

Rene Guenon's Reign of Quantity: a Review of a Paranoid Text

So with the background of the previous chapter in mind, let us look closely at Guenon's book. It has been interesting to read Reign of Quantity again.¹ I have not read it cover to cover in 27 years. To read it again was a repulsive, eye opening experience in some ways. It is such a ridiculous book that is embarrassingly easy to see through. I have learned so much in the last 27 years that it makes it easy to see his really inexcusable errors and fabrications. He uses false analogies and constantly makes assertions without evidence or sources. He is also prone to misquotation and sloppy scholarship and his method typical of those who draw upon sources of second or third hand, with little regard for accuracy that requires careful documentation of a historical nature . Though there is a pose of erudition in the book, there is no real learning. He knows little or nothing about science, and his understanding of history is very skewed by his obsessive and highly eccentric and paranoid point of view. His "hidden masters ('Superieurs Inconnus') are really 'fictions, fabrications loosely based on Gerard Encausse invention of the "l'Ordre des Supérieurs Inconnus", which was a Martinist occult group . Guenon's is imitating Encausse who was himself a charlatan. He sees myopically from one point of view, and when I realized that that one point of view—his "superior principles" have no real content, and confer on him no superiority at all, his whole system falls to pieces. He is openly trying to subject science to

¹ Just as Science trumps the Scholastics, traditionalist fictions are trumped by reason, as I will show in this essay. Comparative Religion went bankrupt in esoterism.. There is a false distinction between Perennial and Traditionalist ideology that is just a fabrication. As I will show here, Guenon is hardly less toxic than Schuon, the distinction between their systems is slight I have lived this history and need quote no one about it. This fabrication was made up by those who wished to protect the Guenonian far right ideology, Marc Sedgwick, among others, against the evidence brought out by me and others about the Schuon cult. Actually it is hardly important that Guénon and Schuon or AKC made up slightly different forms of similar make believe. .It is all nonsense dressed up as "metaphysics". These three books are an attempt at a just as comparative philosophy that does not endorse a reality is a construction point of view, and at the same time weighs philosophies based on the objective criteria of science and actuality.

ideological control and create a parody of it. Only in fiction can Guenon be Lord of the World at last.

Reign of Quantity continues Guenon's work in the earlier book The Lord of the World. In that work he posited a repressive idealized utopia that he tried to suggest was real. Guenon imagined himself somehow Lord of the World, the personal conduit of the divine into the world below. Rather like Charlie Chaplin's Adenoid Hynckle, Guenon thought he was the king of the world. As Schuon would later say of himself "The world is round, I am the king and I don't know why"....



Adenoid Hynckle fantasizing he is Lord of the World.

The genius of Chaplin was to create such a great parody of the cult leader which is useful even to poke some fun at Guenon's Lord of the World. Guenon's inflated myth is a variation on the Shambhala myth was popular early in the 20th century. As Victor Trimondi has written:

“ The ancient origins and contents of the *Shambhala* state make it, when seen from the point of view of a western political scientist, an antidemocratic, totalitarian, doctrinaire and patriarchal model. It concerns a repressive ideal construction which is to be imposed upon all of humanity in the wake of an “ultimate war”. Here the sovereign (the *Shambhala* king) and in no sense the people decide the legal norms. He governs as the absolute monarch of a planetary Buddhocracy. King and state even form a mystic unity, in a literal, not a figurative sense, then the inner bodily energy processes of the ruler are identical with external state happenings. The various administrative levels of Shambhala (viceroys, governors, and officials) are thus considered to be the extended limbs of the sovereign. “ ²

The Shambhala myth was of interest to both the Nazis and the Stalinists, precisely because they recognized in it their own need or centralized dictatorship.³ Theo-fascism is not just a religious phenomenon but also invades the secular states, who likewise try to profit from abstract ideologies and symbolisms.

Guenon uses all sorts of con-man sleight of hand and false analogies and myths like the Shambhala myth to create interest and sensation. He claims on the basis of such bogus knowledge that science is part of a great act of subversion, when really it is Guenon who is the subversive and creator of parody. Reign of Quantity is the Great Parody, a parody showing how ridiculous religion really is. It shows how ridiculous Guenon is. How he goes about doing this is fairly complex, but not hard to see once you figure out his

² <http://www.trimondi.de/SDLE/Part-1-10.htm>

³ ON the Stalinist effort to exploit the Shambhala myth see [Andrei Znamenski's Red Shambhala](http://www.amazon.com/Red-Shambhala-Magic-Prophecy-Geopolitics/dp/0835608913/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1300734895&sr=1-1-spell)
http://www.amazon.com/Red-Shambhala-Magic-Prophecy-Geopolitics/dp/0835608913/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1300734895&sr=1-1-spell

deceitful methods and strategies of turning reality and unreality on their heads.

So, with these general comments in mind, it is time to look at the text itself. In Reign of Quantity Guenon bases the book first on the distinction between quantity and quality which he assumes to be opposites and “complementarities” similar to the ideas of “essence” and “substance”. He misinterprets Aristotle's rather dubious “*categories*” of *quantity and quality to be something they are not. Neither quantity nor quality are metaphysical concepts in Aristotle or anywhere else.*⁴ *Aristotle uses them to try to describe the actual world, not the fictional nether worlds employed by Guenon. Thomas Aquinas lifted Aristotle’s concepts into absurd uses and Guenon follows Aquinas.*⁵ *Guenon identifies the idea of ‘quality’ with ‘essence’ and the idea of ‘quantity’ with ‘substance’.*

When we analyze these concepts it become clear that qualities are merely attributes of a thing. It is a quality of duck billed Platypuses that they have echolocating bills and lay eggs. Quantities are merely segments or parts of extended things, in time and space, as in saying that there are two Duck Billed Platypuses in a given section of a stream in eastern Australia. These are not

⁴ Except maybe Robert Pirsig’s novel Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, which I read back in the 1970’s and which discusses Quality as a sort of religious concept similar to Guenon. Both authors abuse the concept of “quality” by trying to universalize an idea that is really just a descriptive term. Zen was adopted by hippies and writers such as Gary Snyder to be a religion of peace, but that really distorts the historical facts, as Zen was a warrior religion that served the Samurai and was very much in favor of attacking the West in World war II Pirsig’s notion off quality is much overblown when really skill or craft would have been a sufficient things to praise without all the metaphysics to bolster the authenticity and art or craft.

⁵ Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was influenced by Aristotelian rationalism. He defines the relation of knowledge and power in the following terms: "There is a universal and a particular government. The former is God's government whose rule embraces all things...the latter is found in man and is much like the divine government". and therefore "reason is to man what God is to the world", Aquinas concludes that, "man has been appointed to this position in place of God". This absurd definition, basically outlines a sort of magical thinking fallacy. This fallacy in one form or another is the defining the idea of the great chain of being, and is common to all forms of theofascism. Indeed, this fallacy is the basis of the theofascist ideal. (see, Bourke, Vernon J. The Pocket Aquinas New York: Pocket Books; Simon and Schuster 1960

opposites at all. They are merely descriptors. Of course Guenon also uses the word 'quality' in its other sense of upper and lower, high or low, which makes the term a question of "qualification". He confuses these meanings often. These are two separate definitions of the word and Guenon makes no real distinction between the different definitions. What Guenon means most often by quality has to do with hierarchy and metaphysical notions of essence--- which is really a gross abuse of the term. So Guenon perverts the ordinary notion of quality into service of his obsession with hierarchy and authority. That is his problem as well as his obsession. He wants to make everything about degrees of higher and lower, leading up to his preferred delusion of god.

Therefore, the idea of "substance" and "essence" is merely a fiction, based on a linguistic trick. The essence of a person, for instance, might be anything at all that one deems characteristic. The essence of a flower can be its smell or color or any other quality that it might be deemed to have, and thus the idea of essence is really a subjective and poetic feeling; about something, not the 'soul' of something as Guenon tries to extrapolate. Bertrand Russell explains this error very well.

"The essence of a thing appears to have meant " those of its properties which it cannot change without losing its identity". Socrates may be sometimes happy, sometimes sad: sometimes well, sometimes ill. Since he cannot change his properties without ceasing to Socrates they are no part of his essence."⁶

But Russell points out, this is really an illusion. Socrates is not more fundamental than what happens to him.

⁶Russell, Bertrand, History of Philosophy, NY, Simon and Shuster 1945, pg. 201

“ we find it convenient, in describing the world, to describe a certain number of occurrences as events in the life of “Socrates”---- and this leads us to think of Socrates as denoting something that persists through a certain number of years, and is in some ways more “solid” and “real” than the events that happen to him.” however], if Socrates is ill, we think, at other times, that Socrates is well, and therefore the being of Socrates is independent of his illness. [but this is an illusion]...[Illness on the other hand, requires that someone be ill. He is therefore not really any more “solid” than the things that happen to him.”

This is an excellent argument against the idea of essences and is exactly right. The idea of essence is an optical illusion created by words. There is no essential self, being or “soul” that is separate from the body and its activities, no god to generalize based on linguistic misunderstandings. There is no essential self or “soul” that is separate from the body and its activities. The notion that human consciousness transcends the ups and downs joys and sufferings of existence is illusory. There is no transcendental essence that sees all things from a point an all pervading absolute. That is a fiction. It is the primary fiction in all the major religions, in fact. What Guenon calls “ordinary life” with so much hatred and disdain, is in fact the only world there is. Ordinary life is all the Life there is, there is no divine imperial undifferentiated state in which one transcends life and death. This is fiction. There is no such thing as essences or substances in terms of a metaphysical substratum which underlies or summarizes the innermost being of existing things. These are medieval linguistic fictions which Guenon accepts as primary “principles” or axioms. Guenon’s “principles” are utterly illusory and survive in our day only as part of a nostalgic romanticism for the Scholastics such as one finds in Guenon or Coomaraswamy or possibly a reactionary like Heidegger and some poets like Rilke. I believed in the idea of essence in my teens and wrote a little essay about it when I was 16 or 17. But now I see through it and I was mistaken. I see through the fiction of metaphysics .

But in the case of this book by Guenon, whose entire argument is based on the existence of concepts of metaphysical “essence” and “quality”, the whole book fails when the idea of essence fails. So then, by say, page 80 or 90 of Reign Of Quantity it is clear that Guenon whole argument has failed and everything he will say subsequent to this is going to be fatuous fiction, invention, diatribe and false.

Guenon deduces that all the world is illusory, except the delusion of transcendent essence which he has singled out as the sole reality. So actual reality, the reality where we all live, become a lesser reality, mere “manifestation” and evil because of its “remoteness and alterity”, as Schuon says somewhere, parroting Guenon or some other metaphysical maker of fairy tales. 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. Guenon’s extreme obsession with archetypes, symbol and hierarchy derive from this simple delusion that there is a separate reality underlying or transcending ordinary reality.

Guenon magnifies the tendency to abstract qualities or ‘essences’ of a thing or being into an the idea of “form” archetype or even god head. This is characteristic of Guenon and many spiritualists. Guenon is prone to a kind of extrapolation of superlatives and symbols from ordinary things. He had a need to abstract and magnify in an excessive and illogical way. He projects agency on things that are not agents. Pascal Boyer points out that agency of spiritual beings are generally very like humans, often disturbed humans who act badly in their behavior. People who identify with gods or make believe agents often act badly too. Guenon’s aristocratic pretenses are born of arrogance and not any real superiority. His autocratic theofascism follows from this naturally and in accord with his psychology.

