imposed on Priests. For more see links on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic\\_sex\\_abuse\\_cases](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_sex_abuse_cases)

<sup>565</sup> This is discussed by Victor Trimondi here: <http://www.trimondi.de/Zen-Buddhismus/Herrigel.htm>  
Trimondi also suggests that D.T. Suzuki and others had some relation to Nazi philosophy through thinkers like Heidegger who also was a Nazi

state is hardly “enlightened” in the wiser sense of the “enlightenment” that came after the French Revolution. “The unity of Zen and war ...extends to the farthest reaches of the holy war now under way.” Zen Master Harada Daiun Sogaku said in 1939, justifying the Japanese in World War II.

Zen is ‘mindless’ in more ways than one, and encourages ignorance and complicity. Indeed, the very idea of “Spiritual Enlightenment” (satori) all about submission to the non-existent. “Satori” is the aspiration to what does not exist. Zen is about social control and the culture of the Samurai. One can’t just look at the impeccable rock gardens and lovely apples painted on silk or the great screens of Sesshu or Tohaku without seeing their context in the military class and the rich. The pursuit of enlightenment is itself delusional. Other Zen Masters have counseled other insanities,

“Sawaki Kodo (1880-1965), said, as did other Zen teachers, that if killing is done without thinking, in a state of no-mind or no-self, then the act is an expression of enlightenment. No thinking = No-mind = No-self = No karma. In this bizarre equation, the victims are always left out, as if they are irrelevant. Killing is just an elegant expression of the koan. <sup>566</sup>

This Zen attitude toward atrocity recalls, of course, the self-justified cruelty of the Samurai, as well as Robert Oppenheimer’s famous justification for building and dropping the two bombs on Japan in 1945.

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<sup>566</sup> From Zen at War, Brian Victoria, Weatherhill, 1997. Reviewed here: <http://www.darkzen.com/Articles/zenholly.htm>

For more on corruption in Zen in America look up Richard Baker on any search engine. He was the head of the San Francisco Zen center and was a fairly typical cult leader, hurting people, betraying trust, abusing women, money and so on. This sort of corruption is common in religious societies or many kinds.



Oppenhiemer quotes the Bhagavad Gita, to the effect that one must “become death” and kill without attachment. This was religious madness--- madness inherent in the original Bhagavad Gita source---- as we can see now. It destroyed Oppenhiemer and his family—(his daughter Toni committed suicide in 1977).<sup>567</sup> Himmler would also consult the Bhagavad Gita to justify his killing of Jews in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. In all these cases specific individual beings are murdered for an ideology or an abstraction. Killing for Krishna, Hitler, Allah, Zen or American Exceptionalism is all killing and all of it insane. Gods are manufactured symbols of ideology not real things, and to die or kill for a symbols is horrendous and morally wrong.<sup>568</sup>

Zen is merely part of the myth of Buddhism. It is clear that Buddha never existed and was a fiction created over several centuries. The Pali Canon, which is one of the first of Buddhist texts, said to have been written in 29 BCE, was composed nearly 500 years after the supposed existence of the Buddha, which makes his existence a very unlikely occurrence. The ethic that creates the ideology of enlightenment is by and large a male ethic. For almost two thousand years in India, the birthplace of Buddhism, women were excluded from religious positions. The hatred of existence so common in all the major religions is mostly a hatred of women and nature, animals and actual things, often living things. Buddhism was set up as a male priest religion with specific social controls in place, called the Dharma. The earliest aniconic images of the Buddha date to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE and the first iconic images to the first century CE so it would be safe to suppose that the Buddhist myth

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<sup>567</sup> See my essay “Liberty in a Mushroom Cloud: Nagasaki, Oppenheimer and Von Neumann”

[Check ref](#)

<sup>568</sup> I wrote about Oppenhiemer, Himmler and the abusive character of the Bhagavad-Gita in my book *The Empire of the Intellect*.

was created during these years and not before..

Moreover, the notion that “enlightenment” actually means something is wrong. The Buddhist and Hindu concept of Enlightenment is a myth. There is no liberation from suffering and the world. Suffering has to be dealt with in real terms, on the ground, looking for cures or dealing with complex facts realities. No one solves poverty by praying it will end.

In Buddhism and Hinduism, the equation of being “free” with despising earth and attachments to real things and people is utterly ridiculous.. Concern with existence is what matters. Science helps lengthen our mortality because of medical interventions. It really does “free” us from suffering. But religion has done little or nothing to help in that respect. The idea at the basis of religions is a lie and depends partly on denigration of women, nature and animals. In Buddhism and Hinduism this often means saying that bad behavior will get you reincarnated as a lower animal or a woman. In many Buddhist and Hindu sutras and sacred texts being born as a woman or animal is a punishment for ‘sin’. “Birth” itself is seen as a pejorative in these religions, and animals are seen as culpability itself. Throughout Buddhist history it was often said that women cannot attain enlightenment because the “defiled female body” is a hindrance. Women or nuns were occasionally “rewarded” with claims to their enlightened state, but it was applied they had transformed into a male This makes it quite clear that the concept of enlightenment was a political construction and favored men over women. Like the ideology of “Karma” the ideal of enlightenment is a caste idea and is used to discriminate against classes of people and animals who are not preferred. Indeed, Buddhism’s hatred of women is not very well hidden. Shinran’s 35<sup>th</sup> vow states that

“So profound is Amida’s great compassion

That, manifesting inconceivable Buddha-wisdom,

The Buddha established the Vow of transformation into men,  
Thereby vowing to enable women to attain Buddhahood”

This twisted misogyny is presented as a ‘gift’. Shinran is saying that that a woman must renounce herself to become “enlightened”. This shows quite clearly that spiritual “enlightenment” is a fiction and one that easily got adapted to sexist ideology.

The only “enlightenment” that matters is the historical period around 1800 that was the result of science. The spiritual notion of enlightenment is a projection, an empty concept—a fiction—a that has no real meaning in itself. No one has ever attained it because it does not exist. It is based on a demeaning attitude toward nature, women and animals. One could say it is a deep feeling of peace and joy, but that is also meaningless as that is merely a feeling state. It does contain an implicit notion of elitist hatred of nature and of women however, at that is not good for anyone.

I spent two years studying birds and animals closely at a wetland I called Heroes Wetland between 1999 and 2001. I learned from that just how much animals and birds are like ourselves and desire families, freedom and to avoid suffering. There are histories of negative attitudes towards women in culture and religions. But as yet there no wide and in-depth history of human cruelty to animals and nature. The organizations CITES and IUCN, have a great deal of information about extinct and endangered species of many kinds, though little is said about causes and the ideologies that assist in this.<sup>569</sup> David Nibert’s Animal Rights, Human Rights tries to outline what a history of human cruelty to animals might look like. He contends that the rise of cattle farming and

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<sup>569</sup> CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) and IUCN, (International Union for the Conservation of Nature)

<http://www.iucn.org/>

meat eating corresponds to increases in violence and war and the denial of human rights to humans. The rise of the major religions as systems of oppression enabled large scale delusions to be foisted on populations by religions. The exact effects of meat eating on humans are not known or charted in history. Elsewhere Nibert explores how the colonization of the Americas was intertwined with the growth of the cattle industry. He states that “The entangled oppression of devalued humans and cows is most obvious today in Brazil and the Darfur region in western Sudan — where murder and displacement are tied to the expansion of the profitable ‘beef industry.’” Science too can be used to destroy the existence of others. “Trade curses everything it handles” Henry Thoreau writes:



Hunting Coyote from Helicopters

Another book I found that begins to explore the history of cruelty to animals is “Diane Beers’ For the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals. The rapacious abuse of western lands by hunters, ranchers and profiteers is one of the deepest and most shameful and lasting scars on the American landscape. Inspired by Christian hatred of nature, the notion that ‘wild nature’ is somehow a place of “original sin”, as well as notions of wilderness as useless lands that must be “redeemed” by exploitation and capitalization, the 19<sup>th</sup> century is only rivaled by the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a

time of the greatest disrespect for all life in all of earth's history.<sup>570</sup> The murderous rampage of human beings against all other life forms during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is largely unstudied and with few apologies, but it certainly is an atrocity of major proportions and one that rivals and in some respects is much worse than the horror of Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and the Middle Passage of the slave trade. Bird populations were decimated, Passenger pigeons extinct, nearly 50 million Bison wiped out, Whales hunted nearly to extinction, millions of them turned into oil for lamps. And the beaver nearly gone, and so much else.



Cornelis de Man (1621-1706)

The Whale Oil Factory on Jan Mayen Island

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<sup>570</sup> A great deal of ink has been used by Christians to try to excuse the depredations of nature by their culture. St. Francis or Seraphim of Sarov are trotted out to prove how good humans are supposed to be. But such exceptions prove the rule that Christianity is a nature hating religion that worships a god that is other worldly. The mythical Christ denigrates the “things of the world”, just as Hinduism denigrates “Maya” and Buddhism the “ten thousand things”. There is no denying the human centered views promoted by the bible and church “fathers”. Myths like Adam and Eve and Noah’s Ark promote human centered domination of nature.

Indeed, all these atrocities share similar causes and motives. The story of groups in the US and UK that have opposed animal abuse and the horrible fate of many domestic animals has only begun to be told. Animals rights has not yet gone far enough into the human abuse of nature generally. Animals, unlike corporations, are individuals and suffer, and should be persons under the law. The legal system is speciesist and has been as far back as anyone remembers, even before the Magna Carta. The result of speciesism is not just global warming and the destruction of the oceans but the endangerment of many species of birds, animals and plants. Stephen Buchman estimates that:

“we are losing many flowering plants to extinction before we even knew they existed. An estimated 68 percent of the world’s flowering plants are now threatened or endangered. This staggering loss of diversity is due to anthropogenic causes, including habitat loss, degradation and invasive species.”

Similar stories are told about the destruction of Forests not only in the Amazon and the redwoods, but all over the earth. As Charles Little’s *The Dying of the Trees* or Peter Wohlleben’s *The Hidden Life of Trees* indicate, there is so much more to stress than merely slavery to the economic greed of silvaculturists.



Men killing trees, origin of Photo unknown.<sup>571</sup>

Paul Waldau book the Spectre of Speciesism opens the study of religious attitudes towards animals, He doesn't go far enough either and the book has various weaknesses, but it is a good introduction to a vast and largely unresearched subject. Books like the Christian Philokalia, the Hindu Mahabharata or ancient Chinese, Tibetan or Muslim texts, as well as the Bible, for instance, need to be studied for their atrocious attitudes to animals. The cult of the CEO clearly has much in common with cult leaders in general and both need to be analyzed as destructive to both human and biotic societies. Limiting or even eliminating the CEO is important as is the elimination of interlocking boards and monopolies,

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<sup>571</sup> I knew a man who killed redwood trees in just this way, and mostly worked on the ponds off the Russian river in a town called Scotia, sorting logs to be cut.. Bunny O'Brien, was his name. He lived in Rio Dell and Fortuna, for a time but I first met him when he lived in the workers houses at Pacific Lumber Company in Scotia. He ended in be disgusted by the company as it had destroyed nearly all of the redwoods, leaving only 3 percent on government owned lands. People complain about the government, when actually business is the primary problem as the CEOs just cannot help maximizing their greed, and then they complain there are too many regulations. They will devour the whole earth if not stopped.



since these are prestigious supports for economic elites. They treat nature as an “externality” on which they displace risk and harm. Nature takes the suffering that results from CEO profits and bonuses. The Markets serve shareholders and CEO’s and this has to be heavily regulated or eliminated to make way for a system that does not destroy the earth and create poverty and extinctions.

The Presidency in the United States also has autocratic roots and they tend to be like kings or dynasties. This should be abolished. The U.S. government, as well as other governments, is now mostly run by and for corporations and the autocratic CEO. This is the new aristocracy and needs a revolution to stop it. The corporate service to the abstract Market also has many misogynistic features, principle among them being the exploitation of nature for profits at the expense of nature, animals, plants, oceans, air and waters of all kinds. Henry Thoreau notes the destructiveness of his own practice of Surveying, how the woodlots he surveys will soon be cut over. Surveying made him complicit in the destroying the forests he loved”, Laura Dassow Walls writes.

“today I was made aware that I worked in a Pitch Pine wood which ere long—perchance I may survey the lot off for wood auction and see the choppers at work”<sup>572</sup>

What is needed of course is a survey of the surveyors, an accounting of the accountants, a scientific inquiry into the destructive side of corporate science. The CEO’s and CFO’s need men of conscience and insight set over them to regulate and downsize their rapacious greed.

Accordingly an implementation of the idea of ‘nature rights’ as a system of legal and ethical principles, regulations and laws would help stem this destruction. Companies and developers cut down forests, steal

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<sup>572</sup> Quoted in Walls, Laura Dassow, Henry David Thoreau a Life, Univ. of Chicago, 2017 pg. 286



minerals, mine, log pollute and destroy without consequences. They are wrongly allowed to freely take what is not theirs, as they now want to do even to the moon, to make “extraterrestrial profits”.. There must be stiff consequences for those who kill and pollute, rape and steal and deform natural processes. They make billions from doing this and pay back nothing to nature, externalizing all the harm and risk to nature itself. This should be regulated, controlled and in many cases stopped, corporate charters removed, CEO’s legally and financially ruined.

To this list of environmental destroyers should also be added the Marxists, who in my view are merely capitalists who worship the state and make the state the CEO. Mao was the CEO of China just as Stalin was once the CEO of the Soviet Union. The best example of Marxist speciesism and its murder of millions of animals was Mao Zedong’s incredibly ill advised effort to remove the “Four Pests” from China 1958 to 1962. He insisted the people kill all mosquitoes, rats, sparrows and flies.<sup>573</sup> They were shot, exhausted by being forced to fly, smothered and killed with poisons. The ridiculous result of this speciesist genocide was to force nature out of balance and then with all the birds gone, insects such as locusts proliferated, causing the crops all over China to be eaten by these insects. This, combined with the results of other innane campaigns of the Great Leap Forward, bad agricultural techniques and relocation policies displacing farmers, caused a crop failure and national hunger that starved somewhere between 20-40 million people in the so called Great “Famine”. This was supposed to stop grain loss due to birds. But actually the birds helped in unseen ways. They were good at reading

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<sup>573</sup> James Audubon was also a killer of birds, which he killed and then painted. The same is true of Louis Agassiz Fuertes, who was a much better painter than Audubon, but who killed many thousands of birds and animals. Another hunter and bird killer who took to paint was Bruno Liljefors, who was quite a good painter, but whose work is marred by a “predator-prey” mythos that is very much like today’s game agencies, ephemistically referred to as “Division of Wildlife” and other misleading titles. This is often the case with those who study birds, that they are often killers of them. It is disturbing to see how many ornithologists still kill birds for specimens. It is unnecessary and wasteful, especially since birds are declining in populations precipitously in many cases.

Marx but very bad at reading nature and a huge famine was the result.  
China is now credited with being the worst destroyer of sealife.

China's distant-water fishing fleet has grown to nearly 2,600 vessels (the United States has fewer than one-tenth as many), with 400 boats coming into service between 2014 and 2016 alone. Most of the Chinese ships are so large that they scoop up as many fish in one week as Senegalese boats catch in a year, costing West African economies \$2 billion a year, according to a new study published by the journal [Frontiers in Marine Science](#).<sup>574</sup>

China takes fish from all over the world, much of it ending up being fed to American pigs and chickens for humans to eat. Meat eaters are destroying the oceans. No longer should such people be allowed to kill animals or fish with impunity, externalizing their profits onto the seas and into the forests, leaving waste and extinctions behind them.

Similar destruction of animals, insects and birds goes on today in America and Europe as well as elsewhere due to the use of neonicotinoids and glyphosate ( “ Round Up”) poisons, as well as other pesticides and herbicides, put on the land to kill everything but Monsanto and other corporate designed seeds. <sup>575</sup> Frogs, Toads, Dragonflies, butterflies, and insects of all kinds are being killed off by chemical companies. Beetles and many other field dwelling species have also been poisoned to death in the many billions or trillions—no one knows how many. Mao probably killed hundreds of millions of sparrows and other animals, and so has Monsanto and other corporations, farmers and agricultural “experts”. But these deaths, like those millions of

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<sup>574</sup> NYT... “China pushes Fisheries to the Brink”  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/30/world/asia/chinas-appetite-pushes-fisheries-to-the-brink.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=photo-spot-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news>

<sup>575</sup> see the documentary film [The Messenger](#), about the demise of song bird species, or Passerines, due to human causes.

Skunks, Squirrels, Deer, Foxes, Coyotes and others, go unrecorded, uncared for, dying on our roads, hit by trucks and cars.

I have only skimmed the surface of this subject, like a Barn Swallow drinking water from a river. I hope others will research and write on this further. But I have understood that actual existence is what matters and those who hate and despise existence by means of religion, Marxism or corporate science need to be surveyed, assessed and questioned. Our planet belongs to all species, plants, animals, cells and even geologic formations and not merely humans. There is no “separate reality” and no “veil” that separates us from the facts of life other than that of our own making. The idea of the veil is merely the fact of our own ignorance, and to pass beyond that is not a real limit, it is merely the extent of what we do not know yet. Christ, Buddha and Sartre were wrong and the belief systems created by these mythic figures or men, are, like Platonism, not sustainable. Such systems should be put behind us. What matters is bodies and skin, tree trunks and rocks, squirrels and weather... the earth itself. To value the earth as it is, and cease abusing it--- this is a goal whose meaning would be really tremendous, if people would just imagine it and bring about what they imagine.

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### **Mark Sedgwick's Book Against the Modern World**

“there is no coherent non-theological theoretical basis for the study of religion as an academic discipline” Timothy

Fitzgerald in The Ideology of Religious Studies

“ If this claim is true, religious studies should be dissolved as a discipline, replaced with either seminary schools or a subcategory of anthropology and sociology.” Avery Marrow<sup>576</sup>

“The fact that essentialist and generally de—historicizing strategies operate so widely as to be virtually transparent to the mass of scholars of religion is the key to understanding the way the field as a whole has avoided confronting the charges of extreme politics.”  
Russell McCutcheon

This is one of two essays in the book which seek to critique and reassess religious studies recommending it be subsumed in another department in the university or outside the colleges all together. Religious studies is an area of study prone to extremely subjective views. Many professors promote superstition, delusions and mythic fictions of various kinds, to the harm of students. I think it should be abolished as a department and the study of religion should be subsumed under anthropology, literature or sociology or shipped out to theological schools. Teaching religious beliefs as if they were truth is pandering to delusions and should not be permitted in public universities. Likewise teaching the array of religions as if they were all somehow true, “in their

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<sup>576</sup> <http://avery.morrow.name/studies/timothy-fitzgerald.pdf>

own way” is also pandering to the ‘reality is a construction” delusion. So with this in mind, I will here write about my experience with one religious studies professor who was involved rather weakly in the exposure of traditionalism. In the course of this and the later essay on Arthur Versluis, I will consider other religious studies people, slowly building a case against this area of study as currently conceived. Of course, this whole book is an argument against religious studies....

I found Sedgwick to be a very interested scholar and not at all objective. He wished to push a religious ideology, namely Islam and criticized traditionalism only to support Islam. I refused to see him when he requested to come 500 miles to see me at my house because I could see this. Though I originally hoped he might do a good job in his study of traditionalism, I do not think he did, and I did not wish to be misused by him in even worse ways than he already misused me and my witness. He is a poor scholar at best and does not know how to read evidence, led as he is by poor historiography and religious prejudice.

I learned from experience that some scholars think that copyright laws are more important than free speech, telling the truth or following evidence.<sup>577</sup> I will explain this shortly. Mark Sedgwick said he would write a history of Traditionalism from “from their point of view”. As I said earlier, this sort of “embedded” journalism is largely a waste of time. The function of journalism is to question powers and supply a check for corruption, be it institutional and governmental or otherwise. The effort to be accurate and objective is important. As I said earlier in this book, writing a history of the mafia from the mafia’s point of view is a rather a waste of time, except if you wish to please the mafia. I am not at all

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<sup>577</sup> I am not a big fan of copyright, but I think there are few instances where it is reasonable to violate copyright. I have not knowingly done this myself, but those who hide criminal actions behind copyright should be exposed. What became clear to me over time was that Sedgwick did not understand “fair use” and how broad that concept really is. The Schuon cult used copyright to hide real crimes behind. Sedgwick listened to his fear more than to his reason.

interested in writing a history of traditionalism from the point of view of the traditionalists: there are several of those already and they are bad histories. To do this is to be a servile and “embedded” journalist: a sort of proselytizer by default. A historian must sometimes take a point of view. Sedgwick caved into the traditionalists on many things and wrote their history from their point of view in many ways.<sup>578</sup> It is a testament to their paranoid insularity that they do not see this and criticize what he did. There are points of view that a decent historian should avoid. Unfortunately, Sedgwick is a believer who writes to justify his brand of Islamic belief.

Mark Sedgwick’s book is titled Against the Modern World.<sup>579</sup> He

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<sup>578</sup> ON his website Sedgwick says

“During the course of my research into Traditionalism over the following years, my personal attitude towards Traditionalism and the Maryamiyya was naturally modified by what I found, but this did not mean the development of any bias: it is part of the professional method of a scholar to guard against bias, to separate personal attitudes (which everyone has) from scholarly analysis (which must be objective). “

Actually I found Sedgwick’s to be extremely biased, both towards the traditionalists and toward religion and academic studies in general. There is no “objectivity “in religious studies because the whole subject is delusional. Indeed, his point of view is really very narrow and driven by career interests and a pretense of “balance” that has little to do with being factual or following real evidence. He makes up his history with little knowledge of actual facts and then tries to make it sound good. He has not lived the history but merely reports on what he has heard without having any real knowledge about how to assess the merit of hearsay. I have personal knowledge of his repression of facts to serve his thesis.

<sup>579</sup> The reviews of this book are a good introduction to the fanaticism of the traditionalists--- they all attack it viciously. But none of them are believable and appear largely motivated by revenge or denial of facts.

<http://www.tradicio.org/english/1index.html>

Robert Horvarth’s review is made in the context of extremist far right Hungarian politics, similar to Martin Schwartz’s far right German politics. This critique as well as Fitzgerald’s critique of the book verge on hysteria. They try to back up any critique of Schuon and Guenon into their mythic fictions about these men, which have no reality at all, but rather are the fictional production of the cultic thinking around them. Fitzgerald has bunker mentality, literally, as he built a 1950’s style bunker next to his house to survive the apocalyptic ‘conflagration’. His understanding of Schuon is similar, as he cannot abide any interpretation of Schuon except that of

is a Englishman turned Moslem, who lived in Cairo, Egypt for many years and now has moved to Denmark. He admired Guenon because he was, like Guenon, a westerner who converted to a religion he really didn't know much about. Like Guenon he also moved to Cairo. It is a good book as far as peripheral things are concerned. It tells a good story. It is useful as a sort of elementary primer on traditionalism. Good index, some good footnotes. But it is largely mistaken about so many things I rarely look at it and feel it has done more harm than good. It is virtually useless as regards Guenon and Schuon. Sedgwick botches the subjects of Schuon and Guenon very badly, as I will show.

But I'd like to point out first that as general sort of introductory text, Sedgwick's book is the only one that has been attempted, besides the Abdollah Shahbazi book but that is in Persian and I cannot read it except on a translator which works poorly for Persian. I have many objections to Sedgwick's book. On the surface it is a fine, if biased and weak, overview of Traditionalism. I say this despite very serious reservations about the book, a few of which I will outline in this essay. I have many objections to this book, but I will get to my criticisms in a minute. In general, beside the fact, already mentioned, that Sedgwick situates many things along the margin of traditionalism with admirable clarity. The book provides perhaps the only loose attempt to tell the story of these cults and madmen, none of whom Sedgewick really got to know personally. It attempts to be vaguely factual—even when it fails to do so--- and is thus is a good reference or an overview as far as being a sort of "Who is Who" in the traditionalists movement. But as a book of accurate historical assessments of this movement it is largely ridiculous.<sup>580</sup>

I think a book of any kind about this cult took courage to publish

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the cult of personality. As "spokesman" for the Schuon cult, he cannot be trusted to be objective at all and is prone to lying, as Maude Murray showed in excess.

<sup>580</sup> <http://www.shahbazi.org/> see also the book of Abdollah Shahbazi. It is in Persian, which I cannot read, but one can read it in poor translation on google translator.

given the viscous attempt by Michael Fitzgerald and other Schuon cultists to force Oxford to stop publication of the book. The Schuon cult also tried to get Sedgwick fired from his job and the American University in Cairo. I was told this by Sedgwick himself. The Schuon cult, with Fitzgerald as a spokesman, is very much against free speech and considers any criticism of Schuon or his minions to be “diabolic” and seditious heresy. For a theofascist, “disagreement is treason.” Umberto Eco opines in his outline of the 14 characteristics of theofascism. The first response of the Schuon cult ---and Muslim communities as well--- to any critique is to shout ‘Apostate’, ‘heretic’ or ‘blasphemer’. Then, as David Hall has noted in another context, these dogmatic religionists “accuse the author of every kind of moral degeneracy, and leave the facts and arguments he adduces completely unaddressed.”

Remember that Schuon claimed to be infallible--- and he claimed that even his claim to be infallible was infallible! <sup>581</sup>Given the huge gall of Schuon’s pathological subjectivism, it is logical that his fanatical followers would try to destroy anyone who questions the cult leader. They think that to question Schuon is to question “god” just as Muslims think that to question the Koran is to question “god”. In any case, the Schuon cult did not succeed in stopping publication of the book. However, they did succeed in distorting and even mangling some of its contents before it was published. Sedgwick thinks that copyright laws are more important than free speech, telling the truth or following evidence.

However, let us see how good this book really is. Let us look a little closer at Sedgwick’s sources and people whom he thanks in his preface. As any historian trained in graduate school knows, a great deal can be

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<sup>581</sup> As explained elsewhere in this book Schuon’s claim is that god speaks directly through his ‘essence’. He says in his book *Transcendent Unity* that “intellectual intuition is a direct and active participation in divine knowledge and not an indirect and passive participation, as is faith. In other words, in the case of intellectual intuition [gnosis], knowledge is not possessed by the individual insofar as he is an individual, but insofar as in his innermost essence he is not distinct from his Divine Principle”. This subjectivism attached to a fanciful abstraction is the means by which Schuon and other charlatans claim to have special election and absolute knowledge.



told about a book by looking at acknowledgements or who the author thanks. The people he thanks form of clear picture of the bias and slant of his book. He thanks Bryan Rennie, an expert on Mircea Eliade. Rennie is really an apologist for Eliade, who had a fascist past that both Rennie and Sedgwick try hard to paste over and excuse. Eliade is sort of the grandfather of religious studies, along with Huston Smith. They want to excuse this old fascist to try to remove the smell from their profession, as it were. It looks like Sedgwick invented his bogus categories of “soft” and “hard” traditionalism, primarily to try to excuse or even whitewash reactionaries like Eliade.

Looking further on Sedgwick’s list of worthies: why is Sedgwick thanking Boris Falikov? True, one of the good things in Sedgwick’s book is his exposure of Alexander Dugin, a current Russian Guenonian who wants to rehabilitate Stalin along Guenonian terms. It is hard to imagine a more repulsive combination than Guenon and Stalin. Dugin is right about a few things, however, there is a certain relationship between Guenon’s extreme right views and Stalin’s extreme left views. What ties the two together is a fundamentalist fascism of a individualistic and willfully destructive kind. But what this similarity consists of, does not concern Sedgwick at all. That is beyond Sedgwick.

