FEATHERED SNAKE
Corruption Optimi Pessima

From the Sublime to the Ridiculous
The Rise and Fall of a Modern Cult Leader

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(For Private Edition)

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The *Trividya Sutra*, literally "the threefold knowledge," referring to the only three Vedas considered at the time of the Buddha to be canonical by the *Brahman* priests, namely the *Rig Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, and the *Yajur Veda*, (the *Atarva Veda* was added at a later time) shows that for the Buddha metaphysical speculation with its talk of union with *Brahman* is a tale of the blind leading the blind (13,15). Salvation or Liberation has nothing to do with such metaphysical speculations or with a metaphysical entity such as the "One Self."

The Buddha does not deny that one may attain the experience of the state of *Brahman*, nor that one may be reborn in *Brahmaloka* as a *Brahma*; he considers these to be conditioned states short of Liberation. The Buddha points out that metaphysical speculation is not the path to Liberation, which lies beyond the mind and its concepts, hence in silence.

Frithjof Schuon's repetitious loquacity about the structure and complexity of the Absolute is a clear indication that far from being a delivered Master, he has never been able to shake his romantic and grandiose Germanic vision of a final, all-encompassing intellectual system that will explain every religious dogma and difference, thereby surpassing them all.

It goes without saying that Schuon's megalomaniacal ambition to occupy the point of view of the Absolute could only be a failure, as it is axiomatically impossible except to the truly delivered, who always remain silent. For those who in their misapplied humility come to believe themselves incapable of understanding an allegedly supreme metaphysical subtlety which only the mind of the "Master" – being identical to the mind of God – can grasp, we point to the Buddha's opinion and to the warning of Rumi: *Fools take false coins because they appear like the true. If in the world no genuine minted coin were current, how would forgers pass the false? Unless there be truth, how should there be falsehood? Falsehood receives brilliance from truth.*

This book invites you to bite gold coins silently and listen for the clear ring of true silver.
INTRODUCTION

The astonishing story of the Schuon "Tariqah" could fill volumes were all the anecdotes and divergent opinions on Schuon's contradictory doctrines and the absurd enigma of its founder fully expounded. This account is a colorful and fascinating collection of letters, commentaries, documents, and descriptions of facts and events spanning nearly half a century and involving a number of renown personalities, interspersed with explanations for the general reader unacquainted with Schuon. Undoubtedly more will be written in the future by those academicians who prefer to defend truth even at the cost of embarrassment for having been fascinated by the Luciferian pen of Schuon. The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. [Shakespeare. Merchant of Venice, I. iii. 99]

Frithjof Schuon is a prolific comparative religion writer who fell head-over-heels in love with his own image reflected in the ambiguous pool of his own words. Like Napoleon, whom he admires and considers an Avatara, Schuon crowned himself as the greatest of Sufi shaykhs since the dawn of time and gave himself the exuberant name of Isa Nur al din Ahmed (literally: Jesus, Brightness of the Faith, Praiseworthy). He claimed that his right to shaykhdom was revealed by a number of alleged dreams of others, the written records of which conveniently disappeared. The same deceiving genius who early in childhood learned to wear many masks, as he confesses in his Memoirs, most likely invented these dreams.

They are prophets of the deceit of their own heart...Behold I am against them that prophesy false dreams... and cause my people to err by their lies... and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten. [Jeremiah 23]

Schuon appointed himself "Shaykh" in 1937 after having been forbidden to do so by the saintly Shaykh Al Alawi of Mostaghanem, who had died four years previously. After this flagrant disobedience, Schuon proceeded to proclaim that he received the Divine Name directly from Heaven. This absurd claim reveals the reason why the wise Algerian Shaykh had not
permitted Schuon to invoke the Divine Name. Soon Schuon claimed to have had amazing dreams and celestial visitations of the Holy Virgin, and eventually also of the Sioux Indian White Buffalo Woman, Pte San Wen. He claims to have been "adopted" both into the Lakota Tribe by Red Cloud's family and the Crow Tribe, and given the names Brave Eagle and Bright Star. It is a strong belief of Schuon and his followers that because of these alleged adoptions, the members of his "Tariqah" are the only White men who are legitimately entitled to live in America.

His writings of exceptional quality paraphrase much from Vedanta, Plotinus, Plato, Meister Eckhart, Rene Guenon, and others, and explore many aspects of human traditions, history and cultures, thereby attracting for several decades numerous modern scholars to his secret pseudo-Sufi society. The Amerindian dimension, which at first was a mere attraction and was expressed in commemorative Amerindian dances, steadily became an idée fixe. Schuon began to appear at Indian gatherings dressed as a Plains Indian chief. These gatherings evolved into Tantric-Sioux bikini shows, and finally into nude group meetings that unleashed the attention of the police in the Bible-belt community of Bloomington, Indiana.

With this Kafkaesque-Fellinian background illustrated by grotesque photo poses and icons of the naked Schuon, the story unfolds into an ugly collection of broken families, divorces, the teen-age suicide of a boy indoctrinated and initiated into the "Tariqah" at the age of ten as the returning mahdi by one of the cult's most fiendish characters. The ruin of a number of lives. Drunkenness among the elite. Wife switching. Commitment of members to psychiatric wards. Statutory rape and wife beating. Finally, the pathetic spectacle of the 85-year old "Master's" sexual mono-minuet, squeezing one by one a circle of nude wives of his disciples against his naked body while wearing the imposing full-feathered Sioux war bonnet. This became the cult's innermost sacramental rite which the followers believe transmits barakah (grace) to female members in the most effective way. These "primordial gatherings" took place in the presence of children and with the alleged participation of minor girls in the nude circle, all of it excused by the supposed supernatural character of the "Master" which is beyond human reproach. Meanwhile, children in the homes of certain disciples are made to pray to icons of the nude Schuon which prominently display his penis, as if "it" were the holy of holies.
Schuon is in part an enigma and in part a pathetically naive deceiver. His life proves that intelligence is not enough to protect a soul from going astray. It proves starkly why pride is truly the ultimate and most dangerous of sins. The enigma lies in the contested question: was Schuon a spiritual con-man from the start, or did he gradually become corrupt by surrendering to the temptations of pride and lust?

This book also reveals the story of those followers of the Schuon cult who "Professing themselves to be wise, [they ] became fools" [Romans 1:22], and of a few who finally liberated themselves from one of the most dangerous spiritual mirages to appear in modern times. There are others, too, who are sitting on the fence: Huston Smith, Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion, Emeritus, Syracuse University; S.H. Nasr, University Professor of Islamic Studies, George Washington University; William Stoddard; Dr. Martin Lings; P. Joseph Cahill, Chairman, Department of Religious Studies, University of Alberta; James S. Cutsinger, American Academy of Religion; Professor William Chittick, University of Stoney Brook, Long Island, New York; Jacob Needleman, Professor of Comparative Religion, University of San Francisco – academicians confronted with potential damage to their reputations and careers in the event of a national exposure of Frithjof Schuon as the modern cult leader he is.

Dante said: Qui si parè la tua nobilitate ["Here shall you prove your nobility"]]. We will wait and see which of these academicians who have claimed all their lives to believe in the primacy of truth will have the courage to stand by it. Life has placed them at a crossroads: either choose duplicity and bury their heads in the sand, or sacrifice some professional stature among their peers for the sake of truth and ultimate spiritual integrity. Under the circumstances this is the inevitable test of their sincerity. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? [Matthew 17:26]

In recounting the story, some are of the opinion that one should not write from a position of anger, contempt or bitterness. Others say that one should "turn the other cheek." The fanatics comprising the "inner circle" of the Schuon cult will argue that a mere disciple could never judge the level of the "Master's" spiritual attainment. This opinion is voiced by all false gurus and is disposed of by the simple fact that, although one may not fathom the inner perfection of Jesus or the Buddha, one can easily penetrate the false pretenses
of an imposter or the deception of the Devil by lifting his priestly skirt and revealing his tail.

We agree that bitterness must not be permitted to affect our mind. However, to deny the right to anger, contempt, and condemnation is an attempt to silence even Jesus Christ in his treatment of hypocrites or to criticize King David for writing a number of Psalms.

The Biblical injunction, *Judge not, that ye be not judged*, does not forbid a jury of peers from discriminating between right and wrong and declaring a man guilty of his actions. All societies have a right to cast out criminals. They do not have the right to pronounce judgment on the quality and final denouement of a soul. This must be left to the mercy and rigor of the Ultimate Judge Who alone knows the worth of our souls (or to Mr. Schuon?).

Though Schuon claims to be a Bodhisattva, a Saint, a Prophet, a Solar Avatara, the incarnation of Shiva, a new Krishna, the Child of the Virgin, the Pole of the Age, the sole representative of the formless *Religio Perennis*, and the direct incarnation of the Divine Center as such, with the right to condemn other souls as being damned, the writer will refrain from stating whether Schuon will end up in Heaven or Hell. That speculation will be left to the reader. The writer, however, will not spare the "protagonist" of this story any of the modes of human language, including analysis, criticism, denunciation, rhetoric, commentaries, ridicule, satire or condemnation.

In Chapter XI, the following phenomena common to all false sects will be carefully examined and analyzed as they apply to the Schuon cult.

1. The typical cult leader claims to have divine inspiration and to be more than just a medium through which God communicates. Sometimes, as his power grows, he believes himself to be God.

2. The leader is the absolute judge of what is good and what is evil and assesses the depth or sincerity of his followers' faith.

3. Because the leader is divinely inspired, he is not open to question nor will he participate in reasonable debate. Anyone who challenges such a leader is thought to lack the faith necessary to be a true member of the cult. Cult leaders have a free rein to decide what the followers will believe.
Most cult leaders require blind obedience. Those who refuse to follow the cult leader's dictates will be doomed to damnation.

Many leaders have abused their growing powers over the mind and spirits of their members more and more as members' critical powers diminish. Most cult members find it ever more difficult to think things through for themselves, and make decisions. Sidestepping the law is one example, if the crime is for the benefit of the cause. Members of many cults have testified of their willingness to commit murder for their leader and the true faith.

Cult followers will obey and even die for their leader.

The reward is to be one among the chosen, which means to the followers that they will be saved. Soon faithful followers feel a sense of superiority to all other people. In their minds the others are not chosen, therefore they will not survive Judgment Day.

Cults use the idea of being among the chosen to exert pressure upon followers. Those who sacrifice and obediently follow the leader will be rewarded, consequently they tolerate endless sacrifices in blind obedience.

Most of the cults believe they have sole possession of true knowledge and are superior to outsiders.

The motives of many cults have often been proven to be based not really on religion, God, and salvation, but greed, lust, and power.

For the public, the Schuon story is indeed an hallucinating one, considering it is not fiction, but fact. It will prove useful in the rescue of thousands of victims of other sinister New Age cults, and, for those persons caught in cults who still have a modicum of objectivity and discrimination after the heavy dose of mind control admittedly applied by cult leaders, it will prove to be both a means to newly found sobriety and a help to restore one's own
independence, freedom, and human dignity.
CHAPTER I

A Prefiguration of The Beast

For the sake of providing incontrovertible documentation, the following is offered to those who having loved Mr. Schuon's writings, his scenographic genius, his show business sense and artistic talent, but who may still fear they could be stepping on the toes of a true messenger of Heaven. The writer and anyone who dares read the present exposé will most probably be anathematized by Mr. Schuon and his followers, and called satanic or diabolical. However, after seventy years of Communist propaganda, we are familiar with routines of this kind when totalitarian groups are exposed.