The whole of Reign of Quantity is an example of this crazy need to magnify and distort simple, ordinary ideas into illogical transcendental fictions. He even has a phrase “or this magical transposition of reality into unreality. He calls it

“analogical transposition” at the end ”of his book on infinitesimal calculus⁷. What Guenon does is take a scientific truths or math procedures and try to debase them by forcing religious or metaphysical ideas upon them. Thus, “analogical transposition” is really ideological mutilation or mythical deformation of concepts. He did this initially with ‘the calculus’ in his book on that subject in an attempt to show how other science’s might be subverted as he tries to subvert Calculus. I think he fails to accomplish his aim. What he does is create a template for others to follow the same delusory path. He states his plan clearly

“...if the necessity of attaching science to principles is understood, it goes without saying that from then on there would be no reason to remain with the science in itself and the traditional conception would be naturally restored following which a particular science, whatever it may be, is worth less by what it is in itself than by its possibility of serving as a “support” for raising oneself to a knowledge of a superior order”.⁸

It is a poorly constructed sentence. But it is an important admission. It means Guenon wants to deform and mutilate sciences to serve religion as a “support”, - and ‘support’ here means a propagandistic tool for delusions. The whole book is an effort to get revenge on science and ordinary life rather than admit his delusions are delusions.⁹ Of course none of Guenon’s prophecies have come to pass“ The traditionalists have tried to seize some sciences in service of gnosis, as Wolfgang Smith has tried to do, as I show in the last chapter of this book. But these attempts fail and no one believes it except a few die-hard fanatics in some

⁷ Guenon, Rene. The Metaphysical Principles of Infinitesimal Calculus unpublished (?) Manuscript translation by Richard Pickrell. Pg.152

⁸ Ibid pg. 152

⁹ *Guenon is a classic case of what Nietzsche refers to as the need of religion, which hates life, to get revenge against life. Nietzsche also tries to get revenge against life in his own way. Nietzsche’s notion of “resentment” is not what I mean here. His notion of slave morality is ridiculous and akin to racism. Indeed, Nietzsche works are a panegyric to the dying upper classes and in this way he is more akin to Guenon than different, since Guenon is also a swan song to aristocratic and autocratic decadence. See my essay on Nietzsche and the traditionalists in this book*

backward areas of suburban Bloomington, Indiana, where remnants of the Schuon cult still exist or George Washington University, where Nasr holds court over a secretive little cult of his own-- and a few other backwaters. You can only impose religion on science with a sort of charlatan sleight of hand.

So, most of Reign of Quantity is about efforts to either discredit science or turn it into a parody that somehow serves Guenon's megalomaniacal notion of a 'super-religion' that unites all the religions. Guenon's book is really a self-portrait of an extremely devious and untrustworthy man who tries to turn life upside down, deforming common sense and subvert the actual in favor of the unreal and the imaginary.

Guenon imposes his "analogical transposition" as he calls it, upon science, for instance, when, in chapters 4 and 5 of Reign of Quantity, he tries to turn modern ideas of space and time on their head. Guenon tries to take our ordinary concepts of time and impose on them h's already distorted and inaccurate notions of quantity and quality. Misusing the idea of quality to mean something it does not, he abuses Descartes' notion of extension ¹⁰ and tries to force geometry to become a propagandistic tool for the idea of a traditional cross, evoking his own book the Symbolism of the Cross. In this latter book, Guenon tries to connect the cross of Christianity to other metaphysical ideas through several traditions. He proceeds by analogical correspondences, moving from one religious tradition to another, abusing science at every turn without any concrete facts to back him up. His notion of "analogical transposition" is really just fancy words for make believe, superstition or magical thinking. He reduces to false analogies, paranoid constructions, fantasy and fictional superimpositions. If all else fails Guenon merely asserts his beliefs. Often really cranky, fallacious beliefs, as if they were facts. What we end up with in this procedure is not any advance in knowledge at all, but rather retrogression into magical thinking and unwarranted conclusion based on forced analogies between disparate concepts, symbols and religious ideas or traditions imposed rudely onto rare and painstaking sciences. In short

¹⁰ This abuse of Descartes is common in the 20th century. I will discuss that more in the last chapter of this book

he is writing science fiction, or should I say esoteric fiction?.

So, with the idea of space, for instance, Guenon ends by trying to smear the scientific idea of space with bogus traditional notions of space as having some “principle transcendent with respect to it”. Heaven is such a space beyond space and time. So Guenon implies unproven fictions are the basis of reality and anyone who thinks otherwise must be stupid or foolish. He demeans modern geometrical systems, which are quite amazing and interesting and calls them “profane geometry”, since all that interests Guenon is “sacred geometry” of the fictional sort that one finds in the Bible, crop circles or in Tibetan Mandalas. In fact sacred geometry is merely the architecture of elaborate symbolisms transposed into geometric form in an effort to make them seem permanent and eternal. Such geometrical symbolisms are conceptual constructions of a hierarchical priesthood, and as such they are closer to advertising than to geometry. The “Stupas” and hundreds of miles of “Om Ma Ni Pad Me Hum” on walls all over India, Tibet, Ladakh and elsewhere are examples of this geometric and written advertising. A stupa is a shrine that contains holy Buddhist relics or special writings on enlightenment.

Guenon mythologizes space and time with many false analogies and free associations. With the concept of Time, Guenon again performs his magical operation of transposing reality and unreality and tries to bend actual measurable time to become the Hindu notion of Yugas and manvantaras which are totally fictitious notions of mythical times. He tries to maintain that different times are intrinsically different. But he is smart enough to note that “Someone may perhaps argue that the qualitative difference is not inherent in duration itself, but only what happened within it.” And this is right. But he then proceeds to deny what he has said and asserts that time does change qualitatively, without a shred of proof that this is the case. The only evidence he tries to manufacture is that the “particular conditions of this or that period” change. This is not evidence but merely a truism that implies no ‘qualitative’ change in time at all. Generations change, and cultural conditions change, in short material

conditions change but not space and time itself.

My grandfather's world was not "qualitatively" different than mine in terms of time itself. Time is the same. What changed was cultural conditions. There are social, generational, historical differences that are basically cultural. These cultural changes and can be observed, measured or recorded. But to leap from this understanding of different historical periods to accepting the bizarre Hindu theory of the Yugas that make up the "Manvantara" is ludicrous.¹¹

Guenon says that: "The doctrine of cycles.... Is naturally implicit in and fundamental to the whole of this treatise", namely the Reign of Quantity itself. So, since the doctrine of cycles is fallacious the book itself is fallacious and fails. The Reign of Quantity failed earlier when he invented false arguments about the idea of "essence" and "quality" to try to justify the basic idea of his book that they Reign of Quantity is real. These two failures, that quality and essence are not transcendental and that there is no qualitative or cyclic variation in time, results in the whole book being false, since these arguments, he says, are "implicit and fundamental to the whole of this treatise". In short there is no "Reign of Quantity". Guenon invents fictions by advancing false analogies, not defining his terms, making wild unproven assumptions and spinning a web of deceitful and specious arguments.

So by chapter V the book has already failed in its basic premises. It cannot succeed. From thence Reign of Quantity is pure fiction and invention that

¹¹ See Marty Glass's attempt, in his books Yuga to update Guenon's ridiculous idea of Yuga into the 21st century. Glass is a good example of northern Californian escapism, living up above Eureka California he managed to escape from reality into dreams of spiritual make believe. I love California's openness to diversity and individuality, but many have gone off the deep end into reactionary decadence and escapist spirituality. This was true of my friend Jack Hirschman too, who embraced a bizarre form of leftist Stalinism that existed as a viable possibility only in his mind.. Jack was a great poet and I loved him, but he was too prone to romantic excess and did not think through his positions very carefully. Nevertheless he was a mentor of sorts and helped me understand many things I would not have otherwise. I learned little from Schuon expect by default,--Schuon was a horrible teacher and not a good man, but I learned a great deal from Jack, even if I never agreed with some of his basic positions on things. Jack has a good heart underneath the gruff Brooklyn mockery, the Stalinist bravado, communist cultishness and street attitude.

has to do mostly with Guenon's paranoid mind itself and not with reality. He creates a rush of rhetoric so that the reader might not notice his use of bogus and misplaced analogies. But the substance of his argument is so ridiculously weak that it is not believable, Indeed, he has no credible evidence for what he says. It moves long from one self-deception and false assumption to another, one linguistic misunderstanding and fabrication to another. One has to be very gullible or to read the work very quickly to buy the argument. Any close scrutiny, as I make here, causes the entire book to crumple into a dash of occultist rhetoric and misused metaphors strung along by a paranoid rant.

So where does the book go from Chapter 5 ? He slowly descends into real madness. Chapter 8 deals with aesthetics, but that is a complex subject which involves discussions of whole history of modern art and the traditionalist offshoot with in it. Traditionalists ideals of art are really an outgrowth of Symbolist and Fin de Siècle art. but I have reserved discussion of that till a later chapter, so I will skip that for now and move on. If the reader wants to move on to that first it is below and is called Beyond the Dead End of Traditionalist and Modernist Aesthetics.

So skipping the chapter on aesthetics for now, we move to another passage Guenon has trouble understanding the idea of species and how they "may become separate beings while remaining within the species". (Pg.60) The answer to this is easy enough if he understood the basics of Darwinian science and evolution and how species separate by geography, time and other reasons.. But he doesn't understand Darwin at all, so he spends a whole chapter trying to write about individuality and species (Chapter 6). He fails to grasp the basic things that a course in biology would have taught him. But he is too proud to learn, so he spends the whole book attacking science, hardly ever knowing what he is

talking about.

He over uses the word “profane”, which really is an archaic word, used in the late medieval to separate the religious sphere from the sphere of “ordinary life”. For Guenon virtually everything is profane, which to him means not sacred, not suffused and connected to religion. He uses the word to imply demeaning subsidiary meanings too. In current usage ‘profane’ also means low, base or obscenely sacrilegious. So for instance he creates an extreme dichotomy between what he calls “initiatic teaching” as opposed to “profane education” (pg 75) such as Guenon thinks we have now in our schools, and which Guenon considers devils’ teachings. ¹² *One definition of profanity states: “A profanity is a word, expression, gesture, or other social behavior which is socially constructed or interpreted as insulting, rude, vulgar, desecrating, or showing disrespect.” I think it is fair to say that in Guenon’s usage ‘profanity’ is primarily about disrespect of what he sees as the power of gods, and the power of himself and those he supports as the voice or representative of god or gods. The actual world is so deeply insulting to Guenon he feels he must constantly disparage it. So Guenon feels that it is totally natural to refer to science as “profane science” because to him the fact that science has saved millions, perhaps billions of lives is mere profanity. Science to guenon, like someone writing the swear word for feces on a bathroom wall. Guenon sees the whole modern world as profane He would send critics of religion to the Inquisition, and save priests who instill delusions into children. Guenon’s own relation to the world is upside down. The actual facts of the world are disgusting to him*

¹² He says that the idea of the sacred and profane “ has no meaning in traditional societies” and that is because such societies were religious tyrannies where everything in “ordinary life” was dictated by priests and mullahs. History was written in those days by the elites, and this made for some very bad history. The Bible or the Bhagavad Gita is bad history written by Rabbis and Priests about their favorite fictions. Better histories of many so called “traditional” societies have been written only recently. Allot of interesting historical work has been done on such societies form Egypt to medieval France or post-conquest Brazil, using demographic statistics of various kinds to figure out how women or Indians or others fared in making a living or caring for the children and they all show that people of those days led lives that were vital and thriving more ins spite of religion than because of it. Social History is way beyond Guenon’s rather silly attempt to project a “sacred history” on the facts. The notion of “profane history” is itself profane, that is to say, ridiculous, and thus it is absurd to even use such a term.

and make believe gods and “principles” are everything. Seeing profanity where there is none indicates Guenon’s low intellectual culture and his need to debase and demean the actual.. The real obscenity is that Guenon considers the actual world profane and obscene. Science has nothing to do with religion and what is good in our world comes from science, not from religion. Guenon regularly confuses science with industry, when it is really capitalism that he should condemn, not science.

He goes further in this effort to turn reality and unreality upside down. In his chapter 10, on the “the illusion of statistics” Guenon tries to deny that those who live in a society that uses statistics are people who are a “body without a soul” or “sub-human”. The notion of the soul is a fiction and the idea that those who do not have one are lesser is thus untenable. This does not mean that people cannot feel what matters or what someone is essentially about in their person. But as nature has no hierarchy it is meaningless to call animals “sub human” since we are ourselves animals. Guenon likes to unfairly denigrate and demean modern culture in this way, but he does so meanly and inaccurately. , Statistics can be and has been used in inappropriate and misleading ways, no doubt, but it also tells us important things, if used fairly and responsibly.

After trying to bash statistics, the limits and uses of which he does not understand, he then tries to uphold the value of “the true traditional astrology of the ancients” (pg. 90.) This is really crazy, since there is no correlation at all between the accidental positions of random stars in the sky and the birth dates of human individuals on earth. This has been empirically proven many times. If there is any example of pseudo-science that has been totally discredited it is astrology.¹³ The fact that Guenon claims its validity is proof of he is utterly

¹³ A really good refutation of astrology can be found at this link below by Andrew Fraknoi, quoted earlier There are many other refutations. This site is the Astronomical Society of the Pacific <http://www.astrosociety.org/education/astro/act3/astrology3.html#defense>

untrustworthy as a “expert”. Guenon asserts his beliefs without any evidence at all.