Boris Falikov is a Russian academic who is an apologist for totalitarian cults. This seems to be Sedgwick’s interest in him. As a critic of Falikov says, “, if Falikov considers totalitarian cults to be new religions, that is obviously an indication of his own lack of experience in field work into cults.”<sup>582</sup> I agree. Anyone who has actually been in a cult

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<sup>582</sup> This comment by Alexander Dvorkin is prefaced by this: “Totalitarian cults resort to trickery, suppression and coercive propaganda to attract people. They use information censorship to manipulate and retain their people, and also resort to other unethical methods of control over individuals, such as psychological pressure, intimidation and others. In this manner totalitarian cults infringe on human rights with freedom of information, selection of worldview and life-style. In various cults they violate various human rights, but they violate without fail; this is their basic trait.” This is exactly right, and to apologize for cults pretend they are “NRM’s” is to whitewash their violations, as many of the writers try to do who speak at CESNUR conferences including

knows they are not “new religions” but totalistic organizations or in common language, “cults”. Indeed, I can see why Sedgwick relied on Falikov as Sedgwick too is something of an apologist for religious cults. To a degree, Sedgwick apologizes and suppresses evidence against the Schuon cult. It is clear that Sedgwick wants to ‘soften’ or even deny the fact that many of the traditionalists ran or were members of various religious cults. Why would Sedgwick’s wish to do this?

There are two reasons that are really one as to why he wants to apologize for cults. He is a Muslim and Islam is a basically a large destructive cult. Secondly. Sedgwick is an informal member of the “Cesnur” group of cult apologists—and this group is made up of religious studies professors who tend to write insider histories of religion and try to whitewash dangerous religious groups and cults. They do this partly because they are far right ideologues, and partly because religious studies in many universities is an outpost for fanatical science haters, delusion promoters and post modernists who despise rules of evidence. Cults certainly exist and the effort to remove the term is to protect these horrendous organizations from censure and criticism. The problem is that few of these ideologue have never been in a cult, as I have, and do not know what a mind control system actually does to the mind.

Sedgwick also thanks H.T. Hansen an Evola scholar and apologist and promoter of Evola, judging by some of his essays on Evola. Hansen to a degree apologizes for Evola and his involvement in fascism. He praises Evola for writing “with the vertical dimension in mind.” There is no ‘vertical dimension’. That is a fiction created by ‘esoterism’, which is also a fiction. Hansen’s notion of Evola as a great teacher of “self-realization”, “Spiritual Enlightenment” and “transformation” is bogus.

<sup>583</sup> Evola’s “quest for transcendence, for an inner “superiority,” a

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Sedgwick. This is not to say that new religious movement do not exist. They do, but some of these become cults eventually, as Schuon’s Maryami cult certainly did.

<sup>583</sup> <http://www.juliusevola.com/site/MenAmongtheRuins.pdf> pg 25-26

breakthrough of levels, and release from the world”, as Hansen puts it, is a formula for self-delusion, deluding others and autocratic tyranny. Having spent a lot of time with various people influenced by Guenon and other religiophiles, I can say with certainty that their self-transformations led to ill effects, harming their personalities and deforming their characters. Their minds were narrowed and truncated by the teachings of cult leaders and mythical writers from the past. They became cultists and narrow minded devotees of archaic systems of false knowledge.

Sedgwick also thanks Shahram Pazuki, an Iranian scholar who writes without any apparent critical insight into Rumi and other Sufis. Sedgwick also thanks Stephane Dudoignon, a French academic who studies Islam evidently as a Muslim, and who is married to an Iranian and was living in Iran, a backward and theocratic state. Living in Iran involves a certain internal suppression of mental balance, even if one opposes the regime, and a deep internalization of the cultic nature of the regime there, even if one is not a part of it. Iranians are locked into a battle or ideology against the ‘west’ and this tends to make their thinking conspiratorial. Abdollah Shabazi is one result of this way of thinking, creating conspiracies about the Ba’hai, the Freemasons, Jews and other targets of the Iranian republic.

Sedgwick thanks Ottavia Schmidt, an apologist for Islam who writes about “islamophobia” and mosques in Italy. Thierry Zarcone is another French promoter of Sufism and Islam, who Sedgwick references. Sedgwick also consulted with Jean-Pierre Brach: he is a co-inventor of the ideology of Western “esoterism”. There really is no legitimate entity called ‘esoterism’, but intellectuals like Brach have constructed this domain to try to expand their careers. They put together their Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, edited by Wouter J. Hanegraaff with Antoine Faivre, and Jean-Pierre Brach, which bundles together

heterogeneous productions of superstitious and magical thinking. Thrown into the hodge-podge are medieval alchemists, modern theosophists, Guenon, New Thought mystics, commercial astrologers, sex magicians, and UFO channelers and others. Antoine Faivre and Hanegraaff's 'esoteric studies' is really a bogus 'autonomous discipline' in university study. It doesn't belong in a credible university, but in the basement of the Daily News, or in an anthorology department studying the phenomena of crazy Gurus..

Many of Sedgwick's colleagues, who he thanks in his book, such as Pier Zoccatelli are participants in CESNUR, ( the "Center for Study of the New Religions"—which is really the 'Center for the Protection of Totalistic Cults' (CPTC). The head of this group is the impresario Massimo Introvigne <sup>584</sup>— who misuses the claim to be a "sociologist" to hide his far-right catholic promotional schemes. Introvigne's highly political far-right organization promotes cults, religious ideologies and post-modernist ideas of many kinds.<sup>585</sup> Indeed, many post-modern ideas are

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<sup>584</sup> Massimo Introvigne is an example of the repulsive and baneful effect of Guenon on Scholarship. Introvigne is an anti-intellectual of the worst sort, similar in ways to the Rush Limbaugh and other right wing purveyors of double speak. Introvigne says he wants to get rid of the "syndrome of Voltaire," which is to say get rid of critical thinking and smiling reason and understanding, and return us to the Dark Ages of brainwashing cult leaders like Schuon and Mormon polygamists who abuse children. He tries to apologize for pedophile priests and fundamentalists whenever he can. Voltaire's delightful and slightly mocking smile is meant precisely for right-wing cranks like Introvigne.



<sup>585</sup> Introvigne claims to stand for "religious freedom", when really he is for repression and religious intolerance, Cults and arbitrary dictatorship by the far right.

reactionary. It is a reactionary and toxic group beloved of religious studies professors who tend to lean toward the political right even when they pretend to be ‘apolitical’. These elitists and “esoterists” promote religions, Guenonism or even Evola under the guise of “academic freedom”. They misunderstand what academic freedom is.

According to Jocelyn Godwin in his preface to Evola’s book, Men Among the Ruins, a professor should work “with the tools of rationality and scholarship, unsullied by emotionality or subjective references”. I do not know of a single “esoterist” academic, including Godwin, who actually does this, or even really tries to do it. All of them banish criticism and a dispassionate mind, putting science and objectivity outside the pale. These men are all justifying spiritual delusions, crackpot imaginal schemes, the premises of which are never analyzed. Even Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, another professor of “esoterism”, on the surface appears to be somewhat objective, but on closer look he seems something of a promoter of the wackos he writes about—since he has books on Savitri Devi, Francis Parker Yockey, Blatavsky, Miguel Serrano and other far right people who, like Serrano, claim Hitler is an “Avatara”. These people are pretending to objectivity when really they are pushing right wing ideologies on their students. Like Sedgwick they are all post-modernists proselytizers of religion, more or less, who feel they are beyond science and reason and appear to believe that “creating your own reality” is what life is about.

Their pretense at being unbiased is really a cloak for the promotion of various stripes of political religion. “Religious Studies” is the term used to describe this con job.

Like Sedgwick, many of these writers claim “Guenonian

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for more on Introvigne, Zoccatelli and Cesnur see  
<http://www.kelebekler.com/cesnur/update2.htm>

traditionalism is essentially apolitical” when the opposite is true. These religious studies “scholars” are all more or less propagandists for religion or spirituality, including Mr. Godwin, as a cursory glance and his bibliography shows <sup>586</sup>—he has been promoting the occult and “esoterism” for years. Godwin favors making all of Evola’s works available because “it would be academically dishonest to suppress anything.” I agree, in principle. But I do not agree with Godwin about teaching this questionable material to sensitive minds without a thorough critique, which none of these promoters provide. But that is not his real reason. Godwin likes this stuff and has been devoted to it his whole life and has never really done a critique of it of consequence. <sup>587</sup> He promotes it under the guise of academic “honesty” when really he is an addict of it. Godwin sort of endorses it while still pretending not to and thereby he leaves himself an out if someone accuses him of that. Indeed, most religious studies professors are teaching adult make believe without telling students about their own adolescent enthusiasms.

So then, what can we discern through Sedgwick’s preface? Sedgwick’s book is advised by a group of mostly European intellectuals, some of whom are propagandists for Islam or mysticism, esoterism or Sufism, some of whom are careerists who are trying to create a college discipline that does not really exist--- and ought not to exist--- but which is intended to promote anti-scientific and irrational mysticism, “esoterism” and superstitions. Sedgwick’s other advisors try to apologize for cults and are influenced by Cesnur. Though clearly Sedgwick does not personally like Schuon very much, he nevertheless promotes him. The whole pose of the book is promotional as you can see from Jeff

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<sup>586</sup> Godwin’s most recent book is about Atlantis, as if anyone needs another one of those. Atlantis has been utterly discredited as a rational thesis. Godwin’s writes endlessly about all this nonsense with a true believers sense of mission. He is attracted to right wing spirituality and pushes this nonsense onto his students in a way that pretends toward impartiality, but actually infects with a certain enthusiasm. He is really not a scholar but a promoter and an impresario of the occult circus, as it were.

<sup>587</sup> His book Arktos has a few critical comments but too few.

Kripal's blurb on the back that says that the story of Evola, Guenon and Schuon "happens to be ours". This is utterly false. I do not identify myself with any of these writers and find Kripal's remark offensive. Kripal is a religion promoter and tries to extend religious delusions further into the university by promoting ESP and alien abduction and other nonsense of this kind. This cheapens university education and harms the humanities. Like Sedgwick's Kripal brings into question the purpose and existence of Religious studies departments in universities.

Neither Kripal nor Sedgwick know much of anything about these men in person. <sup>588</sup>If Sedgwick's advisors do not like the prevalence of theofascist overtones that threads through all traditionalist thought, it is not obvious in what Sedgwick writes. He is ambiguous and thus is not objective at all, but rather is hiding his religious agenda behind a pose of disinterestedness and "balance". Like Kripal, Sedgwick's more centrist politics hardly makes him less of a purveyor of delusions and superstitions. Sedgwick sought advice from various whitewashers and obfuscators of the truth about Eliade, Evola, Guenon and Schuon and that is really what the book is about. It is a book of whitewash and career building. It is a book that promotes Sedgwick himself, as does his blog.

He says himself in the book that he is writing the book from the point of view of Guenon and Schuon and thus it is not a disinterested book at all but a piece of insider or embedded journalism. Embedded

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<sup>588</sup> Many of the religious studies writers belong in seminaries or cultish places like Naropa or Esalen. I read one of Kripal books once, on his recommendation. Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom: Eroticism and Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism. I found it very a self-regarding excursion into the delights of a narcissistic academic mystic, paranormal promoter and Esalen propagandist. I don't recommend it to anyone except if they wish to see the sort of saccharine soul candy for sale in religions studies departments. Indeed, Kripal teaches delusion for a living. He compares his teaching to the movie the Matrix and cartoons and indeed, most of Kripal's work has the flavor of Kool-Aid and purple haze, comic books and efforts to promote telepathy and other forms of make believe. A modern day snake oil salesman, his books defines very well the sort of rampant subjectivism that reigns in Religious Studies, which William James would celebrate but which I argue against in this book.

journalism is bad journalism.<sup>589</sup> Proving his good will towards the traditionalists, Sedgwick's goes out of his way to apologize for Mircea

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<sup>589</sup> Bad journalism is everywhere these days. Most of what appears as journalism in America is really political lying and advocacy, often by overpaid liars like Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly and others. The New York Times, the so called "paper of record" is often little more than a corporate rag, turning out pro corporate nonsense every day. A good example of this is how they dealt with Bernie Sanders in 2015-16. He was by far the most intelligent and needed candidate, questioning corporate power, advocating for universal health care, opposing global warming, helping college kids with free tuition in state schools. But the Times ran negative article after negative article about him, showing just how conservative they really are. They ran perhaps 500 articles on Trump, 120 on Hillary and 20 on Sanders. They were nominally in favor of Clinton but they pushed Trump, whose views are racist, elitist and far right militarist.

Many complain the Times is "too liberal", but that is false, actually they are largely corporate and the paper of the rich. Day after Day they promoted Trump too, a real estate crook who talks like a fascist and racist..Also the Democratic party lead by Debbie Wasserman Schultz spearheaded a smear campaign against Sanders, insuring that Hillary Clinton, a favorite of the corporate rich, would win the Democratic primary. Thus the lesser of two evils was again created and only corporate candidates were allowed to run. The one chance to help the poor and middle class failed, again, and the worst candidates were lined up like race horses running toward more corruption.. Yet it was clear all along that the democrats should have supported Sanders not Clinton. The result was Clinton lost and the far right prevailed. Trump, "he who should not be named seemed to win, though he lost the popular vote and was only put in by the corrupt electoral college. Once again the press helped "elect" a neo fascist.

**Subject:** Ignorance the NYT and Corporate Trumpism  
attn: Tavernise and Leonhardt

I have been watching the New York Times for years. NYT substantially helped get Trump elected. During the election period, according to your own statistics, you published over 500 articles on Trump, 120 on Hillary and 20 on Bernie Sanders. It is clear who the NYT supported in fact, though the op-ed section pretended to support Hillary. The recent articles by Tavernise and Leonhardt (Feb 20, 2017) are examples of poor thinking and sloppy history writing. Tavernise's shows this by cherry picking examples of people who are Trump or non-Trump supporters. She thinks this is like her war reporting. Her mind seeks a false balance, and so she makes serious mistakes. In fact, Trump is riding on a wave of paid corporate propaganda going now since Rush Limbaugh and Bill O'Reilly came on the scene, and which goes back before that to Red Scare people and Father Coughlin and more recently Jerry Springer and World Wide Wrestling. Steve Bannon, another far right talk show guy, is merely a symptom of this love of hate speech and prejudice. Corporate TV created Trump, and the corporate effort to destroy democracy pushes him on. Corporations hate democracy because they are authoritarian organizations. They want the same top down, scapegoat women and minorities, punish unions, mentality that Trump exhibits so well. Bernie Sanders was the only decent candidate running this time and the NYT helped destroy him, even though he got 46 % or more of the democratic vote. It is extraordinary that he did so well, no thanks to you. The real liberal party should not be blamed, rather it should be recognized that the NYT is not part of it, but helped Trump get elected. The democratic party is now merely Republican lite. Hillary was a big mistake and not much better than Trump. Only corporate candidates are allowed in the pseudo democratic party.

So who got Trump elected ?, Corporate culture did.. He is the logical consequences of corporate



Eliade's endorsement of the murders committed by the Romanian Iron Guard. He also bends over some distance to apologize and blur the factual record of Evola's involvement with the fascists. He also tries as well as to excuse Schuon for his misuse of children. Sedgwick even claims to know that Schuon "would not have been found guilty of any offense" which is bizarre<sup>590</sup> since he knows little about American law and has no legal training.<sup>591</sup> I have proven to a sufficient degree that Schuon

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CEO culture and the anti-democratic values the NYT and Trump both share. He should be impeached tomorrow, but given that Republicans now control congress, the White House and the Supreme Court it is unlikely. What the NYT needs to do is to question the fact that this guy is betraying the Constitution but the Constitution keeps him in power. There is a serious flaw there. Will they address it,--- probably not. Will they address that it shows the presidency is a failed institution,--- probably not. So are the liberals to blame, no, the Republicans, the NYT, phony democrats, and the corporate machine are to blame. This is not new at all. This is what we get for privatizing education and actively promoting ignorance for so many years. It might be worth noting too that the corporate control of the NYT extends even to their pushing the idea of mOnarchy as they did on, 1/7/17. Here:

[https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/06/world/europe/monarchy-us-advantage.html?module=WatchingPortal&region=c-column-middle-span-region&pgType=Homepage&action=click&mediaId=thumb\\_square&state=standard&contentPlacement=7&version=internal&contentCollection=www.nytimes.com&contentId=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2018%2F01%2F06%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fmonarchy-us-advantage.html&eventName=Watching-article-click](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/06/world/europe/monarchy-us-advantage.html?module=WatchingPortal&region=c-column-middle-span-region&pgType=Homepage&action=click&mediaId=thumb_square&state=standard&contentPlacement=7&version=internal&contentCollection=www.nytimes.com&contentId=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2018%2F01%2F06%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fmonarchy-us-advantage.html&eventName=Watching-article-click)

<sup>590</sup> Even Jim Richardson the primary investigator in the case said a miscarriage of justice had occurred. The cult also used Fitzgerald's techniques of malicious prosecution in an attempt to intimidate and harass Sergeant Jim Richardson, of the Indiana State Police, who investigated the cult, by hanging a 2 million dollar lawsuit over the head of the State Police, who were thus forced to make him retire early. He recently got his job back, 3 years later, after the cult withdrew the lawsuit. Both he and his family suffered in the interim. The purpose of the legal threat, according to Jim Richardson, was to intimidate the police and prevent further investigation. Jim said to me that he still believed that Schuon was guilty and he suspected that the cult or their lawyers had used their money and influence to pressure authorities in the government and courts of Indiana to drop the case against Schuon and stop the investigation. Richardson said that the cult had obstructed justice.

<sup>591</sup> Actually Schuon was indicted by a Grand Jury, which is not nothing, the whole jury felt he was guilty and the assistant prosecutor, David Hunter, had to be fired for insisting on the case, which is also not nothing as it shows the prosecutor was acting against the both the Grand Jury and the assistant prosecutor. The case was dropped, apparently for political reasons. The cult prevailed on the state. The Governor of the state forced it to be dropped,--- despite the unanimous indictment of the Grand Jury. The Grand Jury, in a really unprecedented move, reconvened and investigated the head prosecutor, Robert Miller, because they suspected him of corruption on various grounds, including the Schuon case, which they felt was improperly

was guilty. But as I said at the time of the Indictment in the Newspaper, I did not expect at all that Schuon would be found guilty as I knew the cult followers would all lie in court. They did, and I proved that some of them did in fact lie. My purpose was not to put him in jail, but to expose him and his followers as frauds. This I did and it is unknown how many people have been saved from joining that cult of its offshoots. Many I suspect.

But I also proved that Schuon was guilty. There are numerous first person accounts and witnesses and that is all that is needed to prove him guilty. In any case Schuon is dead, and again to say it twice, my point was never to put the dirty old man in jail,-- I only intended to expose him and his cult as frauds and corrupt and that has been amply accomplished. Sedgwick was enlisted as part of the damage control effort but appears to have been not smart enough to realize the fact. Nor did he really understand why I did what I did.

But that said, let us go back, as promised, and pause for a moment over Sedgwick's endorsement of Mircea Eliade. It appears that Eliade's interest in traditionalism and fascism, did indeed influence the ideological underpinning of his theories of religion. Sedgwick mentions Eliade's support of Romanian fascism, but draws no ethical

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handled. Lucy Cherbas, head of the Grand Jury told me she hoped to reopen the case against Schuon: She was sure he was guilty. David Hunter claimed to me repeatedly that the case had been dropped for "political" reasons, and he said he suspected that the cult had engineered this behind the scenes, possibly through bribery. He stressed the huge amount of money they have. Maude Murray says they got Schuon off only because of lying and spending huge amounts of money and she admits Schuon was guilty of the things for which he was accused. But let me make this clear. My effort was to expose Schuon as a fraud not to put him in jail. I think I succeeded. Yes he was guilty, but anyone with any sense knows if you have enough money you can get people off the hook. Look at Michael Jackson, who was also guilty of child abuse or molestation but who bought his innocence. When I helped bring the case in 1991 I knew that the cult people would all lie in court. I knew I would probably "lose". But I felt it was essential that Schuon be exposed and a court was the best way to do it. I knew the cult would attack me viciously and try to destroy my credibility. But I thought that by exposing this man I would help many people see through the lie of his claim to holiness. Many people did indeed leave the cult and Schuon is largely discredited now except among a shrinking circle of fanatical followers.

consequences of this involvement for Eliade's work as a religion scholar. Let's see, Eliade showed himself to be a fascist supporter of genocide against Jews and this means nothing? This is unfortunate and involves Sedgwick's in virtually apologizing for Eliade's theofascism.

Why is Sedgwick led to spend so much time trying to justify an obvious fascist? This follows naturally from the fact that one of Sedgwick's consultants was Bryan Rennie, an apologist for Eliade's fascism, and a man whose thesis trying to whitewash Eliade has been discredited by Russell McCutcheon in his book *Manufacturing Religion* (pg. 85-87). McCutcheon says that Rennie "excuses the violent anti-Semitism" of Codreanu which Eliade supported as being merely "blind nationalism". Rennie also tries to obscure Eliade's support of fascism as being motivated by Eliade's need of "ethnic purity", which really begs the question. Hitler also wanted ethnic purity, as did the slave traders. Sedgwick parrots Rennie's defense of Eliade.<sup>592</sup> It is unfortunate that Sedgwick appears to have strong ties with so many reactionary "scholars". But I illustrate this only to show again how theofascism is not uncommon in the religious studies areas of the university and it is consistently apologized for by Sedgwick and his colleagues.

Russell McCutcheon has said of Eliade that Eliade's far right

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<sup>592</sup> Eliade left a legacy at the university of Chicago that unfortunately continues to bear fruit. Teachers such as Wendy Doniger and her students Jeff Kripal and Hugh Urban and others continue to promote a narcissistic and rather decadent religious myths and fictions and unfortunately are opaque to the destructive influence of their forebears. For more of Kripal and his need of purple mystical pills see

<http://religion-compass.com/2008/03/06/taking-the-purple-pill-on-the-paradoxical-pedagogy-of-mysticism/>

Doniger, whose views are not deeply questioning of religion but who is not orthodox either, writes about religion from an identity politics and a story telling perspective, really a rather weak and post-modernist way of looking at things. She was recently attacked by the far right in India. According to the NYT "Penguin Books India, a unit of "Penguin Random House, has agreed to withdraw and destroy all copies of a 2009 book on Hinduism by an American scholar. " Arundhati Roy wrote about Penguin books that "What was it that terrified you?" Ms. Roy wrote in a column for the Times of India defending the book. "The elections are still a few months away. The fascists are, this far, only campaigning. Yes, it's looking bad, but they are not in power. Not yet. And you've already succumbed?" Far right religious nationalists in India do not like Doniger's book.

politics and the totalizing and colonialist efforts of his theories are largely ignored in religious studies.<sup>593</sup> The reason for ignoring Eliade's fascism is plain: a thorough analysis of the politics at the basis of most religious studies would bring the entire discipline of religious studies into question. It is clear that scholars like Rennie, Sedgwick, Nasr, Huston Smith, James Cutzinger, Jean Borella, Antoine Faivre, Vincent Cornell, Harry Oldmeadow, Arthur Versluis, tacitly support far-right ideologies, theofascism, reactionary and irrational arcane medievalisms, astrologies, superstitions and irrationalism. Religious studies needs to be questioned more closely and directly as a valid discipline. Eliade had much to do with outlining some of the basic policies and methods used in religious studies and turning it into an organ for religious anti-intellectuals, cult apologists, anti-modernists and Guenonian proselytizers. Religious studies exists partly to offer an euphemistically named "apolitical" haven for extremist political positions and ideologies. By and large cult apologists have no idea what the actual practice of religion does to those inside cults and how cults actually operate. They have never seen or felt the insidious dynamics of a dangerous system of beliefs.

. So Sedgwick's book is weak and badly distorted in its criticism of Schuon, better in relation to Julius Evola and Alexander Dugin, but doesn't go very far in his understanding of Guenon. Indeed, the book is more about Schuon and various minor traditionalists than it is about Guenon. However, I was interviewed for this book beginning back in 1998 or 99, and suggested some of its main themes and got to know Sedgwick over several years. I didn't trust him much and thought he was a sort of soft-fascist and perhaps a quasi-monarchist, an impression that has not really gone away. Nevertheless, the thrust of the book is partly

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<sup>593</sup> McCutcheon's books are well worth reading as a critical approach to religion . see his Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia and Critics Not Caretakers (Suny Series, Issues in the Study of Religion)

mine and the chapter about Schuon is largely derived from information supplied by me and others who left the cult. He bungled the information he was given pretty badly. I was already looking at Traditionalism as a far-right global movement before Sedgwick knew anything about the subject.

In any case, after he came out with the book I realized Sedgwick's reporting of my witness was so distorted and falsified that I felt the book should not have been published in its current form. He makes gross mistakes. For instance, he states that certain people, and I know he means the Schuon cult itself, "suggest that the accounts[ of Schuon's primordial gatherings the involvement of minors] was orchestrated by critics of the group". " This is an utter lie, and Sedgwick had enough information to judge it to be a lie. This is a typical paranoid damage statement made by the cult, projecting their own faults onto others. None of the people who left the cult were or are in regular contact with me so the cults claim that we are in conspiracy against them is typical cult paranoia. This is merely damage control the cult told. Sedgwick was used to help cover up for Schuon's crime. Sedgwick knew to what degree this cult lies and should have said so. Sedgwick was endorsing the views of Michael Fitzgerald, a known liar, cult "spokesman" and dis-barred lawyer. In a film Maude made for Schuon called "Colors of Light", she reports that Michael Fitzgerald, "took charge" and "led the entire group to lie in court under oath" to protect Schuon against the charge of child abuse or molestation. She also states that Fitzgerald , allegedly, "was disbarred in Colorado for trickery and income tax evasion". That is the kind of "spokesman" Schuon hires! Sedgwick should not have been so influenced by his point of view, but he is a coward and did what fear told him to do.