A shaykh is a Sufi Spiritual Master within the traditional form of the Islamic revelation. He is entrusted by God with the sacred duty of transmitting doctrine, morality, and method to disciples brought by Heaven to his tariqah. He governs his sacred community as a virtuous servant of God, maintaining harmony, good will, and justice among the souls in his guardianship. His generosity, love, patience and justice for those who have come to him with trust and devotion are inspiring examples for all generations.

According to Sankara, a guru is one who is deeply versed in the Scriptures, is pure, free from lust, and a perfect knower of Brahman. He is upheld continually in Brahman. Is calm like the flame when its fuel is consumed. Is an ocean of love who knows no ulterior motives. Has boundless compassion with steadfast eyes that shed grace, like nectar never ending. He is friend to all good people who entrust themselves to him.

According to traditional Buddhist teachings, a Bodhisattva is an enlightened being who postpones his own Nirvana in order to assist other sentient beings in entering therein before him. He is, among other things, always well built and free from physical defects. He can remember his past lives.

A Spiritual Master is never ambiguous, evasive or dissimulating when devotees respectfully request spiritual counsel or voluntarily submit to his judgment in order to resolve an existential or spiritual crisis.
A Spiritual Master never manifests a lack of normal and honorable attitudes nor fails to respect the good will and integrity of those who are well disposed toward him and who have shown respect for his judgment, knowledge, and experience.

A Spiritual Master never manifests irony, mockery or sarcasm toward other human beings. He does not himself or through the use of third parties criticize his disciples behind their backs, which might injure their good name.  

A Spiritual Master would never directly or indirectly cause the disintegration of families. He would not bring about the polarization of a father and son through the lies he fosters. He would never ignore a common plea for help, especially when two devoted disciples agreed to submit nolo contendere to his decision.

A Spiritual Master would never fan conflicts, reward calumnies, or allow manipulative arrangements to implement a family break-up, all for the capture of one more nude milkmaid for syncretistic obscene rituals.

1 Sa. Badriyyah narrated to my son, who was then only a starry-eyed novice on his second visit to Bloomington, and his wife Sa. Maisun, how Mr. Schuon had once picked up a chocolate chip cookie and started giggling. Then, pointing to a little hole where one of the chocolate chips had fallen out, he said: "S. Junayd would ask for help in putting the chip back in the hole!" Laughing behind a disciple's back and ridiculing the pathological sloth of S. Junayd, as if capital sins were a matter for amusement, are not the acts of a "Spiritual Master," nor does this cheap episode honor the "favorite-vertical-wife" of one who claims to be a "Solar-Avatara." [Mr. Schuon's claims to greatness are made by innuendos in his books and are spelled out in the writings of his wives: Hamidah, Badriyyah, and Latifah. Papers documenting these claims can be ordered.]

Another case in point was Mr. Schuon's deprecatory comments behind the back of a faqir after hearing that Sa. Maisun, a faqirah whose malice and calumnies are fully documented [See Chapter X: "The Feathered Snake and The Eagle"], had informed a number of people in the Bloomington "Tariqah" that her elderly father-in-law, S. Mujahid, had been married four times. Upon hearing this Mr. Schuon allegedly exclaimed that this was "significant" in a negative way.

The motive for Mr. Schuon's attempt in joining Sa. Maisun in the defamation of a devoted disciple's reputation is clear. Sa. Maisun makes a nice, shapely addition to his notorious nude chorus line composed of the wives of his Bloomington followers. Mr. Schuon has four wives - one of whom is legal, and the other three of whom are "vertical." Two of the four are bigamists still married and living with their husbands. Additionally, Mr. Schuon commits multiple adultery with each of the women participating in the so-called "primordial gatherings" in the presence of their husbands, under the guise of performing a "sacred rite," which should more properly be called "sacred adultery!" Is all this not "significant" in a negative way for one claiming to be a "Virtuous Master?"

2 That episode is also fully documented. [See the Chapter X: "The Feathered Snake and the Eagle."] The facts in this case alone are enough to prove that Mr. Schuon is false.
A Spiritual Master would never humiliate husbands by making them stand as passive witnesses, while he fondles their naked wives.³

A real Spiritual Master would never demand that parents instruct their children to lie to grand juries about their presence and participation in sexualized rituals on pain of the fire of Hell if they do not.⁴

A Spiritual Master would never encourage attitudes and opinions that are against the norms of the spiritual life.⁵

A Spiritual Master would never insist on infallibility in regard to matters in which he has clearly failed. He would never expect his disciples to see the Emperor's New Clothes for fear of losing the right to invoke God's Name.⁶

A Spiritual Master would never perpetrate the annexation of absurd, grotesque, and fabricated elements to the dignity of the sacred path, by making them seem as essential and unspoken prerequisites or as conclusions fuqara should have drawn in virtue of their esoteric qualifications from the master's

³ This description of actual events has been narrated by several fuqarah eye witnesses and in affidavits of American and European witnesses. [Papers documenting these claims can be ordered.]

⁴ See the documents by Mark Koslow and the transcript of conversations with another fuqir. The Haqqids were arrested when a photo studio turned them into the police for taking nude pictures of their two teenage daughters. They defended with the lie that it is a Spanish custom to photograph teenage daughters in the nude. [There is a police record of this episode.] We challenge any person to produce evidence that it is a custom in Catholic Spain to photograph teenage daughters in the nude.

⁵ Such as advising women to be sterilized, counseling divorce, depreciating the larger family. Holding in contempt most of humanity as "profane" and setting themselves above as "the Elect." The "us-them" mentality is typical of most modern cults, including those of Jim Jones, Rajneesh, and L. Ron Hubbard. Inflating the egotism and pride of the membership is assiduously cultivated by Mr. Schuon, for he is their example and believes himself to be infallible. His deformities become their deformities. They mimic his example. A number of disciples have even changed their own handwriting to conform to the style of "their Master's!" By virtue of their connection with a "Prophet" and adherence to the "Tariqah," Bloomington fuqarah believe that they are guaranteed a place in Paradise, so long as they do not commit any blatantly sinful acts. Their monstrous hypocrisy and deception, as far as they are concerned, apparently do not constitute such sinful acts, as their letters prove.

⁶ The threat to take away God's Name, or the right to invoke, is the cult's sword of Damocles. This threat was used by S. Junayd to drive Sa. Warda into a mental institution. [See Chapter IX: "Human Tragedies Caused by Cult Affiliation.] We also were warned by S. Junayd that the "Shaykh" had the right to remove permission to invoke the Name. This right belongs to God alone. Just as Baptism or Ordination cannot be removed even by a pope, neither can any other initiation, once effected, be removed by anyone other than God.
writings, concerning which elements he pronounces authoritatively with presumed infallibility.

A Spiritual Master would never invent this fantastic modus operandi as a means of self aggrandizement.7

A Spiritual Master would never permit his closes disciples to openly attribute to him spiritual attainments and authority – above all prophets, even the founders of religions –which he knows he does not possess.

A Spiritual Master would never imply in his writings or allow his wives or followers to proclaim that he is not only a Sufi shaykh, but also a new Sankara, a Bodhisattva, an American Indian Holy Man of the first order, the Eliatic function, the Pole of the Age, the final Central Super Solar Avatara beyond all laws, a supreme incarnation of the Absolute greater than Krishna or Jesus, because according to him, Krishna and Jesus are limited to their respective sectors while he surveys the entire horizon of all revealed religions and has come to unify them all under himself as sole representative of the Religio Perennis.8

7 Numerous errors, inaccuracies, and direct contradictions are to be found in Mr. Schuon's writings. [See Chapter II: "Errors and Contradictions of Schuon".] This fact does not remove from Mr Schuon merit for many remarkable passages in his impressive opus. However, the numerous metaphysical flaws and contradictions evidence beyond shadow of doubt that his claim to infallibility is another "effect of Maya," to use his favorite excuse for embarrassing absurdities.

8 What the exhausted sublimists fail to observe is that Mr. Schuon enjoys access to modern media, including libraries, translators, and a means of rapid communication in a world that has become smaller. If Sankara did not speak of Christianity or Zen, it is simply because there were vast time and space buffers between the traditional worlds of the East and West. Ramakrishna had begun to observe the unity of the truth long before Mr. Schuon. So did Rene Guenon and many others. Mr. Schuon excels in his command of language and his great ability to plagiarize and paraphrase in a manner that makes ancient doctrines appear to be original inspirations. One great man said that mediocre writers imitate, but great writers plagiarize. Schuon does both. When Mr. Schuon was born all that could be said about the Truth and Reality had already been said a thousand times over. He did a splendid job in comparative religious studies until his ego and monstrous ambition unfortunately caused him to pepper his work with numerous gratuitous inaccuracies, especially toward the end of his career. He did this in an effort to create a "Schuon Legend," to prop up his insane ambition of being someday recognized as the greatest being that ever lived. [See S. Badriyyah's paper entitled: "Veneration of the Shaykh," which sufficiently proves Mr. Schuon to be a lunatic and an apostate.] One psychiatrist dubbed Mr. Schuon a sociopath. Mr. Schuon fulfills the old cliché of the madman dressed as Napoleon with his hand in his vest proclaiming very seriously that he is a reincarnation of the French Emperor. Most of the time Mr. Schuon believes his own lies. However occasionally – as many photos and and his own hysteries reveal – he becomes aware of the terrible predicament he has placed his soul into by the infamous crime of damaging and deceiving other human souls.
A Spiritual Master would never dare declare himself to be the child and the sexually favored partner of the Holy Virgin as mother and bride, even in his wildest Tantric fantasies.\(^9\)

A Spiritual Master would never allow his followers to teach their children to pray to icons of himself in the nude, displaying in a most prominent manner his penis a few inches below his inhuman expression.

Clearly, the self-anointed "Shaykh" Isa Nur Addin is a false master, a most amazing impersonator, a great impostor, and a supreme "spiritual" con-artist. By far, Mr. Schuon is the best facsimile guru-saint-avatara to appear among the many false prophets predicted by Holy Scriptures. Like The Beast, Mr. Schuon would almost be able to deceive even saints. The only difference between him and The Beast of the Apocalypse is his inability to perform miracles.\(^10\)

A Spiritual Master would never proclaim that a common concubine is the reincarnation of \textit{Pte San Win}, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, the holy messenger of the American Indians.\(^11\)

A Spiritual Master would never pollute with turn-of-the-century German sentimentalism the little that is left of genuine Amerindian culture.

A Spiritual Master would condemn as diabolical his concubine's dream that her vulva was penetrated by God's Holy Name.\(^12\)

\(^9\) Cult leader Baba Free-John makes the same claim of sexual relations with the Holy Virgin. Such satanic claims clearly reveal and condemn these maniacal sexually obsessed cult leaders as diabolically inspired and dangerous to the youth of the community in which they establish their evil networks.