A really humorous chapter is chapter 19, called the “Limits of History and Geography”. Guenon knows little about history and most of what he knows he gets wrong. For instance, he believes the rather laughable theories that Plato put out about the supposedly lost continent of Atlantis. There was no such continent, but Guenon thinks there was and he speaks of it with laughable “authority” as if he knows when clearly he is a fraud. He writes about “disappearance of a single continent”.. and remarks in parenthesis that “such events have in fact occurred in the course of the history of our present humanity”, as if merely asserting it as an authority would prove his case (pg.160). Actually no amount of unwarranted assertions will prove a case that has no evidence to back it up. He later connects the myth of Atlantis to the Flood and the “Biblical Deluge”. Both are fairy tales of the ancient imagination and have been discredited. Guenon’s attempt to resurrect them is absurd. The only real evidence there is of these events is that 3600 years ago, on the island of Crete, evidence has been found of a 100-foot-high tsunami that wiped out the Minoan civilization. The origin of the tsunami was the explosion of Mount Santorini on the island of Thera not far from Crete. This is factually established and is very likely the source of the Atlantis myth, which got transmogrified into the nonsense that Guenon believed. Guenon was mistaken as was Plato, there was no continent that was destroyed or people on it that could see precious stones where there are none. Guenon is full of errors and fictions of this kind that he promotes as facts to his gullible followers. By this time the book is an embarrassment and anyone who reads this far and there is no point in still reading unless one wishes to assess the man’s mental state or for a good laugh.

Guenon also endorses other fairy tales in this chapter, he claims that history should record a time that “precious stones were as common the most ordinary pebbles now”. He recognizes that this and other fairy tales he panders to his reader might be hard to swallow, so he spend the next

paragraph trying to explain why there is no evidence of this. Why do “archeologists and even pre-historians never find anything of the kind” ? Well it must be because the world has gone through a process of “solidification” and what f “solidification”. No one knows because such thing exists actually or ever happened.

Guenon just made it up. Solids, fluids and air are not metaphysical concepts, but Guenon makes them so by a process of false analogy and psychological extrapolation that is fairly common in magical, paranoid thinking. Guenon really believes these fairy tales he makes up. Ever the con-man, he even tries to say that such fairy tales are not seen by men of great learning. He claims modern “profane” men simply” have lost the mystical faculty of the “Intellect” to shine forth onto their reasoning, which would enable them to see things that are actually not there. Only the initiated can understand Guenon, he is not the fraud he seems to be. The “intellect” in Guenon and Schuon’s usage is basically the organ of wishful thinking and dreams, overwhelming emotion and unconscious projection of falsehoods. It is not ‘objective’ at all, on the contrary. If you look at Guenon’s own reasoning, pedantically luminous with this same ‘Intellect’s divine light”, he makes one ridiculous mistake after another in this book. Indeed the intuitive “Intellect” is merely a “pathological subjectivity”, an organ of fanciful invention, or in Dawkins apt phrase, a “mental virus”.

So I see no reason to trust Guenon’s claims to special knowledge or to a “intellect “ beyond reason, since in fact he has no real knowledge of most of what he talks about. He merely apes other thinkers from Vedanta or Sufism who nurtured similar illusions. Most of his conclusions are make believe. Indeed“, he has a whole chapter castigating the idea of reason. (Chapter 8 “The Postulates of Reason”) and he sums this chapter up at the end of the book where he says that the evil of rationalism is that “rationalism denies to the being the possession or use of any faculty of a transcendent order”. ¹⁴ Of

¹⁴ Ibid pg. 232

course it does: that is what is good about it. Being reasonable is precisely to give weight to evidence and cases, to not judge by authority. In fact, Guenon possessed nothing of a “transcendent order” he merely possessed some unique skills as a con-man and logician. For Guenon reason is only useful if is “transcendent”, and is not “merely” a human faculty. In other words reasons only those chosen by god to have special minds which are governed by irrational posits of transcendent ideas, are truly reasonable. “Visions” are what Guenon really means by “intellect”: one sees within though dreams or intuitions. If the Intellect says the moon is green cheese, by George,’ God has said so.

. No one has ever demonstrated the slightest fact about any transcendent faculty, deific implant, or shown there to be any installed mystical intellect in the brain. Nor is there any organ that processes any transcendent deity in the brain or elsewhere. The notion of transcendence is no different that the idea of the holy spirit, in that both are merely subjective states of elation that have no factual basis in anything other than self-elation or narcissistic dilation. There is no divine intellect through which knowledge of the divine comes. There is only the emotional brain making up stories and Guenon’s story is a delusional whopper!!

What Guenon tries to claim is that literally reason only has value in the hands of priests. He believes he is right even though no one has ever proven that the “transcendent order” exists.¹⁵ No one is able to ask any cogent

¹⁵ H.T. Hansen, the promoter of Evola, demonstrates the typical error of the traditionalists. He says that “it must be stressed that *supra-rational* does not in any way equal *irrational*. On the contrary: irrational means under or before the *ratio* (reason);supra-rational, on the other hand, goes beyond the rational but still includes reason itself.” But this is mistaken. The suprarational does not exist and it is pure fiction,--- it is totally an irrational concept that relies upon “inner truth” and intuition, which is demonstrated in Guenon’s own work to be bogus. Hansen continues that “The triumph of reason alone first began with Nominalism. Before that, there was hardly a doubt that the spiritual (in a pure, elevated sense; the *nous* in the ancient meaning in which Plato and Plotinus used it) ranks above mere reason, just as “intellectual intuition” (the “vision” connected to the supra-rational, the so-called “intellectual contemplation,” of Dante and Thomas Aquinas) lies above discursive knowledge and thus rules over it.” He knows nothing about this and merely repeats fictions made up in earlier centuries. Hansen is only right that Nominalism is the beginning of the demise of the irrational ideology of the “intellectual intuition” as a conduit of the “divine”. Everything else Hansen says is nonsense. The “Intellect” of Plato

questions such that it gives real answers. So what Guenon is really upset about here, is that reason does not serve the social hierarchy and the social order he prefers—in other words the power--- is not in the “possession” of religion anymore. Reason has become part of science and has abandoned religion or even turned against it. This is a good thing, but Guenon does not realize it, longing as he does for the old days of priests putting those who disagreed with them in jail, or burning them at the stake. So Guenon, quite irrationally, hates rationalism and hates the science that he associates with it. He wants only a religious “scientia” a religious art, a religious math. What he wants is the return of discredited systems of knowledge that have no grounding in real evidence. Religious science is not science at all. For Guenon, science, math, music, philosophy, psychology, philosophy, and architecture must be dictated by ‘spiritual’ values and if it is not it is evil and part of the corruption of the modern world, the so called “counter initiation”¹⁶. As such, modern sciences lead to “subversion”, “dissolution”, “counterfeit”, “parody”, and then apocalypse and hell. This is a horrendously flipped and erroneous vision of the world that is utterly crazy and delusional. It is a kitsch and paranoid vision of the world. It resembles recent Christian apocalyptic novels or the apocalyptic cult movie Matrix. Guenon’s vision of the world is dark, perverse and Manichean and conspiratorial.

It is hard to say exactly at what point Guenon’s madness becomes

Plotinus and Guenon is really just a conduit of delusion and social/political prejudice as is more than amply demonstrated in Guenon’s text Reign of Quantity. (see Men Among the Ruins pg 98)

¹⁶ Much of Guenon’s thought revolves around the idea of initiation, a really meaningless concept that really has to do with ideological correctness, and thus with power/knowledge systems passed down via rites. What Guenon really wants is correct belief, and these beliefs have to do with class and control of elitist dynasties, monarchist and religious. Fascism was too diffused for guenon, or in his terms “impure” or in violation of caste, not true Aryans, and born of bad mothers, as it were. He thought they were in the throes of “ psychic influences, enemies of the ” spiritual world”. Which Guenon felt was his alone As I showed elsewhere in this book, Evola thought much the same thing. This is not a repudiation of fascism so much as it is a claim that his version of social control is superior to the Nazis. The same notions of caste obsession and “ill bred” people would be common in the Schuon cult. Guenon ‘racism’ is much larger, than the Nazi’s he is at war not merely with the Jews but with the entire modern world and in letters he states that the great evil is actually all of Europe, because it is no longer religious enough. He joins Islam as part of a way against science, ordinary people, democracy and enlightenment rights and liberties.

apparent in *Reign of Quantity*, somewhere in between chapter 5 and 19, I think.. The book expresses mental imbalance from the beginning but at a certain point becomes decidedly worse. The beginning chapters are rather like Ananda Coomaraswamy's writings, who is the most level headed of the Traditionalists. But as Guenon goes along and makes real blundering mistakes in his scholarship, trying to create a metaphysics of "quality" and "essence" out of thin air, his mind and mania begin to increase and even the early chapters begin to flounder in fiction and unwarranted assumptions.

By Chapter 19 Guenon is trying to say that the terribly inaccurate and botched medieval and ancient maps are true and that land masses no one now recognizes as real were then real. This is outrageous lunacy, having no basis in any kind of empirical data. He tries to claim that bizarre animals and human animal hybrids described by Pliny in his Natural History and in on the edges of the old Bestiaries may have been real too. Lucretius makes great fun of these hybrid-animal delusions and fantasies of paradise in his On the Nature of Things and says that people who mouth such nonsense, "may babble with like reason many whims into our ears".¹⁷ But there is no sign Guenon ever read or would have understood Lucretius. No fiction is beyond Guenon's mania. Such animal fictions as the griffin, Dragon and Chimera have been long ago been ruled out as fantasies of the Middle Ages, curious phantasms of bored monks and cartographers imaginations, doodling on the corners of maps and books. These caricatures actually represent the tacit speciesism that was part of Christianity and that goes back to the Romans and before.

In the process of discussing maps Guenon tries to suggest that there is a 'sacred geography' which defines 'centers' and 'oracles' where divine beings might reside. Lucretius would giggle at these absurdities and I find myself chuckle a bit too. There are many such theories and fictions such as the crops circles, "sacred geometry" and other "Mysteries" promoted in New Age bookshops, all of them bogus and discredited. None of them have any real

¹⁷ Lucretius, On the Nature of Things Dutton. N.Y 1957 pg. 224

evidence backing them up. Guenon's imagination never rises above a similar mawkish hawking of New Age pulp fictions. But it gets worse.

He actually believes this rubbish is not merely the result of a pulp science fiction writer or con-man radio talk show host. Indeed, Guenon goes on in succeeding chapters such as those on "Shamanism and Sorcery" and "Psychic Residues" to propound really bizarre and insane theories about the presence of evil influences in archeological digs and ruins where zombie like "hordes of Gog and Magog" issue forth, set at liberty via "exhumations of vestiges of past periods and vanished civilizations.". This is not just a Boris Karloff Mummy movie. He says that soon an army of inferior and demonic forces will destroy our earth. They will arrive first coming through such places, archeological digs and ruins acting like portals or "fissures" for the malicious spirits sure to come...

Schizophrenia sufferers may wear aluminum foil in the belief that it will stop one's thoughts from being broadcast and protect against malicious waves entering the brain from far away. Guenon says that there is a "Great Wall" around the world and because of the evil of science and materialism, this wall has been breached by inferior forces and these forces have begun pouring through the "fissures". This is a schizophrenic 'vision' and I have heard of just such visions voiced by street people who had this disease of the brain. I have known 3 or 4 people who had such visions, one, an artist in California was convinced that Russian spies were planting thought in his head via radio waves. Projections of fears into the sky or suspicions into "sky machines" is quite common. According to Guenon, after the "Great Wall" is breached the "world will soon "undergo an increasingly downward movement toward "dissolution" to be capped by the "Great Parody". A "counter-tradition" will arise and then the Great Parody will be manifested i" an individual who is the "satanic caricature of everything that is truly traditional and spiritual"¹⁸

All this will happen with a mathematical exactitude, the world reversing

¹⁸ Ibid. pg.326

itself like topological gyres, upending itself in a mirror image of the imaginary Golden age. The age of horror is lovingly described, almost as if Guenon like Dante loved his hell more than this heaven. Guenon describes the last days as being composed of people who are mechanical zombies, "galvanized by an infernal will".¹⁹ The Anti-Christ will be defeated and the story comes to its usual ending, like St. John, with the return of the golden age in splendor and glory. These fantasies and fictions are examples a classical“ paranoid attack of an acute kind. He has had a psychotic break with reality.