Further Sedgwick states that Schuon only had three wives. Actually he had four nominal wives, but no wives in fact. His marriages were all based on phony "visions". Maude Murray was his "wife" till the

early 1990's and Sedgwick leaves her out of his reckoning all together. Maude was "divorced" from Schuon, Maude says, but it is clear it was a meaningless gesture—a whim. Actually there was no marriage to divorce. None of his wives were actually married to him, except the first, who he hadn't treated as a wife for thirty or 40 years. So, really their marriages were utterly empty. Catherine Schuon told me herself she did not love Schuon. So his legal wife was not really his wife and his illegal wives were not really his wives either. All his relationships were dysfunctional. Sedgwick does not even get the number of the wives right much less the fact that the marriages were more or less meaningless. Schuon wrote in his book Esoterism as Principle and Way that

"No doubt a distinction should be made between a polygamy in which several women keep their personality, and a princely "pantogamy" in which a multitude of women represent femininity in a quasi-impersonal manner; the latter would be an affront to the dignity of human persons if it were not founded on the idea that a given bridegroom is situated at the summit of human kind. Pantogamy is possible because Krishna is Vishnu, because David and Solomon are prophets, because the sultan is the "shadow of *Allah* on earth. It could also be said that the innumerable and anonymous harem has a function analogous to that of an imperial throne adorned with precious stones; A function that is analogous, but not identical, for the throne made of human substance — the harem, that is — indicates in an eminently more direct and concrete manner, the real of borrowed divinity of the monarch." (pg. 133)

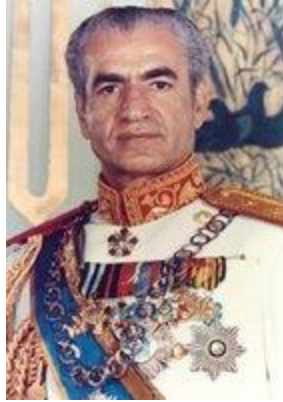
This sums up the sickness of a psychopathic mind. Schuon's phony "marriages" were an "an affront to the dignity of human persons". He compares his women to dead jewels on a throne that he sits on, there

just to prove that the great man is really a psychopathic emperor who has no clothes, a fraud, a cult leader. Schuon demeans women in this analogy as Nazi's did in sewing Jewish skins into lampshades.

There are many other problems with the book. Sedgwick encourages a somewhat "apolitical" view of some of the Traditionalists by arbitrarily dividing them up into "soft traditionalism" and opposing them to "hard" "political Traditionalists". Mircea Eliade being "Soft" and Evola "political". Sedgwick's distinctions on this score are utterly fallacious. Sedgwick write on his self-serving blog that

"There is an important political stream within Traditionalism, though, which follows Julius Evola and Alexander Dugin, and has often been described as "fascist," though I myself prefer a label such as "new right" or "far right." This has only limited implications for the spiritual Traditionalism represented by people such as S. H. Nasr, however. Since the 1920s, political Traditionalism has developed separately from other varieties of Traditionalism."

He doesn't know what he is talking about. He neglects to notice Ling's endorsement of Franco or Schuon's endorsement of Japanese fascism. He doesn't even realize that the Shah of Iran was a neo-fascist or autocratic state created by the U.S. government which Nasr supported



The Shah of Iran

till the end.<sup>594</sup> He tries to excuse this support by saying rather stupidly that Nasr “agreed with Schuon that “kingship flows from an archetype but presidency does not.” “The worst king is better than the best president.” Thus he justifies a sort of theofascist monarchism.<sup>595</sup> The ignorance of this argument is stunning. There are no “archetypes” that is a Platonistic fiction and the history of kinds is itself proof against the

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<sup>594</sup> Nasr politicking is certainly questionable, but what is suggested here by Zachary Markwith is uncertain. He says

The Wikileaks cables deserve a closer look because they prove Nasr is not guilty by association, but because he was an informant working as and on behalf of criminals. The documents are between former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former US Ambassador to Iran and CIA director Richard Helms. Nasr approaches Kissinger and Helms on behalf of the Shah to target the Iranian intellectual Reza Baraheni. The same year as these correspondences and meetings—1976—SAVAK is exposed for a plot involving the planned assassination of Baraheni and other Iranian intellectuals on US soil.

I do not see how it is prudent or merciful to defend criminals or pretend that their crimes do not exist when real human beings have been hurt and are in need of support.

“<http://traditionalistblog.blogspot.com/2016/11/counterpunch-attacks-maryamiyya.html>

I looked this up on Wikileaks and could find no confirmation of this, though there is a Richard Helms letter about Nasr. There is no direct link between Nasr and the planned assassination. He overstates the case. It would have to be researched further. Establishing such a thing requires a great deal of evidence, and what many spiritual people forget is that evidence really matters. They are often prone to belief without any evidence at all..

<sup>595</sup> <http://traditionalistblog.blogspot.com/2006/11/nasr-and-shah.html>



inanity of Nasr's and Schuon ideology. Following leaders is always something you should enter into with skepticism. They are often corrupt.

So Sedgwick's categories are specious and irrelevant. All the traditionalists had far right sympathies and all of them moved more to the right than the fascists, following Guenon. Eliade was a very "hard" political Traditionalist associated with the fascist Iron Guard movement in Romania. He later hid his politics more than Evola did. All the Traditionalists, beginning with Guenon are intensely political. To claim they are apolitical means one has either not read them, ones knows nothing of their history and influence, or one is locked in the bubble of one or another of the various mind-control religious cults operating on the basis of some of Guenon's or Schuon ideas.

I think it is Sedgwick's devotion to Islam that blinds him. Sedgwick has an interest in safeguarding a member of the virtual guild of religious studies professors. Guenon created a politics fundamentally based on and exploiting religion, as this essay will show. In any case, Sedgwick's book, which I advised initially, was deeply marred by the lawyers at Oxford University Press, who—with Sedgwick's evident permission, cut out important evidence and suppressed significant facts due to threats and intimidation from the Schuon cult. The result is a compromised book written partly by lawyers and partly by the Schuon cult. In other words, Sedgwick's writes me that Michael Fitzgerald of the Schuon cult launched "threats of legal action against me, my publisher (OUP), my editor and anyone else involved." These political intimidations by some of the more fanatical of the Traditionalists are not new. They have intimidated others by threats of legal action in order to cover up for Schuon's excesses and criminal actions. For instance Maude Murray was forced to sign a confidentiality agreement abrogating her freedom of speech to mention people who are in the Schuon cult. This is form of legal blackmail. Rama Coomaraswamy was also forced to a similar

‘agreement’ being imposed on him after he disseminated some of the nude photos of Schuon and his “wives” in an effort to expose the fraud of Schuon’s sanctity.

Sedgwick’s somewhat “apolitical” reading of the Traditionalists is thus falsified by the fact that he himself caved into political pressure from the Traditionalists, who forced him to suppress facts they found inconvenient. Sedgwick said in an interview “No, I’m not a Traditionalist, though I have a certain amount of sympathy for some Traditionalist views and positions.” And that is the problem with his book, he pretends to an objectivity about the movement when actually he is caught in the politics of it and in denial about that. Sedgwick’s is a sort of soft “traditionalist” in his own contrived category and a “soft traditionalist” is really just a soft fascist. Sedgwick is out of justify a soft theofascism, echoing both Evola and the traditionalists.

Sedgwick’s book is a work of political cowardice. This is evident for instance in his effort to squash the evidence that I personally gave him about the “Primordial Gatherings”. I sent him numerous accounts of these events and eyewitness testimony from various people about the involvement of at least 6 under aged people who were at these gatherings. These were the children of the Varelas, Gaetanis, Worths, Pollacks and the Fitzgerald’s, among others. All these families let their under aged people be involved in illicit gatherings and were said by various witnesses to have been involved in illegal acts with Schuon or one of his officers, Mr. Gustavo Polit. Sedgwick suppressed a lot of this evidence and the evidence he did provide is so mangled and contradictory as to be bad journalism. The evidence proves young girls were present at Schuon’s Primordial Gatherings and that Schuon grabbed the buttocks and pressed their genitals against his penis in quasi-ritual enactments. Underage boys were made to watch their mothers dance around nude and interact with Schuon in dances that were purported to be “sacred” but were really just the obscene gestures

of a dirty old man and his concubines. As Stephen Lambert testified in a public affidavit

In one small gathering of four couples which I attended, the women were completely nude and performed dances which were approximations of various Far and Middle Eastern dance forms. Then to popular East Indian devotional songs, Mr. Schuon — standing as above described, but without American Indian vestimentary, rather in the presumed regalia of an East Indian “rajah” — embraced each woman in turn, pressing them to himself in full body contact by first clasping them about the upper torso and then about the buttocks. “ In my concrete experience in these occasions amounted to no more than a man indulging his taste for and preoccupation with women”.

Sedgwick ignored this and other corroborating evidence which proves the case. On page 173 Sedgwick’s badly misquotes Maude Murray who actually said that at certain secret Primordial Gatherings,

“ no one was present but myself, Schuon, Catherine Schuon, Sharlyn Romaine Rebecca and Barry Macdonald, John Murray, Mr. and Mrs. Garcia Varela and Barbara Perry [the 2<sup>nd</sup> ‘wife’]. The women were naked...the men wore loincloths, except for Schuon, who wore a ‘free’ loincloth, that is one... could often see him naked...Sharlyn did some lovely Hindu.. American Indian or Balinese [dances]. Rebecca would do a more static kind of belly dancing. Emphasizing hips and stomach and breasts...Schuon

would do the Primordial Dance...<sup>596</sup> The only real objection anyone could make to these gatherings in my opinion, is that Sharlyn would sit for long periods with her legs apart and in front of the Shaykh who would meditate on this position with the rest of us present. Rebecca [MacDonald] did this somewhat ...too.”

Elsewhere, Murray admits that children were involved in some of these gatherings and reports that another inner circle member of the cult, Michael Pollock, allowed his young daughter to be used by Schuon for sexually visual amusement.

Sedgwick misquotes Maude Murray’s evidence, which he so alters and to make it largely meaningless and then concludes that Schuon “saw beauty as affording access to the divine” <sup>597</sup> as if involving underage girls in these sexual rites were somehow like watching a beautiful sunset. If I compare the actual statements of Maude Murray (Sedgwick calls her Rose Conner) to Sedgwick’s diced up facsimile, they are so grossly different as to be unrecognizable. Sedgwick’s ridiculous creation of

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<sup>596</sup> This dance is a secret of the cult still. In this a dance Schuon invented a sort of primitive Jack LaLane style spiritual gymnastics in which the participants --often a nude wife and husband or inner circle members so the cult --do “darshan” with each other and watch as they invoke the ‘divine name’ as they twist their bodies into the one two three of right and lefts twists of torso round and back. It is basically Jane Fonda Tantric calisthenics done to sanctimonious mouthing of meaningless mantras. It is sexual and can lead to intercourse and often does. It is almost a nudist aerobics, but less strenuous, meant to get the body into the mood of sexual invocation of the so called 7<sup>th</sup> theme. One performs constant prayer while having sex. You are not supposed to be attached to the pleasure of sex, but not deny it either. Schuon did this dance with his wives as part of an effort to make up his own neo-Tantric practices. Primordial dances grew out of this dance which I think as invented in the 1960’s or earlier. Maude taught it to me and only the inner most circle of the cult knows it. This secrecy does not mean much as really there is not much to the dance to justify the hiding of it. Schuon was ashamed of it just as he was the Primordial Gatherings. In both cases, the illicit was there as an integral part of the dance and Schuon knew it, and so wished to dissimulate it. In his mind it presented dangers to his reputation. The only thing wrong with it is the constant association of every action with an abstract idea like Allah, or god. This has an effect of making everything unreal but this concept, which of course is the point. It is part of a mind control method. The sexual part of it was a harmless technique for married couples, the dangers was in the religious part of it,

<sup>597</sup> Sedgwick pg. 173y

pseudonyms really amounts to protecting the guilty. His name “Patricia Estelle” is meant to hide the identity of Sharlyn Romaine, Schuon’s fourth wife. He refers to the fourth wife as the third wife, when actually Maude Murray was the third wife.

Even if one grants that Schuon’s marriages have any reality at all, when really they were factitious, one should be accurate about them. Sedgwick quotes the cult that “false accusations” have been heaped on Schuon, when in fact none of the accusations have ever been rebutted in the 25 years since they were made and a lot of new evidence has become available which further strengthens the case against Schuon. To test him, I recently sent some of the evidence about Schuon to Sedgwick’s blog and he refused to put it online, once again showing me that he wishes to hide or suppress the evidence against Schuon. It has been public information for many years but he refuses to link to it or to tell the truth about it. So, I conclude that Sedgwick is somehow complicit with the Schuon cult or otherwise has been prevailed upon to speak for their point of view against the actual evidence. Perhaps he is just a coward. He is in any case, no real scholar.

Sedgwick tries to maintain that Schuon was somehow without desires, as if he knew anything about it. At the time of the Primordial Gatherings I saw, Schuon was 84 and impotent but far from being without desire. He spent most of his time looking at female sexual parts, Maude told me., not just Maude and Sharlyn but other women in the cult as well<sup>598</sup> He still had desires, Maude said, but he could not get an erection anymore. Maude was the last person to have sexual intercourse with him, she said. Romaine and Murray tried to get him aroused enough to do it with them but he couldn’t, she said. Sedgwick claims

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<sup>598</sup> As I explained in the 1991 Account, Maude claimed that Schuon had his fourth wife paint pictures of the Virgin Mary nude while she was spread eagled for his edification. I never witnessed this myself, but heard about it often, almost daily, enough to conclude Schuon may have had some sort of OCD on this subject.

that in the Primordial Gatherings there was no “attempt to arouse or satisfy... sexual desires”. That is absurd. Schuon spent the whole time at these events grabbing many women’s buttocks, looking at female sexual parts and pressing his penis against these parts. He could still be aroused but not satisfied. The fact that Schuon was impotent did not mean he had no desires. Schuon often *said* he had no desires, even decades ago, but to understand this statement you have to understand his peculiar brand of madness.

Schuon lied in a PR video after his arrest for child abuse or molestation and said, “it is psychologically impossible that a man like me could have a passionate pleasure”. This was a Nixonian moment in Schuon’s biography. Richard Nixon, who was forced to resign for crimes and cover ups and who should have been impeached and put in jail. He said about his own crime that “when the president does it, it’s not illegal.”. Schuon was saying on a public video that when the ‘Shaykh does it, it is not illegal’. But what really is being said when Schuon claimed it is “psychologically impossible that a man like me could have a passionate pleasure”.? Just how devious and convoluted Schuon’s thinking on this subject is indicated by the following self-serving passage from one of his books:

“When the Divine-Man apparently expresses a feeling or desire it is he alone who is right in his use of human terms, and the same affirmations would become- as compared with the Man-God- more or less false in the mouth of the ordinary man....When the wise man says: “I desire”, he speaks truly, but when the ordinary man says of him: “he desires”, he is mistaken. [Because] when the wise man desires something, he does so with divine consent. This compels one to admit, that from the ordinary human point of view,

the perfect sage is beyond desire.<sup>599</sup>

The logic is then above passage is a psychopathic maneuver, an exploit, similar to that of Richard Nixon and other psychopaths.. This explains why Schuon thinks he is beyond the law. Only Fred Schuon can be judge and jury in his own case: he is a “Man-God” or a “Divine Man”. Only he and god---- and, for goodness sake, is there any real difference? --- only he and god, know what his intentions or the meaning of his actions are.

This delusional solipsism is a regular feature of Schuon’s psychology. So when he says that no one may judge him because he is god, well, is not that what every psychopath says? No one may accurately speak about or judge any of Schuon’s actions, even if he murders someone, because only he knows the will of god and has god’s “consent”. Everything he does is pure because he is god. “To the pure, all things are pure.” Schuon liked to quote this statement. If he abuses children, well that is OK, because he is god and god knows he did not mean it. But this, of course, is actually merely a very sophisticated evasion of any responsibility for his actions. It is a form of consciencelessness, a form of spiritual psycho- pathology. Schuon is a relativist, and everything is relative to him because he is god! Many cult leaders employ this absurd sort of self-serving logic.

For Schuon sexuality appears to be primarily about power. But he clearly has many sexual and passionate interests. Both Lambert and I have written about Schuon’s need to satisfy his interest in sex and power. Maude stressed this over and over to me. In the quote some pages above, Stephen Lambert writes that Schuon at Primordial Gatherings that in “my concrete experience in these occasions amounted to no more than a man indulging his taste for and preoccupation with women”. He concludes, “I claim the right to make these judgments as one who has

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<sup>599</sup> Schuon, Frithjof, Eye of the Heart Unpublished translation by Gerald Palmer

been closely and intimately associated with the group for more than twelve years, even at its upper echelons, and who has since severed all relations exactly because of the evidence of its spiritual bankruptcy and the consequent machinations that result to obscure this fact". So Lambert is sure Schuon was a regular guy and not a god, and that he is a compulsive liar....

Catherine Perry, (a daughter of one of Schuons "wives") whom Schuon tried to seduce in the 1970's, says to me in letters that Schuon's interest in her certainly was passionate. Years ago, she told me, she was made to lie about this. Maude Murray writes that everyone in the cult lied to the grand jury about Schuon, and she records that Fitzgerald has been lying about Schuon's marriages. She writes that Fitzgerald "even tried to tell my father recently that the marriages to Schuon were purely Platonic ! I guess he [Fitzgerald] thinks he was in bed with us {Murray and Schuon}. It cannot be good for a saint to be continually protected by lies when so many people know the truth".

Elsewhere Murray has written at some length about Schuon's passionate interests. In a letter to me she writes that Schuon and Romaine discussed "in front of me—letting Jennifer Casey and Deborah Willsey come to see [Schuon] totally naked. He was wondering if they would want to touch his penis and was looking forward to more meetings like this". She writes Schuon "did make love with Romaine and Perry and I on each side of him and he did love to have photos of himself taken naked". This hardly describes a passionless man.... And it indicates that Catherine Schuon lied when she said that she took these photos merely to record his spiritual aura or some nonsense. He was a sex minded old goat, not to demean goats. He lied in a video and said he had no desires but that is merely a lie couched by Fitzgerald and other lawyers. Proving that he had no desires was essential to getting the case thrown out of court. Schuon says in his Memoirs that the habit of lying started early for him. He states "After the death of my father I had quickly to get used



to hiding my pearls, and thus a dissimulation that was forced upon me became my second nature; even when I did not wish to dissimulate, I was unable not to;" So Schuon is merely dissimulating. Again this is how a psychopath thinks. I do not care that he had desires, but I do care that he foisted these on women and children with such perfidious deception and the power of his cult network.

The Primordial Gatherings are primarily about power, yes, not sex, but they were about sex too. It must be understood that sex is the means to power in these Gatherings. Sedgwick could not understand this and botched this badly in his book where he says, --- wrongly--- that "Koslow now accepts that Schuon's intentions were not primarily about sex but about ... [Schuon's] pursuit of absurd delusions of power". He misquotes me out of context and misunderstands what I said and why I said it. I said that because too many people were saying it was *only* about sex. It was about sex, but mostly it was about power through sex.

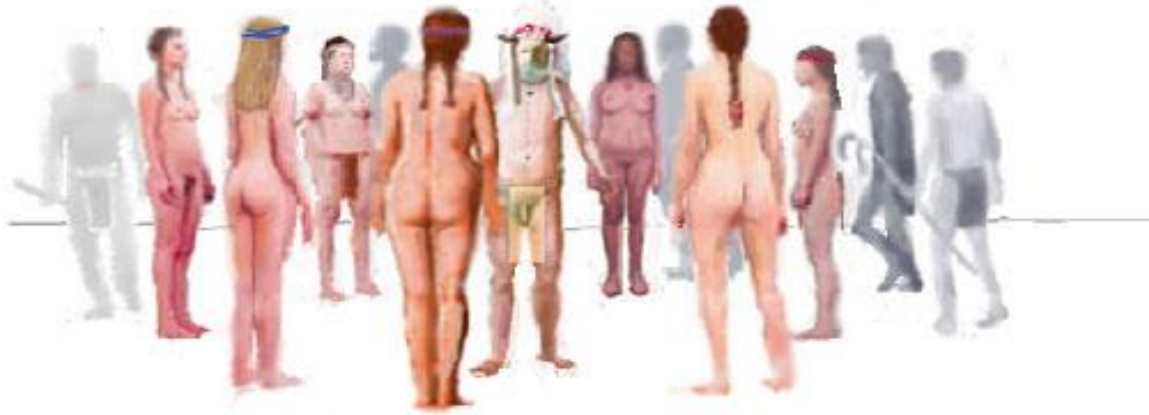
I will explain this further: The following picture was made by me on Photoshop for this book. It is based on sketches I did the year I left the cult so there are quite accurate if not realistic. It is an accurate approximation of what primordial gatherings looked like. But there are differences. There are far less people. I have not included any of the colors or objects in the actual room where these gatherings occurred. It is more or less a schematic drawing, made to show how the gatherings operated. Some of the women were fatter, some thinner than shown here. Younger or older. The lion cloth was more greenish perhaps, but his penis could be seen both through and to the side of side of the loin cloth. He did not wear the loin cloth in more intimate gatherings, he was exposed. Not that anyone should care, but I merely note it.

The men, here shown in black and white for contrast, to show their outsider status, danced around Schuon who had the women in the interior circle. The men were more or less irrelevant and I am unsure why they were there at all, other than as humiliated voyeurs or witnesses

of Schuon's obsessions. Cuckolding large groups of men seemed to be part of the plan.<sup>600</sup> The men were meant to be made to feel irrelevant, All that mattered was Schuon and the women, and the husbands and sons in the outer ring are really just meant to be witness to the superlative "prophet/sundance pole/penis/god" in the middle of his harem of "Gopis" or 'goat herders'. as Krishna's little harem girls were called. Maude referred to all the nude women at these gatherings as "goat herders", imitating Schuon. The gatherings were vary largely sex fantasies born between Schuon and his third and fourth wives. He had invited Stephen Lambert to one gatherings, as already noted, and he regretted this badly, as Lambert was a far more impressive man that Schuon and Schuon was jealous of him. After that, he made sure he was the only male actor in these events and had possession of other men's wives who were in attendance watching. Sharlyn Romaine was a fanatic and had a tendency to push any man that got too close to Schuon out of the way. In this picture Schuon is headed up to one of the women to grab her butt cheeks and pull her towards his penis, in full body contact. That was the main event in these gatherings, though there were many variations on it, all of them sexual.

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<sup>600</sup> Lambert was not asked to come again to these gatherings because Schuon was intimidated by him and Romaine was jealous of his presence. He was a very tall, handsome and darker skinned man and very impressive and they hated this as it showed Schuon up for the rather insecure man he was.



When I went to a few large Primordial Gatherings, there were fifty to seventy people there.<sup>601</sup> I couldn't put symbolic representations of all these people in this drawing and have them fit. So I decided to make the image simpler and show how the thing operated in its various iterations. No one in the drawing looks like anyone in the cult, except for Schuon, in the middle, who I made up from memory. I decided I did not want to spend much time on this so I did it in Photoshop, adapted forms from internet nudes and from Meyerbridge, or just made them up by myself. I adapted them to the costumes people wore at the gatherings, changing all the bodies in the process. So no one can be offended that they are in the drawing, I do not have time of interest to do a hyper realistic view of this. No real people are represented but it is accurate and somewhat objective, while still being my own subjective view of it. There are film images of this, which would be better, but I doubt the cult will ever let them out, so this is the only image of these gatherings that now exists.. But it is important to be generally accurate and show what actually was going on at these gatherings, based on eyewitness accounts by myself, Lambert and Murray. So this is an approximately accurate rendition without trying to be hyper real about it.

There were different levels of nudity at different Primordial

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<sup>601</sup> Stanley Jones, the Willseys, The Fitzgeralds, the Reynolds, the Arbogasts, the Perrys,

Gatherings. Full nudity was more “esoteric”, as if that word really meant anything other than more sexual or subjective. Full nudity occurred at more private gatherings among select disciples. Schuon styled the whole thing out of a fantasy of the Sundance and the Krishna myth, as well as orientalist fantasies. Geriatric Krishna is supposed to be the sun and the women the planets circling around him and coming into union with him as the goat herders had sex with Krishna. Seventy people in a room—and Schuon at one point had Sharlyn, then 38, sit down in front of him naked and spread her legs wide. He stared at her spread vagina for quite a long time while 70 people watched this. The whole room was suffused with illicit desire as well as a hint of shock, not dissimilar to the Eucharist rite which also employs illicit metaphors, in that case of cannibalistic rites. It was indeed shocking to watch so many nude or semi-nude women be sexual with one man. Schuon wanted us to watch him enjoying pressing himself against female genitals. Schuon stood in the center of the circle and 25 women danced around him in various stages of nudity and he pressed each one’s vagina against his penis. To say this is not about sex is absurd, and to say it is not about power is absurd. I said it was primarily about power, obviously. If it were primarily about sex, it would have been Schuon and his concubines in a private room with no one else watching.

Having so many people watching in a charged atmosphere of forbidden desire among illicit libertines is necessarily about control and power, status and delusions of grandeur. It is like a dream of Paulo Pasolini. Everyone in the room was made guilty for the actions that were occurring, rather as at a swinger’s club of nudist wife swappers. That is why they all hide from telling the truth about it now. They are all ashamed on one level while on the other brainwashed into thinking this is an esoteric event to which they alone had a prescriptive right. The notion that there was anything spiritual in these gatherings is also absurd. Spirituality is a convenient excuse. Murderers have said that

murder is a spiritual act. They feel like God when they do it. Himmler liked going to the concentration camps and watching executions with the Bhagavad Gita in his pocket. What Schuon was doing here was like the eating of the Eucharist, the cannibalistic and symbolist act made sacred. There was in it a flavor of the illicit and the shame of what everyone knew was criminal, but had been told it was sublime. The whole idea was to wrap up the followers in guilt and voyeuristic pleasure, ensnaring them in regret and profound adulation of the Master. He cuckolded all the husbands and ensnared all the wives in a guilty union that made them all complicit.

The cult claims these gatherings were “spiritual” only because it hides what the rites actually were really about, which was sex in the context of cult control, and slurred as “healing” when no one was healed of anything. If they were spiritual then it is spirituality itself that is criminal. This indeed is the case. The delusional nature of religion can only be imposed on reality by force of an exploit, violence, crime or lie told to the gullible. No one can define what the spiritual is and so it becomes an excuse for every sort of illusion and fabrication.<sup>602</sup> It is a specious category and means virtually anything you please, which really means it means nothing. Was god hovering around Schuon’s penis as he pressed it against numerous nude and scantily dressed females? Was god present in the eyes of all the cult voyeurs watching Schuon looked up Sharlyn’s vagina? She sat spread legged in front of 70 people and did this with him in public. This is not criminal, but it is an abuse if young people are exposed to this very adult exploit.

What sort of god cares for this cheap public porno? The idea is ridiculous. The Primordial Gatherings were an exercise in sexual delusions of grandeur and an ultimate example of traditionalism’s transcendent double speak, folly and madness. We only adults there it

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<sup>602</sup>

would have been little more than a group of neighbors as a sort of nudist cult soiree. It was not that I objected to the nudity. It was the madness of Schuon I objected to. It goes deeply into the core of who this man was, right into the cult of “having a center”, which is the title of a book he wrote around the time of these events.

The atmosphere of these gatherings was that of a peep show parlor or a guilty scene of strip tease burlesque restyled as a church service.<sup>603</sup> But again it was not the nudity that was objectionable. Everyone tried to be so serious and pretended it was not what in fact it was. A lot of its power derived from this imposture. There was a strong feeling of fear in it too as everyone knew that this was wrong on some level and no one could talk about it or say why. That made it frightening. It was consciously modeled on Sundances and Pilgrims circling the Kaaba with his own delusions of grandeur, as well as the Christian Eucharistic rite which combines the illicit eating of human flesh with a quasi-sexual injection of the gods body into the postulant orally. Schuon had written about this in his first book. The same claim of healing was made as happens in the Eucharistic rite. Schuon combined these symbolist fantasies of nudist Indians, the Eucharist, into a guilt ridden atmosphere of the Primordial Gatherings in such a way that it was primarily about exalting him. It was required that no one notice that there was anything wrong with this and that it was a normal even a profound thing to do. One was obliged to praise it and they all did like automotons.