\(^10\) There are stories about one of his paintings glowing in the dark. Stories of how he brought rain to Bloomington during a drought. The best miracle of all was claimed when his thin, old man skin prevented the police from finger printing him accurately, a feat also achieved by those who work with cement without using gloves. We have been assured that Mr. Schuon never did any manual labor of the kind. The greatest portent occurred when his legal wife found a blond hair in his room. Upon being questioned about it, he lifted his arms and exclaimed, "Miracolo! Miracolo!"

\(^11\) To perceive the conniving personality of this woman, read her letter prepared during the conspiracy to destroy S. Mujahid's family unity in order to secure the presence of Sa. Maisun in the circle of nude ladies in Chapter X: "The Feathered Snake and the Eagle," and read in this Chapter a further description of her character.

\(^12\) Mr. Schuon used this insane Freudian dream of Sa. Badriyyah as his God-granted excuse to
When such a "Shaykh":

- persists in gross errors;
- manifests a blindness toward devoted fuqarah;
- remains deliberately aloof from those who manifest normality and good faith (unless they hold some position of importance in the academic, political or financial world);
- fails to manifest the indispensable qualities and requisite dimensions of a spiritual master;
- fails to manifest the fruits of spirituality in general, such as detachment, compassion, mercy, gratitude, kindness, love, generosity, patience;
- allows and sanctions abuses and injustices, deception and ill will, thus patently manifesting a lack of sense of proportion and causing through such acts and self-serving omissions grave suffering in the existential life of his disciples;
- refuses to repair wrongs and resolve misunderstandings in a frank and receptive manner, but rather equivocates and hides behind his wives, thereby betraying those who implicitly trust him:

then it must be concluded that such a man is an impostor who has been successful in seeming to be more than he is, thanks to his remarkable literary ability. In so acting Mr. Schuon has attempted to assume functions and prerogatives which pertain to God alone.

The abnormalities enumerated above have resulted in a "Kafkaesque" pseudo-Tantric cult administered by a petty hierarchy of weak men and women who are completely deluded in their belief that they are "the elect of
the Elect" and absolutely certain that Mr. Schuon has made firm reservations for their admission and eternal residence in the ultimate Paradise, regardless of any crime performed against innocent people to indulge their "Master's" vices.

It is a dangerous error to mistake the enigmas, the incoherence of syncretistic rites, and the evasiveness of this man and his representatives for esoteric veils hiding a sacred mystery.

It is a dangerous error to abandon the critical faculty and let oneself be enchanted by a proud genius' manipulative intellectual pronouncements and his intricate inventions designed to produce a counterfeit koanic effect, whose frequent equivocation, sophistry, and metaphysical subterfuges add to his person the fascination of a seemingly prophetic quality.

It is a dangerous error to accept blindly the Bloomington Curia's proclamations of an infallible party line or to allow oneself to believe that the rotten fruits of criminal investigations, confusion, demoralization, injustices and defections from the group are due to a faqir's alleged character defects, paranoia or stupidity, rather than by the poison of a false teacher.13


The "Bloomington sacred community" is a world wherein the individual cannot hope to lay hold of simple truth, understand exactly what is being said, or even speak frankly without being accused of pride and dragged into complexes of guilt, confusion, fear, unintelligibility, distrust, absurdity, a

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13 Thus out of innocent and trusting respect, reinforced by the superimposed mirage of the absoluteness of their "Master," faqarah believe that traits which in reality are vices, errors, and gross distortions are actually positive virtues, profundities, and insights. Passion, inexperience, and a lack of discernment or objectivity on the part of faqarah have made this illusion habitual, the more so as they progressively participate in the errors of their "Master."
subterranean labyrinth without exit. The only knowledge admissible in it is his, though he is rarely available to disciples in need of help, being too busy with his sexual gratification and self-aggrandizement to give more than a few minutes to followers who have traveled at great cost half way around the world to see him.14

A real sacred community does not create an ambiance of defaming persecution, calumnies, and silent ostracism. The turning of deaf ears or beating around the bush in the face of direct questions. The general demoralization of initially sincere devotees. The terrifying threat of spiritual decapitation by removal of the right to invoke the Holy Name. The fear of irretrievable loss of the means of salvation.15

What has been produced by this pseudo-Tariqah are the putrefied fruits of a diabolical cult spun by one the most enormously arrogant personalities the world has ever seen, breeding a psychological climate of tension, intrigue, pretentiousness and underestimation of the neighbor with a concomitant scorn for the essential qualities of simplicity, candor, trust, childlikeness, sympathy, generosity and love - qualities which a truly spiritual community ought precisely to live and exemplify because these qualities manifest the innocence and peace of Paradise. In brief, an ambiance tending toward the diseased and the inhuman; towards impermeability to spiritual realities and to grace; toward hardness of heart and the veiling of the sacred.

When a person claiming to be a "Master" fails to exemplify the virtues that

14 On our last visit to Bloomington, my wife and I had arranged for an audience with Mr. Schuon. With great trepidation we traveled from California at a time when we could hardly afford it. After all these preparations, and the donning of our special "Tariqah" garb, the moment came. We entered his studio and kissed his hand. Mr. Schuon asked what language we would prefer. I said my wife spoke some German, I understood French, and in light humor I suggested that we speak Italian, remembering he had once said to me, "La bella lingua Italiana!" At that moment he put his hand on his forehead and said in English, "My head...I have a headache!" We then crossed the door to exit. He stopped us and had the poor taste to ask us to bring gift to S. Junayd in California, the very man Mr. Schuon had tabbed a "criminal mind." We felt sick to our stomachs, but as good devotees tried to find every possible excuse for his ugly lack of consideration, discrimination, compassion, understanding, and a sense of proportions. He was our "Master" so we chose to create mysterious excuses for his acting like a bad-mannered person. Sa. Latifah was shocked. He could have scheduled another meeting, but was too busy going out to restaurants to do so.

15 It was this very threat, executed by the then muqqadim and highly praised right hand of the "Master," the notorious pedophile S. Junayd, that directly caused the psychiatric hospitalization of a youngfaqirah, Sa. Warda. [Read about the brutality of this horrendous episode in Chapter IX: "Human Tragedies Caused By Cult Affiliation."
permit the application of the doctrine to the existential realities of his life, but on the contrary adulterates and distorts the holy doctrines by projecting a cult of his own personality, using all that is sacred as means to fulfill his grandiose scheme, it is clear that such a "Master" must no longer be considered to be a representative of Heaven, for he has falsified the Truth in the gravest possible way. He has compromised the receptivity of trusting souls toward divine teachings. He has deviated from the sacred way of all traditions. He has jeopardized through the effect of his actions and attitudes the spiritual possibilities of those Heaven brought before him.

We earnestly encourage our innocent brothers seeking a true Way to turn away from the Schuon cult and to avail themselves of the saving mercy and goodness of God, which remains always what He is. As generous souls, let us pray that Mr. Schuon will turn away from his awful errors, self-destructive pride and lust. Let us hope that he will take refuge in the possibility of redemption. We further pray to God for forgiveness for our own lack of discernment and discrimination, and for having followed this "blind leader of the blind," and praise the Divine Mercy and Generosity that has intervened in time to bring us back onto the straight and narrow Path.
CHAPTER IV
The Root of the Problem

NOTE: THE FORMAT OF THIS CHAPTER IS A REPLICA OF A VITRIOLIC PAPER COMPOSED BY THE BLOOMINGTON CURIA AS PART OF A CONSPIRACY THAT DESTROYED THE LIFE OF DR. VICTOR DANNER (S. ABDL JABBAR). THE FORMAT IS RETAINED WITH MINOR CHANGES TO FIT ITS NEW TARGET AS AN ACT OF POETIC JUSTICE.

In spite of a certain exterior appearance of strength, some brilliant gifts, and some fine qualities, "Shaykh" Isa Nur Addin is inwardly a weak man who, like Narcissus, has fallen in love with himself and has a colossal delusion of self-importance, showing a complete loss of sense of proportions and humility. In fact, he is fearful to the point of cowardice, hiding from all criticism behind the skirts of his legal wife and concubines, bitter toward the world, contemptuous of most other human beings, living or deceased, with very few exceptions, cold-hearted, pessimistic and thin-skinned. His wife knows that he suffers from this, and since he is a hypochondriac, she has the maternal instinct to be his protector. His three bigamous wives, or concubines, vie with each other to pamper him and serve his sexual needs. He has a good dose of paranoiac persecution mania, psychosomatic health symptoms of the patently hysteric type, and is often given to choleric rages. His wife and three "mistresses" - instead of seeking to heal him - reinforce his problems by attacking whoever criticizes their dependant, who for them represents the greatest of idols.

From this is born a monstrous indifference to others and a hatred for anyone who dares condemn his game of "let's pretend we are all Indians and I am the only Chief and Medicine Man left in the world."

When a questioning faqir asks why something is blue, he is reproached for not seeing that it is red. When stating it is red, he is reproached for not realizing it is blue. When standing still, he is reproached for not walking. When walking, he is reproached for not standing still. These arrogant, absurd
mind games are all the more contemptible because they are directed toward
devoted and sincere disciples who place the rights of Truth above the self
importance and presumed infallibility of the "Shaykh."

If honorable *fuqarah* dare to respectfully object to his primordial fantasyland,
"Shaykh" Isa Nur Addin accuses them of being narrow minded or too
Bhaktic, proud, paranoid or stupid, or, if all else fails, of being satanic.
*Fuqarah* who see no need for nude ballet or Amerindian bikini shows when
they have "La ilaha illa Llah" are promptly ostracized.

Let us admit that there are here, at the passional level and on the conjugal
and extra-marital plane, attenuating circumstances, taking into account
human vanity, pettiness or simple human imperfections to which even
Jesus, being human, was exposed, as the Tempter all too well knew when he
tried the Son of God. But these are hardly valid excuses for ruining the
spiritual lives of hundreds of members of the "Tariqah" or for – under the
pretext that *gnostics* are exempt from sin because of their knowledge –
accepting the Tempter's bait – hook, line and sinker!

The "Shaykh's" irrational traits are hidden by his brilliant writing abilities.
Many of his most devoted *fuqarah* have never been given personal
attention or time enough to really know him or be known by him in depth.
With confidence they accepted the "Shaykh" as a spiritual master not only
because of his metaphysical opus, but also due to the recommendations from
honorable and intellectually respectable persons. Had they known that the
"Shaykh" is ironic, sarcastic, ambiguous, and indifferent (at least to males and
women past their menopause), seekers would not have so readily chosen to
follow him, since these traits savor of pride and consequently evoke an
association with rather sinister ideas.

We love holy childlikeness and aspire to Paradise just as much as the
"Shaykh" and his inflated, blindfolded courtesans claim to, but we do not see
the need to demean prophets and saints, despise children, break up marriages,
offend and ruin faithful men and women who seek liberation through the
invocation of the Holy Name.