Guenon sees enemies everywhere, like a paranoid street person off his medications. He observes that one “must exercise extreme vigilance ---for the enemy only knows too well how to take on the most insidious disguises”, he writes. (pg 288) Guenon had himself been a man of disguises. But now he fears the very thing he had been. He was a very sick man, as Martin Lings suggests in an essay he wrote about the period where Guenon is writing Reign of Quantity. Lings says that “ He had enemies in France and suspected that they wished to attack him by magic...Guenon was very much afraid of being attacked by certain people”. Mark Sedgwick, obtusely and unfortunately without embarrassment notes that

I‘ a letter to Evola in 19’8, Guenon wrote that an 'attack of rheumatism' in 1939 had been caused by 'une influence maléfique,'(a malicious influence] and disagreed with Evola, who had evidently said that such things could not hurt those who have spiritual stature. Guénon pointed out that the Prophet himself was made ill by sorcerers.²⁰ Most Guenonian biographers tend to gloss over Guenon’s concern with magic, sometimes referring to attacks of persecution mania when Guénon was ill, but in one sense such apologies are unnecessary. A

¹⁹ Ibid. pg. 238

²⁰ As if reports about Muhammad all of which were written nearly 200 years after his death had any validity at all!! No one knows much of anything concrete about this person named Muhammad. He is largely and perhaps entirely a fiction.

belief in the efficacy of magic is not un-Islamic, as Guenon's own reference to the Prophet reminds us. Such a belief was (and is) widespread in Egypt amongst all types and classes of person, and so may be described as traditional within Islam.²¹

In short, since abysmal ignorance, magical thinking and superstition is so widespread in the middle east, it is "traditional" and since tradition is good, it is OK to be ignorant and superstitious. In "his backwards reasoning, Sedgwick is trying it to excuse Guenon's lunacy, as he excuses Eliade's, and as he tried to excuse Schuon's crimes. He is trying to say it is OK Guenon wrote like a paranoid schizophrenic, since it is so common to employ unbalanced magical thinking in Islam. Sedgwick is a rather a superstitious man himself and acts as if the moniker "traditional" had any merit at all, when really it is just an excuse for lazy and ignorant thoughtlessness. The fact that magical thinking is "traditional" means that "Tradition" itself is an excuse for all manner of bogus nonsense, What he should say is that people of Islamic faith should be given better teachers and books to read. Rather than draw this obvious conclusion, Sedgwick comes off supporting ignorance, Islam and Tradition at the same time. The truth is that the Prophet, who may not even have existed, was not attacked by any 'sorcerers' and neither was Guenon.²² Magical thinking of this kind depends upon the gullibility of the religious. Guenon was highly gullible and suggestible. His fear of attack is deeply paranoid and self-created. It is palpable throughout the end of Reign of

²¹ <http://www.traditionalists.org/write/tradsuf.htm>

²² The full quote illustrates how deep Guenon's paranoia was and casts some light on the psychology behind the Reign of Quantity. Evola had written Guenon about an illness he had. Guenon replies that he was sick in 1939. "I was confined to bed for six months, unable to make the slightest move. Everybody thought this was a case of rheumatism, but the truth is .. we all knew who acted as the unconscious vehicle of a maleficent influence". The man was sent away and Guenon recovered."

Schuon, too, has the ability to project on others the causes of his distresses, even those these others do not have anything to do with the problem. Schuon sees others as conduit for his illnesses, and God punishes his persecutors. Joseph Epes Brown, Schuon said, got Alzheimer's because Brown Would not publicly admit that Schuon helped him edit and create the book the Sacred Pipe.

Quantity.

It is clear that Guenon projected his paranoid fears upon the entire world as a sort of defensive counter attack. He was mentally ill. His projection of evil on the universe, done in coldly logical prose, marbled with insane fantasies of a particularly violent and graphic kind. No wonder one of his favorite author is Dante. Like Dante in the Divine Comedy, Guenon sees virtually everyone as an enemy, except perhaps a few orthodox people. Dante and The Apocalypse of St John inspire Guenon.²³ The Apocalypse or Revelations, is a bogus text, probably written nearly 200-250 years after the birth of the mythic person they call Jesus and has nothing to do with the man called St. John²⁴, if there was such a person, which is probably another fiction, created by the same Gospel

²³ I wrote in 1992 regarding the the Apocalypse....” This unrelenting fantasy of revenge erects hatred of the world into a universal principle. It is indeed a work of art, but one so densely crafted of simultaneous symbols of transcendent perfection and sheerest cruelty that the mixture is both suffocating and infectious. This close congruence of transcendent knowledge and terrible cruelty is what I mean by the term "knowledge/ power".The exquisitely crafted and precious malice of this book indicates a pathology so totalitarian that it makes Hitler and Stalin, Sade, Dante and Genet look like schoolboys in the art of torture.

<http://www.trimondi.de/H.Krieg/Koslow.htm>

²⁴ The earliest fragment of the Revelations appears to be Papyrus 115, dated to 250-300 C.E. though some place it a little earlier. (Oxford Ashmolean museum) Even the works of John are of doubtful authenticity. The earliest Gospel of John (besides P52 the Ryaland’s Papyri which is of highly questionable dating _(117-150 C.E.)) is The Bodmer Papyri II collection which includes the first fourteen chapters of the Gospel of John and much of the last seven chapters. It dates from around AD 200. This hardly suggests John the beloved disciple who was with Christ and his mother when he supposedly died. John is a late fiction, written by a Platonist. This is obvious even internally, given the mystical fervor of the Gospel. So it is quite likely that the John is a forgery of some kind. Since virtually all existing manuscripts of the Gospels are over 150 years after the presumed time of Christ it is very likely that Christ himself never existed and that Christianity itself is based on a literary fiction, confabulated in the 2nd and third centuries. Doherty claims that the Mark gospel might date back to 90 C.E. and the other Gospels to 130 C.E., but it might be as late as 150. Which seems more likely. There are no manuscripts that can be reliably dated back much before 200 C.E..

see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_manuscript. for various accepted dates on this. I am not a biblical scholar, but one does not have to dig very far to see that the Gospels are later literary fictions. This is obvious internally too, as they clearly describe miraculous events that have no basis in ordinary provable facts or evidence. There are no contemporary reports of any of these miracles either, so it is fiction.

writers. The earliest extant manuscript evidence ²⁵ of Revelation is dated no earlier than about 250 C.E. Regarding the Revelations I wrote in 1997 that:

“The frustrated hopes of an obscure religious cult blossomed into an elaborate fantasy of revenge and desire for power. This is expressed in many early Christian texts, the Revelations of John perhaps representing a later summation of this tendency. As the Roman Empire failed, the obscure cult took over the social fabric of the Roman Empire and combined the rationalistic regimentation of the Romans with the apocalyptic fervor of Christianity.....

The apocalypse, clearly a forgery from later centuries pictures an orgiastic dismemberment of the very fabric of the universe in order to justify an intellect that desires totalistic power. The world must be destroyed so that the intellect in its drive for totality and purity finally can possess immortality.The apocalyptic drive desires glory through violence and transcendent power through the dismemberment of people's bodies or destruction of the earth itself. Transcendence requires destruction; the monistic God must destroy diversity; Christ the savior destroys nearly all the beings on earth. Plato's "Sovereign Good" demands total social control: just as the Aztec priests needed to rip out the hearts of children to prove their power. Devotees of Christ wanted to conquer time so the fiction of Christ could dominate the world. Those who refuse to be obedient to the Christian, Aztec or Platonic imposition of a blackmailing concept of 'eternity' must be burned at the stake, eliminated, warred against, or destroyed in an apocalypse. Beyond the dreams of utopia, perfection, glory, wealth, El Dorado and the final End of History the reality of what happens in apocalyptic politics is a gruesome and bloody nightmare. The perfections of the 'next world'

²⁵ Some of the basic dates of various New and Old Testament biblical manuscripts can be found here http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_manuscript

covers this world in blood.”

I have mixed together many things here, but this is substantially correct, I think now. There is no transcendent next world. The transcendent is a fiction. We must transcend transcendence. There is only this world. In Guenon’s delusional fantasy of revenge against life, history has been reduced to a paranoid “Plot” that is going on everywhere, with Satan as the head of the conspiracy against Guenon’s religious ideology. Guenon is a decadent writer as was the writer of Revelations. The end of the Roman Empire echoes the end of the aristocracy and the Church. Apocalyptic fantasies are delusions born of disappointment and bitterness, or, when they occur in mental illness, excess serotonin. Guenon is writing out of reactionary bitterness against the new world science has made, just as those who murdered Hypatia killed out of reactionary ignorance against the rising science of the time which Hypatia so wonderfully embodied. Guenon resembles the murderers of Hypatia, he wants to destroy the world that does not fit his fantasy. As Baudelaire said in his gloss on De Maistre “In Politics, the true saint is the man who uses his whip and kills people for their own good.”

I think Guenon was living in a real subjective hell while he was writing this book. It is, in fact, a deeply personal, even manically personal book. It is written with such searing passion by a man who despises all passion. He is insane and the insane suffer mentally. He is a doomsayer, sure that virtually everyone in the world, but a very small remnant, will soon be destroyed. It is a sad book he has written here, which shows a man who has been clearly and permanently driven mad by the occult and metaphysics, lost in a make believe world.....rather like a bleak Piranesi prison, Guenon is caught in his own theory in a madness where a vision of hate a world despised and carefully ignited. In a vampire-like version of Don Quixote, Guenon claws at broken windmill of his own mind spinning furiously. Guenon lives in a sort of subjective Last Judgment, or as if in the movie “Night of the Living Dead” and the fictional modern world which he thinks is so evil, actually is not evil at all.

There is real mania in this book, madness of an authentic kind. No play acting.

It is Guenon's own imagination that is 'evil' source of this, still obsessed with Satan, enemies and dark forces. He is lost in delusions of a kind that projects what he is on the world. He is utterly convinced of the reality of his delusions, even as he projects what he is on the world that he hates. Like Mad Meg is Breughel's great painting, (see below) Guenon ends up surrounded by Hieronymous Bosch-like demons,²⁶ created by his own mind, and in his madness he cannot distinguish true from false. As fascinating as this madness is, one has to call it madness. Guenon's followers really think all these phantasms are real. Indeed, reading Guenon after 27 years shows me a man who is very much in the grip of the same illness I have seen in street people who scream on city sidewalks that the sky is falling immediately.

²⁶ For recent views of Bosch and the mistaken thesis that Bosch and Breughel are somehow prefigurations of the modern hell, see Terry Tempest Williams, Leap, or Michael Foucault's writings on Bosch. In both cases these thinkers fail to see that Bosch is not a New Age epicurean and certainly not a prefiguration of the modern dilemmas and the sexual revolution. He is a throwback to the medieval period and not at all a liberal who looks forward. They project what they wish to see onto him,. The Garden of Earthly Delights is not a prefiguration of Surrealism, but rather a reactionary prelude to Bosch's really awful hell pictures, which contain the Inquisition and witch hunts in fantasy



Pieter Breughel ---Mad Meg

Breughel's *Mad Meg* may be one of the first objective attempts to depict mental illness in the history of painting. All the "Temptations of St. Anthony" from Grunewald to Bosch are still wrapped up in the mythic magical thinking. Breughel appears to be on the verge of escaping from this, and perhaps he did escape from it, hinting at an objective picture of a real street woman. This whole book of Guenon' is plunged back into the dark ages and medieval madness as if science never existed. Indeed, this book is a paranoid attack on science.

Much of Reign of Quantity's tone of barely contained hysteria hides behind excessive logic. This is typical for someone with as deep a paranoid fixation as Guenon had. He is on the verge of psychotic break throughout the beginning of book. By the middle of the book the break with reality has occurred. The logical pretence of the arguments is a part of the disease that

inhabits the book.