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<sup>603</sup> Schuon’s sexual obsessions remind me of the metaphysical pornography of Marcel Duchamp. Duchamp, one of the creators of corporate art. Of course, he was a joker, a gift utterly lacking in Schuon, who could barely smile, much less laugh. But Schuon’s notion of the vagina as his ultimate object of worship was very Duchampian. Schuon’s virgin is not far at all from the ‘bride stripped bare’ (Entant Donne) in the room in the Philadelphia museum of art. Duchamp’s piece is also a work of symbolist and quasi spiritual eroticism. Like Duchamp, Schuonian spirituality ultimately goes bankrupt in a solipsistic and elitist esoterism, and an onanistic metaphysic. The self-serving immortal narcissist is an image of the corporate “person” as divine person, in a way.

One was supposed to genuflect mentally to the grandeur of Schuon's sex fantasies. I knew the whole thing was a sham and wondered how to say or express this fact, without this cult wanting to kill me. How would I get out of this cult alive. I could see these were dangerous people in the grip of delusions. I was mentally free of it soon after I saw it, and those who claim I left the cult merely because of my involvement with Maude Murry are crazy. I left the cult because it was corrupt from top to bottom and I left Maude too.

These gatherings were later claimed to be not ritual events and peripheral to the Tariqa, but that is a PR lie, they were clearly and unambiguously the summit of Schuon's own message and history, personality, obsessions and career and were presented to us as such.<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>604</sup> I wrote in 1991

"The metaphysical concepts Schuon uses to justify this practice I learned from questioning Sa. Aminah after her visits with him. He invented these justifications after the gatherings were already established. The Principle is: Atma (Schuon) becomes Maya (the naked women) in order that the naked women (Maya) may become Schuon (Atma). Alternately, the center becomes the periphery in order that the periphery may become the center. "God becomes man in order that man could become God." The reader will recognize these formulations as central to Schuon's doctrine. The primordial gatherings are thus the quintessential expression of the doctrine.

Quite clearly this is a rite, though Schuon dissimulates this idea, since he doesn't wish to be accused of syncretism. However, all the elements of a rite are present. Schuon's body is like the Eucharist, the women are the receptive souls awaiting his naked body. Murray said he compares this dance of his to the dance of Krishna with the Gopis (some Kangra miniatures picture this); to the Sun Dance - since the sun dancers go in and out from the center; and to the circumambulation of the Kaaba. This means clearly that Schuon sees himself as equal to Krishna (an avatara) to the Sun Dance Tree (who according to Black Elk, represents Wakan Tanka) and to the Kaaba, the most sacred object in all of Islam. These comparisons indicate the syncretic nature of the rite. Schuon has combined three religions - firstly himself as Islamic Shaykh - Krishna, - Kaaba, joining himself in an American Indian Dance, to naked women who are supposed to believe he is the Atma: Islam- Red Indian - Hindu. Schuon explains: this is the primordial religion; he is its only exalted exponent; in fact he himself IS esoterism; he is the Religio Perennis.

This, of course, is really a completely new religion: Schuonism. As the Virgin blessed Schuon with her genitals and healed him of his distress, so also Schuon blesses these women with his body, healing them of all their illness. Since Schuon is both beyond the Law and infallible, he cannot be questioned about all of this.

Schuon promoted the idea that he was totally pure and beyond wrong doing or 'sin'. Utter Adamic innocence was insisted on in absolute terms of mind control. "To the pure all things are pure" they said. His trained and gullible followers accept such twaddle without question. Schuon injected his characteristic obsession with himself as a prophet of the highest order, so he alone was the Sundance and the Kaaba and he alone grabbed the circling buttocks that danced in desire around his amazing penis. He was ever ready to press itself against the next beautiful body, over and over again for quite a while. A 'presence' like the eucharist was claimed by those who embraced his body, Catherine Schuon claimed his body could emanate "spiritual fluids"<sup>605</sup>. No one asked how many times he would have to press himself against each women to "heal" her. Schuon's penis, now the center of the cult, was even painted into Icons and hung in followers bedrooms so they could feel the healing presence of his lingam, dong or dick, whatever you wish to call the pathetic 84 year old thing he tried to get young women to worship. Sedgwick grasped none of this.

Therefore, Sedgwick gets it all wrong about Schuon. The Schuon cult's various defenders falsely accused Sedgwick's poorly done book of all sorts of nonsense. The Schuon cult wrote many attacks, most of them rather hysterical. They have an interest in lying and covering up Schuon's crime, so of course they must go out of their way to try to undermine and discredit the book. Indeed, the virulence of their attacks on Sedgwick are themselves indications of their guilt. They have so much to hide. I advised a parts of Sedgwick's' book and conditioned the books over all point of view. That this why they hate in it. But, actually, Sedgwick is in many ways their defender. He worked hard to make the

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The problem is that no one is healed in this rite, because the rite manifests Schuon's own sickness."

<sup>605</sup> letter to Phillipe Grall. Probably authored by Schuon



book pleasing to the cult and to Michael Fitzgerald. He even suppressed evidence to please them. They should be happy it is such a cowardly book and he bent over so far to cozy up to them. Sedgwick had to make a choice, tell the truth and possibly end up in court or parrot the cult's lies. He chooses the latter.

But though the book has value as a public exposure of these charlatans, it is really very tame and cowardly. Even on the surface of the book there are real problems. Sedgwick's book purports to be primarily about Guenon, which is odd, since it says little that cannot be found in any of the venues that promote Guenon. The book has a very shallow grasp of ideas promoted by Guenon and his followers. It mistakenly assumes that only Evola is a "political traditionalist", without understanding that spirituality is politics by another name. Guenon's political extremism was what influenced Evola and other theofascists and is indeed the fountain of the whole movement.

Evola reads Guenon very well and merely apes his theofascism as does Schuon and his followers. Evola and Guenon had an extensive correspondence. They reviewed each other's books. Evola had several of Guenon's books published in Italy. Guenon even published articles in a Fascist newspaper (Regime Fascista). Guenon and Evola were very close in many ways. Sedgwick is mistaken on this as on so much else. Guenon wrote a ringing endorsement of Evola's book *Revolt Against the Modern World*: 'nothing should...

"prevent us from recognizing, as is right, the merit and interest of the work as a whole, and to bring it in a particular way to the attention of all those who are concerned with the "crisis of the modern world", and who think like us [my emphasis] that the only efficacious means of rectifying it would consist in a return to the traditional spirit outside of which nothing truly constructive could be validly undertaken."

Guenon rarely wrote like this about anyone. Sedgwick also missed Ananda Coomaraswamy's endorsement of Evola. Coomaraswamy wrote of Evola's Revolt Against the Modern World that

“his book constitutes a remarkable presentation and exposition of *traditional doctrine* and could well serve as an introductory text for the student of anthropology and as a *guide for the Indologist*.”

(*The Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, Feb-Apr 1940)

For decades the Schuonian and Guenonians have been trying to distance themselves from Evola because of his Nazi and Fascist s background, But actually, both Guenon, Lings and Schuon endorsed aspects of fascism and created a theofascist philosophy that is very close to Evola's and De Maistre's ideas, as I show at length in this book. Sedgwick writes nothing about any of this. There is also nothing about Lings and his idealization and endorsement of Franco or Schuon and his love of Japanese fascism. Nor does he note Schuon's approval of South African Apartheid or Nixon's war in Vietnam

Like a new age gossip columnist, Sedgwick tries to explain away Guenon's paranoid fits as examples of attacks by magicians! It is hard to take a book seriously that endorses some of the superstitious nonsense that obsessed Guenon. Against the Modern World might have been a good book if Sedgwick had trusted the evidence and followed the facts rather than caving in to political pressures and writing about his own rather twisted and unexamined spirituality .

The book tries to strike a false “balance”, which really is just a refusal to look at evidence. He has the false idea that scholars cannot take any point of view but are merely ciphers. The idea that “balance” is required in reporting is useful in various ordinary and uncontroversial cases where facts are not known and only opinions can be expressed. But in matters of fact, like global warming, acid rain and Ozone depletion, the health effects of smoking or the killing of Elephants and

Rhinos, only facts matter and a bogus “balance” is really an excuse for allowing profiteers and exploiters to get equal say with defenders and those who understand the facts. Religion is like global warming in that it has virtually no real facts on its side. Global warming is an incontestable fact, and those who deny it are paid scientists who lie because they are paid to lie. The plant news articles, do TV spots, or write bogus scientific reports. This has been meticulously documented by Naomi Oreskes and others. <sup>606</sup>

As an example of Sedgwick’s manner of thinking I can tell a story. He and I were discussing Islam. I dislike the Koran and find it too full of threats, implied violence and apocalyptic fantasies used as a means of spiritually blackmailing people into correct behaviors. Someone told me that the penalty for leaving Islam could be death. I could not belong to a religion that encourages the violation of human rights and the free exchange of ideas. I am opposed to any form of spiritual blackmail. Human rights matter more to me than the dogmas of any book. So, I asked Sedgwick, as a Moslem, what he thought about the cruelty implicit in Islam and the killing of people who leave Islam. Mark did not deny the abysmal human rights record of Islam. He did not question or object such practices either. But his allegiance to Islam made him unable to comment on this atrocious ideas. His undecided and “balanced” view troubled me. It was a false balance based in moral cowardice. A similar ambiguity and refusal to look at the hard questions is at the heart of the book Against the Modern World as well.

No one can write a “balanced” history of the Third Reich, since to do so would involve giving credence to the Holocaust deniers or neo-Nazis. You can’t write a “balanced” history of slavery, since you would

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<sup>606</sup> Oreskes, Naomi, Conway, Erik. *Merchants of Doubt*, They show how such scientists like Fred Singer and Frederick Seitz started working for tobacco companies or denouncing global warming while being paid to do so by companies who profit from harming lungs or the environment. They supported reactionary ideologies such as free enterprise capitalism, and used their scientific credentials to push bad science. .

have to justify slavery to some degree as the slave owners did.. You can't write a "balanced" history of the Schuon cult, since it is proven now that they all lied in court and the evidence against Schuon is overwhelming. How do you balance truth tellers against with lies. Writing a "balanced" history of Scientology, partly because they too are liars and have done a lot of harms that are not widely known, as victims of such cults tend to be silent and afraid to talk. Hugh Urban's book on this subject is thus is written in a "balanced" manner and so is mistaken in various ways. Scientology invented the whole idea of cult apology and Urban is influenced by them in that he too apologizes for this dangerous cult.<sup>607</sup> Corporate histories tend to be bad for the same reason, how do you "balance" CEO point of view against the workers they exploit? CEO's have way too much power and can intimidate workers from talking or lie to interviewers easily. As Howard Zinn said you cannot be neutral on a moving train, which means that you have to take a point of view sometimes and cannot pretend to be impartial when serious moral questions are at issue. Sometimes being "balanced" is actually being complicit.

Did Sedgwick's book require some courage? Yes, a little. Mark was originally fired up about doing the right thing, but as time went on he waffled, weakened and did the wrong thing and compromised with the Schuon cult when they pressured him. Now he is more or less an apologist for the traditionalists and Islam. It does have the merit of at least opening up more academic inquiry into investigating the

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<sup>607</sup> A less flaccid study of Scientology is Lawrence Wright's Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief. Wright has evidence that the leaders of Scientology have beaten inner circle members, and a culture of violence is common there. He also mentions child abuse in the cult. Wright has been systematically harassed by lawyers from the cult. The book has many problems though. Wright seems to understand very little about how cults work and how mind control systems operate. See also Cynthia Kissler on the internet, She was a brave woman who stood up for victims of this cult and suffered for them terribly. She was the head of the Cult Awareness Network, which became the lying and dissembling Cult Apology Network when Scientology destroyed it..

Traditionalists and their relation to fascism, though it does this so weakly that it is nearly an endorsement of theofascism.

But I have to say that little has come out of it in terms of other books or articles of merit about the Schuon cult. Sedgwick's view is too milk-toast and lukewarm. As Russell McCutcheon said the role of religious scholars should be "critics not caretakers" of the faiths they study. Huston Smith did a great deal of harm in trying to make religious studies scholar cheerleaders for the religions. Sedgwick is not a critic but a promoter, caretaker and sometimes cheerleader, who tries only occasionally to be a really involved and accurate scholar who will fight for the truth. He evidently did quite well as a student at Oxford, but it did not teach him to seek the truth and follow evidence. He hides cowardice and weakness behind a studied cloak of professionalism.

On the other hand, it is good that he shows traditionalism is a worldwide movement, connected to fascism and not merely a religious cult in Bloomington, Indiana, or scattered among French right-wing intellectuals. That has some value. Sedgwick did have to show some courage to publish this book, since the Schuon cult tried to squash it and threatened Sedgwick for bringing it to print. They even tried to force him to lose his job at Cairo university by pressuring other faculty or administrators there. I do not agree with the effort to take his job, but I do think he should not be teaching at public universities as he is really a promoter and so should be at a Madrasah or a religious school. But since he caved into the cult's demands, how brave was he in the end? It is not easy to stand up against a dangerous cult. True. But I don't admire him or his publisher for caving into the cult. They need not have. Truth was on their side. There is plenty of evidence about Schuon and his gatherings. He need not have backed down at all about anything.

So the book is compromised in serious ways. In the end, the book comes close to trying to exonerate Schuon, while not completely doing so. Sedgwick's could only accomplish this waffling ambiguity by suppressing

evidence that I gave him. He was unable to criticize the Islamic religion he belongs to. He thinks that ordinary religion is a real thing and Schuon as a crazy extremist and anomaly. But I think he is dead wrong.

Schuon's delusions are an outgrowth of religion as such, both Islamic, Hindu, Christian Native American and Buddhist, all of which share a "transcendent unity" of delusions in their core. Islam is much worse than Schuon over the centuries and its human rights violations are perhaps the worst of any religion in the world. To pretend this is not the case is merely to lie to oneself. Moreover the origins of Islam are as murky and those of Christianity and both are mythic constructions that have little of the truth in them. They are myths.

Sedgwick is a man who cares more about his career than anything else and that made him vulnerable to spinning the truth in favor of Islam. He edits facts to serve his own academic and religious agenda as well as that of the Schuon cult. There are various kinds of history books. The Schuon cult itself has written various bad histories of themselves, for instance. But Schuon's Memoirs, for instance, show a really insane man posing in various ways for his followers. This is interesting because it is a primary document that suggests a lot about how he lost his mind. There are other histories of the cult that are promotional and sophomoric advertising texts such as James Cutsinger's For the Serious Seeker or Charles Upton's the System of the Anti-Christ. The former is a gushing and adolescent book written by a cult groupie. The latter is a promotional text for the Schuon cult, written by right wing New Age fanatic and advised and promoted by Huston Smith. It is a silly rehash of the lunacy of the Guenonian conspiracy theory told in a bombastic and inflated style. These are not histories, exactly, but promotional texts for a cult: tracts to attract potential gullible and unwary "true believers". Sedgwick's book is better than these, but it is still a promotional text and a work of biased and poorly done history.

I presented Sedgwick with more information than he could handle

and he failed to do it justice. He suppressed facts about Guenon and the Schuon cult in order to advance a rather theofascist tendency in the academic study of religion. He upset the traditionalists by quoting me and implying the obvious relation between traditionalism and far-right politics. Anyone with eyes can see that traditionalism is a far right religious fanaticism. But he was fearful about facing all the implications of his study. The far right tendencies of religious studies scholarship corrupts many professors in our universities, or at least those who follow after the mold of Huston Smith, Arthur Versluis or other traditionalists and careerists. These men give up objectivity in the interest of promoting their personal and rather delusional religious mythologies. They act the part of religious insiders, when they should be critical outsiders. The free university system is not about such attempts to promote a religious agenda and professors who carry such an agenda really belong in religious colleges, or New Age institutes like Naropa, Esalen or Christian colleges, Moslem schools or bible schools.

**On Education: and Manufacturing Religion in Universities: or How Fictional Deific Persons got Replaced with Corporate Persons.**

Religion is analogous to self-immolation by  
moths,

*Richard Dawkins*

Man is the Religious Animal. He is the only  
Religious Animal. He is the only animal that has  
the True Religion, several of them. He is the  
only animal that loves his neighbor as himself,  
and cuts his throat if his theology isn't straight.  
He has made a graveyard of the globe in trying

his honest best to smooth his brothers path to happiness and heaven. He was at it in the time of the Caesars, he was at it in Muhammad's time, he was at it in the time of the Inquisition,.... The higher animals have no religion. And we are told that they are going to be left out, in the Hereafter."

Samuel Longhorn Clemens<sup>608</sup>

"To teach superstitions as truth is a most terrible thing." Hypatia

This is the second essay in the book that deals with the failure and inadequacy of Religious Studies in our public and private universities. A few first premises about education warranted at the beginning. First there are few things more important to a healthy society than education. Not only is a democracy only as good as the education of its participants. but it says a great deal about a society how it treats education. Kids learn by doing, as Dewey said, and not by taking tests. The current system of education in America is increasingly about

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<sup>608</sup> Mark Twain wrote many excellent and true things about religion. One of the most delightful is his accurate attempt to show that animals are superior to humans in "the Damned Human Race". Twain wrote, "I have been studying the traits and dispositions of the lower animals (so-called), and contrasting them with the traits and dispositions of man. I find the result humiliating to me. For it obliges me to renounce my allegiance to the Darwinian theory of the Ascent of Man from the Lower Animals; since it now seems plain to me that the theory ought to be vacated in favor of a new and truer one, this new and truer one to be named the *Descent* of Man from the Higher Animals." Twain is joking here of course, and he probably did not realize that Darwin also had a very high view of animals and was skeptical of humans. "Humanism", strictly so called, is a questionable entity. Of course, when one says "have you no humanity?" it might mean something good, as in, "stop abusing people or misusing animals".  
<http://www.skeptically.org/logicalthreads/id14.html>



punitive testing of children, quite apart from what they know or have done. Right wing "think tanks" endorse standardized tests for children. Dismantling liberal arts courses is designed to abolish critical thinking and enlightenment education.. To them education is merely training and preparation for authoritarian corporations who have no democracy and employ drones who do not think or question. The best education is by example and by active participation, actually trying to do what is taught. Kids learn physics or math by doing it, trying the magnet, see how speed effects force if the mass is greater, or how chemical mixed together make a third thing. On higher levels one learns know at graduate school how to think for oneself and weigh texts and evidence. Professors are very important in this process in helping the student guide themselves. The right wing hates teachers and wants to eliminate their unions.

Education is in trouble these days, as corporations try to take over schools and efforts are made to destroy academic freedom; destroy tenure, gouge students and make them into indentured servants of banks and markets. The effort is to exploit children and profit from families and ruin the schools in the process of privatization. Universities and colleges hire endless administrators trained as businessmen, which then proceed to inflate prices and take larger incomes. It used to be administrative costs were small as teachers did the administration themselves. Now the schools are trying to destroy the humanities because they do not make businessmen much money. They do not want to train citizens who are well rounded and understand things beyond money, they only want corporate drones who do not think or have critical minds.

With these realities in mind it is useful to see cult of the CEO as both a religious and a market ideology which grew out of the old aristocracies. In light of these facts, it is interesting to see how universities treat religious studies, as a test case. Universities are promoting fictions and undermining the enlightenment ideal of free inquiry, evidence and

reason. In enlightened, science based universities, there is supposed to be to be a complete separation between the scholarly activity of studying religion as a human phenomenon and the preaching of a specific religion as if it were true reality. There is supposed to be a difference between a Religious Studies department and a Divinity school,(be it Islamic, Jewish or Hindu school that teaches fictional religious ideas). A non-religious university and a Theology department at a Christian college are not the same thing. f

As Mark Twain said, "Education consists mainly of what we have unlearned." Unlearning religion is part of any good education. There is precedence for keeping education 'secular' and free of religion. Religion in American life is supposed to be outside the public domain, and thus should be excluded from democratic institutions. The French Revolution established a firm separation between religious schools and public universities. The government seized religious school endowments and properties and dismissed priests and church-controlled teachers. When the monarchists sought to restore social inequality and the 'nobility' they also sought to return the control of the universities to the Catholic Church and the military and force traditionalism upon students. It has not gone this far in United States schools but there is disquieting increase professors who are true believers teaching at public universities. In France, after the revolution, conservatives wanted schools controlled by the Catholic Church so that the Church could force obedience and traditionalism. Traditionalist teachers in today's religious studies area are a throwback to the Monarchists.

The obvious and basic principle of separation between religious and scientific schools is repeatedly and chronically violated in today's universities. <sup>609</sup> Indeed, the number of atheists that are allowed into

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<sup>609</sup> Now we have professors promoting Schuonian ideology at Cornell university or Jeff Kripal promoting gnostic ideas and William James' delusions under the guise of the "phenomenology of religious experience" at Rice University.

religious studies departments is practically zero, though I have found a few. They should be in the majority and anyone who is religious, needs to be able to suppress their beliefs to teach the subject. Otherwise let them teach at Esalen<sup>610</sup> or Christian Universities .

Religion is best taught with considerable skepticism as part of history, anthropology, sociology of literature. Religion is really part of the history of myth and literature as well as the sociology of power and politics. If a university is devoted to the truth, religious promulgation does not belong there since religions promote fictions and delusions. Teaching delusions in a “unbiased” and “objective” manner is difficult at best. But one can talk about religion from many points of view, and study it as if it were a biological specimen. An ideal way to study religion is as part of a science of Religious Studies, namely to study religion from an evolutionary perspective, purely as a human/cultural/political phenomenon, which of course is what it is. I think it can be shown fairly easily that religion is not the result of evolution, but is an ideological construction, like money. This makes religion part of the study of myth and literature, or cultural and sociological study.

History departments are better than religious studies, particularly in the last 50 years, because a real effort has been made to use evidence and fact in assessments and inquiry. Social history is partly responsible for this. This is not to say that history is prone to ideological corruption. It certainly is but not nearly to the degree that happens in religion, which is almost entirely ideological, though the study of it can be done in a

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<sup>610</sup> Esalen has been important in pushing a very questionable relation between Buddhist Hindu and modern physics that is certainly mistaken and misleading. Jeff Kripal's book on Esalen (for a promotional and largely unreflective text on this institution) The blurb for Kripal's book states that Esalen sought to “fuse the spiritual revelations of the East with the scientific revolutions of the West” which was a huge mistake. Kripal is unaware of this and so writes a promotional text advertising an institution. He is something of a cheerleader and lacks in critical acuity skills. He pushes a sensationalist notion of religion as narcissist snake oil, sold to kids as an exciting frontier of subjectivist “experience” along the line of James' Varieties of Religious Experience. See the chapter below for more on the mistake of combining religion and science.

quasi-scientific way, but this is very rare. History is partly prone to mythology when it serves nation states, military history, or Marxism, for instance. It is prone to other problems when it serves a sort of biological determinism, or speciesism. Decoding the various ideologies in a history department is certainly possible and should be done. One needs to look as much as possible at what is the case, as opposed to what is believed. The humanities in general are a threat to big businesses and nationalism and so they are hated by free market ideologues and some Christians. But the humanities are essential to democracy and are capable of some measure of objectivity, and this makes them invaluable to education, and hated by corporate elites who dislike critical thinking, want to dissolve democracy, love autocratic bossing of others and want workers to have few rights and machines to make them rich. The humanities are important to children, music art and literature are very important to training the minds, ears and eyes.

So the question must be: is the role of universities to provide fairy tales and delusions for children to enable them to lie to themselves and live by myths to get on in the world, or is it to train adults to see reality with clear eyes and to live with one another in the real world of facts and nature?. Clearly it is the latter that matters and that is the purpose of education and the humanities are important to that. Religious studies largely serves the former, and that is why I oppose it in public schools. Myths can be taught as make believe and culture stories, but not as truth. The purpose of education is to grow into reality and learn to deal with it, understand it and become part of a their real world. It is not to tell fairy tales or to lie to students as if they were children.

Into this unhealthy mix, the fiction of corporate personhood has given ridiculous powers to corporations and corporations now speculate on making money from universities. The, English, French and American revolutions sidelined religion, to their credit. But it raised its ugly head again with the invention of the ideology of corporate persons, who are

now the defacto citizens of the world, actual citizens having been made redundant. With corporate personhood now the gods of our world, the old gods are kept only to supply an escape for the poor and the middle class, free only to pursue illusions. With unions broken and organizing for the poor largely forbidden by law, kids are made victims of CEO culture. Children, young men and women are now farmed like slaves in universities, made to pay through the teeth to make the rich richer. The humanities are being pushed out of the schools, art is declining, music and theatre and history sidelined. Yet religion is more and more taught on its own terms. Liberal education is under assault. Freedom of inquiry is supplanted by inquiry done for corporations. The increasing takeover of the public and private university system by the corporate sector, results in public education under attack and tenure and academic freedom threatened in its root. Corporate power comes from an abuse of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment, which was created to protect the persons of ex-slaves. Corporations who denied that slaves were people abused the law intended to help them by trying to make themselves over in the image of the Catholic church which also claimed to be a transcendent person, like the myth of the Jesus as a divine person. Our schools are invaded by “faith based” initiatives and religious doublespeak. A free and independent university system is failing and corporations and right wing forces are trying to destroy it. There is an increasing attempt to privatize public universities, including community universities. It would not be hard make all universities free, They are free in Mexico City for instance. They are free in Germany. They should be free in the U.S.. But the trend is in the opposite direction. Public and private universities are under assault. Students are gouged and pushed into extremely high cost long term loans that benefit banks. These loans make students into an indentured servitude when they graduate, having to pay back these huge loans. Hence they shy away from any subject that will not give them good paying jobs. Enrollment in Humanities is down by 70% I read in one

study. Knowledge is made serviceable only to income. The notion that democracy depends on an informed electorate is being destroyed. Students are no longer being informed, they are being farmed by corporate CEO's.

There is also an effort to create for-profit universities, exploiting students as cash cows. These are chilling developments that move in the direction of those who opposed the French Revolution and what to see the return of "Throne and God", to use the phrase of that archdeacon of anti-science and anti-democratic demagoguery, Joseph De Maistre...

So how has this happened and why has religion become a part of today's declining universities? To make it specific, I will look at this issue through the lens of one 'scholar', Arthur Versluis. He is a Platonist 'gnostic' who really belongs in the 16<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. Platonism was defeated by Darwinism 150 years ago. What is a reactionary Platonist doing in a 21<sup>st</sup> century university? Platonism at the time of Plotinus was an escape from reality into effete dreams of the "Nous", and helped bring about the Dark Ages. The esoterists are of a similar mindset and would have us all head backwards into the shadows of the medieval mind. I don't think any esoterist has any understanding of what is threatened or why. The natural proclivities of Platonism make it an enabler of reactionary tendencies. In the late, greenhouse gas-ridden and globalized, corporate environment of today's America, an escapist 'scholar' is needed to push the irrational and promote the delusional. How else can one keep alive the pretense that corporations are persons?

Versluis wants to push a gnostic faith upon students. He pushes the idea of esoterism". "Esoterism" is a 20<sup>th</sup> century effort to recreate the old religious delusions and fictions under a new name. "Esoterism" is basically a 20<sup>th</sup> century new religion for intellectuals who wish to live in a fantasy world of subjective inflation. Gnosis is more or less synonymous with subjectivism. Esoterism is their new religion, in which they make up their own religion, almost at will, provided they imitate the old style

religions in a more or less correct way. In the current environment of capitalist depredations of the world, the pursuit of effete systems of spiritual escape seems extremely unwise, as it merely leads to further support of the harms being done. So then why have esoteric studies found a place in the universities when this study is obviously another form of bogus mystification?