It is necessary to insist upon this: the disorders and disaster in Bloomington
result from a degenerate pathology which would be no one's concern if the
man involved had not under false pretenses caused hundreds to follow him.
Consider the folly of creating a sexual porno-symbology with the excuse that "to the pure everything is pure" — a catch-all phrase which could be used to excuse any kind of crime. Consider also the incredible stupidity of creating an obscene personality cult in a small town smack in the middle of the Bible Belt — proving clearly that when it comes to governing, the "Shaykh" has not even learned that simple ancient rule of conduct: "When in Rome do as the Romans do."

Finally, there is the evil of destroying human lives and souls in order to preserve at all cost an invalid authority. The *dossiers* on these matters cover thousands of pages and constitute a record of shame and psychological abuse. One weeps upon reading the many anguished and respectful letters, imploring the "Shaykh" to return to the purity of The Way. The responses from him represent an ugly record of unholy, deceptive, conniving, false pronouncements, reminiscent of the double talk of Communist tyrants.

The awful conspiracy to destroy S. Abdl Jabbar; the man who was responsible for giving birth to the Bloomington community, was set in motion by a justifiable complaint of Mrs. Danner (which was later proved correct) against Sa. Latifah for improperly intruding in S. Abdl Jabbar's duties as a muqqaddam.

This episode alone, documented by writings of the "Shaykh" and its participants, is so damning that it should engender in any faqir who can still think objectively the certainty that the "Shaykh" is not a spiritual master by any stretch of the imagination.

As a Latin adage says: "To err is human, but to persevere in error is diabolical."  

1 Anyone desiring this infamous dossier — much of which is in the Shaykh's own handwriting — may request a copy.

2 The conspiracy against S. Abdl Jabbar is recorded in letters in the handwriting of its participants. Briefly, Sa. Latifah had insisted on the initiation of persons having just arrived from Latin America. S. Abdl Jabbar felt that these people were involved in sinister practices, which was later discovered to be true. Nonetheless, Sa. Latifah insisted that S. Abdl Jabbar apologize for voicing a different opinion. Not wishing to cause any problem, S. Abdl Jabbar apologized to her, repeatedly, apologies he did not owe but offered in humble submission to abusive and unfair authority. History shows his patient modesty in the face of an avalanche of injustices and vituperation from a gang of attackers egged on by the "Master"; the absolute ostracism imposed on him by his tormentors; and the appalling absence of the least compassion.
The "Shaykh" composed an ugly list of accusations, cruelly titled "V.D." (for Victor Danner) and written to destroy utterly the name and reputation of the first Bloomington muqqadam to whom Schuon owed the Bloomington following. Those who read the original may have noticed how well the "V.D." list describes its merciless and shameless author, "F.S." The following is an almost word-for-word replica, fitting Mr. Schuon far more than it ever fit S. Abdl Jabbar. Once again we claim the right of poetic justice and to vindicate – years after the death of S. Abdl Jabbar – a good man with the echo of this abomination returning to its source, as if from beyond the grave. (The original by Mr. Schuon is available upon request.)

F.S.

He is in reality a strangely insensitive man, a pessimist, bashful and incoherently sophistic, despite his brilliant metaphysical writing.

It is clear that he:
1. does not listen to what one says; or strangely misinterprets what one says to him;
2. does not say what he really thinks: does not agree with anyone unless they paraphrase him and praise him with sufficient grandiosity;
3. takes the attitude that he is always right even when he is visibly and incontrovertibly wrong;
4. consequently submits to the fatality of the incomprehension of all

when he was dying of cancer. Doctors now confirm that S. Abdl Jabbar's health had in great part been destroyed by the shock, heartbreak, and unrelenting sadism of this campaign of brutal character defamation.

After the death of their victim, the participants circulated a particularly diabolical quote from the "Master" to the effect that S. Abdl Jabbar's cancer had come as God's punishment for Mrs. Danner's having dared to criticize Sa. Latifah. Mrs. Danner's final, sober, dignified and moving letter of goodbye to the fuqarah truly puts to shame the sickening chicanery of the so-called "spiritual master" and his band of unconscionable followers.

At the time of the conspiracy, S. Abdl Jabbar and his wife were travelling out of the country. A veritable lynching in absentia against this faithful man was planned and organized in the minutest detail, with written instructions from the "Shaykh" (available upon request). A list of false accusations and fabrications of facts was prepared. The "Virtuous Shaykh" added fuel on the fire by writing a poisonous article entitled, "The Root of the Problem," which was to be the final blow to the reputation of one of the most effective muqqaddams in the "Tariqah."
strong and clear-minded men and is left surrounded by sycophants, with few exceptions. Which means he takes strong, clear-minded persons for fools or madmen, or further, for persons of vile character; which in the end is due to a monstrous pride, if not a mania.

* * *

Somewhere in the precepts of Tibetan Mahayana a warning can to be found: those who unjustly accuse and mercilessly destroy devoted men with reckless words will inevitably hear their own words blown back to them by the winds of Divine Justice.
CHAPTER V

About Children

Mr. Schuon's point of view about children provided us with our first chilling doubts about the Tariqah. At first we stupidly thought that a saint who had received the visits and blessings of the Holy Virgin would simply delight in the beauty and innocence of children. Jesus loved the little ones, so did the Prophet, and even the great Medicine Man, Black Elk, loved their company in his old age, for children had just come from the Great Spirit and he was about to return. We soon found out that with Schuon children are tabu.

The refusal of Mr. Schuon to see our little Orlando, then only four, was painful and difficult to explain to him. The story we heard was that the Tariqah is an esoteric dimension which must exclude children. We knew that Christianity at its origin had an esoteric dimension, but that did not stop Jesus from asking that the children be allowed to come unto Him.

The next shock was all the advice given out to fuqarah not to have children, and this was related to the end of the age and the profanity of the world. But we thought then, why not in the sacred oasis of the Tariqah? After all, this was an island of holiness and common concern for each other in the profane sea, an island protected by the Holy Virgin, a perfect place for innocent children! We could not understand why the Tariqah did not integrate children in its sacred environment, instead of sending them to profane schools, considering the affluence of so many and the abundant zakkat coming from all over the world.

When we were exposed to S. Junayd, we soon discovered that to him children were pure irritation unless of the feminine gender, which automatically turned him into a playful child intimately frolicking with them.

One day our little Lorenzo, then only three years old, was in the garden playing in the grass, chanting sottovoce "La ilaha illa Llah." S. Junayd, still in his muqaddam-pose, scolded us for allowing this blasphemy from the child.
S. Junayd related to us that Mr. Schuon once had declared that if he (Mr. Schuon) had children, they would either be saints or cripples.

The most tragic of cases which we know of is that involving the children of the Perrys. Growing up and not knowing if Mr. Schuon or Mr. Perry was their father. Witnessing their own mother, while still married to their "public" father, being the "wife" of Mr. Schuon as well. What kind of confusion must this have created for the little ones? As if this were not enough, these abuses continued into the next generation. Catherine Perry's children were sacrificed and separated from their mother to save Mr. Schuon from an early scandal. Psychological abuse and brainwashing by S. Junayd and others caused Catherine Perry's son to come to believe he was the madhi. He was initiated with Mr. Schuon's knowledge at the age of 10. At age 17 this disturbed child committed suicide. Mr. Schuon's words of compassion to the mother were that the suicide was her fault.
With a Kafkaesque-Fellinian background the story unfolds into an ugly collection of broken families, divorces, the teen-age suicide of a boy indoctrinated and initiated into the "Tariqah" at the age of ten as the returning mahdi by one of the cult's most fiendish characters. The ruin of a number of lives. Drunkenness among the elite. Wife swapping. Commitment of members to psychiatric wards. Statutory rape and wife beating. Finally, the pathetic spectacle of the 85-year old "Master's" sexual monominuet, squeezing one by one a circle of nude wives of his disciples against his naked body while wearing the imposing full-feathered Sioux war bonnet.

This book also reveals the story of those followers of the Schuon cult who Professing themselves to be wise, [they] became fools [Romans 1:22], and of a few who finally liberated themselves from one of the most dangerous spiritual mirages to appear in modern times. There are others, too, who are sitting on the fence: Huston Smith, Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion, Emeritus, Syracuse University; S.H. Nasr, University Professor of Islamic Studies, George Washington University; William Stoddard; Dr. Martin Lings; P. Joseph Cahill, Chairman, Department of Religious Studies, University of Alberta; James S. Cutsinger, American Academy of Religion; Professor William Chittick, University of Stoney Brook, Long Island, New York; Jacob Needleman, Professor of Comparative Religion, University of San Francisco – academicians confronted with potential damage to their reputations and careers in the event of a national exposure of Frithjof Schuon as the modern cult leader he is.
The master is in principle infallible...but this infallibility is conditioned by the equilibrium between knowledge and virtue, or between intelligence and humility...a spirituality deprived of these bases can only end up as a psychological exploit. ("Nature and Function of the Spiritual Master" by F. Schuon)

There are men who have the vainglorious ambition to be particularly intelligent, and this makes them all the more stupid; their case would not be hopeless if they had the good sense and humility to recognize their limits - for which Heaven could not reproach them - and if they took their stand modestly on wholesome and thus intelligent principles. ("Anonymity of the Virtues" by F. Schuon)

Dear Mr. Schuon,

After reflection on your impersonal photocopied paper titled "Answers to a Metaphysical Question," with which you respond to my last question as a disciple, I find it necessary for the love of Truth to refute some of your positions. Extensive quotes have been mandated by Mrs. Schuon's complaint that my last letter to you gave the impression of taking phrases out of context.

Following the refutation you will find my reasons for rejecting you as a spiritual authority. I will not attempt to express the suffering you have caused our family, knowing you could care less about the feelings of others, as your behavior has transparently shown.
REFUTATION to F.S.'s "Answers to a Metaphysical Question"

We are in agreement that Beyond Being cannot be "unaware" of anything at all, for there cannot be any lack in the Absolute. However, you contradict yourself when you add: it means that Beyond Being knows all things in their undifferentiated potentiality, or let us say in their pure possibility. With this you introduce a lack in the Absolute, namely: that the Absolute is not capable of knowing things in their differentiated state and from every possible point of view, including the distinctive mode and in relativity.

In Light on the Ancient Worlds, p. 89, you contradict yourself again with the following passage:

The Hindus declare without hesitation that Maya is inexplicable; the Moslems for their part insist on the contrary on the "divine motivation" of the creation, in accordance with the saying: "I was a hidden treasure, I desired to be known (4) and I created the world."

In the Footnote (4) you write:

Or "I desired to know"; that is to say, in distinctive mode and in relativity." [emphasis ours]

An old Italian proverb states: Non cade foglia che Dio non voglia. We are confirmed that God loves us and knows everything we know at the contingent level by the well known Hadith Qudsi: He who adores Me never ceases to approach Me until I love him, and, when I love him I am the hearing by which he hears, the sight by which he sees, the hand with which he grasps and the foot with which he walks. Your view would have us think that this Hadith refers to a demiurge which is itself only a production of Maya, and therefore a grand illusion. The Hadith in fact refers to the one God, the Absolute, otherwise the word "God" would not apply.