The book proceeds by a rational irrationality that is born of his paranoid terror of science. Guenon says repeatedly that “the falsification of everything” (pg.249) has come about and has done so because everything has fallen out of “proper hierarchical order” (pg. 243). Again his main concern is the loss of power, and he wants it back, like Joseph De Maistre.. Democracy and human rights are the evils that got rid of aristocratic tyrants and popes with crowns. Guenon’s madness is one of nostalgia for the lost power of churches and monarchs. He is obsessed with bygone notion of religious order of a Dantean and Hindu sort, unaware that such notions were proven wrong centuries ago.

Is there really a “falsification of everything “? Actually the opposite is true, since Newton, Einstein and Darwin disproved Dante, Augustine, the Bhagavad Gita and Plato, the world is so much clearer and easier to understand. What has been falsified is the superstitious fictions that Guenon fanatically and insanely clings to. Hence his hysteria. He is in denial and must pretend that what is real is unreal and his madness is sanity.

Guenon’s book is full of excessive pronouncements meant to inspire fear. A metaphysical terrorist, he wants the reader to believe in what he fears, rather than admit he might be wrong, and his whole system is wrong. Like the Republicans in today’s America he uses fear to support an unjust power structure. He wants to spread the contagion of fear. He wildly claims that reason, science, equality and democracy have destroyed the order of the world. Utterly false. All that was destroyed by the French and American Revolutions was the theocratic illusion. Guenon’s theofascist fantasy is born of the desire to go back to the toxic delusions of the far past. He is an escape artist, a true romantic, like Artaud, who prefers his insane subjective world to reality. The problem for Guenon as for religion in general is humans. Gods are to be preferred, metaphysical fictions are better than reality and ordinary things. The actual world must be abolished because of the imaginary “beloved” beyond the sky is real. Guenon cares more about symbols than people, more about

doctrine than 'ordinary life', which he despises.

Tradition is not about humans, he says. Guenon writes that it is a horrible mistake to confuse tradition with things that are on "the lower human level and are completely lacking in profound significance." (pg. 253) Guenon is anti-human, he is even anti-earth and anti-cosmos--- and all he cares about is the fiction of his super-human "principles" ---principles which he never defines, but claims to know everything about. "The restoration of the superhuman" (pg. 253) as he calls it (evoking Nietzsche) will only come about once science and materialism, humanism and human rights, democracy and reason are all negated. He equates all these with what is "satanic" and what is satanic involves "all negation and reversal of order, such as is incontestably in evidence in everything we now see around is" (pg. 237)

There is no such "incontestable" evidence in Guenon's book. On the contrary. Guenon announces his conclusions before he shows us any evidence that is supposed to prove it. Most human lives are far better than they ever have been. What has fallen is belief in con-men like Guenon. This is not to say there are no serious problems. There are huge problems left to solve, but no solutions will be forthcoming from the traditionalists, who are a cult and who exist only in tiny enclaves of privilege and luxury. Guenon has no sense of proportion. He wants to go back the Dark Ages when life expectancy was 35, prostitution was rampant, workers had no rights, were forced to work seven day weeks. Women regularly died in childbirth, diseases were common and killed many children, poxed faces, left terrible scars, sweatshops abounded and the Church was utterly corrupt. In a recent book, Steven Pinker shows that in the "good old days"

"Tribal warfare was nine times as deadly as war and genocide in the 20th century. The murder rate of Medieval Europe was more than thirty times what it is today. Slavery, sadistic punishments, and frivolous executions were unexceptionable features of life for millennia, then suddenly were targeted for abolition. Wars between developed countries have vanished,

and even in the developing world, wars kill a fraction of the people they did a few decades ago. Rape, battering, hate crimes, deadly riots, child abuse, cruelty to animals—all substantially down”²⁷

In these good old days life was “brutish and short” as Hobbes says and priests ruled everyone’s lives.²⁸

Guenon was a profoundly disturbed man suffering from paranoid delusions. He sees the whole world as evil. To him, science is a satanic “counterfeit” and is part of the conspiracy against the anti-human and “super-human” ‘truth’. He sees the world as coming toward a cataclysm of horrendous proportions when all his favorite enemies will be destroyed. Religion has become so completely the vehicle of Guenon’s personal self that anything scientific and reasonable comes to seem to him as ultimately evil. His sociopathic insanity mounts as he imagines that science has enclosed his fantasy of god behind a fictional wall that stretches around the world. He imagines that inferior evil domains are pouring into the world with all their filth and wickedness. The exact nature of these “inferior domains” is never described, as they do not actually exist, but for Guenon, they loom with bloody teeth on the edge of consciousness. He wants you to do the work of imagining these things. Poor Guenon is caught up in his own mind like a Manichean lunatic and at war with himself in a horrible and suffocating sense of personal defeat and hatred of our world.

²⁷ <http://stevenpinker.com/publications/better-angels-our-nature>

²⁸ Another book of interest to the decay of Traditionalism is Mark Perry’s [On Awakening & Remembering: To Know is To Be](#). Catherine Perry called this book “ indigestible”. One reviewer said that “if you think capital punishment is spiritually uplifting this book is for you”. Another writes that “This book may have value for you if believe that inquisitions, reducing women to chattel, theological fanaticism and priest kings are good for the world. Otherwise skip it as it is one of the most odious books written since Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged or Mein Kampf.”

The heart of Guenon's Reign of Quantity is not his crazy theory about a "plan" to defeat tradition and the "principles of metaphysics". The heart of Reign of Quantity is Guenon's his own distempered mind. It is his paranoid psychosis that is the real subject of this book, not the process of "subversion", "anti-traditional action" counter initiation" and the final "Great Parody". These are just symptoms of his disease, projections of his illness on the world. Guenon's theory that the Anti-Christ will seize the moment and destroy the world just as the "reinstatement" arrives and the world will begin all over again--- this theory borrows heavily from Hindu myths and fairy tales, and is really just a symptom of Guenon's dementia.

Most of the time, his illness is hidden behind an artful pose of impersonality and his manic rush of fabrication and paranoid inventiveness. It is an amazing text as a tour de force of metaphysical madness. Sometimes however, his illness actually shows itself directly and personally in his text. For instance, Guenon blames Henri Bergson, a very mild and rather harmless French philosopher from the early 20th century, who promoted a philosophy of 'vitalism" and intuitionism. It is rather a gentle and romantic philosophy influenced by hints of Rousseau and Darwinism. Bergson's thought may not be to my taste but it is hardly anything dangerous or to be feared. But Guenon is livid with fear about this harmless man and his theory.

He hates William James too, who is really quite interesting and also mostly harmless when he writes about science and not religion. James is one of the fathers of early brain science, and a sort of forbear of people like John Dewey. James who is not threatening to anyone either. I disagree with James' subjectivist theory of religion, as this book makes plain. But that does not make James a bad man. So why is Guenon so paranoid with fear of them?

It would appear that Guenon hates Bergson and James for their science and their rather lukewarm "spiritualism" "Bergson was actually a Jew and suffered under the French Nazis (the "Vichy") and loved Darwin, so it would appear that Guenon, who had friends in French fascist movements, hated Bergson as a left leaning man interested in science. Virtually everything

Guenon says about Bergson is nonsense, as well as vicious, insinuating and blacklisting. He tries to imply that Bergson was an unwitting part of a diabolical plot "against the "Truth", capital T. ²⁹

He tries to say that Bergson and James are harbingers of the imaginary "Anti-Christ". The reason he gives is they do not admit of basic religious ideas and are more influenced by science. So what? Why should they admit the truth of religion when it is obviously false? Why should anyone have to be believer "in the nutty nonsense Guenon believes in? It is science that Guenon hates in Bergson and James. These two men must therefore be devil's in disguise, Guenon imagines, and their writing opens the door to the "sub-corporeal" and 'sub-human" realm. There is nothing wrong with beings that are not as complex as humans are, but there is no "sub-human" realm, as Guenon maintains. Nature is nowhere a hierarchy, but rather a sort of continuum wherein all beings have their own lives and progression within the overall adaptation of the evolutionary field.

So as I was saying, the heart of Guenon's Reign of Quantity is not his theory about a "plan" to defeat tradition. Rather the heart of this book is in Guenon's own disturbed brain, hungering after power, which births the "plan" or "plot" to destroy the world. The origin or personal starting point of this crazy book to be found in Guenon's rare admission of jealousy of Henri Bergson, the French philosopher. Guenon reproaches Bergson for not really understanding the "magical operations" that Guenon believes in....Guenon erupts into a really bizarre accusation:

²⁹ Bergson shares some things with Guenon in fact. Like Guenon Bergson puts huge stress on "intuition" and thus is a romantic and prone to certain irrational beliefs in the afterlife and religious ideas. He almost converted to Catholicism before he died. "Bergson died in occupied Paris from pneumonia contracted after standing for several hours in a queue for registration as a Jew" his biography says. Bergson sided with the Jews who were being killed in the camps. His biography also states that he renounced "all of the posts and honors previously awarded him, rather than accept exemption from the anti-Semitic laws imposed by the Vichy government" This shows a rare bravery, of the sort it is hard to imagine Guenon or Schuon having.

One can admire the intrepidity of this philosopher, shut into his private room, and well protected against the attacks of certain influences which undoubtedly would not hesitate to take advantage of him as an auxiliary no less valuable than unwilling. ³⁰

He goes on to say that “experience demonstrates the falsity” of Bergson’s assertions about magic. We know from other sources that Guenon claimed to have experienced horrible attacks of magic coming from Paris. As I discussed earlier, Lings mentions that when he says, “He had enemies in France and he suspected that they wished to attack him by magic”. ³¹ So Guenon was affronted by Bergson who apparently and rightly does not believe in this paranoid nonsense and does not have such attacks. Guenon is jealous that unlike himself, Bergson does have demons coming from overseas and harassing him from the corners of his room. He has been attacked by “magical operations” since he has recently been the victim of them, or so he imagines. He claims to suffer from strange evils, of which he detects the origin in “psychic attacks” directed against him. They are imaginary, but the paranoid tenor of Reign of Quantity comes from these ‘experiences’ of imagined terror. Bergson, Guenon says, would realize his errors if only he understood that magic operations are real and spirits can attack people at a distance. Actually, the errors are all Guenon’s. He attacks Bergson, James and others out of a personal mental illness and projects of them his own terrors and fears of plot and conspiracy.

³⁰ Ibid pg. 270

³¹ This is an important admission and I quote it twice but it is really the key to understanding the whole of Guenon’s ‘masterpiece’ which is really his greatest work of unintentional fiction. More than any other work I can think of Reign of Quantity is book intended as a nonfiction work, but which is so upside down and a sort of parody of itself that it is actually a work of fiction—a work of fiction that the author was not aware he was writing, which makes it akin to the writing of the insane, and it is this that makes the book an echo of Revelations, which is also a crazy fiction. The ‘genius’ of the book is that it sucks so many people into its insanity. He totally believes his own insanity and wants to make you believe it to. It is this that makes it an exemplar of religion as a whole. That is to say, this is what religions do, they convince the gullible of the most patently ridiculous nonsense and make it seem like it is life or death reality.

Of course Guenon has not a shred of evidence that “ghosts”, “spirits” “psychic residues” and such like beings actually exist. His ‘mental virus’ as Dawkins would call it, is such that even imagines these evil little demons coming through coins and money. Guenon writes that “the control” of money by the spiritual authority” is essential. Money must be backed by religion, both being by-products of evolution, in fact. But Guenon does not realize that he has lost himself in the make believe land where imaginary money and gods are both invoked as “principles”. He agrees with the fascist poet Ezra Pound on this. Pound thought that “Usury” is the great evil, which basically is defined as the taking of unnecessarily high interest in loans. This idea was long preached as part of the language of anti-Semitism., conspiracy theories about Jewish bankers and notions of degeneration resulting from abandoning the gold standard. ³² Ezra Pound's anti-Semitism was based on his interest in fascist monetary theories, which, to put it over-simply, saw usury as the chief economic ill of modern society. Guenon ideas are similar but more widely applied. Guenon applies the anti-Semitic ideas to all of the “profane” world. For Guenon the hated category “Jews” become the “Profane”. This is true in Schuon too. Guenon sees *any* secular control of finance as an evil. He wants it all in the hands of priests. Pound too is traditionalist, as you can see in his poem, the “Canto Usura”

Duccio came not by usura
nor Pier della Francesca; Zuan Bellin' not by usura
nor was "La Calunnia" painted.
Came not by usura Angelico; came not Ambrogio Praedis,

³² A recent example of this paranoia is the murderer Jared Loughner, who killed six people in Arizona. Apparently inspired by the neo fascist hate rhetoric of such luminous far right fanatics as Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin, both of whom have advocated “targeting” of anyone who questions right wing hate, corporatism and reactionary politics. Loughner shot a 9 year old girl and a congresswoman, who was shot through the head, but is still alive, badly injured but recovering. Loughner had an obsession with currency issues rather like Pound and Guenon. The idea is to control money for “god”, and since there is no god what is really meant is to control money for those who preach god. It is a self-serving ideology, which is a conspiracy theory still going strong in certain outsider circles today.