So it is useful to review the ideas of writers who knows a lot about totalism and does not understand it, much less have the courage to fight it. There are many academic professors who push the ideology of religion on their students as if it were a real thing. There are hardly any professors, for instance, who give time to the idea that Jesus was a myth, though the evidence does weigh heavily that he never existed. The same is true of Muhammad, who probably did not exist either. But religious studies professors have a career to pursue and real evidence is not terribly important to them. They are enablers of delusions.

So I have chosen Versluis for analysis and reflection in order to talk about our failing education system. Arthur Versluis recent books are called New Inquisitions, Heretic Hunting and the Intellectual Origins of Modern Totalitarianism, The Mystical State: Politics, Gnosis, and Emergent Cultures, and American Gurus. These are interesting books as examples of backward and reactionary thinking. To his credit he appears to think that the traditional religion are toxic failures and he would be right about that. But he wants to replace religion with “esoterism” and a romantic ideology of gnosis that is a major part of our problem. Whatever good there may have been in Versluis has been replaced by cheerleading for religions and cults. He is a caretaker of spiritual delusions and not a critic of them.

In a recent book, American Gurus, Versluis discusses some of the most destructive cult leaders in the last decades and can only comment that he “would not want the reader to think that I am disparaging these authors or figures”. Yes, well he is talking about William Burroughs, who

murdered his own wife and Adi Da, who abused children and women and about whom thousands of pages of witness documents have been written outlining his authoritarian abuses.<sup>611</sup> He is talking about Schuon, who had children at his primordial gatherings and used them, as has been proven years ago. Schuon also was an authoritarian dictator who supported Japanese fascism and whose main followers Martin Lings and Hossein Nasr supported Franco and the Shah of Iran, both murdering tyrants. Versluis, showing his shallowness and anti-intellectualism can only say that Schuon is “mildly antinomian”. Versluis would not want to disparage these famous criminals. He is in favor of “outlaw religion”. I would never allow such a morally bankrupt person to teach my children in his classes. Such a person should not be teaching anyone’s children. Other cases in our universities abound.<sup>612</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> There are various sites that explore some of this material. Such as [http://www.enlightened-spirituality.org/Da\\_and\\_his\\_cult.html](http://www.enlightened-spirituality.org/Da_and_his_cult.html)

all evidence indicates that Franklin Jones / Da Free John fell deeply and dangerously into monstrous ego-inflation, abusively toxic relationships towards his disciples and wife/wives, and heavy addictions to personal power, sexual debauchery, drugs, and extravagant material possessions.

And

<http://web.archive.org/web/20130120183045/http://www.adidaarchives.org/>

“Adidam turned out to be a deeply dysfunctional organization that showed all the classic signs of a personality cult, even as its leader criticized cultism to try and obscure his part in creating it. Virtually all of its resources were devoted to fulfilling the needs and desires of one man, Adi Da, at the great expense of everyone else. In addition, those most deeply involved in Adidam were essentially *compelled* to engage in a lifestyle and practice that literally *epitomized* much of what Adi Da criticized about cultism and “spiritual seeking.”

<sup>612</sup> There are many examples. Another that comes to mind is Catherine Albanese, who teaches in California at Santa Barbara, who seeks to justify Spiritualism, Theosophy, Reiki, Christian Science, UFO activity, Mormonism, channeling, Hinduism, Zen and the New Age movement. The lack of critical insight is notable. Russell McCutcheon notes that

“Catherine Albanese has rightly - though perhaps unwittingly - observed, ‘scholars of religion... find in the mental worlds they create and construct a “refuge” and “safe haven” from the general assaults of change that come with time’s passing’ It is in constructing just such a ‘safe haven’ that we find evidence of our complicity with power.”



But, Ok, this is my conclusion, let's back up and look at how I arrived at it. It is good to see that a quasi- traditionalist scholar is able to question totalism in some of its aspects. Rejecting the monotheistic traditions for inherently leading to a kind of totalitarianism is the right attitude to have. The monotheistic traditions are totalitarian. But Versluis's religious beliefs, as one could predict, make him unable to see totalitarianism in a wider context. He doesn't grasp the totalistic nature of cults or totalistic religions or ideocracies or how ideocracies like Marxism are also rigid, dogmatic and millennialist forms of religion too. Indeed, Stalinism is basically a religious doctrine and practice.

Versluis supposes, wrongly, that totalism begins with the Inquisition. He traces Totalism from the Catholic Church to Nazism and Stalinism. That is a small part of the story. He leaves out the written origins of totalism in his hero Plato, as well as in Augustine, Aquinas and the development of it in many other contexts, from totalistic and imperialistic Islamic rampages in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries to the Hindu caste system, to the Chinese governments endless oppression of its own people to innumerable little cults and societies all over world, no doubt going very far back in time. He wants to try to justify a small and recently invented religion which he calls "Gnosticism" and "esoterism" which he rather senselessly exempts from totalism, and which he advances as part of his career ambitions as a new religion. In the Mystical State, he wants to advocate the destructive idea that esoterism and Gnosticism should take over the political center stage. He thinks there is a mystical core to political reality and Platonist fantasy must take over. He does not know that Plato's system is toxic theofascism nor that he is endorsing the Platonist theofascist agenda, restated. Versluis is a gnostic elitist and wants a

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This is correct, many "religious studies" scholars are in complicity with power and advocates of delusional thinking and status quo refusals to deal with reality.

government that enshrines the fiction of transcendence.

Versluis is an enabler of delusions. He wants to advance a misplaced 'affirmative action plan' for irrationalism--- hoping to push forward his backwards agenda by promoting the legitimacy of far-right fanatics, superstitious alchemists, Rosicrucians, Kabbalists, Transcendentalists, astrologers, magicians and other phony systems of knowledge created by charlatans. The purpose of affirmative action is to advance disposed minorities, not advance the progress or delusions and superstition. One need not have affirmative action for the mafia, or street gangs, or corrupt businessmen. Cults ought not to be encouraged. He celebrates such cult leaders as Adi Da, Schuon and Ken Wilber, all snake oil salesman of diverse make up and purposes. The whole panoply of 'gnostic' studies might fascinate outsider adolescents, but really has no place in a university except perhaps in anthropology or psychology. Like Jocelyn Godwin at Colgate, Versluis tries to fascinate young minds with this resurrected adolescent nonsense, partly because it fills classrooms with adoring eyes and partly because it suggests a future where irrationalism will have an even greater role in our society than it does now. Mostly, I think he does it, however, because it advances his own career. Unfortunately, the rather sad state of the self-destructive "post-modernist" humanities departments at our current university studies allows irrationalism to be promoted. Escape literature is popular with students who have been saddled with loan conditions that make them indentured servants. Of course they wish to escape. They will work in the corporate sector, which will take their hearts and minds from them. They have to study subjects that will get them good jobs to pay back their enormous debt. This is one of many reasons that the humanities are declining precipitously.<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>613</sup> The humanities are also being pushed out by a business model of education that has made education so expensive that only classes that help a student pay back huge loans are desired. The

. The term “gnostic” is so highly problematic that I rejected it years ago in these words:

Foucault is in some respects a romantic gnostic. There is long tradition, or what might be called an anti-tradition of gnosticism that goes back to Valentinus and Basilides and the “heretical” sects that so angered Augustine that he thought they should be killed. But the Christian hatred of gnosticism is rather arbitrary and represents the drive of early Christians to eliminate oppositional groups. For Christians the invention of “gnostics” was a ruse to secure political power. People today who push the idea of gnosticism, are also mostly concerned with power.. Indeed, the term gnosticism is problematical, because it is used to describe too many different things, from the Templars to Carl Jung. From the cults of the Black Virgin to the legend of the Grail, and from the Carpocratians to Marx, Blake and Nietzsche gnosticism has been formulated in relation to dominant European powers. But in its various forms, gnosticism remains a will to power through knowledge. Insofar as the term can have any meaning.”

Christianity is also gnostic religion, in the sense that it assumes “man’s alienation in the cosmos” ( Voegelin), an alienation that can only be reversed through violence and social control. Some scientists also might be gnostic in that they assumes man’s intellectual supremacy relative to the cosmos. But science itself is not gnostic and does not assume human supremacy. The gnostic wants to overcome the human state, which he thinks is low and unworthy. But this is true of all the religions, more or less. Foucault wants to recreate himself as a ‘total innovation’. Marx is also a gnostic in this sense, except that his concern is not merely personal transformation, as in Foucault, but total social

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student must go onto business and make as much money as possible. The high cost of college is making colleges agents of indentured servitude to big business.

transformation. One could perhaps speak of a gnosticism of the right and of the left. But there is no clear dividing line. Schelling, Von Baader, De Maistre, Shelley, Coleridge, Novalis, Robespierre, Hegel, Jung, Guenon, Lanz von Liebenfels, have all been considered gnostics. But what ties them together is actually a variation on the knowledge/power relationship. The word “gnosis” is Greek for ‘knowledge’. M.H. Abrams writes that

“in romantic {or gnostic} thought, the mind of man confronts the old heaven and the old earth and possesses within itself the power to transform them into a new heaven and a new earth by means of a total revolution in consciousness”. (Abrams. *Natural Supernaturalism* pg.334)

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If this passage is understood in the widest sense, Christian symbolism aside, this ‘gnostic’ inflation of self is a drive for total transformation, and is as much a part of Christ and Descartes as of Mao, Plato, Confucius and William Blake. What is called gnosticism appears to be more than merely the romanticism restyled as an oppositional aspiration of a few poets and leaders of sects and apolitical cult like Marxism. Gnosticism is a widely various attempt to theorize about and seize power by means of an underlying hatred to the actual and of the earth. But this is misleading too, because it is too wide, diffuse and insufficiently descriptive.. So what I have done is jettison the term gnosticism altogether, since it has been used as a pejorative term to denigrate romantics of an oppositional stripe, when gnosticism is clearly more than this. Einstein, with his philosophy of hating the personal and the earthly in favor of the mathematical and otherworldly tended to the gnostic. Hinduism is gnostic in this sense too, as are Nazis like Goering and

Himmler. What ties all these thinkers, poets, scientists and statesman together is not gnosticism but the will to power through a variety of different kinds of knowledge. In summary, I have avoided use of the term gnosticism, as have used the conjunction 'knowledge/power' instead. But this is problematical too, since knowledge is not a bad thing, in general, and power has its purposes if held in check.

Obviously the term gnostic, in Versluis, Voegelin, and elsewhere is turgid and slippery and really refers to so many things it is meaningless. Versluis is a gnostic in the sense that I have rejected the term and reject his view of the world too. He cannot see nature without seeing slippery spirits gods or symbols behind it, and he writes that " Gnosis is not reducible to seeing or conversing with spirits, or to other visionary experiences. But it is possible, is it not, that gnosis may include such dimensions of human experience?" So he imagines all sorts of nonsense are real, so it must be real because he imagines it. But his is to merely fall back into the trap William James created, giving wings to subjective delusions.

Versluis sees archaic systems of knowing such as one finds in the occult and astrology as containing 'real' knowledge by persecuted heretics, rather than what they really were, which was small arcane groups and individuals looking for an angle and vying for power against mainstream religions and replacing them in some cases. There is no "real" knowledge there. There is merely the modernist spiritualism as a fiction of knowing, as William James defined it. The gnostic subject is a fiction. It is what Schuon called the "intellect" which is really just subjective pretense and surmise. Christ and Buddha are myth, Muhammad and Krishna are myth. Teaching religion as real is to indulge in mythic fantasy and promote delusions. There I no way around this

criticism.<sup>614</sup>

Sometimes cults were clearing houses for future religions and social movements, experiments as it were, for alternatives to the ruling system, and as such they are rarely less toxic than the ruling system and often even more toxic. This is the case with the nascent Christian or Essene communities and the Templars and Cathars for instance. The latter were cults that grew up as an adjunct to the Vatican and its wars in the Crusades. They posed a challenge to the dominant order and lost. One can see this in Chinese religio-politics, how Taoist or Buddhist outlying cults and alternative movements developed in relation to failing dynasties and in some cases either took them over, failed or in other cases led to reforms. These relics of former ways of knowing have an antiquarian interest, but not much else. They are examples of the symbiotic relationship of religion and politics.

Astrology was a pseudo-science. Indeed, it is *the* case study in pseudo-science and no objective merit at all. The position of the Sun, Moon, and planets at the moment we are born does not influence even slightly our personality, love life or career. A good refutation of astrology by Andrew Fraknoi can be found here. There are many other refutations. This site is the Astronomical Society of the Pacific:

<http://www.astrosociety.org/education/astro/act3/astrology3.html#defense>

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Mr. Fraknoi exposes astrology as an utter fraud with various questions such as

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<sup>614</sup> In *American Gurus*, Versluis writes mild criticism of American spirituality as being too fat food and he expresses a preference for more orthodox and difficult traditional religions. But this is a distinction without a difference as New Age spirituality is hardly less delusional than orthodox Christianity or Tibetan monasticism.

-----“Why is the moment of birth, rather than conception, crucial for astrology?...What is the likelihood that one-twelfth of the world’s population is having the same kind of day?

Simple division shows that this means 400 million people around the world will all have the same kind of day

Shouldn’t we condemn astrology as a form of bigotry?

-----In a civilized society we deplore all systems that judge individuals by sex, skin color, religion, national origin, or other accidents of birth. Yet astrologers boast that they can evaluate people based on another accident of birth

----. If astrological influence is carried by an unknown force, why is it independent of distance?

All the long-range forces we know in the universe get weaker as objects get farther apart. But, as you might expect in an Earth-centered system made thousands of years ago, astrological influences do not depend on distance at all. The importance of Mars in your horoscope is identical whether the planet is on the same side of the Sun as the Earth or seven times farther away on the other side.

If astrological influences don’t depend on distance, why is there no astrology of stars, galaxies, and quasars? “

These and many other questions show that astrology is a farce and has no truth value at all. Leonardo rightly said that astrology was a “deceptive opinion by which a living is made by fools”<sup>615</sup> This is what

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<sup>615</sup> Quoted in Capra, Fritjof, The Science of Leonardo, NY Doubleday, 2007, pg.225.

This is a good book, though marred by lack of research in some ways, Capra begins by stating that a ‘supposed self-portrait by Leonardo is actually him when all good scholars of Leonardo know very well in cannot be a self-portrait as he did the drawing in his forties and it pictures a man in his seventies. But Capra’s books does have an interesting discussion of Leonardo’s studies

religion is too. Teaching such myths in a university is ridiculous and Versluis is wrong to present this nonsense as a martyred system of knowledge. Falsities have no truth value and cannot be martyred, they are merely delusional. Religious studies is teaching of just such “deceptive opinion” as Leonardo speaks of.

There is no real knowledge in magic, astrology or gnosis as Versluis claims, since these marginalized systems of knowledge are not based on any real evidence. It is absurd to claim that magic and astrology are victims. Magic is a system of deceit that is made to make fools out of the audience who pay to be deceived. Magicians are hardly victims, they victimize their audience for money. Astrology exploited gullible believers for centuries making astrologers a nice living. Is the discredited theory of “ether” a “victim” that was roundly defeated by Einstein’s’ theory of relativity? No, of course not, it was a false theory that was disproved so it fell by the wayside like a seed that didn’t sprout. It was just wrong. Astrology and magic are bad seeds in just this way. What we have here is an irresponsible professor pandering to corporate culture by selling kids a bunch of reactionary superstition and escapist adolescent fictions.

Defining what education ought to be is a different matter. As the education theorist Henry Giroux, student of the great historian Howard Zinn, has said “

“Higher education may be one of the few institutions we have left in the United States where knowledge, values and learning offer a

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in mathematics and his efforts to grasp an early version of the wave theory of light and sound, as well as Leonardo’s early theories of topology and his engineering and mechanics experiments. Capra thinks that Leonardo’s notion of the soul is somehow still valid as a New Age construct. It isn’t. He makes a mistake to think so and this mars the book. Leonardo was right about many things and was an amazing researcher, which Capra amply shows. But he was wrong about things too, as is not surprising given that his science is a hundred years or more before science gets started in earnest.



glimpse of the promise of education for nurturing public values, critical hope and a sense of civic responsibility”.

Versluis does not have this civic mind. He is pushing bogus pseudo-science on university kids. We need more promotion of reason and critical thinking, not more irrationalism and a return to failed or discredited religious values of the far past. I see no point in teaching magic and the occult. The effort to do so by Versluis and others is not about higher education, but about dumbing students into intellectual zombies ready for autocratic corporations, Ken Wilbur or Schuon cult. Giroux notes that

to speak truth to power is not a temporary and unfortunate lapse into politics on the part of academics: it is central to opposing all those modes of ignorance, whether they are market-based or rooted in other fundamentalist ideologies, that make judgments difficult and democracy dysfunctional.

“Gnosis” in Versluis and other academic purveyors of the hybrid religions called “esoterism” is basically a form of elitist and dysfunctional fundamentalism, however posed as a New Age Advaita Vedanta it might pretend to be. Vedanta was merely a luxury metaphysics for upper class Hindus. “Gnosis” is basically a system of esoteric religious thought that seeks unity with an imaginary “non-dual” principle, such as Brahma or God. The fiction of non-duality tries to maintain the delusion that the formless, shapeless, colorless, soundless, stateless, god or void, is totally empty. Yet this nothing is paradoxically and simultaneously dancing the whole empty universe into all forms, shapes, colors, sounds and states of the myriad worlds and beings populating these worlds. The One God or Goddess Reality is doing everything and being everyone, but all that is done is meaningless. Merely the dance of Lila,--- this is a very clever

constructed fiction, but it lies about the world. The actual lives of suffering beings are denigrated and those who claim to be disinterested are exalted into priestly positions of power. Unreality is exalted and exploited and the real is made meaningless. This horrendous and cruel strategy is at the heart of the religions.

This fiction if is at the basis of most mystical systems. The Advaitic formula “Atma is Brahma” which basically states that your inner self is the universe of everything, is a ‘gnostic” formula which means that an individual joins himself in his or her imagination to an imaginal construction that is ‘god’, “void” or whatever. This is a form of imaginary or “virtual” self-magnification and is properly a psychological self-deceit, not an objective accomplishment. The process of gaining this “knowledge” which really isn’t knowledge at all but a sort of imposture— involves the devaluing of the cosmos, since one “transcends the world” and seeks union with an imaginary, universal concept of what one is not. One seeks union with what does not exist and in so doing denigrates all that does exist. To teach superstitions as truth is a most terrible thing, as Hypatia said.

Mystical Gnosis is thus a destructive thing, not a positive thing. Those who promote it do harm. It is a state of emotional and intellectual delusion, dialation, verging on trance, sometimes, sometimes merely a self-hypnosis. Such inner states, encouraged by others who have had similar states, are the stock and trade of all the religions. There are thousands of descriptions of these states. In his book American Gurus, where he tries to praise the rather cowboy religions and cults of America, Versluis quotes Bronson. Alcott, the transcendentalist. Alcott was addicted to such states and tried to reproduce them often. He writes of one such state that he “rose from the sepulchers of sense and was in God”. Religions often associate the actual world of sense with death or “sepulchers”. He notes “how few and transient” are such states. Of

course they are, they are delusional, making the real world into evil and death and the imaginary beyond into a resplendent reality is pure fiction.. I have been in such states myself and they are just a magnified sense of existence, which are magnified by reading the accounts of others who have such states too. There is no ‘other world’ beyond ours in which one can transcend the world of things and beings people like Alcott hates. Alcott posits such another world, which he then uses it to disparage and denounce the actual world. This is very common in all the religions and is deplorable.

Versluis also approves Alcott’s seething anti-evolutionism. Alcott claimed, falsely, that animals are the result of human sins. Hinduism had a similar view and has animals be lesser than human on the fictional scale of Karmic values. This too is make believe nonsense that harms both humans and animals. This view is typical of religious and human centered speciesism, which I will discuss elsewhere in these books. The need to disparage the world is typical in many religions.

For the Platonist “gnostic”, the world becomes Maya or the “ten thousand things”, as is also stated in Hindu or Taoist thought. Gnosis devalues earth and the cosmos in favor of non-existence, dreams and fictions, feeling states that are imaginary. Gnosis or esoterism is merely a new attempt to recreate religion in the modern age, using the same old tired fictions. Esoteric gnosis is just a new form of metaphysical sleight of hand. Versluis writes in praise of American “outlaw” religion as a true believer, unaware that he is promoting cults and delusions, as well as the fiction of corporate personhood, which, like the ideology of the three Trinitarian Persons, is a complete fiction. Fictive “Persons” are merely adult make believe, certainly not made more real by the fact they are preached by someone with a PHD or those who sit on the “supreme court”.

American gnostic gurus are really just con men, not cowboys. Actual cowboys were a poor and pathetic lot, who worked hard to help

destroy land, kill off Bison and people the continent with nature destroying meat cattle. They were and still are sometimes cruel to animals. Cowboys were underpaid drudges for cattle men, who made their owners rich, at their own expense and to the cost of nature. Actual cult leaders are pathetic too, despite Versluis's attempt to make rock star cowboys out of them. Of course, nowadays the notion of "outlaws" or "mavericks" refers to Republicans, corporate raiders, real estate shysters and hedge fund con-men, who steal from the poor and give to the rich. The cowboy presidents were ( Reagan, the Bushes) were above all corporate men, who did a lot to harm the middle class in America. They wanted to take the taxes of ordinary Americans and give as much as possible to the rich.

Efforts to teach gnosis or esoterism in today's universities as a "real" thing are pernicious and fraudulent. I recently had occasion to look at one of James Cutzinger's class syllabi and it was basically a primer for induction into the Schuon cult with exclusive readings of fanatical traditionalists from Nasr to Schuon and Oldmeadow. These writers should not be taught uncritically in our university system. They are cult leaders, sellers of phony knowledge or charlatans

When I read that Versluis calls Theodore Adorno an "Inquisitor" or compares him to anti-Semites, I have to speak out and object to such lies. This sort of reverse 'affirmative action' is typical of the far right. After being attacked by leftist extremists in the late 1960's Adorno wrote to Sam Beckett, the great playwright, that "the feeling of suddenly being attacked as a reactionary at least has a surprising note.". Versluis falsely attacks Adorno as a reactionary. Versluis cannot admit that his addiction to imaginary occult make-believe, gnostic pretence and religious fictions is chronic. Adorno is far from a perfect writer, but his devotion to freedom of inquiry and critical thought matters and should not be slighted, especially in our time where freedom of thought is under siege by far-right-extremists both of a fundamentalist and traditionalist bent.

The university system and public education is under real threat from both corporatist and reactionary religious sources.

I am not a devotee of Adorno by any means, but I can find no indication that Adorno was a witch hunter. Certainly he would have disliked Versluis's spiritual propaganda. He wrote against authoritarianism and studied anti-Semitism as part of his study of fascism. His most famous book, Negative Dialectics is a call for increased critical thinking and when I read it in the 1980's it helped form in my mind a certain attitude toward culture which helped me learn to be skeptical of corporate culture in New York City. Critical thinking is essential in a democracy. It involves examining assumptions, discerning hidden values, and especially evaluating evidence, logic and reason. Adorno was not a very nice man, apparently, but that does not mean he was bad. Mostly men and women are highly imperfect and very flawed, and as even Leonardo knew, no work is perfect.

Actually it is Versluis who is the witch hunter, as he blames Adorno's very witty and funny piece called "Theses on Occultism" for faults it doesn't have. (I discuss this in a footnote reproduced below) <sup>616</sup> I

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<sup>616</sup> "Adorno, Theodore " Theses on Occultism ". This is really a very interesting essay. This essay is full of small insights. For instance when he says occultists " take speculation to the point of fraudulent bankruptcy" this is certainly true. Guenon writes metaphysic like a medieval Aquinas writes on the head of a pin, -- it all amounts to empty words about an invented fiction that does not exist. " Or when Adorno writes "Their procedure is to be strictly scientific; the greater the humbug, the more meticulously the experiment is prepared." Exactly right. The traditionalists write with scientific exactitude about that which does not exist. And there is this delightful joke: "The soul can soar to the heights, heigh-ho, / the body stays put on the sofa below."—yes that is Martin Lings on his comfy English sofa dreaming of things that do not exist. And then this "power of occultism, as of Fascism, to which it is connected by thought-patterns of the ilk of anti-Semitism" yes, Perennialism is all about first inventing and then hating the profane world just as Hitler hated the Jews. For the traditionalists "Superstition is knowledge, because it sees together the ciphers of destruction scattered on the social surface; it is folly, because in all its death-wish it still clings to illusions: expecting from the transfigured shape of society misplaced in the skies an answer that only a study of real society can give." Exactly right. There must be study of reality to achieve real knowledge and change society from what it is. Occultism is cheap fetishes of knowledge, not the real thing. "By its regression to magic under late capitalism, thought is assimilated to late capitalist forms." Yes, Schuonism ultimately is Disney's Epcot Center, regurgitated culture colonized as a commodity fetishes . Epcot was one of Schuon's favorite places in America. He saw himself there in the Disneyland fantasy. Schuon liked Disney and

can see why Versluis hates this piece as it attacks his own prejudices and belief in irrational fictions. Versluis really goes off the deep end, trying to create a normalized view of “gnosis” when really gnosis is a spurious category of thought, based merely on the assertions of questionable mystics from ages ago. Religion is above all a community of shared delusions. There are many organized systems of delusion around the world that we call religions. The notions of “Spiritual Enlightenment” or enlightened realization of gnosis are simply non-existent things, merely imaginary fictions. The magic, occultism and astrology that Versluis tries to defend and teach, as if it were something valuable, cannot be meaningfully resurrected from the dust heap of irrational and dead systems of thought. These have been utterly discredited. Adorno was quite right to critique them.