In your indirect answer to my letter you write:

And if we human creatures are given enough light to conceive Beyond Being, it is because the pure Absolute - necessarily immanent in Being - penetrates the whole manifestation; otherwise manifestation could not exist, for Reality is one...because our very
center - Eckhart's intellectus - "contains," through Being, a "ray" of
Beyond Being; the Absolute knows us in our pure potentiality or
possibility, and therefore there is an intellect - aliquid increatum et
increabile - which is necessarily capable of knowing the reality of
Beyond Being. This belongs to the mystery of universal immanence.

However, since your answer suggests that the Divine Intellect only knows us
as possibilities and not also as manifested creatures, your affirmation that our
center is penetrated by a "ray" of Beyond Being - which is obvious even to a
beginner on the Path - offers one more reason to refute your contention that
the Absolute does not know us as creatures. Since this "ray" proceeds from
the Divine Intellect, it cannot be blind to the existence of its destination and to
its purpose nor can it be limited in its functions to a one way direction
whereby humans can conceive of Beyond Being, while the Absolute, in spite
of being aware, as you confirm, of our potentiality, lacks the ability to
conceive and to perceive our existence in distinctive mode and in relativity,
which is necessarily projected by one feature of All-Possibility (call it Maya
or what you will). This feature is one with the Absolute, hence one with
creation on pain of irreversible duality. Let us never forget that "all things
are possible unto God" even if some of us are unable to grasp them and
explain them with organized schematics and monolithic rational systems.

By insisting that the Absolute does not know us as existent creatures, you
affirm that the Divine "ray" that penetrates our very center is blind, that the
Absolute is divided in water tight compartments and knows not what It has
deployed, nor how nor why. While we are able to know our oneness with
the Absolute and can, once liberated, experience the coincidentia oppositorum,
starting from our contingent human perspective - thanks to
the uncreated "ray" - the Absolute, although one with us, is, according to
you, stuck on one side of the illusory veil of Maya and cannot experience the
effects of the veil, which is precisely, as you assert, the very thing the Absolute
desires to experience according to the note just cited. Clearly your
reasoning is contradictory and flawed, proving that your claim to infallibility

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1. This position is an irreducible dualism. The contingent is an illusion because of the veil
placed over the "divine ray," which vanishes when we are delivered. The Divine knows all,
including this effect of Maya on its own projected "ray," for creation proceeds from the
Absolute, just as every possibility proceeds from the Absolute. All the difficulties you bring
about appear because you speak from the point of view of an undelivered creature, evidenced by
the delusion of wanting to define or limit the Absolute so often in your writings.
To underline this last point, we direct your attention to Footnote 4 in *Light on the Ancient Worlds*, p. 89, quoted above. You state the exact contrary: *I desired to know in a distinctive mode and in relativity.* According to your interpretation, that was the very reason God created the world, by manifesting the power of *Maya*, so It (the Absolute) might know relativity as well as become known by sentient beings able and willing, in their relative freedom, to free themselves from the veil or the optical illusion of *Maya*.

However, you reverse your previous opinion: *The supreme Non-Being is "aware" of both existence and Being, but not in a differentiated way.*

We emphatically refute this, for as you have maintained more than once and as all revelations confirm, including the intellectual intuition of every clear minded man, no lack is possible in the Absolute; hence it follows that there is nothing whatsoever from which the Absolute is excluded.

Limiting the Absolute from any mode of knowledge contradicts much of your own work and is itself a contradiction in terms. Absolute knowledge is infinite and must of necessity embrace all modes and everything, including the knowledge of every spacial, temporal and extra-temporal, non spacial phenomenon in the illusory productions of *Maya*.

You further write in your answer: *We do not understand absolute awareness from a contingent point of view; we understand it through the essence of our intelligence, which is not contingent, being God’s presence in us...Principle is absolutely Principle, but manifestation is not absolutely manifestation; there is no symmetry between Reality and appearance or illusion. If we say that *Maya* is essentially *Atma*, we do not say implicitly that *Atma* is ontologically and logically obliged to be essentially *Maya*.*

Intelligence is not contingent at its origin, being a ray of the Divine in us. Intelligence is the *Chit* aspect of the Divine power that gives life and consciousness; it manifests the mysterious miracle of unique subjectivity and houses all of this in our primordial clay, one more reason why there can be nothing we know that God does not also know since it is His being, His intelligence, His life, His love — and not ours — that we enjoy. God knows and conceives absolutely all things and everything we know, including all that we never even dream. God knows the number of hairs on our heads.
and every single leaf that falls.

We must insist that even if, as you write: *...we understand it through the essence of our intelligence, which is not contingent*, until we are liberated we cannot understand Absolute awareness, because until final liberation we are in the grip of illusion, *Maya or Samsara*, and the uncreated "ray" is suffused by the clouds of illusion. It is precisely the divine "ray" of intelligence and the intrinsic will of the Absolute to be known (and Its ability to know all dimensions) which are the very grounds of *Maya*, because the illusion of duality, according to Sankara, begins with perception, or with the unfolding of mind, and ends after the mind is silenced in liberation.

Illusion cannot possibly arise without a perceiver, and a perceiver cannot be an illusion nor come into being without a real will or Divine fiat. Only then can the mind deploy the veil of *Avidya*, illusion, ignorance, for what could *Maya* veil were there no witnesses? Suddenly the rope appears to be a snake and *Samsara* is manifest, being nothing other than *Nirvana* viewed out of focus or from behind the veil of *Maya* by a real, perceiving subject.

*Isvara* is merely the illusory or veiled image of the One Divinity, a mental superimposition projected by the perceiver in the grip of *Samsara, Avidya* or *Maya* upon *Atma* through *Atma*’s will. There is no actual separate Creator-Being projected by the Absolute, as your doctrine suggests. The Absolute is Supreme Pure Being. *Isvara*, the Personal God, is the image of the one and only God, the One Reality, viewed through the veils of relative minds; therefore *Isvara* may be seen as Creator for our mental convenience, but ceases to appear real, along with *Maya*, upon our deliverance. At risk of repetition, the "relative absolute" – to use the term you coined – is only imaginary, a superimposition, a conceptual illusion, the image of the Real seen through a veil or colored filter – *Maya*. That is why monotheism is ultimately right in proclaiming the *one* true God. That is why the *Gnostic* ideas, which you reintroduce from the platform of a falsified *Religio Perennis*, were heresies and still are, even if better camouflaged in your works.

You write in "*Atma-Mayan*", *In the Face of the Absolute*, p. 55: *...it is in and through *Maya* that both the Holy Spirit and the Son are actualized*. This heretical idea means that both Holy Spirit and the Son are the radiation and reverberation of a pure illusion. Is there anything more at odds with the
Christian Scriptures? The Trinity is intrinsically and supremely real; in no way could it be a production or a mirage of unrealized minds.

In the above questions you have the cart before the horse.

Mr. Jean Borella has written at some length on your error in reference to the Holy Trinity. We take the liberty to quote from one of his letters:

In all of this I am leaving aside the ignorance (interested or not) manifest in the Schuonian critique with respect to Catholic theology; ignorance or incomprehension, for I also think that trinitarian dogma has also constituted a most irritating challenge to his reason and contradicts the most deep-seated bent of his spirit, a bent which inclines him to see his own judgement as the norm and measure of divine Wisdom. At any rate, this ignorance is agonizingly apparent in the "Evidence and Mystery" chapter of Logic and Transcendence, especially in the theologically curious handling of the notions of essence, substance, relation, hypostasis, etc., and also by the fact that he does not seem to take into account that theology has explicitly formulated many statements and definitions which he reproaches it for not knowing how to elaborate: for example, the definition of "person" as a "substantial mode." In the same vein, I will not speak of the unlikely lack of a "sense of proportion" in a solitary individual who claims to reprove six or seven ecumenical councils accomplishing the work of the Holy Spirit, a claim which leads him to assert that "The theology of the Trinity does not constitute an explicit and homogeneous revelation" (Logic and Transcendence, p. 96) - which is rather astonishing.

...Having set a few of these difficulties before F.S. fifteen years ago, particularly those relating to the dogmatic tradition elaborated by the seven ecumenical councils, works of the Holy Spirit, he replied that "even the Holy Spirit cannot prevent an ass from braying." Such a blasphemy passed as commentary. In any case it reflects, under the pretext of lucidity, a rare and unconscious intellectual pride.

* * *

When you claim to have gone a step beyond Sankara in explaining Maya (see page 8 hereof), you engage in a repetitive error that is found in many of
your papers. *Maya* is not just an intrinsic effect of the Infinite, as you insist. According to Sankara, it is an aspect of the Divine nature of the mind which coincides perfectly with the doctrine of Padmasambhava's *Zab-chos zhi-khrod gongs-pa rang-grol* (Self Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness), and in another sense with *il dolce gioco*, as Dante called it.

More than once you paraphrase the formula of the Church Fathers: *God became man that man might become God* in the Vedantine form: *Atma made Itself Maya in order that Maya might realize Atma.* This amounts to saying that in order to create the Universe, the Absolute made Itself illusory, the Infinite made Itself finite, the Real made Itself unreal, which is as impossible as claiming that the plenum made itself nothingness.

Illusions are not actual entities; illusions are distortions of realities, veilings, superimpositions or privations in the perception of substantial reality caused by the effect of *Maya on the perceiving mind.* A mirage of water in the desert is not water that made itself illusory in order that the illusion might become water. That would not be *il dolce gioco*, but a rather senseless game. A mirage is a mental superimposition on the refraction of light, an actual error of perception. Our minds superimpose conceptual veils, making the light refracted by the hot air assume the appearance of a body of water, a mere concept in our loquacious mind. Again the rope and the snake. Illusion can never become reality. It can only vanish by our waking up and focusing our spiritual eyes or by lifting the veil that was only in our mind.

When God made Himself man, the Logos was incarnated in the real, immortal, and incorruptible body of Christ. Christ was far from being an illusion produced by *Maya*. Christ was the irruption of Reality and Truth among drunken and sleep-walking men chasing their own mental illusions. Christ lifted the veil of illusions for those who had eyes and wanted to see. Real Man, Real God. Physically born of the Virgin (not just in a dream), and thereby a direct incarnation of God.

Illusion is in the eyes of the beholder. It is there one moment and gone the next, uncovering what underlies it: the Eternal Oneness of the Real. The non created Intellect, that "ray" of the Absolute that penetrates our center, upon being directionally, as it were, reversed (another way of expressing the veiling of Oneness into a duality), becomes the witness that seeks to perceive the Oneness through apparent diversity. Our subjectivity is a unique spark

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2 *Survey of Metaphysics and Esoterism*, p. 5.
from the Divine Sun and thereby the very ground or stage of illusion. Our Self, veiled by the arrogant ego and the stream of concepts, traps us into Samsara on the karmic level.

Your view of Maya coincides with Sankara only up to a point. It becomes a great metaphysical error, however, when you speak of Maya as an entity capable of creating an actual Supreme Being, God the Creator, and deploy the three persons of the Trinity as a prolongation of the initial grand illusion.