Came no church of cut stone signed: Adamo me fecit.
Not by usura St Trophime
Not by usura Saint Hilaire,
Usura rusteth the chisel
It rusteth the craft and the craftsman
It gnaweth the thread in the loom
None learneth to weave gold in her pattern;
Azure hath a canker by usura;³³

The big evil for Pound as for Guenon, ---as well as for crypto-fascist historians like Oswald Spengler is the Renaissance, Pound³⁴“wants a return to a religious veneration of objects. This sounds both like Ananda Coomaraswamy and Guenon, with its extolling of traditional religious craft and its anti-Semitic hatred of bankers. There is nothing wrong with the love of craft. But, neither Pound or Guenon stops there. Guenon wants all coins insured by god and thus “counterfeit” coins will cease to be conduits of devilish witchcraft like forces and “psychic entities”. Pond wants something similar in his mad dash to support Mussolini’s fascism.

Guenon thought that all money should be controlled by the “spiritual authority”. There is truth to there being harm done by capitalists, and lenders at interest, because of financial trickery, but this is even more true of religious institutions. The Vatican is hardly a good example of sound finance, taking from the poor, selling “Indulgences” to feed the rich as they did for centuries. But there are other ways to deal with greed in banks and the rich everywhere. Tax them heavily.

Although Pope Pius V decreed in 1567 that indulgences should not be given in exchange for money, and the Church made huge amounts of money

³³ It is worth hearing Pound reading this
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xn6r2Nm0ZMo>

³⁴ Indeed the milieu of Pound and Eliot included a lot of Pre-Raphaelite followers and artists who would be of interest to A. Coomaraswamy such as Eric Gill, Wyndam Lewis etc.

from this. Martin Luther recognized this indulgence selling as an attempt to profit from sin, Luther protested by nailing 95 objections to this on the wall of the Church in Wittenberg. The sale of indulgences mostly had to do with buying time back for sin to be spent in a fictional purgatory.³⁵ Indeed, the sale of indulgences is one of the origins of the private insurance racket, which begin also with insuring slaves and slave ships being sold from Africa to the New World. Indulgences were a kind of buying selling of souls for profit, just like slavery, where they died in droves during the Middle Passage.³⁶



³⁵ Buying carbon offsets or credits is the new sale of indulgences, whereby corporations or countries persist in polluting by making others pay for their sins, as it were. The carbon offset system simply allows the corporate sector to buy off critics and keep polluting. The sale of indulgences was meant to allow the rich to keep sinning and buy off their sins. This is just a new form of magical thinking.

³⁶ The Church was a parasitical organization which profited from sin and Insurance companies are similar, as the profit from the fear of the rich, lest they lose their investments. In American medicine, insurance companies are utterly unnecessary and unethical organization that profit from the sick. A single payer system would abolish them and set up a system where no one profits from people being sick, but

One of JMW's great paintings is of a slave ship in which the captain of the slave ship "Zong"³⁷ had ordered 133 slaves to be thrown overboard so that insurance payments could be collected. Insurance companies got their start with slavery this is one example of this symbiosis. Controlling gods is like controlling money in that both are meant to serve certain social factions and to disenfranchise others. Just as slaves were considered not people, the Church saw those who it did not control as inferior beings, or "sinners", "witches" or "evil ones". Guenon has no historical sense of how corrupt and depraved the historical church was when it had control of aspects of the economy. He does not realize that money like gods are fictional abstractions that have not real existence. They are social constructions.

Nor does he grasp what a disaster the theory of castes was in India, eventually necessitating it being outlawed. It was a mistake to have the Brahmins in charge of social relations. But Guenon is never concerned with human or earthy realities, which he considers to be "low" and "inferior" realms. People do not matter to him. Nature does not matter to him. Only ideas, his fictional "principles" matter to him.

The whole second half of Guenon's book is devoted to his **constrained and** paranoid fantasies that psychic entities and satanic conspiracies not only exist but the great secret of our time is that they do exist. He thinks this is a fact of "diabolical cleverness" (pg 109) that Satan hid his little demons from average people. Thanks to Guenon this universal secret is now revealed to you for the first time!! The universe is being overrun by demons. They not only exist but they proliferate wildly like the demons in a painting by Hieronymus Bosch or

money would be pooled into one fund to be paid out for everyone when they get sick, as everyone does get sick at some point.

³⁷ I got to spend many hours with this work in 1976. The Zong massacre as an important story as the deaths of all these slaves ended provoking a law case and then it helped inspire the Abolitionist movement. Turner painted this partly in protest and partly to try to influence Prince Albert against slavery. Slaves were thought to be animals and each slave on this ship was worth 30 pounds, The company hoped to recover this money for their animals, which they themselves had murdered, throwing them overboard to collect insurance on them...

Pieter Breughel. Indeed, Guenon, like Bosch or Breughel, is a throwback to ignorance and superstition of the Dark Ages. Though I think Breughel at least, and possibly Bosch, understood that these images of hellish fantasy were indeed conceits or allegorical games.

By chapter 22, which is about the evil influences that come through metals, Guenon has really lost any semblance of sanity. What he calls the “maleficent influence” of metals, is part of what he calls “cosmic psychism” (pg.189), and these demons or spirits are everywhere proliferating – He says these “influences, in their multitudinous forms are today actively threatening the “solidity” of the world. The dissolution is supposed to come about when everything is reduced to an “atomic dust without cohesion” (pg199). Guenon sinks himself into utter fantasy about alchemical processes and spiritualist rhetoric. Full of obscure empty terms like “coagulation and “extra-corporeal modalities” , which sound like they mean something but really are just elitist sounding mystical gobbledygook. He writes as a madman, utterly convinced of his delusions:

“In order to undo the knots resulting from the solidification which has been going on up till now and (the word knots is used intentionally, as it suggests the effects of a certain kind of coagulation particularly connected with the realm of magic) the intervention of something more directly effective for the purpose in view is required, and this something must no longer belong to the domain, the very restricted domain to which the “reign of quantity” itself properly belongs. It is easy to perceive, from the occasional indications already given, that the action of subtle influences is involved: such action really began long ago to operate in the modern world, although at first it did so in no very apparent manner, and it has actually always co-existed with materialism for the very moment at which the latter was first constituted in a clearly defined form.”

You can see he has a matter of fact way of speaking about things that are utterly imaginary and fictitious. He suggests that materialism was suggested by the evil demons who swarm around the earth, who apparently whisper in people's ears—people like Hypatia perhaps or Bacon³⁸, Da Vinci, Holbein or Descartes--- and insinuate plots to overthrow religious elites and metaphysical paranoids like Guenon. If only Galileo did not fall prey to the whispers of demons when he discovered the four moons of Jupiter! How did I not see how crazy this is 27 year ago? I was intelligent but even the intelligent do not always understand what they read. I only felt the fear of the book not the hysteria that makes his mind be totally at variance to the facts.

Clearly Guenon had a mental problem. The notion that being a materialist is somehow evil and damnable is ludicrous. Descartes was not inspired by demons when he conceived the scientific project³⁹ indeed. On the contrary, Descartes is a modern French hero and not the villain of Guenon's dark, malicious fantasies. The author of the Discourse on Method and the Meditations was a man who tried to bring us out of the dark times of the Inquisition and the Catholic Church. Many “ esoteric gnostics”, such as Frithjof Capra⁴⁰ or of the modern period hate Descartes undeservedly. He is credited

³⁸ Bacon is often condemned by New Agers as being chavannistic and damning of nature, and while there is truth to this there is also truth to his being an anti cartesian and holding more to epicurean thought than the hyper rationalism of Descartes, which is arbitrary and seeks to ground reason in a god fiction, rather than empirical fact.

³⁹ Descartes contributed to the field of cognitive science hundreds of years before it was officially established. His ideas are still relevant, unlike Guenon's ideas, which are fading already.. Noam Chomsky implemented some of Descartes ideas into his own work. Descartes was not the devil that Guenon paints him as. He was in fear of the horrible inquisition and but he was a very interesting thinker who provoked a huge leap in humankind's understanding. He developed analytical geometry---a coordinate system, and is really the first person to start trying to outline the method by which science operates. Chomsky notes in several essays that Descartes mechanical philosophy was soon brought into question by Hume and Newton and that it was basically discredited by Newton who showed that gravity or action at a distance negated Descartes claim that all action had to be mechanical. I am not sure that Chomsky is right about this, but more of that later.

⁴⁰ Capra's Tao of Physics has been discredited, Peter Woit writes, for instance

with bring us materialism, reductionism and relativism⁴¹ and all sorts of other New Age and Traditionalists bugaboos.⁴²

Guenon wants to thrust us back into the same Dark Ages that Descartes did so much the help lead us out of in his Meditations and other writings. Da Vinci did not study hydraulics, birds in flight and anatomy because some perverse little spirits that crept of “cracks in the “Great Wall” made him do so, as Guenon suggests. Indeed, Da Vinci is really the first scientist and not merely a rationalists as was Descartes. Da Vinci is an experimentalist and joins a long line of mostly anonymous scientists who developed carpentry and architecture, metallurgy and shipbuilding, going back the Roman and Greeks as well as the Chinese and others. Da Vinci is preferable over Descartes who tortured live animals and how believed that animals do not feel pain.

“The Tao of Physics was completed in December 1974, and the implications of the November Revolution one month earlier that led to the dramatic confirmations of the standard-model quantum field theory clearly had not sunk in for Capra (like many others at that time). What is harder to understand is that the book has now gone through several editions, and in each of them Capra has left intact the now out-of-date physics, including new forewords and afterwords that with a straight face deny what has happened. The foreword to the second edition of 1983 claims, "It has been very gratifying for me that none of these recent developments has invalidated anything I wrote seven years ago. In fact, most of them were anticipated in the original edition," a statement far from any relation to the reality that in 1983 the standard model was nearly universally accepted in the physics community, and the bootstrap theory was a dead idea ... Even now, Capra's book, with its nutty denials of what has happened in particle theory, can be found selling well at every major bookstore. It has been joined by some other books on the same topic, most notably Gary Zukav's *The Dancing Wu-Li Masters*. The bootstrap philosophy, despite its complete failure as a physical theory, lives on as part of an embarrassing New Age cult, with its followers refusing to acknowledge what has happened.

⁴¹ They never define why these things are evil or bad. It is assumed they are, but in most cases they are all fine things. Materialism is merely a fact, we are all material beings. Reduction is a good thing too, as in pottery or making things simpler in science. Relativism is a vague and uncertain term and needs a fresh definition wherever it is used as it is used in so many odd ways. Holistic ideas a certainly questionable, though justified in some cases, but one has to analyze each case.

⁴² For another wacky and ridiculous conspiracy theory as insane as Guenon see Lee Penn's New Dawn, a far right and theofascist take on everything the Catholic Church hates, form George Soros to Hare Krishna . It is a ridiculous book, but interesting in that it illustrates the psychology of the far right.

There were no little spirit-demons that crawled into Hipparchus, c. 190 BC – c. 120 BCE) when he conceived of the earth as a globe that goes around the sun. ⁴³ There were no little demons when he invented altitude and longitude to help ships navigate the seas. I am not sure than anyone ever was a strict materialist, since life is in some ways not exactly a material phenomenon, though many of the brain's process are material in their roots. I am not suggesting “spiritual” forces at all. There are physical forces or fields in the world that suggest ‘action at a distance’ without actually being that, such as magnetism and gravity. These did not really bring Cartesian mechanics into question, though Chomsky wrongly thinks they did. Pure Cartesian mechanics is rather too simple to explain much but concepts like Faraday's and Maxwell's idea of fields go far to explaining how the appearance of action at a distance can happen, while yet the underlying facts are all physical and mechanical in the sense of being causal and having physical explanations..