Yes, one can teach such irrational or nonexistent fictions as part of a literature department, or in history or anthropology. But they should be taught skeptically, as part of the history of human fallibility. Religions are systems of delusions that failed, rather like pseudo sciences or failed political systems, bankrupt currencies, or libraries of dead myths. The history of such failed entities is interesting, but one cannot teach these things as if they were real. To teach esoterism, gnosis or astrology as if they were true, is to misuse teaching as a place of promoting superstition and this is unethical or wrong. Yes, such things can be and are being practiced in many places, as are all sort of erroneous beliefs, but one is required to point out that these are irrational and superstitious systems of thought. We are not required to accept irrational and harmful superstitions being forced into our children minds in public schools. Dawkins is right that this verges on child abuse. If Iran mandates that

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Disney land very much. Cyril Glasse says of the inner circle interest in Disney that “Disney World seems to have become the spiritual retreat of the Schuon inner circle, who go there whenever the going gets rough”. Yes that is correct. Schuon thought very highly of the place and went there with his various “wives”, who also loved to be tourists down there in Florida at Epcot. “

nine-year-old girl can be forcibly married to older men, as was the case under Khomeini, that is a criminal issue and efforts should be made to stop such injustices. It should not be taught in our schools as if it were a good thing or even a neutral thing. Nor should esoterism and astrology be taught as if they are real. They are not. While it is a fact that our society is becoming less and less educated every year, it is the mission of the university system to educate people for science and democracy and not for the reproduction of the medieval world or the Iranian state. Chomsky notes that

People were asked their opinion on various theories of evolution, of how the world came to be what it is. The number of people who believed in Darwinian evolution was less than ten percent.<sup>617</sup>

These numbers are the fault of an underfunded and poor education system as well as a rampant and ignorant Christianity. Nearly every child, or at least 90% are “left behind” in the U.S.. Iran and the U.S. both need more enlightenment and science education. In Iran and even more so in Saudi Arabia, where Islamic creationism is paramount, science is poorly taught. Versluis is in the highbrow fringe of fanatic misinterprets and proselytizers of irrationality, fundamentalists and esoterists who really belong in religious schools. Chomsky notes the reason for this ignorance and clinging to superstition might have to do with the fact “that ideal culture is so radically different from the real culture that people will find some ways of identifying themselves, becoming associated with others, taking part in something.” Since we don’t have a real democracy where people and not corporations come first, religion compensates with irrational social conformities, bible study, addictions to the “holy spirit” or “gnosis”.. We desire a society that

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<sup>617</sup> <http://www.chomsky.info/interviews/1990----.htm>

is fair and equal, but we get corrupt bankers and a government sold out for tax breaks to the rich at the expense of the poor and the middle class. Some people in their frustration want to believe Pied Pipers like Versluis or Schuon, Falwell, Billy Graham or some other TV evangelist. They end up wanting fictions like Versluis's "gnosis". They want fundamentalist fictions that Jesus will solve all our problems because George Bush or some other far right fanatic is "an anointed one of the Lord", as an incredibly ignorant and misguided Christian woman told me one day. Increasingly in the United States any sort of objective inquiry or reasoned discussion having to do with the good of community and the furtherance of democratic involvement and participation is minimized, ridiculed or ostracized. Corporations try to destroy unions, teachers are bashed and hounded by those who want to privatize education. Corporate and market place values—which are inherently authoritarian--- rule and dominate even out intellectual lives. Lacking any real community life people turn to bogus communities, cults, churches and irrational system of belief. With starvation of public life due to corporate narrowness and greed, private lives in America are reduced to rank superstition. As Chomsky wrote elsewhere

"You can see that in the polls too. I was just looking at a study by an American sociologist (published in England) of comparative religious attitudes in various countries. The figures are shocking. Three quarters of the American population literally believe in religious miracles. The numbers who believe in the devil, in resurrection, in God doing this and that — it's astonishing. These numbers aren't duplicated anywhere else in the industrial world. You'd have to maybe go to mosques in Iran or do a poll among old ladies in Sicily to get numbers like this. Yet this is the American population."



People believe in miracles for desperate reasons. They want to feel that they are important in the universe and so make up stories and fictions to give themselves this feeling. Miracles are really about feelings. A woman goes to Lourdes and her diabetes gets a little better, it must be a miracle. She projects agency onto a place, as if saints were actually there, Mary or St. Joseph did it and she buys a new picture of him for her bedroom. Someone recently told me a story that a man they knew gave money to the poor and afterwards got in a car wreck by driving off a bridge, but he is not killed,--- so it must have been baby Jesus who saved him, the person told me Miracles are generally chance events that would have a thousand other explanations but are instead used to justify and already existing fictional system of belief. . Chance events are just chance events. There are no hidden agents acting from outside of time.

Astrology, and miracles explain nothing, they are merely fictions on top of other fictions.<sup>618</sup> The root of the word Miracle is Latin for wonder or amazement. The word is “mira”. It means ‘to look’ in Spanish, “wonder” in other languages. It is a fine thing to look and wonder. What happens though is that people jump from being amazed by something that happened by chance to creating a mythology based on the event. There are no events that violate the basic laws of nature. Religions depends on wild extrapolations from chance events. Virgin Births,

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<sup>618</sup> In his *Ethics*, (1677) Baruch Spinoza wrote against miracles and said “Those who wish to seek out the cause of miracles, and to understand the things of nature as philosophers, and not to stare at them in astonishment like fools, are soon considered heretical and impious, and proclaimed as such by those whom the mob adores as the interpreters of nature and the gods. For these men know that, once ignorance is put aside, that wonderment would be taken away, which is the only means by which their authority is preserved.” In other words the Churches and preserve their authority by bogus miracles and astonishing the ignorant. Science takes away this foolishness and the allure of miraculous fairy tales.

resurrections of the dead or Milarepa's magic flights and rainbows are not different than absurd leaps of superstition based on blind coincidences.

Occult and irrational systems of belief are encouraged by religious studies professors and preachers because they are also basically authoritarian and escapist and present no threat to mainstream capitalist and corporate values. Esoterism helps corporations "transcend" democracy and feed the rich at the expense of the middle class. So a thinker like Versluis who pushes transcendent gnosis is allowed in the university system because he serves the need of escapist delusion and fictional diversion and student like sensationalist magical thinking. I think it is irresponsible of the universities to allow this to go on unquestioned. <sup>619</sup>

Versluis is right that religious, heretical individuals were unjustly killed or harmed by tyrants like Stalin, but this does not make whatever nonsense they believed true. The Romanian and Chinese communists persecuted the religious in their countries, just as Catholics and Hindus persecuted the insufficiently religious in their countries. Versluis tries to make a hagiography of various gnostic martyrs, such as Socrates or himself, but it fails. Socrates was not a martyr so much as an advertisement for Plato. Plato is not writing about an historical person, but is creating fictions to push his own ideology. The earliest account of Socrates is Aristophanes, who calls him a sophist, which might well be true,. Xenophon implies Socrates sought his own death, which hardly makes him a martyr.

So it is not useful to peddle martyrs for ideologies rather than evidence of actual truth and history. Since Socrates wrote nothing, there is no way to know what he was actually like and views of him are so

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<sup>619</sup> Unfortunately universities often make decisions based on making money instead of the pursuit of science and knowledge, and thus like the sensational appeal of certain courses, or sports, hence their allowance of irrationalism or post-modernist nonsense of various kinds.

different, once cannot believe one or another. The answer is not more religion, or martyrs, nor, on the other side, more Marxism, which is a religion of sorts. The answer is honesty and skepticism. Corporate America promotes religions in other nations as an advance guard of corporate capitalism. This is what Versluis is doing too, however unconsciously.

The answer is to understand that ideological systems like Catholicism, Gnosis or Marxism are dangerous and cultist in their behavior. Truth is not their concern, social acceptance and control of minds is what they want. Versluis is pushing his 'non dual' ideology of transcendence as if it were a real thing. Of course it is just a fabrication. Alan Watts, Ginsberg, Snyder, and many others extrapolated their inner states into assertions of universal significance without any real proof that their states actually had real content to them. Subjective illusions are the coin gnostics trade in. Marxism and Gnosis are as irrational systems as Catholicism. There is objective reason a person would join or espouse either dogma. Meister Eckhart and Spinoza were both harmed by inquisitorial orthodoxies but that does not make Eckhart's irrational systems of mysticism a true picture of reality. Indeed, systems of power always have victims and it is a question of valuing victims as people without necessarily agreeing with their belief system. Islamism is an awful religion, in my personal estimation, but one must separate the harms that Islam does from the Muslims. I have known and liked many Muslims, despite the religion they belong to.

The story of Eckhart or Spinoza are somewhat anomalous stories. These men were non conformists and one admires that whatever the content of their thought. But is more instructive to look at the witch killings in Europe in the 1690's and beyond. This was the protestant equivalent of the Inquisitions and had similar motivations. It supported the upper classes and was engineered to punish early science. There were tragedies of horrendous magnitude, 'gendercide' as some have

rightly called it. There were over 40-60,000 so called witches killed. 70% of the people killed were women during the period called “the Burning Times”. Another source says that 100,000 people were killed as witches or demon possession, and 83% were women.<sup>620</sup> During this period there were crazes, panics, and mass hysterias. The Burning Times lasted from 1550-1650, largely in Germany, just as Catholicism is losing its grip to Protestantism and the population is in rebellion against an incredibly corrupt Catholic Church. ‘Gnostic’ ideologies were rampant and not much better than the church they sought to replace. Slowly as the 1600’s advanced science is finally supplanting ‘gnosis’ with objectivity and devotion to actualities rather than irrational imaginings. With the slow advent of science and reason, the witch burnings slow down.

As Barbara Ehrenreich suggested many years ago, it appears that women “witches” were killed not because of some imaginary spirituality they supposedly possessed, but because they were good doctors and botanists, chemists and midwives who were much more likely to help real women than their overpriced male counter parts who were more likely to “Bleed” or apply leeches their patients. Witches did not care about ‘gnosticism’ as Versluis tries to maintain. The best book on the mentality of women who were accused of witchcraft is The Life of Martha Ballard by Laura Elrich. Ballard was a midwife who was badly treated by the early male dominated medical profession. It shows clearly that her main concern was not the narcissistic category Versluis calls ‘gnostics’, but rather she was occupied with healing patients with botanical remedies she grew in her own garden. She was an early empiricist and scientist. Witches were victims of misogyny, which is as much a part of the so called “gnostics” as of Catholicism. Versluis doesn’t talk about this either. Ehrenreich writes:

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<sup>620</sup> See Peoples History of Science by Clifford Conner, page 367-371.

“The witch-healer’s methods were as great a threat (to the Catholic Church, if not the Protestant) as her results, for the witch was an empiricist: she relied on her senses rather than on faith or doctrine, she believed in trial and error, cause and effect. Her attitude was not religiously passive, but actively inquiring. She trusted her ability to find ways to deal with disease, pregnancy and childbirth — whether through medications or charms. In short, her magic was the science of her time.” <sup>621</sup>

It was science, reason and enlightenment that was the indicated solution to the injustices of the the witch hunting period, just as it was science and enlightenment that was indicated by every other Inquisition or religious war. Gnosticism was merely a superstitious reaction to the corruption of the Church. Versluis is wrong. The ‘heretics’ in the witch hunting period, after the Inquisition or after Hitler and Stalin did not become good little Gnostics as Versluis claims. Even those who left Stalinist terrors, did not seek religion freedom so much as the open society beyond the Soviet Border. Religion was merely a screen on which the Samizdat refuseniks based their wild hopes for freedom. Religion was one minor mode of Russian resistance to a tyranny that was really about a quasi-religious Marxist irrationality and violations of human rights. One systems of irrationality is not a solution to another. Slaves who sought to escape from slavery might indulge in African religious chants, or early gospel music in the woods, but the basis of that was not some imaginary search for ‘gnosis” but rather freedom from the oppressors hand and whip. <sup>622</sup>The freedom from slavery and lynching was not

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<sup>621</sup> Ehrenreich, Barbara and English, Deirdre Midwives, Witches and Nurses: A History of Women Healers. Second edition July 2010

<sup>622</sup> The abstracted emotionality of music make music easily exploitable by institutions. Take for instance J.S.Bach’s incredibly lovely B minor Mass. It is a profound piece of music, not

achieved by religion but by objective analysis and bravery by people like Frederick Douglas or Harriet Tubman or Ida B. Wells-Barnett, who wrote bravely against the lynching of black women, children and men in southern states by white men. The involvement of religion in resistance movements is merely a sidebar, an accident of history. What was crucial was objective analysis, clear purpose and effective action.

After reading a few pages of Versluis's books it become clear to me that it is not totalism or even real history that Versluis wants to explore but rather he really wants to bracket off religious and political groups he does not like so as to push his own brand of religious fanaticism and myth, which he calls "gnosis". His blanket effort to justify any religious group that reminds him or his own "gnostic" obsessions seems a little obtuse. He is myth making based on bogus concepts like Dual and Non Dual, Esoterism and Gnosis. These are concepts with no future or past and are used as a kind of mind control to create willing and unthinking acceptance. This is also true in his American Gurus book, which if read with a skeptical eye, is a good source book on how to make up your own religion based on bogus claims of prior religions. Versluis calls his new religion "immediateism" and it is merely an American version of the same old political ideology based on spiritual delusions one saw in Guenon or

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because it is true about religion but because it is so full of longing and other human emotions. Bach wrote for the Church and put his own misguided faith into it. That does not make his faith true. What is true in the work is the emotion of hope or expectation, grief and longing. I am still moved when I listen to it, and there is not a shred of religious interest in it for me. It is a great piece of expression of longing and a disturbing work, because I know it is also full of human self-delusion. Religious art is an art that is unbearably sad, because it is false and wants to terribly badly to be true. I have the same reaction looking at the absolutist art of Rubens, this excessive praise of Kings and Queens and the inflated mythological bloatedness of his bodies and compositions. I can see this is the excess of the absolutist delusion, and I prefer Rembrandt's more intimate humanism. But at the same time I love Rubens ability to draw and delineate form. I did a copy of his wonderful portrait of his wife Isabella Brandt recently and loved his obvious love of her. Art often is a sucker or subservient to power and this is a fact I dislike very much.

Schuon, Eckhart, Aquinas and Plato. He is trying to justify his career as a confidence man, selling ideologies as if they were realities.

He seeks to reinvent the intellectual vacuum of the medieval Scholastics. His persistent illusion that Platonism has not been utterly defeated is curious. Plato is his gnostic hero, when in fact Plato was a major totalitarian thinker, indeed, he is something of the father of totalism---as well as being an early “gnostic”. Indeed, Plato is the arch “gnostic”. By the end of Versluis’s very confused books it seems clear that the ‘gnosticism’ that Versluis admires is really the same thing that creates totalism, as Versluis himself says

“Tertullian railed against the Gnostics because supposedly they were dualists and because some of them reputedly held that humanity was deluded and the world was evil, yet much of mainstream Christianity, like Tertullian himself, came to espouse a fierce dualism and an insistence on the evil nature of humanity. <sup>623</sup>

It is hardly to anyone credit to espouse non dualism either, since it is the source of so much that is harmful, from caste to Arjuna’s killings to Zen priests involvement in World War 2. So what Versluis really wants is to restate religious power in our world, a new religion of a fictional “non-duality” and self- hypnosis where superstition is free and without accountability. There is more of a hype-gnosis than any actual knowledge here.

Non-dualism is no panacea as is shown by Shankara himself who was one of the creators of non-dual thought--- Shankara—who could be called the Hindu Plato. He preached the horror of the caste system (as did Plato). The caste system is one of the most unjust social systems ever created. “Non-duality” is very much present throughout Christian history

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<sup>623</sup> Versluis, Arthur *The New Inquisitions*. Oxford 2006 pg.56

and can be found in Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite, Eckhart, St John and Christ many others. Non duality imposes a solipsistic fiction on the world that ends in producing the very sort of hypocritical world hatred and caste hierarchy that is found in Shankara's thought. It merely restyles the world as a construction of the human mind. This is really a lie about reality. Religions want reality to be a construction so they can manage people's perceptions and control minds. The fact is that "thou art that" ( Tawhid in Sufism or Wu Wei in Taoism, or primordial state in Dzog Chen<sup>624</sup>) is a lie. The notion that you are everything and everything is you in a sort of undifferentiated consciousness is really not helpful to anyone. It is merely a grand fabrication, a great fiction, that might 'feel' real, but actually is false, merely a delusion of the mind. We are part of the earth and the solar system in a literal and not in a metaphysical way.

Versluis wrongly thinks that Emerson is a Platonist. It is true that an element of Platonic essentialism enters Emerson via the German philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, like Schelling or Kant, as well as Wordsworth, Shelley and some of the English Romantics, like Carlyle. From them he picked up an attenuated Platonism, unfortunately. But he

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<sup>624</sup> In Tibetan Buddhism there denomination of the larger religion called Dzog Chen. The main idea of it is the "primordial state" is a state of being detached from everything while being "present" to everything. This "samsara in Nirvana" is really an artificial state that can only be attained after years of training. There is nothing natural about it and it involves an inherent abstraction and detachment from everything that ultimately is based on a hatred of existence. The result of this is a suppositious exaltation of death as a complete union with "the void". Buddhist lamas in this traditional claim all sort of outrageous things, such as being able to live for long period on no food, just little mineral pills or being able to reduce themselves to death through meditation to nothing but hair and fingernails. This sort of magical thinking is also found in Zen, Chan and Bon. But when looked at closely it is merely the usual mumbo jumbo of charlatans. For more on Dzog Chen and Namkhay Norbu seen through the eyes of his son, Yeshe see, the Documentary My Reincarnation The son brings into question the mythos his father and his disciples lived by but unfortunately falls for the myth in the end and became another trader in the spiritual market, like his father, who is a salesman for Buddhism in the west. What the film does show I think it is the political nature of Tibetan Buddhism and how this politics is called "religion". The absurdity of the idea of Reincarnation turns out to be a political one where a son is drawn into a cultural hegemony and is made "spiritual" by what amounts to a cultic process. He is more or less subjected to mind control by followers and his father  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My\\_Reincarnation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Reincarnation)



is not a Platonist though sometimes it served him to pretend he was, as it creates a certain oracular rhetoric for his aphoristic lectures. But we was strongly anti-slavery and Plato designed a caste and slave state in his Republic. As I will show later in an essay, "The Dead Hand of Plato", Plato's theories are utterly discredited and more akin to fascism than to Emerson. Moreover, Emerson's essay "Self-Reliance" is more pragmatist than Platonist. Plato was opposed to any self-reliance and wanted all decisions to be made by the "guardians" of the theofascist state. His understanding of Nature is very weak and would need Thoreau to clean up its symbolist caricatures. To the degree Emerson is a Platonist, he is deplorable and is forgettable like Agassiz, who was in error about species. Emerson sometimes plays with Plato's anti-democratic ideology, for instance, as when he says that the masses are "rude, lame, unmade, pernicious in their demands and ignorance.. the calamity is the masses"<sup>625</sup> But this Platonic hatred of ordinary people is pernicious.

Henry David Thoreau, who was Emerson's student and friend for a time, ended up disliking this aspect of essentialism in Emerson. In the last 10 years of Thoreau's journal he rebels against Emerson's ideology of the essentialized universe and become more and more Darwinian in his outlook. Indeed, Thoreau is by far the more important of the two men, and Emerson's ideas have largely fallen out of the way, part because of his unfortunate Hinduized Platonism. It is not surprising that Versluis would try to resurrect these dead ideas, as they serve a conservative and insular refusal to look at reality as it is. Thoreau in contrast is a breath of fresh air and his deep reading in Darwin chimed so well with the intimacy and realism of his nature observations that Thoreau's still reads as a contemporary, presaging ecology by a century or more.

To the degree that Emerson is what Versluis thinks he is, he cannot be taken seriously. Gnostic and esoteric thought creates castles

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<sup>625</sup> Versluis, Arthur, American Gurus, Oxford,. page 46

in the air, like Shelley's poems. Versluis also appears to endorse the creationism of Alcott and Agassiz, and shows his ignorance of biology in quote form Agassiz in which Agassiz expresses his idea that species were created by god and could not change into one another. Agassiz was long ago proven wrong on this. There is so much evidence for evolution that it has long since ceased to be in any dispute except by ideologues who refuses to look at the increasingly vast and endless evidence in favor of Darwin.<sup>626</sup>

Even if one looks at a "non-dual" gnostic far from the Transcendentalists, or Romantics, gnosticism fails. Dogen is a typical gnostic from Japan for instance, who, like Emerson and Alcott, imagines a world beyond our world for which there is no evidence at all other than subjective illusions. Dogen says in his Shobogenzo<sup>627</sup> that he is beyond "cause and effect" and understands that "mountains are walking", which is a very fancy way of saying he is beyond space and time, existence and non-existence, just as Emerson claimed to be. It is utter nonsense, fashionable and abstruse nonsense, but nonsense all the same. It is bragging on the basis of what is purely delusional. It is very clear in the sense that all Zen is a sort of undermining of reality with vacuity of mind, but the surrealism of it is ultimately silly. Mountains do not walk. One could stretch it and say that plate tectonics makes mountains walk over eons. But that is a statement of evolutionary fact and is way beyond Dogen. The negation of sense in Zen Koans is a falsification of reality and denial of the actual. It is quite possible to pretend reality is not reality. Language creates an abstract space often labeled "transcendent" which actually is merely a fictional space, useful for imaginary metaphors, but that has no real content. Koans are merely references to this abstract, linguistic, fictional space. This is a very common strategy of mystics all

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<sup>626</sup> See Versluis, in American Gurus, "the Concord School and American Platonism" in which he argues a failed creationist position.

<sup>627</sup> <http://www.urbandharma.org/pdf/Shobogenzo.pdf>

over the world and it does not indicate a common truth, but a common delusion. The human brain can make things up in extreme emotional and cognitive states. But reality is still reality and those like Dogen, or the poet Gary Snyder, who follows Dogen, are lying about the world.

Classical Chinese poetry, which is very largely a religious poetry, depends on these false or fictional Buddhist metaphors dividing reality into the real and the unreal, arranged hierarchically as samsara and nirvana. A great deal of ink has been wasted trying to prove the real (samsara) is not real or that reality(the imaginary) is God. The pretence is that nirvana is the void or sunyata. When actually there is no Nirvana: nirvana is just a linguistic space which is made quasi- permanent by excessive fixation of the mind. Yoga and Zen training are really ways of deforming the mind. Mountains are mountains and are not walking. To understand nature does not require Buddhism or Emerson's "oversoul" but merely being there as much as possible, which turns out to take a full life time and even then it will not entirely be understood. Science is key to this, not Buddhism, which lies about life as much as the other religions do, but does it with a different terminology. The world( samsara) is denigrated as being nothing, empty—the ten thousand things--- and one should avoid attachments if possible. This is all misogynistic fiction, not really very different than Eckhart's formulas or Shankara's,--- all this is make believe.

Consciousness is not a religious or metaphysical phenomena but a biological fact of the organization of the brain. The brain surgeon Henry Marsh said that the brain is a " mystery as great as the stars at night and the universe around us" and by this I don't think he meant anything mystical. The brain is a Darwinian structure and differs only a little from chimps or monkey brains. Birds like Crows have great powers of thinking ability too. The idea of the 'soul' is a fiction unique to humans, as far as we know, and largely the result of social pressure and linguistic slippages. Brain science has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years.

Reality is neither “dual” or “non dual”, these are religious/mystical terms created to denigrate opposing points of view. Science is not dualistic any more than it is Non-dual. These are badly constructed metaphors—stereotype—used by the religious to stigmatize those who do not think like them. “non duality” is really a totalistic mentality, a “one taste” gnostic, Hindu or Buddhist way of suppression, whereby reality is subjected to a mental control by a unitary and dominating mind centered subjectivity. There is no scientific merit to this way of seeing the world at all.<sup>628</sup> Yes, it is all fine and good to see that all things are somehow related or made of one universal stuff, but reality is really not one or two dimensional. It is much more complex than that. It is true that everything is related, but not by religious concepts. The relations are all physical and evolutionary, by affinities of similar body type, eyes or species relationships. There are differences in nature and they are important. You are not a platypus, or a Scarlet Tanager, even though you share most of their DNA. We “are all related” is true—in a way---, but biology is more than merely similarities, the important differences also demand respect. Non-duality is another monistic and solipsistic fiction that cannot be made square with the theory of evolution or with science. It is evolution that is more important than feel good Vedantic, Zen or Rumiesque theories that sounds good on paper, Non-duality is pie in the sky nonsense. So is “dualism”. These are species categories that are mental fictions. Many writers of New Age metaphysics use this sort of imaginary language to describe things, but it is simply imaginaries. To really know the species on earth you can’t stare at your navel or read Goodrick Clarke’s books, you must study species as themselves in their own environments and not study them as a projection of an esoterists selfish need of imaginary non-duality or unity. Life is not ‘dual’ or ‘non

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<sup>628</sup> one can read about the non-dual state in Tibetan ( Dzog Chen) Versluis, Zen, Vedanta or Ken Wilber and all the descriptions are slightly different, but they all boil down to a totalistic system of self-conscious mind control and disinterest.

dual', all that is chimera and make believe.

The much misused term “gnosis” is just a Greek term that means knowledge. It has come to mean in spiritual writers a special kind of imaginary knowledge that arises from “inwardness”, where consciousness is universalized, magnified and fluffed up and the cosmos is devalued. The universe only has value as a symbol of an imaginary beyond, the exact nature of which is unknown, because it does not exist. Emerson flirted with this same nonsense. Thoreau overcame this Symbolist view of reality and it is this that makes his late journal one of the most important books of the 1900's.

Inwardness is deified in Versluis's writing in accord with New-Ageism—which is a spinoff of American Protestantism and its worship of the “holy ghost”—and Versluis is a confused if unwilling part the New Age. “Gnosis” is merely an elitist version of the fluffy spirituality of holy rollers. Versluis calls the American version of gnosis, “immediateism” a sort of fast food, cowboy spirituality, dished out by cult leaders and con men, like Adi Da or Ken Wilbur. Cowboy spirituality corresponds quite closely to CEO culture, with its cowboy need of freedom, *lassaiz faire* economics and cult of the individual . They rob their money from hard working people and stow it away in tax havens and off shore banks so they avoid paying taxes on it, and then, hide behind dark windowed cars and gated mansions hidden beyond dense thickets of trees, or in penthouses that have no name on them at the building entrance.

The idea of “Inwardness”, is really an alienated and twisted notion of self which really dissolves into politics when looked at closely. What they refer to as “immanence” or inwardness is really just well-being, a sense oneself and others as having personhood, but they elevate this idea into a subjective pathology. The notion that the inner self is somehow to be “born again” or transcended and that this being born again brings about a “metanoia”, is specious. When I was 14, I watched as various people, including a girl my age who I thought I was in love with, stood in

a blue swimming pool to get baptized by a white-robed preacher. He was really a foreman in some factory or something. The suburban pool was behind a 1970's pseudo colonial house and was as Blue as a David Hockney painting of an LA swimming pool. He dunked their heads under the chlorinated water, one by one. They were all born again, and apparently the Holy Spirit did not mind the chlorine. On another occasion I was subjected to a "laying on of hands" event in which various women put their hands on me and spoke in tongues, presumably healing me and getting the evil out of me. It was weird and I tried to let happen what they were saying should happen, but part of me knew it was all a fraud, including the speaking in tongues. Both the baptism and the laying on of hands were really social events that had to do with imposing uniform and correct thinking and thus were really political events. Even the witnesses were important to this happening.

"Born again" Christians have nothing that makes them better than non-born-again people. The revival in the 1970's had to do with politics and the republican party, and the rise of a capitalistic fundamentalism that would take over in the Reagan years. They supported the Vietnam war and hated hippies. The difference between gospel singing Baptists and elitist Sufis in university religious studies departments is nothing, really. Both are practicing versions of the same fictional spiritual/political system of social control. It is all pretense, snake oil, group mind control and social conditioning. One cannot transcend oneself. The idea that one can is really a misunderstanding of language.<sup>629</sup>

The inwardness that Versluis promotes is really just narcissistic

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<sup>629</sup> Antinomian metaphors are legion in religions and are usually abuses of a language. There is no god but God is typical statement of this kind and defines an absolutist transcendent deity above all smaller concerns. If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light is a statement of the mythical Christ which defines inner states of "transcendental emotion" emotion. The via negativa is antinomian meaning it is supposed to transcend social norms, but really such attempts at transcendence are really just new attempts to underscore a more radical system of social control and power.

self-inflation, not unlike corporations claiming to be persons when in fact they neither die nor eat, have babies or are human.