In Esoterism, "Understanding Esoterism," p. 21, we read:

We will say, independently of Sankara, that this Maya - which coincides with relativity and contingency - is an emanation of the Self by virtue of the infinity of the latter; that is to say, infinity, by reason of its so to speak overflowing nature, demands universal radiation, whereas absoluteness on the contrary excludes by definition all repetition and diversification; but Sankara leaves in suspense this question of the metaphysical origin of Maya and speaks of the latter only in a more or less practical fashion. For him Maya is indefinable as to its cause, but the Jnani knows that it exists since he is submerged in it; he also knows that it is illusory since he can escape from it; he obtains this liberation through intellectual discrimination and profound and methodical concentration on his own essence, which in the last analysis is not other than the infinite Self.

Aside the fact that Absoluteness cannot exclude anything at all on pain of not being absolute, and that the Infinite has no overflowing nature on pain of not being infinite (and needing somewhere outside infinity to overflow into), the comments you add to this absurd statement - implying that you are superior to Sankara - are surprising in light of the Advaita Bodha Deepika, wherein Sankara's understanding of Maya and its cause are examined in great depth.

Advaita Bodha Deepika, pp. 8-9:

D: What is Maya?
M: It is the ignorance about the aforesaid Brahman.
D: What is Ignorance?
M: Though the Self is Brahman, there is not the knowledge of the Self (being Brahman). That which obstructs this knowledge of the Self is Ignorance.
D: How can this project the world?
M: Just as ignorance of the substratum, namely the rope, projects the illusions of a snake, so ignorance of Brahman projects this world.
M: It must be regarded as illusion because it is superimposed and does not exist either before (perception) or after (knowledge).

Pp. 28-29:
D: Maya cannot but have a cause. Just as clay cannot become a pot without the agency of a potter, so also the Power all long remaining unmanifest in Brahman can manifest only with Isvara's will.
M: In dissolution there remains only the non-dual Brahman and no Isvara. Clearly there cannot be His will. When it is said that in dissolution all are withdrawn from manifestation and remain unmanifest, it means that the jivas, all the universe, and Isvara, have all become unmanifest. The unmanifest Isvara cannot exercise His will. What happens is this: just as the dormant power of sleep displays itself as a dream, so the dormant power of Maya displays itself as this plurality, consisting of Isvara, His will, the universe and the jivas. Isvara is thus the product of Maya and He cannot be the origin of His origin. Maya therefore has no antecedent cause. In dissolution there remains only Pure Being devoid of will, and admitting of no change. In creation Maya hitherto remaining unmanifest in this Pure Being, shines forth as the mind. By the play of mind, plurality appears as Isvara, the worlds and the jivas, like magic. Maya manifest is creation, and Maya unmanifest is dissolution. Thus of its own accord, Maya appears or withdraws itself and has thus no beginning. Therefore we say there is no antecedent cause for it.
D: What is its nature?
M: It is inexpressible. Because its existence is later invalidated, it is not real; because it is factually experienced, it is not unreal; nor it be a mixture of the two opposites, the real and the unreal. Therefore the wise say that it is indescribable (anirvachaniya).
D: Now what is real and what is unreal?
M: That which is the substratum of Maya, Pure Being or Brahman, admitting of no duality, is real. The illusory phenomenon, consisting of names and forms, and called the universe, is unreal.
In light of this passage, it is difficult to see how anything new was ever added independently or otherwise to Sankara's explanation of Maya by you or anyone else.

In To Have A Center, p. 116, you write:

...the great pitfall of monotheism is its need — since "God is one" and since this "One" is creative Being — to attribute to Him on the one hand the All-Possibility which in reality pertains to Beyond-Being and for which the personal God could not be held responsible, and on the other hand the most contingent particular possibilities, which pertain to the Logos, center of the Universe, and for that reason already "manifested" or cosmic. (8)

In Footnote (8), you add:

(8) So as not to risk appearing to introduce a duality, let alone a plurality, into the one and personal God, the Semitic texts and their commentators refuse to give the right answer by stating that God, being "all-powerful," "doeth what He wills"; we find this argument in Isaiah, Job and Saint Paul, as well as in the Koran. It is a double-edged argument, yet for certain psychological reasons it was efficacious for three or four millennia, in the climate for which it was destined.

We must again categorically refute your dualism in divinis as unnecessary and disturbing to the spiritual life, for it arrogantly dares define the Creator as a non responsible second rate demigod, and thereby introduces the heresy of an insuperable scission in the Absolute and in the souls of seekers. This point of view leads you into astonishing excesses. One cannot help but note with amazement here, that you go so far as to correct God himself for not having given us the right answer for all times in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Holy Koran, as if God had trouble foreseeing our climate and our needs!

The answers God gave in the Bible and the Koran are outdated, according to you. Like a one-man Vatican II council, you make yourself the instrument for the "Aggiornamento" of God in all religions. You write: The human instrument for the manifestation of the Religio Perennis at the end of time had to be a Westerner...a proto-Aryan...a south German deeply rooted in poetic and mystical Romanticism – having grown up with the German fairy-
tale and German song ("Excerpts from Letters," October 1980). Could there be a greater example to prove that Maya operates in the mind to cast mighty illusions in the lives of men, no matter how clever and erudite they may appear?

The grotesque aspect of your grand illusion of being like God and above all religions proceeds from the fact that only an immensely gifted man with a gnostic, heretical megalomania, steeped in 19th century German sentimentalism, wearing a gnostic mask of teutonic coldness and indifference toward others, filled with monumental self-importance, and suffering from hardness of heart could of course have carried out this cruel masquerade for more than half a century. Only a madman would dare to bring God up-to-date and demote Him to the rank of relative demiurge.

You repeat this heresy in To Have A Center, pp. 116-117, where you again limit the Absolute and inaccurately paraphrase Sankara:³

_Beyond-Being, or the suprapersonal Essence, can only will All-Possibility in itself, which coincides with its tendency to radiate — this being the effect of Its Infinitude._ [emphasis ours]

At risk of repetition, the Infinite does not radiate, for It is already everywhere. The Divine Center radiates Its bliss, thus manifesting Its light, love and creative power throughout Its own Infinity. How could the word "only" ever apply to Beyond Being? Is there something beyond the Infinite Possibility of the Absolute that the Absolute cannot will and know? Absurd!

Without taking away the many moments in which you shine with brilliant clearness of language and inspiration, Mr. Schuon, once the reader awakes

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³ Sankara states: _In dissolution there remains only the non-dual Brahman and no Isvara. Clearly there cannot be His will._ Schuon paraphrases this, but ignores that Sankara also said: _In creation Maya hitherto remaining unmanifest in this Pure Being, shines forth as the mind. By the play of mind, plurality appears as Isvara, the worlds and the jivas, like magic. Maya manifest is creation, and Maya unmanifest is dissolution, and: It (Maya) is inexpressible. Because its existence is later invalidated, it is not real; and: That which is the substratum of Maya, Pure Being or Brahman, admitting of no duality, is real._ Therefore Sankara clearly agrees with Padmasambhava, but not with Schuon. There is one God which manifests the ground of His will through an aspect (Maya) of the Nature of the Divine Mind, which alone contains all possibilities.
from the trance your writings create, he will be able to find errors throughout your works, distorting in one way or another all the major Sacred Doctrines of the world, none of which you seem to fully respect.4

You paint yourself into a corner with your pen and your behavior, yet you continue to reach for ever more absurdly spectacular claims about yourself, propped up by subtle, face-saving ambiguities.5 On pain of being ridiculed, you are unable to retreat from the following grandiose claims being made by you and by your followers: your claim to infallibility; your claims of being a Sufi Shaykh; the Paragon of Virtues; an Amerindian shaman or holy medicine-man; the child and physical lover of the Holy Virgin; a Bodhisattva; the King of the World; a Solar Avatar; the Supreme Spokesman for the Religio Perennis; the Pole of the Age; a Prophet; the Incarnation of God; the Manifestation of the Center as such (and there may be others). Clearly you have abandoned the last trace of a sense of proportions and joined the ranks of the New Age false prophets like Rajneesh, Sun Myung Moon, Nichiren Shoshu, Baba Free John, Jim Jones, L. Ron Hubbard, Marahaj Ji, and all the other lunatics who made similar claims.

We have heard the audiatur et altera pars formula ad nauseam. To prevent the usual overused accusation that we did not give you a chance to defend yourself, we make it a point to underline the fact that we waited to face you with all this until after receiving your self-defense papers for which we had to ask a number of times. We allowed one year to pass in order to carefully examine many items of evidence sent to us from many sources. Additionally, we are giving you ten days to present a further rebuttal. Please remember, Mr. Schuon, that you did not have the courtesy of giving the ruination of my family a second thought, nor did you allow us the same right

4 Schuon tells us In the Face of the Absolute, "The Two Paradises," page 246: There is in Atma a point which is Maya, and that is Being or the Personal God, while there is in Maya a point which is Atma and that is Beyond Being or the Divine Essence present in the intellect; it is the immanent Absoluteness in Human Relativity...The fact that man can conceive of the limitations of Being in relation to the pure Absolute proves that he can in principle realize this pure absolute and thus transcend the Legislation which emanates from Being, namely formal religion; "in principle," we say, and rarely in fact. In other words, Schuon tells us that since man has a touch of the Absolute, while the Creator is only relative, man can dispense with the Creator's laws! At least a few can. Surely Schuon considers himself among those few "exempted from sin," as his behavior toward his disciples demonstrates.

5 One of the latest collections can be found in "The Play of Masks."
you ask for yourself *audiatur et altera pars*. You simply ignored our request to be heard.

Your facile self-defense is easily refuted and can be proven flawed in numerous ways. For example, in your Text 1075, we find the following:

*It may happen that the pure pneumatic will act in a manner foreign to a particular religious perspective and to particular prescriptions, but it cannot happen that he act in a manner contrary to the nature of things, for he bears the essential, universal and primordial Law in the depths of his own heart. For this very reason, deviation or corruption is in his case impossible, whatever appearances from a particular limited perspective may be.*

This is pure sophistry. Every creature acts according to the nature of things. The Devil himself cannot act against the nature of things. Devils act devilishly, dogs act like dogs, and false teachers act according to the nature of things by deceiving their followers and by proclaiming in self defense that it is beyond the ability of disciples to discriminate against a clever deceiver who claims to be a master! You assume, Mr. Schuon, that your disciples are stupid enough to accept the impudent absurdity that it is impossible for the master to be corrupt or deviate, no matter what the appearances may be! How convenient! No wonder so many scoundrels have chosen a guru's career and succeeded in fooling thousands.

In an excerpt from a letter distributed in your defense, allegedly by S. Ibrahim (written in about 1978), we read:

*Do you believe that God would disavow the spiritual work of a man who for hundreds if not thousands of souls seeking the Truth, represents the only guiding light in the midst of the storm?...Do you think that God would abandon a spiritual master who, in a world like the present one, insists on the invocation of the Divine Name and who has given to this method a form that allows of following it in all circumstances; a form at once very simple and very complete, clearly reflecting an inspiration?*

If these were valid arguments they would also be so for every false teacher and prophet. Modern gurus have become guiding lights for thousands and
use the invocatory method. The same kind of defense would apply to the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith whose followers God has allowed to multiply by the millions. And what about Vatican II? How could God allow 600,000,000 Catholics to be deceived? This defense is appallingly naive.