In any case, I will discuss the traditionalist's dismal ignorance as regard science in a later chapter.

Guenon hates modern education and suggests that those who were interested in magnetism were somehow agents of the devil. He claims that “occultism and modern science tend more and more to join up with each other” (pg. 158). The opposite is true. The history of human understanding of magnetism actually goes back before Aristotle and was known in India and China too. William Gilbert set about demystifying magnetism in his book *On the Magnet and Magnetic Bodies, and on the Great Magnet the Earth*, published in 1600. His knowledge was obtained from innumerable and unnamed blacksmiths, miners, sailors and instrument makers. These are the very “low”

⁴³ Hipparchus is a fascinating study all by himself. He is thought to have created early numerical trigonometry. Also to have discovered a way to predict solar eclipses and to measure the distance of the moon from the earth as well as the diameter of the earth itself. He did all this not by magic, but by math and inquiry.

people that Guenon despises so much ⁴⁴ Guenon's notion that it was an occult concern is mistaken and another example of his bad history writing. He just didn't research the subject. Blacksmith's regularly play with magnetism in the iron in the forge and cool off. Guenon did not bother to ask them how this works, many know exactly how it works.

Guenon also claims that psychiatrists that are psychoanalyzed themselves are involved in a sort of pseudo-initiation process and this process gives them a certain "stain". He uses a term that is used by Catholics to refer to the "stain of original sin". The idea of "original sin" being a way in which the church blamed babies for sins they never committed, in order to get their parents to inject their children into the church via baptism. Original sin is a horrible notion, which means that those outside the church are evil by definition and those inside the church are pure. It is a way of creating a destructive "Them versus Us" dynamic. The notion that Jesus Christ is a payment for sin and that he died for our sins and that "his death constitutes a successful propitiation of a "loving" God is a direct and undisguised inheritance of the superstitious bloodletting that has plagued bewildered people throughout history."⁴⁵ Such barbaric bloodletting is an enormous disgrace and invalidates any moral validity claimed for the Christian god. A god that would allow this, or a parent, is barbaric and immoral.

The idea of "original sin" is akin to the Eastern notion of "karma", which is the basis of the caste system, which also has the function of making everyone feel a primal guilt that can only be addressed by parasitical priests who administer a caste system meant to work out the "bad effects" of karma. Actually, karma is pure fiction and there are no "bad effects".⁴⁶ Caste and

⁴⁴ William Gilbert and his sources, including his main source, a sailor and mechanic named Robert Norman, is discussed at length in Clifford Conner's very interesting. [A People's History of Science.](#)

⁴⁵ From Sam Harris, [Letter to a Christian Nation.](#) Pg ?

⁴⁶ I once heard someone use the idea of Karma to condemn a child. Ignorant people will blame a genetic deformity on a moral cause originating in the parents. This sort of repulsive magical thinking is very common in societies where ignorance is rampant or science is hated for irrational reasons. The person in question hates science and is a Guenonian who has turned against the Enlightenment of his own country. The idea of karma originates in the ideology of caste and is an elitist as well as speciesist notion. It is

class are artificial and are created by elites to justify their power and greed. You are not guilty for what your mother or grandfather did or did not do. You are not guilty because you were born into the world. Karma and “original sin” lie about nature and birth giving.

In any case, what Guenon is condemning is all psychiatrists who he says are “stained” and in league with the devil. He says they have a “mark” on them, which is the term used in revelations that applies to those who are damned in the next world after the apocalypse. In other words, Guenon is using stigma and stereotype, trying to do to psychiatrists what Hitler did to Jews. There are many good psychologists and mental health workers. Guenon’s condemnation of them is a typical example of his stereotyping others and branding those who are in competition with him. Certainly there are things to question in current Psychology, and any good psychologist would freely admit, but Guenon’s approach to this is unworkable.

Schuon and Guenon hated psychologists first because they were both mentally ill and in denial about it and second because “the priest”, who they did admire, is no longer trusted to deal with mental problems, so they resented the loss of power to priests. Having seen concrete examples of Schuon’s utter incompetence in dealing with people’s personal problems and mental stresses, the idea that anyone would be treated for anything by any of the traditionalists seems frightening to me. Schuon was a horrible “Shaykh” who harmed many people who trusted him with their lives. Rama Coomaraswamy got a degree in psychology but I would never recommend anyone to him because I saw how incompetent he was as a psychologist. He went back to school as an old man after retiring from the practice of surgery. Evidently a good surgeon, he was not very good at psychology. His views on psychology were distorted and extremist as his views on religion. He was interested in promoting and performing

moralistic and someone with “bad Karma” is supposed to come back as an animal humans despise. They will be animals or be born in a low caste. This is a perfidious idea. Deformities are caused by genetic anomalies or chemical toxins, not by moral faults of parents, except in cases where parents ingested such materials, were exposed to radiation or other things of that kind. The idea of karma enshrines an unforgivable ignorance and the word “karma” should not be used by anyone who thinks about it carefully.

ineffectual and discredited exorcism rituals and in forcing gay people to give up their sexual preferences because he was sure homosexuality was a form of mental illness. This is medieval in its ignorance and cruelty.⁴⁷ Indeed, one of the foremost psychiatrists in the world, Dr. Robert Spitzer, recently apologized to the gay community of “making unproven claims about the efficacy of reparative therapy”.⁴⁸ Rama should have apologized for his backwards and destructive ideas on this subject years ago, but he was too narrow minded to be aware of the need for this. I suggested he amend his views but he refused. The traditionalists hate psychology and try to stigmatize those who they see as competing with their role of priests. Psychologists and in fact do much better at helping others than either Guenon, Schuon, Nasr, Coomaraswamy, Lings or Evola were ever able to do. ⁴⁹

In the last half of Guenon’s *Reign of Quantity*, Guenon spends a lot of time branding and stigmatizing people. Guenon sets up a structure of the end of the book where he tries, first, to delineate his paranoid theory of world collapse and apocalypse, which cycles through a series of events. There is subversion, anti-traditional action, counter-initiation and then the Great Parody, followed by apocalypse and then reinstatement the new world. This wooden structure taken from archaic Hindu theory of cycles, as I said earlier,

⁴⁷ To see more on the far right, fascist and theofascist ideology of traditional Catholicism see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Controversies_surrounding_the_Society_of_St._Pius_X

⁴⁸ See New York Times May 18, 2012

⁴⁹ The Churches Rama Coomaraswamy belonged to (SSPX and SSPV) were extremist groups fanatical in the old right wing Catholicism of the 1940’s—the same Catholicism that had a concordat with Hitler. Rama was close of the extremist and far right John Birch Society in many of his views. Some of the members of the SSPX, Rama’s church, were caught echoing anti-Semitic, homophobic views, defending the Spanish Inquisition and similar views to those I heard Rama espouse.

“Richard Williamson, who is infamous for his Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism. In January, just a few days before the pontiff invited Williamson back into the church, he appeared on a Swedish TV program insisting the Nazis had no gas chambers. “I believe that the historical evidence is strongly against — is hugely against — 6 million Jews having been deliberately gassed in gas chambers as a deliberate policy of Adolf Hitler,” Williamson said. “I believe there were no gas chambers.”

<http://www.splcenter.org/blog/2009/02/26/behind-the-bishop-the-anti-semitism-of-the-sspx/>

and it is not real, but merely a mythic construction. Guenon co-opted these ideas from India unexamined or analyzed. He added this to the stew or pastiche of heterogeneous elements taken from numerous sources and religions.

So what Guenon created is a fantasy of conglomerated myths, forged in the Smithy of his desire for power and his madness.;. He tries to adapt the idea of the Kali Yuga to Christian notions of the apocalypse. He connects Hindu fantasy to various rather trivial examples of“ things Guenon hates. So he hates westerners doing yoga, so they must be “unconscious Satanists” (Pg. 289). He hates those who are involved in naturalism or ‘cosmic consciousness” , or who believe in “ordinary life” or who combine various traditions together—as if Guenon himself doesn’t do that!. However, his hypocrisy aside, he thinks those who do yoga are evil and under the influence of quasi-demonic or actually demonic forces. Doing yoga outside of India is a trivial concern and hardly warrants mention. It is a useful relaxation technique and the metaphysics behind it cannot be taken seriously by anyone who cares about reality. Why make a big deal out of something so trivial after he has just destroyed the planet in a book?

However, Guenon makes a big deal out of it as if with were a sin against him, Pope of Esoterism. Traditionalist dogmatism and repression will merely lead to more rebellion, as indeed it should. People play with all sorts of belief systems in their lives and it is hardly a “satanic” act. It is merely experimentation. But Guenon brands experimentation as devilish sin too and claims such experimentation is itself evil. Guenon makes himself appear to be a repressive old bigot and priggish zealot forbidding any sort of inquiry, and assuming the efficacy of the most bogus spiritual conglomerations and practices.

He really trips up on himself trying to claim that the spiritual and the psychic are different and should not be confused. (Chapter 35) There is no real difference between the Catholic Church and say, the Church of Scientology or

spiritualist groups, as Guenon would wrongly claim. One is merely older and bigger than the other is. They all claim privileged access to knowledge, which in fact does not exist, just as Guenon does. He says that “true initiates” are “conscious of their part” in the divine “Plot” that god weaves for the demise of humankind. He tries to make it a virtue to be part of the destruction of earth. It is only an imaginary destruction, but how despicable is it to want to destroy the earth to begin with? The only difference between the so called psychic and the so called spiritual is that one has a higher “level” of abstraction and thus of delusion than the other. The Magician wants to control someone and the spiritual ecstatic wants everyone to be controlled by his favorite delusion. There are no real levels here and in fact the spiritual is probably more dangerous than the [psychic because the psychic is merely a false belief whereas the spiritual is a false belief that many seek to impose universally. When the gospel writers put in the mouth of their imaginary character Jesus “Not my will but Thine be done.”, they are involving a system of mind control that is totalistic and which the religion wants to impose so deeply on the individual that he or she thinks that “god” speaks and acts through them automatically, without any mediation. But there is no real difference between the psychic and the spiritual in fact, as both are the effects of imaginary systems of belief, involving slavish credulity about unexamined assumptions. Those who write about this as if it were a true distinction and merely making a distinction without a difference, violating Occam’s razor. There certainly does exist the psychological, but the psychic and spiritual are fiction in ordinary usage, so I am not expressing a preference for either of them

A psychic sees a snake as a means to gather hidden inner powers, a spiritual man sees a snake as a symbol of the illusory nature of all life, and tries to transcend reality until he is totally suffused with an illusion he wrongly calls “reality”, an ecologist who is wise will study actual snakes as much as he can and try to save the wildness that supports the most endangered of them. Clearly only the last one is a reasonable man, the other two are merely deluded and help no one.

”Analogously”, Guenon argues, “that evil members of the counter-initiation are not conscious” that the earth will be destroyed. Those in “counter-initiation” are “dupes” and their “ignorance is much worse for them than is the mere ignorance of the profane”. How silly and arbitrary. In other words, people who believe in New Age ideas or left leaning spiritual notions will suffer far more in the fictional ‘next world’, which does not exist. Those who like repressive, tightly conservative, theofascist religion will have a wonderful afterlife, after Armageddon strikes. This is really about ideological control and does not describe anything that is actually wrong or immoral.

So what Guenon is doing here is trying to eliminate his competition. He is afraid of people who merely do yoga or who are “pagans”. He has been doing that all his life, ever since his acceptance and then rejection of Papus or his acceptance and then rejection of Theosophy. Guenon was a secretive spy, and infiltrator, who wanted to eliminate all his competition so he alone will stand up free and whole and the end of time, shinning as the prophet of the last days. His addiction to the spiritual is really just a higher addiction to transcendent power that goes beyond magic. Guenon offers the world nothing be more con-men and cult leaders. You can only do this in the make-believe waste of religious fantasy. Anyone who tried to be a prophet of the last days as Guenon and Schuon do, in reality, should either be laughed at or put in exile at Elba.