The idea of ‘gnosis’ like its synonym ‘esoterism’ refers to nothing at all, in fact. It is a pure fiction, an imaginary supposition that only refers to imaginary knowledge. It is a new religious construct that is applied retrospectively to people like Alcott or Emerson and which has not real substance to it. The gnostic idea, for instance, that “consciousness is everything and everywhere” is utterly meaningless, -- it is fiction and a fiction that is regularly imagined by followers of various ideologies. The Gnostic is one who feels something ‘inwardly’ it this feeling of “god’ or “eternal consciousness”, Atma or “Beyond Being”. This fiction is misinterpreted as a fact and claimed to be a ‘knowledge’ when really it is just a feeling--- a magnified and mystical romantic dream of some kind.<sup>630</sup> The feeling might have come from ones parents, from books, from priests or from misinterpreting the idea of the ‘self’ as an infinite eternal thing, or from misinterpreting Nature<sup>631</sup>. Consciousness is a mirror of sorts and one can mistakenly think that this mirror reflects everything, but actually it is just a part of being and even the consciousness of a rabbit reflects or holds much of the world in its

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<sup>630</sup> One of Versluis’s own examples of an exemplary gnostic is the new age thinker Franklin Merrell Wolff, who thinks consciousness is everything, and things are nothing. This is Shankara in a nutshell and involves a radical devaluation of the actual—the earth--- in favor of the purely mental or rather the fiction of the “spiritual”. The universal consciousness these thinkers posit is a confusion of language and a fabrication.

<sup>631</sup> Emerson mystified Nature when he knew little about it, Thoreau followed him in this for a short time, but as Thoreau’s journal shows, he become increasingly disillusioned by Emerson’s transcendentalist ideology and began to reject Emerson. Henry then accepted Darwin and science as he got older. Mystics tend to project their pet theories on nature, when nature is not ‘gnostic’ at all. Versluis projects his misunderstanding of nature upon Thoreau perhaps because of some latent hatred of science. He doesn’t seem to have read the late journals which are full of science and specific observation, and no talk, thank goodness of “gnosis” or Vedanta or any of that nonsense. Thoreau gave up Emerson in his later work. He became a scientist and largely abandoned transcendentalism

embrace. The romantic dream of Merrell Wolfe or Shankara is just a dream, they are not better than the thoughts of rabbits. Indeed, the thoughts of rabbits are probably better than metaphysical fabrications, certainly more real.

Versluis repeatedly insists on the “ahistorical” character of gnosis, when really this is just an optical illusion,-- or rather an “imaginal” illusion--- or what Richard Dawkins might call a mental virus. There is no “eternity” outside of time. One can imagine such an “eternity”—art depends somewhat on the illusion of eternity,--- but the imagining itself is not actually outside time or history.<sup>632</sup> Eternity is a mind game humans play on themselves. Gods, or realizations of gods, are little more than emotional delusions born of constant mental conditioning. Such ideologies are born of emotional and psychological clusters of ideas which come from others of a similar creative subjectivity. These are not real facts but suggested and imagined images born of words and analogies.

Indeed, the idea of eternity is a fiction that was created by upper classes to preserve the illusion of power and permanence. This is evident, for instance in Renaissance architecture, of the Vatican particularly, where the fiction of the “city of God”, which goes back to Christianized Roman ideas in Augustine and others, was pasted onto the ambitions of the Popes. They wanted to create an “eternal” architecture in Saint Peters and other buildings elsewhere that would suggest that the Papacy was

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<sup>632</sup> Thus when Rumi says, “Never did the dust of mortality settle on my skirt, o dervish! I have gathered a wealth of roses in the garden of Eternity.” He is really saying he is better than everyone because he is beyond existence, and life is dust, and all that matters is what does not exist. He expresses a fake humility that is really universal pride. The absurd logic of immortality is in Niffari, Ibn Arabi, Zen, Lao Tzu and all the mystics. It really amounts to this abstract self-referring word games played endlessly around the pivot of delusion. No doubt this experience of infinite delusion in the denial of life creates a certain hypnotic euphoria, a “drunken love” of a certain kind of power that denies it is power. But it is destructive and apophatic and this inflated mysticism is a dead end. The pretense and fiction of immortality is a way to make humans seem divine. They are not, of course, nor is there any divine ‘soul’ that lives beyond death. Immortality is the conceited fiction that makes humans believe they are above all other animals when they are not.



immutable and perpetual. The Popes hired Michelangelo to design the illusion of an architecture of forever. In actual fact the Papacy was already sliding into decadence at the time of Bramante and Leonardo. One could even say it was born in decadence. The attempt to create an architecture of eternity is perhaps a compensation for the fact that Christ never existed, but to give the myth reality requires great illusions. The conceit of immortality and eternity applied to an institution like the Church is meant to give the Church authority and "magisterial power", when in fact it is just another collection of more or less corrupt people, ordinary as can be, who wish to get on top of the world by whatever means they can. Michelangelo's job was to create propaganda for this and he was very good at it.

This attempt to magnify motives and claim immortality is not exclusive to the Church, you can find the same thing in John Locke<sup>633</sup> and his effort of justify nascent corporate capitalism as protected by Insurance to put it beyond change and chance.<sup>634</sup> The idea of immortal,

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<sup>633</sup> In his justification of stealing Native American land Locke imposes the idea of private property on America and says that "in the beginning all the world was America". The divine right of property must be imposed on America which had done without it for 30,000 years. For Locke, Salvation is ownership, and the Master who owns, owns by virtue of his Christian right. "And thus came in the use of money, some lasting thing that men might keep without spoiling". Eternity is slavery and Money. Money, like the Eucharistic species, brings a resemblance of immortality. It is not money primarily that interested Locke, though he was enormously motivated to make more of it, as many of his letters show. Rather, his concern seems to have been the immortality, or, what amounts to the same thing, the power that wealth gave him. Like Jay Gould, the American Robber Baron, Locke's primary concern was erect himself into a position of highest status and influence. Corporate immortality is enshrined in the fiction of corporate personhood,-- which like the god concept is a fabrication. See Locke, John, Second Treatise of Government, section 47 chapter 5. Macpherson ed.

<sup>634</sup> . John Locke: Second Treatise of Government Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing 1980 27-29 Locke, wrote this as a panegyric against the concept of the divine right of Kings, which had been advocated in the writings of Sir Robert Filmer, ( see *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings* 1680). The controversy between Filmer and Locke concerns the transfer of power from an aristocratic- military state to a merchant military state. Locke's famous plea for religious toleration is really a plea for the toleration of merchant warriors to conquer where they will. While the removal of the Kings is a good thing as is the separation of Church and state, Locke is not really a human rights advocate. He was concerned with toleration of the greed of the English upper classes. His "toleration" appears to be merely replacing one form of divine right with

corporate structures are things that are abstractions, myths, like gods or like money or insurance. These are means the very rich use to try to give a patina of totality and permanence to their small and mortal selves. They use inflated legal rhetoric seek to put themselves beyond time. A corporation is little different than an Egyptian god, as, indeed, both are conceits made to insure a given group of class of people are were deathless. If one can convince enough people that this lie is true and dynasty of corporation might last decades or even centuries.

This is delusional pretence at eternal existence is partly a result of transcendentalist notions of the body derived from Christianity The body is seen as a corporate thing and a divine person is put in charge as that which is beyond change and chance. The Eucharistic species put the body front and center as the supreme object of the universe. As Christianity declined, corporate culture took over. The corporate body become a sort of new church for capitalism which claims ownership of “property”. Attempts have been made, very foolish ones, to make property a “divine” or “transcendent” thing. This is far right, republican fiction.<sup>635</sup> In actual fact nature is nowhere property, but rather a sort of process in which the rights of all are dependent on evolutionary differentiation and exclusive breeding possibility through species. No one owns entirely

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another, that of divine property rights. Human rights only involved the upper classes in England, since they alone were truly human. Indians, the poor, slaves, indentured servants, women, had virtually no rights. Filmer was much worse than Locke and saw the state and religion as one and the same. For most of human history this is the case, the separation of religion and the state is a new phenomenon beginning with Jefferson and others. Religion is a form of politics, even today, even with those who deny this is so. Once both religion and politics are brought into regulation the world might be a less dangerous place. The state remains a largely toxic institution and needs to be diminished as the monarchy was in Europe.

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<sup>635</sup> There are also notions of “transcendent law” too which are also attempts to make a religion of capitalism, rather as in Ayn Rand. These make a religion of property and give special rights to those who have lot so money and things, no matter by what crooked means they got them, and however they stone form and denigrate those who are poor. This 'Horatio Alger' philosophy is very American and is the worst side of American selfishness and lack of social conscience. Everything for the rich and nothing for nature or the poor, who suffer the brunt of the self-serving rich.

their own body, since no one can stop death, puberty, menopause or ageing. Since we do not entirely own even our own bodies it is absurd to claim ownership of land or nature, trees and animals. The earth and species upon it, own themselves, and prosper or not according to their own abilities and weaknesses. Human attitudes towards nature and animals are also self-serving fictions. It is objective that animals created themselves, over long periods of evolution. To suppose humans have the right to dominate and abuse them is fiction and a horrible fiction that is now wasting nature everywhere. Humans are “lower than the animals”, Both Thoreau and Twain said, rightly, in most cases.<sup>636</sup>

The reality of the world is not religious, but Darwinian. In the actual world, species are their own creation and exist side by side in a peace fraught with difficulties and hardships. But there is beauty in it, as Darwin said. But the Lockean state and the ideology of corporate personhood and the personhood of the gods are all delusions of a kind, and equally questionable. Gnosis is merely the conceit of permanence erected into a pretend eternity. The embalming of Lenin’s body in Red Square has the same function, as do the pyramids. All these images are images of elitist conceit, which are supposed to be read a “spiritual” claims, the use of the “spiritual” term here being more or less synonymous with ‘magnified or abstracted political fiction’. Dismantling the injustice and inequality created by corporations and religions is part of the process implied by understanding these things. Once the political purpose of spiritual claims is known one can begin taking it apart. Once one understand that these structures are specious creations of interest and corruption, there is nothing to do but endeavor to remove them from power. Thus, the rights of nature or of species to exist and evolve should supersede any abstract rights like property, gods or the corporate state.

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<sup>636</sup> See Thoreau’s essay “Walking”. Twain wrote “I have been studying the traits and dispositions of the lower animals (so-called), and contrasting them with the traits and dispositions of man. I find the result humiliating to me.” Twain from *The Lowest Animal*

Reversing the ongoing destruction of nature created by abstract systems of human centered belief is essential to human and animal survival on earth

There is no such thing as eternity of the “spiritual” both of these are really conceits or generalities, abstractions that have no real content other than pretense and fiction. To understand how concepts like eternity work as political constructions is the begging of dismantling power systems and unjust social relations. There is no “ahistorical” gnosis or reality, though there are several ‘ahistorical’ ideologies that claim to be outside time, but actually these are systems of make believe: religions and imaginary metaphysical systems, to be precise. “Gnosis” here is merely another word for what the “intellect”<sup>637</sup> is supposed to attain or acquire. The ideology of “Intellect” is the cornerstone of the totalistic ( totalitarian) system that Guenon and Schuon created, and it is a central idea to all the systems for make believe we call the major religions.

The idea of the intellect is shot through with assumptions and political implications. The term “intellect” is borrowed from Plato and Aquinas, among others, where it is likewise a fictional concept which served a political purpose. Gnosis is a mystagogy: a borderland between aggression and presumption of divinity. Non duality is really totalism and usually serves a basically conservative political agenda. Rreligious

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<sup>637</sup> This is an important concept and I speak of it several times throughout this book. It is really the key concept to traditionalists thought and religion in general and once one sees though it, the ‘gnostic’ pretence collapses. The “intellect” is merely self-referential self-magnification. This means that the thinker who imagines that ‘god’ has opened up eternity in his mind/heart, is seriously self-deluded. All that has actually happened is that the inner self has dilated in a “vision” of self-delusion, a suggestion brought on by exposure to religious thought, that there is a “self” beyond oneself, beyond time and space and that that inhabits the deepest part of one’s being. One becomes abstract to oneself, and open to a sort of “primordial” otherness that is delusional. Marcus Aurelius called this the “daimon”, Guenon calls it the intellect. It is really just transcendental narcissism, or delusional egotism that is both artificial and magnified into cosmic proportions. This delusion of powerful and those who have it might even be willing to die for it. But once one sees thought he delusion it disappears like fog. .

studies is riddled with unacknowledged assumptions that serve to perpetuate historical biases and the implicit power relations that underlie those biases. Versluis is biased. He is right that the essence of gnosis is transcendence, but he fails to see that transcendence is really just the inner will or ‘subject’ in a state of excessive and delusional self-magnification. Dugin, for all his horrendous faults really expresses this very well when he notes that

“ the principle itself of aggression, the primordial will itself to the “violent transgressing of bounds”, the aspiration for the totalization of one’s own subjective character (however that may be expressed — either through national or religious, or tribal affiliation)”... is what transcendence is all about—and gnosis is the “attaining the total character, to the maximum extension of a subject up to the sphere of the Divine”. <sup>638</sup>

Narcissistic self-inflation becomes national power, or the state as a universalist abstraction, in short. The mystical state totalism of Schuon Versluis and Dionysius the Aeropagite are roughly equivalent. Dugin is insane, so he can state the obvious: namely, that religion is driven by excessive and unbalanced states of mind. Versluis is polite professor and hides his ambitions behind scholarly journals and does not say what he really means. Gnosis is not an actual thing. No one has “gnosis” that

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<sup>638</sup> [http://www.feastofhateandfear.com/archives/dugin\\_01.html](http://www.feastofhateandfear.com/archives/dugin_01.html)

This is a fairly typical example of Dugin’s mania, “The Hand is Reaching for the Holster Dugin loves war and conflict and writes “Heraclitus called "hostility" the "father of things." Everywhere in the world there are opposing poles: executioners and victims, men and women, coercive authority and rebellious subject. War of the elements. War of classes, nations, races, economic formations, material interests, ambitions, ideas.

That is why aggression - is the founding law of existence.”

Christ actually exists, because he didn't, he was merely a fiction made up by the early writers of the Gospels, who were writing mythic stories to give an ideology historical dress. Gnosis is a fiction that serves to explain to believers falsehoods that they accept as true. Transcendence is a delusional state of mental and emotional excess. Gnosis and transcendence are not real things but rather invented fictions which are ultimately about the will to power and hierarchy.

Totalism and 'gnosis' are really part of the same make believe world of need of power and subjective self-magnification. "I am that I am" is what God calls himself in the Old Testament. There is no god who says this; it is a statement in a book of fictions. What is magnified in the god concept is the state of mind of the magnifier. God is an inflated projection of an ideology. The delusion is that the self is 'omniscient and omnipotent'. Or so it claims These ideas are inherently "aggressive", as Dugin correctly points out. These same ideas, namely transcendence or God's self-identity—when applied in the social realm create inquisitions and inequalities. That is what Dugin, Guenon and Schuon want, of course. That is what makes them theofascists. Versluis cannot see this because he is so anxiously ambitious to push his gnostic belief system on others. He is a theofascist too, though blissfully unaware of it. The political nature of his own beliefs appears to escape him.

Scholars of religion do a lot of promotion of a given faith, but little or no observing about the actual behavior and intentions of the religious.

Versluis states this explicitly. He writes that

I argue that some sympathy with the authors and works one is studying is necessary to understand them. Hence I believe it is extremely important to attempt to remain faithful to the subject one is investigating.<sup>639</sup>

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<sup>639</sup> <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeIV/Methods.htm>

This is the procedure of a bad partisan scholar, or a true believer. In other words one can only read texts like Boehme or Dante, Jesus or Swedenborg as a True Believer, with “faith” or one is somehow betraying spiritual authors to “Reductionism”. The latter being the abusive invention of the true believer. Actually what he misnames “reduction” is just the following out of evidence and it does not reduce, it expands and elucidates. Being objective about religion is very difficult without oneself ceasing to be a believer. Once one does become a believer, objectivity is gone and one should not be teaching religion in a university. Timothy Fitzgerald states in his The Ideology of Religious Studies, that “there is no coherent non-theological theoretical basis for the study of religion as an academic discipline”. Exactly right. Avery Marrow concludes from this that “If this claim is true, religious studies should be dissolved as a discipline, replaced with either seminary schools or a subcategory of anthropology and sociology.” This is exactly right too. Unfortunately some anthropologists use their discipline to promote mythology and ideology. But an anthropology that tries to study religion as an objective phenomena is fine.

However, Versluis’ ambition is to inject ‘esoterism” or theofascism, into our higher education. He writes in glowing terms that that the “Dutch professor Wouter Hanegraaff.... Holds the first specially endowed university chair for the study of Western esotericism”. Similar efforts by Antoine Faivre, and Nicholas Goodrick Clarke, Jeffery Kripal and Versluis himself are not an accomplishment but a setback.<sup>640</sup> These are

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<sup>640</sup> Nicholas Goodrick Clarke’s book is *The Western Esoteric Traditions: A Historical Introduction*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2008.

PR schools promoting religion. Like Sedgwick, Versluis admires the advance of irrational and reactionary systems of archaic studies into the university system, when actually it is merely the advance of imaginary irrationality. "The emergence of Western esotericism as an academic field is evidence that what Gershom Scholem termed "counter-history" is emerging into the light of day." Counter history is counter-revolutionary history or bogus revisionist history, or reactionary history, the history of wannabe mystics, promoters of Kabbalah, creationist bigots and fundamentalists. This is 'anti-history' really, or traditionalism as a politics of anti-Darwinian, mystical reaction. What this means in practical terms is that esoteric schools are promoting of superstitious illusions in in universities without oversight or questioning. Henry Corbin, Francois Secret, Antoine Faivre, Arthur Versluis, Joscelyn Godwin, and Wouter Hanegraaff, Jeffery Kripal and many others have reinvented histories to try to sell their books and promote spiritualist con men like Swedenborg, Mesmer, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, Aleister Crowley, Gurdjieff and Paracelsus, among many others. While all these people belong in a history of cults or religious ideologies, promoting them as conveyers of real knowledge and mystical insight is ridiculous.<sup>641</sup> Kripal, who promotes the paranormal, writes of Christology of the comic books and the Superhero of Nazareth, which is pretty accurate as Christ is as absurd a fiction as Clark Kent. Goodrick Clarke tries to maintain that there is a " western esoteric tradition", but really there isn't. There is a disconnected series of eccentrics, spiritualists, cranks and fanatics, outsiders and dreamers a few of whom influenced others, but it is not a tradition and has little or no basis in reality, or rather it is merely a tradition of con-men and delusions. These delusions are cultured and maintained by networks of like minds. I don't think such studies belong in our universities, unless they are put in sociology or anthropology and

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treated as systems of subjectivism and make believe:.. which is what they are.

Teaching ‘esoterism’ in schools is teaching “counter history” – and counter history is bogus history, the history of the delusion of the changeless, the immortal. Nietzsche thought history could be overcome by an excess of ecstatic zeal. He was creating his own religion, just as the Gospelers had, though that has been forgotten. Gershom Scholem imagines a similar excessive ‘fiction as truth’ as a scholar of Jewish mysticism. This claim to be beyond history via fictions is the conceit of a false and harmful metaphysical dreams. Scholem, Versluis, Guenon and Schuon are not historians and what they have to say about history is utter nonsense, as I have shown throughout this book. It is one thing to teach the history of irrationalism and quite another to teach kids to *be* irrational, which I think is what Versluis, Goodrick Clarke, Kripal and Godwin want to do, after the model of Huston Smith and many other ‘insider’ promoters of romantic eternities. These are promoters of deceptions, charismatic pretenders who distort and use double speak to push their favorite delusions.

The superstitious irrationalism taught in these schools is anti-science and anti-intellectualism that does not belong in our education system. Many kindred minds of the traditionalists who are in our universities, Alan Godlas, John Finamore, Arthur Versluis, Mark Sedgwick, Vincent Cornell, David Dakake, Nicholas Goodrick Clarke, Harry Oldmeadow, James Cutzinger, Marco Toti, Peter Kingsley, Jeremy Henzell-Thomas, Renaud Fabbri ,\_Setareh Housman.<sup>642</sup> And many others who push an imaginary “esoterism” of some kind, shouldn’t be there at all.<sup>643</sup> They should be in private religious institutions, perhaps paid for

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<sup>642</sup> See Traditionalism in America: Setareh Housman, *De la philosophia perennis au pérennialisme américain* (Milan: Archè, 2010). This text is a rather sycophantic to Nasr, Cutzinger Huston Smith and other academic traditionalists.

<sup>643</sup> For more academics who have been seduced into the Schuonian or Guenonian orbit , see the lists of names at the World Wisdom website, those who participate in CESNUR, Evola websites,

by nutty eccentrics like Prince Charles and his Temenos Academy or perhaps a school could be created for them called the 'Gnostic School of Applied Disney Metaphysics'. The Schuon cult exists in a small suburban enclave outside Bloomington, Indiana and it belongs there in Indiana, where the KKK the Manson cult and other sordid cults got started. It does not belong in our schools or universities, which should be devoted to real knowledge, not the science of make believe..

There are many such departments of "esoterism" growing up around the world. <sup>644</sup> They are not teachers but proselytizers, part historians and part purveyors of superstition and devotees of irrationality. Cutzinger, Versluis and the others do not belong in our university system. They should not be teaching at Colgate, University of Michigan, Rice, U.C. Davis<sup>645</sup>, or Exeter University but rather should be teaching in The Religious Institute of Phony Knowledge, should anyone wish to create such a satirical university. It could have departments for Homeopathy, Astrology, Gnosticism, crystal gazing, homeopathy, aromatherapy, metaphysics, psychic forensics, pseudo-scientific creationism and apocalyptic astrology studies as well as the Guenon

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Exeter Center. Tremens and similar venues. World Wisdom collects names like trophies in the effort to proselytize though academics and to colonize their belief systems where ever they can. They are aggressive proselytizers.

<sup>644</sup> As an example take the [Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism](http://centres.exeter.ac.uk/exeseso/) (EXESES), headed by Nicholas Goodrick Clarke and his wife Clare who teach ambiguous courses on Neo-Platonist and Rosicrucianism, homeopathy, alchemy and other gnostic nonsense at Exeter University,. They also write books about far right mystics like Miguel Serrano or Blavatsky, as well as various cults and cult leaders, Savitri Devi and many others. The whole department for the study of esoterism I is questionable. Clare Goodrick Clarke is a Homeopath, a domain of medicine that has been utterly discredited as having any value at all other than Placebo. The Clarke's of Exeter appear to be a sort of center for the promotion of bogus esoterica like homeopathy and astrology as well as esoteric irrationality. His work on Savitri Devi, a woman who started worship of Hitler as an avatara, and moved to India because she loved the caste system, is overly sympathetic. See this site for other gnostic promoters. Jeffery Kripal has created a virtually identical center for bogus studies in Texas Rice University. It is called the GEM Program and is about Gnosticism, Esoterism, and Mysticism, offering PHD's in delusions.

<http://centres.exeter.ac.uk/exeseso/staff.php>

<sup>645</sup> Allison Coudert has a course on Traditionalism there.

chair in Esoteric Paranoia Studies and the Schuon Chair of Gnostic Erotic's . The department of Spiritual Delusions is now offering a smorgasbord of courses: come get your Bachelor degree in defunct systems of arcane knowledge--- astrology and esoterism, mesmerism and Ken Wilber moonshine consciousness as well as Versluis' theories of imaginary transcendence.

These men are enablers of corporate culture, pawns in the game to religious mystification which supports capitalist ideology. Versluis is one of many anti-intellectuals who teach in our universities who support an economic order sanctioned by the corporate God of the apolitical, -- since apolitical religion is so useful to corporate growth and profits. Corporate controllers love the apolitical because they do not cause trouble for the masters of finance. These men all tacitly support the corporate system of irrationality and ignorance, in some cases without even being aware of it. The anti-democratic values that drive free-market fundamentalism are very sympathetic religion and corresponds well with Guenonian orthodoxy. Versluis is not far from all this and supports it in his writings. He wants to create a proselytizing religious studies department that allows "purely historical research" but makes clear this is just window dressing—he really he doesn't care about that--- he wants works that are like the "works of Corbin, Eliade, and Scholem, that also seek to reveal the kinds of consciousness esotericism entails." By "kinds of consciousness" he wants kids to learn mysticism laced with solipsistic monism and pathological subjectivity. In other words, he wants interested religion with a right wing slant (Eliade, Corbin and Scholem) preached in our "secular" universities. He says he wants a "studied sympathetic neutrality"--- which is really a euphemism for interested advocacy—promotional and proselytizing the New Religious Movement he calls 'esoterism'.

Voltaire once imagined seeing a huge pile of human bones and notes that this pile of bones is all the people killed over scholars disagreeing

about metaphysics. Voltaire is right about this. I can't think of many religion scholars who will even ask the question Voltaire suggests. They stand mute and claim to be apolitical before religious violence, and the horrible hatreds and killings done by the religions. But the proof is in the doing, and when Versluis declare that only "one taste" is allowable in non-dual thought, he is declaring himself on the side of totalism and the romantic hatred of 'fascination' or curiosity and interest which create science. Voltaire wants us to consider the reasons for religious violence and atrocity. This whole book is about that. It is impossible to ask Voltaire's question and still have a "studied sympathetic neutrality" toward religion.

Versluis preaches Schuonian Perennialism as can be seen in his 1992 book about Native Americans. His writing about Schuon and Guenon in American Guru sound very much like a cult follower <sup>646</sup> To repeat it again—in my view, writers like Godwin, Goodrick-Clarke, Cutzinger, Versluis and many others does not belong in the public university system but at a religious colleges. Religious studies departments should be moved over to anthropology or sociology and more stringent hiring practices used to keep out proselytizers .

To quote Versluis himself out of context, the study of religion in university religion ought to be reduced to "cultural-historical studies, or

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<sup>646</sup> For more about how to play the victim while preaching religion and violating academic freedom and free inquiry--- and also forbidding contrary views--- see his artfully written essay "What is Esoteric : Methods in the Study of Western Esotericism" <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeIV/Methods.htm>

Versluis, editor of the magazine *Esoterica* is cowardly about contrary views, peer review and the ordinary exercise of science and so like an Inquisitor, he forbids them. He writes "The only approaches that our journal, *Esoterica*, refuses out of hand are those that derive from manifestly anti-esoteric or reductionist perspectives." Since hardly anyone with a mind agrees that esoterica is a rational course of study, nearly everyone is excluded except a few deluded spiritualist cranks, homeopaths and neo-mystics. In other worlds only those who agree with his chimerical and delusional ideology may publish in his cultic oracle, all others need not apply.

to eliminate religious studies entirely”<sup>647</sup> This is what he fears, and his fear is justified. It is exactly right that we should eliminate religious studies, if religion cannot be taught in our schools as simply cultural/historical artifacts, the way ancient Greek religion is taught in history or anthropology classes. If this cannot be done, then religious studies should be eliminated from the university. Versluis forbids critical thinking from his journal. Critical thinking is a cornerstone of academic freedom and without critical thinking, irrational systems of thought begin to corrode the foundations of democracy and a free society. Goodrick-Clarke, Versluis, Godwin and others have initiated a downward slide into advocacy of esoterism. Religious Studies has become ‘promoting religion’ and this should be questioned and halted.