In the same letter, we read:

*Finally, is it conceivable that a man whose very nature is intellectual incorruptibility, who has never diluted a truth in order to satisfy a sentiment, who is like the personification of the spirit of *furaan*—that such a man would succumb to a banal temptation?*

Fourteen years later we can say to S. Ibrahim (if indeed he wrote this inane letter), "Yes! Categorically yes!" It is *quite* conceivable, for the evidence shows that the Truth has not only been diluted, it has been monstrously distorted to satisfy a Luciferian sense of self importance and a lust for adulation. As for the alleged intellectual incorruptibility, we most strongly refute it with all the points covered in this letter and many more we have not the time to detail here. The accused "Master" has succumbed to dozens of banal temptations. The dates of the letters of S. Ibrahim show that this is a repetitive human weakness of the "Master." What could be more monstrous and ridiculous for a "Master" than blindly pursuing one more banal *gopi*—Maisun—and ruining a family in the process!

In your letter to S. Imran of 6-II-92, you refer to Mark Koslow as "a paranoid monster," and in your self-defense video you refer to him as "an intrinsic swine." You may want to review your style, Mr. Schuon, and gather inspiration from Master Xu Yun, who, after being violently beaten by Communist fanatics and having his skull fractured at the age of 113, refused to call his enemies bad names when questioned by government authorities who came to his defense. In his hour of suffering Master Xu Yun showed real detachment and retained his emotional balance and equanimity. After watching your video we can say with certainty that you completely "lost your cool."

In S. Ibrahim's letter to S. 'Abd al-Hayy, we read:

*You doubtless know the Sufic rule, cited by al-Qushayri, according to which the disciple must never regard the actions of his master in an*
unfavorable light, "even if he believes he has caught him in flagrant adultery." One could therefore ask oneself: how, then, does the disciple recognize the orthodoxy of the master? The answer is this: in everything that concerns the disciple himself and not in what concerns only the master.

You have often criticized Sufic hyperbole and exaggerations in your books, Mr. Schuon. One could carry this Semitic extravagance about adultery committed by a "Master" to the extreme...that even if the "Master" commits rape, as long as the act is only the "Master's" business, the disciple has no right to judge him. What attracted a number of followers to your books was the illusion that at last the use of our intelligence was no longer in conflict to traveling the Path to liberation. We were happy that blind faith was not required in the gnostic path, for men of our times have a need of causality. All of a sudden we are confronted with an excessively passiona Sufi point of view which would have us surrender our intelligence and our brains to you, kiss the feet of an adulterer and call him blindly a "Master," no matter what the appearances! We seek sapience, not exoteric fanaticisms and unconditional surrender to the whims of a man who claims he is a "Master" but gives all the signals that he is a highly talented impostor. True fuqarah surrender to God alone. You, Mr. Schuon, may be God as much as any sentient being is, but God is not you.

In the same letter we read:

God will not deceive us; He does not ask us to analyze the personal actions of the master, to "psychologize," but if He wishes to show us the falsity of the master, He will show it to us on the very plane of those Divine Truths in virtue of which we have adhered to the master. Al-Qushayri is saying, then: If a master teaches errors or a method contrary to the Revelation, leave him, but if he appears to commit immoral actions, distrust your own distrust.

Here S. Ibrahim as a Schuonian presumes to tell us what God will or will not ask of us. Christ has clearly told us, Ye shall know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:16). God has clearly warned mankind of the proliferation of false prophets in the final times: For false Christs and false prophets shall rise...to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. (Mark 13:22). The Devil has a great interest in our closing our eyes to the errors of false teachers, after all they are his most precious servants. As for errors, you teach plenty of them including
the blatantly erroneous teaching that we should not analyze your errors, a teaching which diametrically opposed to the warning of the Gospels: *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.* (Matthew 7:15). Al Qushayri does not have the rank of the Gospel, so in this he is superseded, as some of Ashary writings must be superseded, as you rightly commented in your books. You often comment negatively about the use of pious hyperbole except when it is convenient to your point of view.

Further in the same letter, S. Ibrahim says:

> False masters generally appear to be endowed with a psychological -- thus merely human -- perfection; more often than not they are moral purists, but they teach errors.

In this S. Ibrahim is quite mistaken. We can hardly call the personalities and behavior of any of the notorious modern masters "humanly perfect." To refer to a "merely human perfection" as something hiding evil is inane. To be humanly perfect is to be a saint. Evil men are never humanly perfect.

Your betrayals of the great traditions and of your teachers – Sankara, Guenon, the Shaykh Al Alawi – once ferreted out and surgically removed from your writings – show one single intent: to prepare the reader for the final proclamation that the writer is the last, grand and direct Incarnation of God.

Unfortunately you have shown yourself to be among the men fitting Sankara's description:

> Having read all the sastras and well grounded in them, they grow conceited that they are all knowing, accomplished and worthy of respect; filled with love and hate they presume themselves respectable; they are only packasses esteemed for carrying loads...He was well-versed in the Vedas and the Vedanta and otherwise an accomplished man too. He would not practice what he had learned but would give lessons in it to others...transgressing the code of conduct...enjoying himself according to his own sweet will, after death he passed to hell. *Advaita Bodha Deepika,* pp. 52-53.

You assumed the task of spiritual guide prematurely without the right or the
authority to do so. There is no evidence that you were allowed to invoke the
Divine Name by the saintly Shaykh Al Alawi. In fact in your memoirs you
tell us you received the name directly from Heaven. Why so? Heaven had a
Saint available next to you. There are fuqara from the Alawi Tariqah who
claim that the saintly Shaykh was opposed to your becoming a muqqadam
and most certainly a shaykh before he died. Your silence about the Shaykh Al
Alawi is eloquent.

As I expressed in the opening statements of this letter, your behavior toward
your disciples does not show the least evidence of intrinsic spiritual
attainments, quite the contrary. Your taking the wives of your disciples for
your concubines while they still live with their husbands ("vertical wives" in
your lingo) completes your apostasy as a Sufi shaykh. According to reports
from Cairo, you were declared an apostate by the Shaykh Batawi of the Shadili
Tariqah. Your behavior as described by Sa. Amina and by other witnesses is
plain adultery of the grossest kind, and violates all traditions, including the
Amerindian. (Your version of the American Indian religion is refuted by the
best experts on the subject.)

The pretext of "Tantric" ritual and dimensions in the face of the knowledge
that is coming from Tibetan Lamas is just a cover up for infantile sexual
titillations. With this false pretext you have demonstrated the most
ridiculous dilettantism, profaning a tradition to which you have no real
access and clearly showing that your information comes from the discredited
accounts of the early Western intrusions into Tibet. In addition you have
brought ridicule to the dignity of an ancient Sufi line of spiritual masters.

You have shown a remarkable lack of wisdom, even on the basic level of
normal existential relationships. Your lack of courtesy, generosity,
compassion, concern, sincerity, veracity, and gratitude toward your
fellowman would be astonishing were you a mere profane individual. But
such behavior is especially despicable coming from a man who has
unauthorizedly assumed the responsibility of caring for human souls -
devoted men, who have blindly showered you with undeserved praise and
honors for the love of God. I accept blame for my own naiveté, for I should
have looked at you more carefully and read your works without surrendering
my intellectual discrimination.

The record in my case shows that you, who had asked me for a favor to help
you in a family problem with your wife, did not have the gentlemanly
fairness to respond to my plea for your help in a disastrous family situation, a situation that was engendered by your ambition to add one more milkmaid to your Amerindian-Krishna impersonation. You ignored your wife's suggestion to send my son home. Instead you listened to your concubine who informed you what a willing subject Sa. Maisun would be for your "Tantric" games. Within a few weeks you had given Sa. Maisun a personal gift - a lamp for her zawiyah. Had you penetrated the immaculate depth of her soul and discovered the reincarnation of Lady Godiva? The entire story is simply an obscene comedy and we were more and more revolted as details of what happened surface one by one.

In your self defense video you point to your age and your books as proofs of your innocence, which was a simplistic defense for the simple minded average viewer. In answer to the question, "At what age does a man overcome his lust?" A Hindu story tells of a guru taking a king to the bedside of a dying centenarian, accompanied by the king's beautiful daughter. The guru tells the king, "Watch the eyes of the dying man!" The king sees the dying man's eyes fixed on the beautiful woman. Equally significant is the fact that more often than not, men write and speak far above their station.

The infallible way to know you is to by your fruits. You have proven yourself to be a barren tree to be cut down and cast into the fire. You care not a fig for the spiritual or existential well-being of your disciples, you care only for yourself. The conditions you have brought into Sa. Amina's life accuse you clearly of being unconscionable. The devastation you brought in the lives of S. Abdl-Qayyum, his wife and daughter, and the suicide of the grandson stand as abominations upon your record, for which you will be tried. What you did to destroy S. Abdl Jabbar accuses you from his grave. The many other cases cast a pall of infamy on your name, all the more so as you raise your chin in pride.

Your favored disciple, S. Junayd, told me that you gave him permission to do anything he desired sexually to Jasmine, then a girl of sixteen years, except entering her - which restriction he disobeyed repeatedly. That was not the advice of a wise man, but of an amoral if not immoral man, a man who has no understanding of the souls of the young nor of their right to be protected from sexual intrusion until they have reached maturity. Your advice most likely caused the mental crisis of Jasmine's mother and makes you an irresponsible man. It confirms the molestations you committed against
minors, acts you instructed others to deny before the grand jury. We have spoken to witnesses who confirm all you were accused of and more.

Your wife once told me you did not want to be loved, but only feared. That sounded stupid. With all your philosophy, you fail to realize that one fears only the person one loves. Having ceased to love you and finding only pain, disappointment, and contempt for you we have lost all fear of you, and we see you at last as you really are: a pathetic unkind old man, a lost soul, drowning in his own colossal pretensions and illusions of spiritual greatness. Your behavior is that of a neurotic, whining, spoiled little boy who thinks he has the right to treat others as if they did not exist because he is the center of the world.

Your love of nudity is a wish to be the emperor dressed with miraculous garments of light, but as the photos we have prove, you have only managed to make yourself look ridiculous. Most of your Bloomington followers are like the crowd in the fairytale. They know they must pretend to see what is not there on pain of losing their place in that illusory paradise of the unvirtuous you sold them.

A Spiritual Master is a generous, humble and strong man made of one piece, impartial to his disciples. You instead are a weak sentimental dreamer who has fallen in love with himself by admiring the mirage of your own image in the ambiguous lake of your own words. Your books, your mudakarrah, are beautiful in many places, but do not prove the validity of any of your claims. Between your words and your deeds there is a vast abyss.

The Tariqah's history – without a single example of spiritual achievement, individual or collective, with the possible exception of one person who maintained a degree of intellectual independence from you – amply shows that it is a dangerous form of delusion that has infected a large number of good people and fostered pride and arrogance, turning many of them into whitened sepulchres, despisers of the simple, the poor, and the oppressed, proficient liars, deceivers, and wrong doers without scruples even against brothers on the Path. (We have a dossier of thousands of pages that illustrates and evidences this sad fact in considerable detail.)