So what is there to fear in Yoga? After the Great Wall has been breached, what kind of tin-can Napoleon is this, that he fears breathing exercises that calm the mind? Most western uses of Yoga are quite harmless and even beneficial.⁵⁰ For Guenon only traditional yoga, which was hierarchical and

⁵⁰ Traditional yoga was quite a harmful thing in that it was connected with the ideology of Karma and caste, and hatred of attachments, ego and family. Hindu texts talk about yoga as a means of “controlling the universe” by “transcending suffering and existence”. This is fiction. The self is not the universe. Yoga done as a body relaxation technique or to calm the mind can be quite helpful to those who suffer from panic attacks for instance, or sore back or muscles. Modern yoga is thus an improvement over the traditional Hindu variety. But traditional Yoga was used to justify war. An example of this is the Nath Yogic Order which was used to win a battle in 1804 to put Man Singh in power on the throne of Jodhpur.

world denying, matters. Chakras and Kundalini are imaginary medical fictions and cannot be taken seriously on their own terms, and indeed, some yogic ideas were used for war and support social injustice.. But Guenon is a political animal and he hates all things implying equality. So of course he only wants traditional yoga.

Guenon's conspiratorial mentality hides the fact that he was himself the most conspiratorial man I have ever heard of. ⁵¹ Guenon was addicted to opportunistic secrecy.⁵² Indeed, one of the last chapters in the book, chapter 37, is called "The Deceptiveness of "Prophesies". Guenon's own Deceptiveness of "Prophesies" is never considered. That is an odd title for a chapter in a book

Yoga here is a mind control technique used to do violence. Control the universe really means support status quo rulers who wish to enforce behavior codes that keep them in power.

⁵¹ Guenon's use and abuse of secrecy was life long and inspired Schuon to a similar secrecy. Secrecy increases the likelihood of immoral actions and despising those who are not in on the secret. It is a tool of power and tends to corrupt people. Guenon has a whole chapter in this book trying to excuse and justify secrecy. He does not explore any of the evil uses of secrecy in Tibetan Buddhism or the Inquisition, Hinduism or elsewhere. Hugh B. Urban wrote a few good things on secrecy in religion, particularly in relation to questions of knowledge and power. Focusing primarily on the traditions of South Asia, he is author of Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics and Power in the Study of Religion (2003) and Magia Sexualis: Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism (2006), and Hugh Urban's The Church of Scientology: A History of a New Religion among other books. Unfortunately, he has a strong secondary interest in "contemporary new religious movements", more properly called cults. Lately his books seem to have become more "balanced" in the sense of being less willing to question what religion is and more promotional of it. Scientology has done harm to huge numbers of people, and largely invented the term NRM, now used like a mantra of cult apology by rather dim academics like Urban. Urban writes of it more or less as another corporate history. Indeed, he is writing an institutional history, and thus neglects the individuals who have been harmed by this institution. The other problem with the book is that Urban is scared to define religion himself, he wants scientology and the US government to define religion for him, which is not a good idea. See

" <http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/urban41/>

Information theory predicts that the world is safer when information is divulged. This was evident during the cold war where regular "leaks" from an overly secretive government resulted in a thawing of cold war tensions. What matters is the victims of these cults, the cults themselves are like corporations and basically about power and unjust practices. They write their own histories, which are invariably PR. To see what Urban should have written about Scientology see "The Top 25 People Crippling Scientology", at this site

http://blogs.villagevoice.com/runninscared/2011/08/tory_christman_top_25_crippling_scientology.php

⁵² One of the best writers on secrecy is Robert Jay Lifton who discusses secrecy in relation to atrocities such as happening under the Nazi Doctors, in the killing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and other atrocities such as Vietnam or Iraq and the Abu Graib prison where Americans abused prisoners in horrible ways, under a cloak of secrets.

that is entirely about imaginary prophetic pronouncements of the doomed future of humankind. But this is typical of myth and cults. This is the tactic of a con-man. He knows his readers are skeptical of the bunk he is dishing out, so he tries to say he is not a used car salesman like the other con-men down the street !. He wouldn't lie to you as they do! He says that those phony prophets, "always present everything in a distressing of even in a terrifying light" (pg306)--- well-- as if Guenon were Mr. Cheerful throughout this dismal and doom and gloom book! Guenon is the great deceiver. This is a depressing book, depressing that a man can deceive himself as much as Guenon does, and depressing that he could deceive and lie to others so readily and cynically. Schuon would go even further in his abilities to lie and deceive.

The last 10 chapters of Guenon's book try to present infallible proof that the end of the world is not only near but soon to happen in an awful cataclysm. One would think he should marshal deep and certain evidence of this. He doesn't have any evidence to speak of---he spends half a chapter talking about a few irrelevant charlatans who push false ideas about the pyramids containing prophecies supposedly hidden in the geometry of the pyramids. (Guenon was then living within site of the pyramids in Cairo) He attacks a few "neo-spiritualists", a few psychoanalysts, a few "false prophets", --- in addition to the already blacklisted and mistreated authors, Henri Bergson, Einstein and Darwin. All of these latter thinkers Guenon thinks are part of the great "subversion".

Guenon says, speaking of spiritualism and similar irrelevant fringe cults and practices, that

"the one thing certain is that there is something here that fits in perfectly with the exigencies of a "control" exerted over inferior psychic influences, themselves already essentially maleficent, in order that they may be used more directly with certain defined ends in view, in conformity with the

pre-established “plan” of the work of subversion, for which purpose they are now being “unchained” in our world.

“The one thing certain”...Guenon fancies that there is a “plan” to destroy the world, without the slightest evidence. He does not know exactly what the nature of the “plan” is, but it is “certain” there is one. It is “certain” that these meaningless little cults in the 20th century somehow are helping unchain the so called “hordes of Gog and Magog” to unleash the psychic corpses—zombies—who come through the “cracks and fissures of the Great Wall” to swarm over the world. The little demons will create the “counter-tradition” and then the Great Parody and finally the whole thing dissolves in chaos and apocalypse until at last, the world is destroyed--- but then is brought back as a new world or the new Manvantara begins. This is definitely like a 1950’s “B” horror movie. The Blob or the Huge Ants will come any day to destroy us. Or it is like Piranesi’s imaginary prison, except that what is imprisoned is the minds of Guenon’s followers who believe all this nonsense



Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778) for the Carceri, The Prison series

Like Piranesi's Prisons Guenon thought is the last gasp of the mentality that created the Inquisition. What Guenon fears will be subverted is the outlandish nonsense he himself believes in. His most important book ends in a pathetic whimper. He is man who lives in hate and thinks in hate and calls his hate the "intellect" and contemplation. ⁵³ One would think that in order to

⁵³ Guenon's love of violent images mirrors that of the Apocalypse of St John. As I wrote elsewhere if John's supposed writing on the end of the world "are considered quite as they appear, without pious or esoteric sophistry, they are psychotic, and involve a will to power that has identified itself with the totalistic concept of the universal Logos. One begins to see how the doctrine of the Logos or the sacrificed Word of God is related to the destruction of the world that John predicts. John's vision on the island of Patmos is an explosion of anger and hatred against the world that cannot conform to John's gnostic ideal of the perfect man. The Christ of the Apocalypse is a horrible person, who despises the world and lives on hate. He is a bigoted man who has a bottomless need of revenge... The Apocalypse of John is certainly one of the most fatal and destructive books ever written, in terms of its eventual effect upon history. This unrelenting fantasy of revenge erects hatred of the world into a universal principle. It is indeed a work of art, but one so densely crafted of simultaneous symbols of transcendent perfection and sheerest cruelty that the mixture is both suffocating and infectious. This close congruence of transcendent knowledge and terrible cruelty is what I mean by the term "knowledge power". This is theofascism. In the Apocalypse of John symbol upon symbol of power and cruelty is built up and contrasted with ultimate

prove the end of the world Guenon could have come up with much better examples and evidence than these paltry, even pathetic arguments. Perhaps people fall for these caricatures because he goes on and on with such relentless logic as if he believed all of it himself. I think he did believe it.

Harry Oldmeadow writes, rather obtusely, that The Reign of Quantity is a magisterial summation of Guenon's work. One need not read another word of his is this nonsense is “magisterial”. As Guenon himself writes on phony prophecies, how can people allow themselves to believe Guenon’s “absurdities so manifest that one cannot help but wonder how it is that nobody seems to notice it,” to quote Guenon. Am I surely not the first to notice what nonsense all this really is? Or have so few people actually read this ridiculous book? This book is so full of fabrications and fictions that it amazes me any of his followers take him seriously at all.

Guenon himself appears to note that his pathetic reasons why the world should be forced into a Great Parody and apocalypse and finally destroyed really doesn't make much sense. He marshals such paltry evidence. Apparently aware reader might not believe his nonsense, Guenon leaps at a last attempt to convince and introduces the fiction that maybe

“ this extreme degeneration goes a long way back into the past” and maybe goes back to the “the perversion of one of the ancient civilizations belonging to one or the other of the continent that have disappeared in cataclysms occurring in the course of the present Manvantara” (pg.316)

So it was the perversion of Atlantis that caused the present “degeneration”!! How sad: there was no Atlantis as I said, the theory of Atlantis was another of Plato's mistakes. The volcano at Thera, Santorini was bigger than the huge

wealth and exaltation. Horror and purity are mixed in a conglomerate vertigo meant to oppress all rational argument in a terrorist's appeal to transcendent truth.” This is a horrible piece of writing that influences readers who take it seriously in horrific ways. This psychosis is also in Guenon and his followers, just as it is in other delusional readers of St. John or the Koran. The insanity of religions is evident in these hypocritical fantasies of world destruction

explosion at Krakatoa. There was probably Plato's Atlantis. There was destroyed around 1600 B.C.E.. despite its rhetoric of being an apocalyptic prophecy. So much for that con job.

So therefore the last half of Guenon's book is not about evidence for the end of the world, since Guenon has little of value to present. The end of the book is really a desperate attempt to threaten apocalypse—to grandstand, as they say--- in view of solidifying his power over his small area of religious theory. Guenon spends the last part of the book weaving his apocalyptic talk while nit-picking over various little cults and threats to himself. He also tries to defend the ideology of traditionalism against imaginary threats, and thus the book is about himself, without ever saying so, indeed, it pretends falsely to be the most impersonal of books.

I would suggest that book is really a kind of damage control. He is trying to defend failing religion against the real onslaught of science and reason, which had already overwhelmed religion when Guenon made this last ditch effort. This explains the suppressed hysteria that is underneath the pose of a logical tone on the surface of the book. He can't defeat science on its own terms, so he has to write a mythical story that will blind or undermine science in the estimation of his few narrow-minded followers. He cannot touch science itself, and indeed, no scientist, other than Wolfgang Smith who is really not a scientist at all, has ever taken Guenon seriously. To achieve his end of damage control, he has to lie, invent fictions and use false analogies and then to make his audience feel mythic fears. Hence the apocalyptic myths and analogies Guenon manufactures for the purpose. Then he has to separate the wheat from the chaff, so he attacks various cults and groups like neo-spiritualism, theosophy or psychiatrists, anyone close enough to religion who pose a threat to Guenon's presumption of power or question accurately Guenon ridiculous claims. In the end he merely whimpers about Yoga.

What he really wants to do is to dominate a fringe market in religion. All those terrible titles on the metaphysics section at bookstores that do not carry the books of RG or FS. Is that why he spends so much time in seemingly

irrelevant attacks on other fringe groups? He also wishes to try to colonize existing religions with his progeny. That is also why tries he to create a means for his followers to be involved in various religions while yet remaining Guenonian. Schuon continued this and tried to colonize Indians, Muslims and Christians and academics by adopting them into his cult directly or holding them close while not yet full members. This is a sort of ideological or intellectual colonialism. It is a con-job by a couple of con-men.

So in the end Guenon's great book, Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times is a ridiculous tirade written by a paranoid reactionary who is desperate to hold on to religions fading powers. No one who reads Reign of Quantity with any intelligence at all, can take it seriously. Guenon make" extraordinary claims, and as Carl Sagan said "extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." But Guenon has no evidence for his tall tales. It is all bunk. So his book is merely another example in pseudo-science, like Astrology, or the Book of Revelations, both of which are pure fiction. It is a crass example of paranoid literature, a metaphysical version of a 1950's horror movie, as well as an recruiting mechanism for drawing people into a cultish ideology. If Guenon's book is of value now it is merely a document in the history of pseudo-science and theofascism, the history of the decline and end of religion, as well as the history of the literature of mental illness in the 20th century. No more, no less.