I know from direct experience that Traditionalist intellectuals are usually enemies of the university, education, democracy, human rights and a free and open inquiry and what Popper called an open society. They express their hatred of democracy openly and with prejudice. They want to return to autocratic government and 12<sup>th</sup> century hierarchical and Platonist education<sup>648</sup> such as the medieval trivium and quadrivium.<sup>649</sup> They want to replace thinking with prayer and intelligence with dogmatic obedience to hierarchy. This is not education at all, but dis-education, putting young minds into the darkness of the dark ages. Instead of actual literacy they want “spiritual literacy” in Ali Lakhani’s words, which is really a form of ignorance and mindless forgetting of the actual in favor of the imaginary. Preaching delusions

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<sup>647</sup> *ibid*

<sup>648</sup> Titus Burkhardt writes about traditional Christian education methods in some of his writing—such as “Seven Liberal Arts on the West Door of Chartres Cathedral” in Mirror the Intellect . This view of education is an education for caste and elitist indoctrination into a religious ideology.

<sup>649</sup> The traditionalists resemble the far right Christian education corporation called Classical Conversations. Started by Leigh Bortins this is a creationist group that has nothing to do with classical or enlightenment education, in fact the opposite. This is a backwards politico/religious group that seeks to create a far right Christian method of religious education.

fosters no learning. Lakhani imagines that praying is “awareness that guards against the lapse into forgetfulness.” This insistence on forgetfulness is common in religions, showing that prayer is an extremely artificial state that must be beaten into the brain by force of mechanical repetition. As Ananda Coomaraswamy said, praising his own mindless adherence to religious authority: ” I have never built up a philosophy of my own or wished to establish a new school of thought. Perhaps the greatest thing I have learnt is never to think for myself” <sup>650</sup>

To be continually remembering fictions is very difficult and requires brainwashing. As a champion of this brainwashing, Lakhani states that in prayer “resides the mystery of the Divine Invocation, the *dhikr* or Om, the “re-minding”, of the Word that God utters, which ultimately is none other than our very Self.” The mystery of the Divine prayer or invocation is merely the mystery of brainwashing. Quite literally. The brain is the product of evolution and invocation is a means of misusing the brain for socially designed purposes. The constant repetition is meant to instill total belief, which can never be achieved, and which is unnatural and therefore must be forced.

A good deal of religion consists of recalling and reminding of the delusions that govern the religion. Religious “Experience” in James term, is basically just this perpetual self-kidding, self-delusional reminding. One goes on an arduous journey to the Kaaba with a million other pilgrims or does full prostrations around Mt. Kailash with Tibetan Buddhists. These events condition the mind to accept all sort of nonsense, given the effort time and exertion involved. Pilgrimages to churches or holy sites, the stations of the cross, pilgrimage sites in China<sup>651</sup> or Japan, or Athos or St. Catharine’s monastery on Mt Sinai,

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<sup>650</sup> After-dinner speech on the occasion of his 70th birthday 1947

<sup>651</sup> Buddhist pilgrim sites such as The Longmen and Yungang Caves as well as Wutaishan (literally, the Mountain of the Five Terraces). There are thousands upon thousands of pilgrimage sites in India, such as Varnasi or Benares, Mamallapuram or Ajanta and more in southeast Asia, as well as many sites in Europe like Lourdes or Fatima, Chartres or Westminster. So called

these are all advertisements of a kind, as well as tools of mind bending and ideological control.<sup>652</sup> These and elaborate prayers are means of convincing oneself of what is not true. Hence prayer tends toward an obsessive compulsive disorder. (OCD) Pascal Boyer suggests that cognitive study of religion is that religion is rather “natural” in the sense that it consists of by-products of normal mental functioning.<sup>653</sup> The purpose of prayer is to quiet the brain and put it into a state of abeyance and surrender. The excess of saying Jesus or Allah over and over and every hour of everyday is meant to create a false eternity and to dominate the self with the imaginary.<sup>654</sup> It is not our actual “self” but the imaginary religious ideology of the “Self” that that is actuated in prayer. Prayer opens the mind and heart to fiction and places there the ideology of the mullahs of priests, lamas or rabbis or sunyasis. The repeated mantra of ceaseless prayer creates a sort of hypnotic insanity eventually, if repeated often enough. It is a divine dumbing down, or a kind of avataric atavism or invocational idiocy.

In Schuon’s case I am sure that the obsessive with repetitive prayer and movement had to do with quieting a personality disorder that

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“sacred sites” are political centers and organized a way of thought and life dictated usually by a priesthood, often in service of a regime of some kind

<sup>652</sup> I was more attracted to Russian Orthodoxy than Catholicism, and helped build a Russian Church as well as studied with an iconographer, and attended Russians services, which was not that easy to do in California. I stayed for short time in a Russian orthodox monastery. I had a “spiritual Mother” in a Russian convent in Point Reyes for a few years. I often acted as their handy man. But it is a very restrictive life and in the end, I could not see the value of the monks of Athos and their need to “pray without ceasing”. It is escapist and world denying and one lives inside the myths like a strait jacket. I saw how earnestly the nuns tried to wear their delusions and how they worked to increase their ever failing fervour. Certainly there is a beauty in such a life, and I saw that. But it is the beauty of delusion and defeat and one that they know can be no other way. But the beauty is taken from nature in the end, and the mythic is laid over nature as an ideological veil of dust and abjuration.

<sup>653</sup> Pascal Boyer [http://www.csicop.org/si/show/why\\_is\\_religion\\_natural/](http://www.csicop.org/si/show/why_is_religion_natural/)

<sup>654</sup> In the Schuon cult one was first required to inwardly say La illaha illa Llah, at all times and later after initiate one could say Allah at all times, and this in addition to the five times prayer for Islam and the Wird and other prayers of certain occasions, as well as prayer sessions, gatherings and Primordial events, and even invocations while having sex, eating or driving. This is coercive OCD. This excess betrayed a real insecurity about belief, forcing belief to shut out the slightest doubt. When I left the cult I immediately gave up all of it, with a relief.

included extreme anxiety states. What I learned about Schuon's personal life from having a window onto his daily activity was that this man was regularly and often daily visited by extreme emotional states of anger and anxiety which he could scarcely manage. A lot of his actions had to do with trying to compensate for this. Quieting him was a major part of the activity of the wives. His work is largely a compensatory device. His perpetual need of adulations was also part of the emptiness that he felt inside. A man of deep anxiety about his image and full of self-hatred, he needed to be praised all the time.

Schuon hated academics and thought himself vastly superior to them, wrongly of course. True, there are academics who might be just as biased, archaic, and wrongheaded, if not as delusional or paranoid in their thinking as Schuon. He was a poor scholar. But most academics are decent folks who are not prone to dogma and who seek the truth as best they can. The assault by esoterism into universities is harmful and needs to be subjected to the most penetrating analysis and critique. It is an assault only possible now that universities are under assault from so many quarters. Russell McCutcheon's efforts to deconstruct the pretensions of religious studies scholars is useful here. He said,

"The fact that essentialist and generally de-historicizing strategies operate so widely as to be virtually transparent to the mass of scholars of religion is the key to understanding the way the field as a whole has avoided confronting the charges of extreme politics."

This is exactly right. To say this in simpler words. Essentialism and Perennialism are largely the same thing. Essentialism was defeated by Darwin, but persists in irrational pockets of religious scholars and creationist cranks. Perennialism persists only because it is differently packaged. Perennialism is merely essentialism by a new name. The pretense of timelessness and hostility to history, evolution and science



operates widely among scholars of religion. In love with their own subjectivity or “consciousness” as Versluis calls it, they pretend to speak as if from eternity, like priests or sophist scholastics, not professors in a modern university, aware of science, evidence and reality. They seek to provide for their students openings to religious experiences and are thus propagandists for creating a certain “subjectivity” or emotion based consciousness that glories in itself—a spiritual narcissism.

Indeed, these assumptions are so widespread among religious scholars that the way to understand the invisible prejudices behind religious studies is obscured. To clarify the way we need to bring religious scholars down from the academic mountain tops, and uncover their poses as Priests of the Irrational, Magi of the Imaginary or Esoteric Shamans. They are Preachers of Phony Knowledge. To do that we need to question the fallacy of misplaced concreteness and anti-historical tendencies of the religions. To do this we need to take apart the pretence of transcendence and unravel the tapestry of ‘gnosis’ or spiritual knowledge, which really is knowledge of nothing at all. In other words we need to realize that the idea of god and the afterlife is an illusion that has no evidence at all to back it up, it is merely a subjective delusion inflated by the will. The function of the university is not to teach delusions, but to seek the truth.

Versluis book on Totalism is highly confused and undermines its own thesis. He does pretty well showing that the Catholic Church during the Inquisition (1200 -1800, roughly) was horrific, though Sam Harris does much better in his book, The End Of Faith. Versluis does show Guenon’s ideology appealed closely to the Nazi Professor and Catholic Carl Schmitt. Versluis is unable to imagine why this might be, of course. The Heidegger scholar Emmanuel Faye mentions Carl Schmitt along with Heidegger as two of the primary philosophic voices of the Third Reich. Schmidt’s interest in Guenon shows again that fascism and theofascism share common interests. Versluis makes the mistake of thinking that

esoterism is beyond politics: actually, theofascism of the sort Versluis espouses claims to create a metaphysics that underlies all politics. Metaphysics is politics by another name. Versluis's chapter condemning the totalism of George Bush Jr., who appeared to enjoy torture and "rendition" is excellent and is surprising coming from a man so close to the Schuon cult. Schuon loved Bush and Nixon, but it may be that Versluis does not know that. Versluis notes in this chapter that there is a tendency in American culture toward totalism. But he didn't draw the conclusion backwards, showing how Vietnam, Iraq, Panama, El Salvador, the Philippines and the dropping bombs on Hiroshima were part of this totalistic tendency. He does not mention or appear to know much about the totalistic decimation of Native American populations, locking them into reservations<sup>655</sup> and starving them to death or killing off all the animals that were the staple of their diet. Hatred of native peoples, women and animals tend to go together. Nor does he grasp the history of slavery, largely organized and justified by Christians, which is a racist kind of totalism practiced by Americans for 200 years. Africans were dragged out of their homes in Africa, killed in the Middle Passage, and those who made it in the slave ships faced the destruction of their families, whippings, working them to death and selling children out from under their parents. Christians supported this genocidal murder and exploitation for centuries. Christians were the driving force behind Jim Crow and the effort to prevent African Americans from voting. However, Versluis only appears to be interested in history, so long as he can

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<sup>655</sup> The history of the idea of 'reservations' should be more studied. It is clear that putting Native Americans on reservations was a colonialistic move to silence and defeat them and keep them out of sight. Soon such a system was used to create ghettos in Europe and Concentration Camps in Germany, as well as the Japanese camps in the far west during WW2. Lately it is being used to sequester pockets of nature so that one can exploit and abuse all that the lands that are not reservations. It acts to prevent the use of an ecological mind set off the reservations, and this is very destructive. Actually it is even more important to push for awareness of nature off the reservation than on it. This is certainly not to say that 'reserves' on land or seas should be exploited, on the contrary, all lands should be protected in a much more forward way that is currently being done. Much too much power is given to corporations to exploit land and seas.

promulgate the religion of “gnosis”. The category of Gnosis for him is out of bounds to criticism or question.

To his credit, rather late in the book, Versluis finally determines that “some elements of totalitarianism can appear within what at least appears to be a constitutional republic or a parliamentary democracy”. This should have been stated at the beginning as part of the inquiry, but then, inquiry is not what concerns Versluis. It becomes clear that what Versluis really wants to do is to condemn Catholic, Hitlerian and Stalinist totalism in such a way as to justify and defend every other form of individualistic and ‘gnostic’ and totalistic religion that he wants to promulgate. He sets up worthy victims and unworthy victims. The pose of empirical inquiry in Versluis’ work is just a pose. It appears that the conclusions were decided on before the book was researched. This reactionary and revisionist history involves a lot of avoidance and dancing around real issues and this mars the book seriously enough that it cannot be taken seriously as a real inquiry into totalism or totalitarianism.

It is really a book that pleads reverse discrimination against the sciences in favor of irrationality and religion. Versluis is esoterism’s Elmer Gantry. He seeks to excuse religion from its role in creating irrational system of social abuse and totalistic theocratic politics. He wants to paint the superstitious and irrational as victims. Magicians, Astrologers, cultists, esoterists, are all victims. In fact most of the mystics in the “western esoteric tradition” were hardly victims. They were prowlers of Salons and drawing rooms of the rich, con-men and elitists who latched onto the upper classes in a parasitical way, men such as Papus, Mesmer or Gurdjieff, the Italian neo-Platonists or Aleister Crowley.

The book has more than a “whiff” of totalism in it. He tries to end it with self-aggrandizing attempt to claim his little formula of Christian esoterism, ( ‘read my books’ his footnotes say) --- as well as his

admiration for Platonic totalism will lead us, he claims to “the joyous transcendence of self and other” and we will all become “healers of humanity”. Nonsense. He wants us to become academic wannabe Priests. Schuon thought he was a “healer” in just this way, when actually he was spreading the ideological disease of authoritarian Platonism and Vedanta. Insofar as Emerson was a Platonist, he too was spreading the disease of the hatred of change, imagining all the world of becoming as an evil thing, and inventing the conceit of an eternal world beyond with the gods “still sitting around him on their thrones”.<sup>656</sup>.

There is no history of any “healing” done by transcendental systems, on the contrary. This book is merely unwarranted assertion with no historical evidence a revival of irrational systems of knowledge will improve anything. His savior complex puts him right back into totalistic territory. In other words, he jumps out of the pan of totalitarianism right back into the pan of totalism. This dreamy eyed nonsense ignores the fact that totalistic states and cults of many kinds claim just this “transcendence”. The whole notion of transcendence is fictional. There is no such thing. The claim to transcend is merely a fictional form of emotional self-magnification and narcissism. The earth cannot be transcended and the effort to try to do so merely sets up another cloudy mystification of human centered ignorance and arrogance. Efforts at transcendence of the earthly condition merely wastes its substance. There is only the earthly. Heaven is a delusion. Transcendence must be transcended if there is to be any “healing” of the earth .

So where does this lead Versluis? Versluis ends his disappointing book with a paean to Plato’s horrible and backwards totalistic “vision” or the Allegory of the Cave. He has a victim complex about Plato and sees

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<sup>656</sup> Versluis, *American Gurus*, pg. 48.

anyone who attacks Plato as revolting. Actually Plato is rather revolting with his obsession with authoritarian hierarchy. Plato calls the world a “barbarous slough”, which in fact the world is full of beauty and none of it is symbols of a pretend world beyond. As I have shown elsewhere in this book, Plato’s Cave is a false analogy. The truth is that the religions are the idols in the Cave and those who escape from religion have a chance of looking at the actual world, as it is, without transcendental delusions, without caves or torture chambers such as Plato invented.

So when I read Versluis, Huston and Wolfgang Smith or any of the traditionalists or other “gnostics”, I see how little they are willing to examine real evidence. This is somewhat true of less religious scholars like Hugh Urban and Jeffery Kripal, or Joscelyn Godwin, who act “balanced” in their examinations of religions but who still promote their subjectivist and irrational views in clandestine ways. Their take on Religious Studies is decidedly like that of William James. A ‘balanced history “ is often a false history that apologizes for the abuses of the powerful. No one can write a balanced history of the Third Reich, slavery, the Schuon cult, Scientology or corporate history. To write a balance history of corporations is usually absurd since the corporations have most of the information and power to intimidate witnesses. Those in power lie, misrepresent, fabricate. I watched how effectively the Schuon cult did just this. Corporations and cults are secret organizations and share a mentality in some cases akin to a psychopath. It is immoral to take the point of view of unjust CEO, cult leader or Hitler. Military, corporate, imperial, cult and institutional histories are generally very bad histories. As Howard Zinn said “you cannot be neutral on a moving train”, which means that you have to take a point of view sometimes and cannot pretend to be impartial when serious moral questions are at issue. Sometimes being “balanced” is actually being complicit or even worse than that, being balanced can mean being immoral, part of the

problem part of an unjust establishment that is status quo and doing harm. As Peter Novick has shown in his great book, That Noble Dream, the historical profession has been at war with itself for a century over how to represent fraught areas of history objectively. Establishment history is the history of military conquest and is not at all concerned with questioning the status quo and so is complicit in it. I write oppositional history here and am no partisan to religion.<sup>657</sup> I doubt there is any other way to be objective about religion.

There are few if any “atheist”/reasonist histories . The book you are reading might be read as one of the first. There are now Women’s histories, Black histories, Gay histories and Latino histories and these are all exceedingly interesting. Writing the history of slave-owners and fascists, Inquisitionists and Stalinists, or the history of cults and religions told from the point of view of cults and religions is merely propaganda. I am no propagandist. I like history that advocates a point of view that is lived and authentic, and does so in the most accurate way possible. I am not ashamed of this and neither was Howard Zinn, whose People’s History of the United States I have long admired.

In any case, many religious scholars are complicit addicts of romantic inwardness, narcissistic reactionaries who wants to proselytize their religious view under the aegis of “balance” and their misunderstanding of academic freedom. Russell McCutcheon is right to

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<sup>657</sup> I agree with Howard Zinn that a historian must be responsible to the truth as far as it can be discovered. But one is obliged to be accurate and moral at the same time. It is impossible to justify writing history in service of the powerful who hurt others. One can record what they did, yes, objectively, but not have one’s heart in it, and never leave out the harm they did, as many histories do. One can recognize the fading supremacy of the United States in the world today without agreeing that Manifest Destiny is a good thing, or American exceptionalism is a fact or a religion faith one can agree with. I cannot write history from the point of view of the victimizers, but only of the victims. What matters is not powers or corporate bosses, but people, animals, and the small things of the earth. Ordinary reality is what matters, not the inflated myths of the rich and powerful. History cannot be from the point of view of the ruling classes alone, as most history is.

say that Huston Smith's or Cyril Glasse's<sup>658</sup> view of religion is a “modernist sentimentalization of classical piety”. I would go further as say that Huston Smith and those who follow on him in religious studies are reactionaries who have abandoned objectivity in their study.

How much subjectivity should be allowed in universities? It is clear that religion, as such, has no legitimate place in the modern American academy. But to what degree is it excluded? And where should it be allowed? I doubt that promulgating romantic and mystical superstitions is appropriate in a public university.

If, as McCutcheon says “religion, as we have it today may be nothing more or less than a product of the Victorian imagination” then Huston Smith is about as relevant today as Victorian Social Darwinism or women's corsets. Smith was a caretaker of religion in American universities, not a critic. Indeed, the series of videos made for PBS with Huston Smith by Bill Moyers showed him to be a Schuonian of dogmatic absolutes, mean hearted with repression and reaction. Writing reactionary history such as these men do has a “whiff of the totalitarian”. To give free allowance to rather silly accounts of the history of Magic or Alchemy as if it were equal to say, chemistry or biology or a slave narratives or social historical account of women living in new England factory towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is absurd. Hugh Urban for instance thinks that just because a bunch of people believe in a given cult, like Scientology or Catholicism, that this is “meaningful” and meaning is equivalent to valid in his eyes. Meaning, however superstitious harmful or delusional, become the sine-qua-non of religion. All that is required is that something have a following. Likewise, Versluis ends in endorsing the reactionary theofascism of Plato, the world hating arch-gnostic and hero of Guenon and Schuon. Plato is attractive to reactionaries because he ascribes hierarchical “meanings” or “essences”

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<sup>658</sup> See Cyril Glasse's [Encyclopedia of Islam](#).

which are really just projections and imaginative fiction. Frankly I am not sure I see the wisdom in s calling superstition anything but superstition.

Versluis is an advocate of totalitarians like Evola, Schuon and Guenon and writes:

It is possible, after all, that “Traditionalism, with its efforts to reconcile unity and multiplicity, traditional cultures and modernity, may point as much to the future as to the past. In any event, the works of its primary figures, including Guenon and Evola, remain worth the challenging reading that they present, and their intellectual, cultural, historical, philosophical, and religious significances await further consideration.”<sup>659</sup>

I don't think so. Should we study Mein Kampf with “sympathetic neutrality” or maybe the collected works of Rush Limbaugh? Goodrick Clarke seems to thinks so. This is again the bogus notion of “balanced” history” or the “inner theofascism” or apolitical stand of Evola: “apoliteia”. “Apoliteia”, for Evola and Junger was an “inner distance unassailable by society and its “values”, by which Evola means that the superior man has a politics of his own, based on traditional far right values of transcendental “non-duality”. The claim that this is apolitical is false as what is really claimed is a super politics.

Hugh Urban likes the sadistic and sometimes theofascist writings of Michel Foucault, in which he sees some sort of connection to the cruelty and love of erotic violence in Alistair Crowley, who he also admires. He

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<http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeVIII/EsotericaVIII.pdf>



also appears to admire Kali worshipping tantric religion.<sup>660</sup> This is again the “inner theofascism” or apolitical stand of Evola.



Crowley

This cult of “meaning” is really the romantic cult of feeling, which as Bertrand Russell showed, and has a real relationship to the far-right and reactionary politics. The mystic, Russell said, “becomes one with God and in the contemplation of the Infinite feels himself absolved of duty to his neighbor. The anarchic rebel does even better, he feels himself not one with god, but God.” This need to transcendental subjective delusions is curious and common in mystics. Lao Tzu, Ramakrishna,

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<sup>660</sup> Crowley was a repulsive and immoral person, drug addict, serial adulterer, bisexual, murderer and power hungry for lots of spiritual powers, titles, and pretenses. He is important only the bogus area of esoteric studies, which itself is merely the history of promoters of delusions. He has the man who stole Ananda Coomaraswamy’s wife and got her pregnant. AKC and Crowley were alike in some ways. Foucault was also a man of extreme tastes who lived outside social norms and was addicted to power pleasures. Foucault was a Nietzschean who loved power, and AKC had been a Nietzschean too. He was also a sadist who admired the Inquisition, and a theofascist who admired the Iranian Revolution of 1979.( see James Miller’s biography of Foucault) IN Discipline and Punish Foucault hates the effort to make criminals better people, and prefers instead the systems of medieval bodily torture. Once I read this book any respect I formerly had for Foucault went out the window. His admiration for torture is really repulsive. Tantra is a system of bogus sexual spiritual claims, mostly a magical nature, usually associated with various form of misogyny and often exploitive of children. Sex is not symbolic, and Tantra depends on this false analogy. It was and is still used India Tibet and elsewhere. The common thread of all these things is a love of abusive power, sexual excess, sex as a form of power grabbing, and esoteric delusions and pretense and an inflated sense of self driven by a theofascist love of religion. It is hard to take Foucault serious once one understands these things

Foucault and many cult leaders are examples of just this sort of mysticism and theofascism.

Delusional mysticism depends on spiritual states that are illusory and magnified out of the bounds of reason and sense. The mystic seeks feeling states which are generated and maintained by groups and cults, rituals and prayers, mantras and words. Rituals and prayers are essentially fences and a form of mental and physical ownership of those who partake of the ritual or say the prayer. Rituals and prayer are attempts to rationalize the absurd and superstitious. The meanings have little to do with reality and much to do with directing thought and feeling in politically correct channels. Religious studies academics, and Priests are gatekeepers for this political correctness, and thus defenders of delusions, protectors of the lies societies tell their children. So this same cult of “meaning” in Versluis results in reactionary anti-intellectualism and theocratic leanings. Versluis is primarily concerned with promoting feeling states that perpetuate religious delusions, as are most, if not all, religious studies professors. I use Versluis as an example of this tendency, though many religious professors would do as well.

When I was in the Schuon cult some members of the upper echelons of the cult were saying they thought Versluis would be a good candidate to be recruited into the cult. He is in a certain sense an advocate for many of the cults he discusses. I do not know what his spiritual practice is. He might not belong to any of them but prefers to be above them all in the Platonic ozone. This is likely, Platonists like to see themselves as Prophets of a kind.. In any case I don't think a contemporary university is well served by such reactionary voices, though the corporate world certainly is served by them.. Academic freedom is about service to Enlightenment and some measure of intellectual honesty and disinterested knowledge. Versluis is a proselytizer of superstition and irrationalism and an enemy of Enlightenment. He would do better to move to a seminary or join the

Schuon cult in Bloomington Indiana than burden our universities with what he writes and teaches. This is true of most religions studies “scholars” who are really not scholars at all. They are keepers and ‘historians’ of social delusions, caretakers of myths, not critics and scientists as they should be...

The sciences impose a harsh discipline that refines scientists efforts: whereas in the humanities “one can spin fanciful tales with impunity”, Chomsky says somewhere. Chomsky does a good deal of such spinning himself, but at least he honors science somewhat.. Chomsky could have been speaking of Versluis when he wrote that those who inform “ us that the “project of the Enlightenment” is dead, that we must abandon the “illusions” of science and rationality—[is] a message that will gladden the hearts of the powerful, delighted to monopolize these instruments for their own use.” I certainly don’t agree with all that Chomsky says but he is right about some things.<sup>661</sup> Teaching alchemy, magic, esoterism, tantra and other superstitions is not a valuable thing to do, nor is supporting traditionalism. Scholars like Versluis, Wouter Hannegraff, Jeff Kripal, or Mark Sedgwick<sup>662</sup> are basically self-appointed wanna-be gurus, careerists and promoters of a kind, pushing an ill-considered new age esoterism and religiosity that lacks objectivity. They are dealers in delusions, promoters of esoteric palaver. Traditionalism and “gnosis” are gifts to corporate autocracy and much of academic religious studies is an exercise in promotional and romantic subjectivism. They are creating a history of falsehoods, a propaganda system that promotes delusions for the young. This is not a good thing for anyone except these men, who create a sort of guild of spritual promoters that produces nothing but a system of mental controls that keeps the unjust in power.

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<sup>661</sup>

Rationality and science 1995 <http://www.chomsky.info/articles/1995----02.htm>

<sup>662</sup> See Sedgwick’s [Western Sufism: From the Abbasids to the New Age](#)

Religious studies has been for too long a force for reaction and subjectivism under the guidance of Huston Smith and Eliade. The shadow of William James Varieties of Religious Experience is long and unfortunate. There needs to be a new willingness to throw over the subjectivist heritage of William James, Huston Smith and Mircea Eliade and embrace science and the questioning of religion in a scientific way. In a time where corporate money is doing all it can to subvert reason and academic freedom so as to turn university into profit making ventures, academics like Versluis are welcome additions to an education system going into self-destruction.

However, using the age old tools of critical thinking, logic and sense perception will help others see through the assault on reason and science that traditionalism and 'gnosis' are really about.

# INDEX

I have not indexed all the names in these three books, but have sought to explain some of the content of the books by indexing important concepts and terms that occur throughout these texts. This is a departure from the usual purpose of indexes, as it makes the index into something of a synopsis of the content. This is intentional as I do not wish my meaning to be ambiguous. But this index also serves the usual purpose which is to look up where a given person or idea is discussed. The names that are indexed are part of the central argument and the evidence that support it. I do not usually include all the references to a given name, concept or idea, as this can be done by an ordinary search. I only try to indicate where a given concept of name is most saliently considered. It is thus a much longer index than is normally the case

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