See how typical this is in all cults: the dividing of the faithful – "We, the Elite" – from "Them, the Profane." In our forthcoming book refer to the chapter on modern cults. Notice how well your "Personality-Cult" fits exactly all elements found in most modern cults.
The metaphysical imposture is over with the Vidalis. It took us more than a year of careful review to come to understand how we had stupidly allowed ourselves to be taken in by such a collection of subtle contradictions. Others will have to do their own homework to liberate themselves from the mental pollution and poison so shrewdly concealed between the lines of otherwise marvelous material. Like arsenic added to a great wine. From another point of view we see the wrongs you have committed against my family also as a Divine gift. They became God's manner of rescuing us from following a blind leader of the blind and revealing the characters of quite a few we once had loved and respected.

* * *

Finally, I affirm that, contrary to your ambiguities and heresies, God is Absolutely One, Pure, Infinite and Perfect Being, Absolute Consciousness and Supreme Intelligence, Unfathomable Bliss, Beauty and Love. We believe that Maya, as Sankara said, does not have any reality but is the effect of the nature of the Divine Mind deployed to allow the illusory separations that give rise to the multiplicity of centers of awareness, all united by the ONE SOLE AND SINGLE NATURE OF THE DIVINE MIND. As Padmasambhava affirms, it is the One Nature of the Self wherein we all partake of the same reality and the same infinity in uniquely different modes in Eternity.

* * *

I am told by persons who have been very close to you, Mr. Schuon, that you do not open your own correspondence, but that your women read it to you and edit out whatever might be unpleasant for you, regardless of its truth. However, if we receive no personal answer to this letter to prove you have read it, this letter will become an international document. On the other hand we are quite ready to extend you a further audiatur et altera pars before we consign all the contents of our correspondence to the open winds of destiny.

Be advised that we are seeking a peaceful solution. Release my son from the spell you placed him under and we will act as if you did not exist. The details of how my son should be freed without embarrassment on your part are enumerated in my letter to your wife.

Goodbye, Mr. Schuon, and may God have mercy on your soul.
SOME ASPECTS OF THE SHAYKH’S NATURE

(From a conversation with the Shaykh)

Tanzih means abstraction, exclusion, extinction, it is a priori intellectual; tashbih on the contrary means analogy, inclusion, assimilation, it is a priori existential. There is nevertheless in tanzih an existential element, contemplation; and in the same way we find in tashbih an intellectual element, essentialization. A perfect equilibrium of the two attitudes is very exceptional; in most cases, the one or the other is predominant or even exclusive.

* * *

When one has a contact with God in a direct way, above any form, this is tanzih: Lā ilāha illā 'Illāh.

When one has a contact with God in an indirect way, through an avatāra, this is tashbih: such as invocations of Rama, Krishna, Amitabha, Jesus.

The Salāt 'alā 'n-Nabi is the Islamic form of this possibility of tashbih, since in Islam it is impossible to invoke the name of Muhammad alone. However, the prayer on the Prophet did not prevent the coming, to our essentially universal tarīqah, of the Holy Virgin, because as a woman she brings another, more "shaktic", manifestation of tashbih. Wherever there is beauty there is also love, goodness and peace; these are qualities that make people better because they exclude from the soul wickedness, pettiness and pride. "God is beautiful and He loves Beauty."

The Holy Virgin brought the formula "Yā Maryamu 'alayki 's-salām" and the invocation "Yā Rahmān, yā Rahīm"; also the icons, which suggest the mystery of sacred nudity and remind us of the Hindu goddesses. In Sufism, we find allusions to the unveiling of Laylā or Salmā, personifications of the mystical contact with the Infinite. In a way, infinity means divine Femininity; there is also a relationship between the feminine principle and tashbih. "Beauty is the splendor of Truth", which implies that the perception of beauty means spiritual assimilation, interiorization and essentialization.

* * *

The Shaykh has a side of his nature which comes from tanzih, and this is his keen metaphysical and phenomenological discernment. He also has a side which comes from tashbih, and this is his profound sense of beauty and his sense of the sacred. One could say that his nature is like a combination of Shankara and Abhinavagupta, this latter being spiritually connected with Krishna.
From Hinduism the Shaykh received metaphysics through the Vedanta, but all the rest of the message he received directly from Heaven, including the Invocation, the Themes, and the coming of the Holy Virgin. Islam provided an accent on resignation to God's Will and trust in His Mercy.

The foundation of the Shaykh's nature is in Essentiality and Universality, and from this comes a natural attraction to Primordiality, which is the fitrah. This explains the profound basis of the Shaykh's relationship with the Red Indian world, as also his connection with Sacred Nudity; for it is rooted in God's Nature and in virgin Nature.

The Shaykh has never changed in his whole life; he is now as he always was. As a youth he was, in a way, veiled from himself, veils that came from the contradiction between his nature, rooted in the fitrah, and the modern world, with all of its absurdities; these veils he had to discard. Given his concrete universality, one cannot ascribe to him a particular religion, despite the fact that his traditional framework is Islam. Now, essential Islam is fitrah and nothing else; therefore formal Islam can be a framework for the Religio Perennis, precisely.

* * *

The human soul is woven of tendencies and happenings; the tendencies come from the inside, and the happenings come from the outside. These are the warp and the woof of that veil made of dreams which is our soul.

This veil envelops a transcendental center, our heart, which carries the consciousness of the Absolute. And consciousness of the Absolute is our real being; remembrance of God contains everything we love. In God, nothing is lost, and all is gained.
Naming honor returns

Pine Ridge — The tradition of honoring non-Indians with Indian names and adopting them into tribes can lead to embarrassing situations for tribal members.

The Red Cloud family of Pine Ridge found just such an embarrassing situation this spring when it was brought to their attention that a group of people in Bloomington, Ind., has created its own religious society and is performing sacred ceremonies derived in part from sacred Lakota spiritual beliefs.

James Red Cloud, an ancestor of the Red Cloud family, welcomed the Schuons into the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and gave Indian names to Frithjof Schuon and his wife Catherine.

The couple’s Bloomington group, known as “Tarigah Mariah,” is a “spiritual society” for prayer, according to Frithjof Schuon, the leader. He is known around the world as an author of comparative religion. This group combines elements of Islam, Hinduism and American Indian spirituality.

Mr. Schuon said he has a preference for the “Red Indian” religion, but his followers are not forced to follow his preferences. The group denies performing any American Indian rites.

In one of the group’s rituals, Mr. Schuon allegedly stands in the middle of a circle of nude or scantily clad females. He embraces them and believes his body is sacred and “radiates grace,” according to former society member, Mark Kedlow. He became disillusioned with the society after he came to believe Mr. Schuon to be likening himself to Christ and Mohammed.

Mr. Schuon is one of the many authors who has written of Native cultures — profiting nicely from his publications. Many tribal members are offended by such authors, who are non-Native and, in the end, do not lend credible economic, social or legitimate benefits to tribes they write about. These authors often write detrimental things about tribes, sometimes exposing sacred things that are meant for tribal members alone.

Often authors who are not tribal members write cold accounts that misinform the general public to the

Michael Poteck photograph used with permission

Frithjof Schuon is a renowned philosopher of comparative religion. He is married to Catherine Schuon and also has three "spiritual wives." He is a leader of a prayer group that re-enacts the legend of the White Buffalo Calf Woman, who brought the Pipe to the Sioux people.
James Red Cloud, said his family was considering a lawsuit against Mr. Schuon because his family had been shamed by the society's carrying on. He does not want the Red Cloud family name associated with the group that portrays the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Woman as a naked white woman wearing a war bonnet.

The Schuons have photographs of Edgar Red Cloud and Charles Red Cloud taken in 1959 when they adopted the Schuons into the Lakota Nation. They also have a shield signed by the "officials" who adopted the couple.

Mr. Schuon's group re-enacts the coming of the White Buffalo Calf Woman to the Sioux people. The Pi San Win is a sacred being who brought the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe to the people, telling them, "Behold this Pipe. Always remember how sacred it is, and treat it as such, for it will take you to the end."

The Sacred Calf Pipe has the power of healing the sick and maintaining the good health of the people. It is prayed to in times of hardship and will make the people strong. Oral history passed on from generation to generation explains that as long as the Pipe is properly cared for and respected, there will always be a Sioux Nation.

Mr. Schuon has incorporated his own religious dogma in his spiritual society's beliefs. He has written about the sacred rites of the Sioux. He believes in the Transcendent Unity of religions. Mr. Koslow alleges in the cult's re-enactment of the coming of the Pi San Win, a non-Indian woman, naked except for a floor-length war bonnet, brings the Sacred Calf Pipe to the society.

Mr. Schuon reveres virgin nature. He believes nudity has a sacred connotation, and that it manifests itself both in the primordial and the universal. Michael Fitzgerald, a member of the society, said the facts presented to the Lakota Times are distorted. Mr. Koslow is using the press to discredit Mr. Schuon because the religious leader would not bless an adulterous affair of Mr. Koslow's and another follower in the society, he said.

Mr. Koslow expected to be discredited by the group. He said they have called him many names in an effort to discredit his allegations. He still stands by his statements in spite of denials by Mr. Fitzgerald, who is a spokesman for Mr. Schuon, that no Lakota rites are performed by the society.

"Mr. Schuon is a great lover of Red Indian spirit and tradition. He has painted many paintings of them," Mr. Fitzgerald said.

"The man (Mr. Koslow) is spreading slander and lies. He has taken photos of other people's art and is saying they are Schuon's."

He said his society does "pow wow type" dances, round dances, grand entries. Once a month Mr. Schuon used to smoke the Pipe and say a prayer for the Indians, until he became ill with heart problems. The society sends money and clothes to its Indian friends, Mr. Fitzgerald said.

The society has many original accounts of the coming of the White Buffalo Calf Woman, he explained, and according to these accounts, she came to the people naked. He said the fact that Lakota women traditionally are modest, and it is believed that exposing themselves is shameful, has not been overlooked by the society. It believes this shame came from the influence of Christian religion.

Mr. Fitzgerald said it was only after the influence of Christian religions that the Lakota people became ashamed and changed the story of the Pi San Win and added that she came clothed in white buckskin.

According to the book "Lakota Belief and Ritual" by James R. Walker, University of Nebraska Press, 1986, in which interviews were done with Lakota elders, the White Buffalo Calf Woman came to the people "without clothing of any kind except that her hair was very long and fell over her body like a robe."

In a catalog of Mr. Schuon's paintings, an explanation is given of why Sharlyn Romaine wears a war bonnet when she portrays the Pi San Win. "The images of the White Buffalo Cow Woman (sic) who brought the Sacred Pipe to the Lasota Indians; we may add that the headdresses she wears in some of Schuon's paintings, or other details may have a symbolic import and do not mean that the heavenly person actually appeared that way."

"Nothing that Mr. Schuon or any of his friends do reflects anything immoral, but always reflects the beauty, grandeur and dignity of the Native American spirit," Mr. Fitzgerald said.

"There are no rites of any type and the artistic dance recreating the legend of the coming of the Buffalo Calf Pipe reflects the descent of Divine Femininity bringing a revelation for the Sioux and all people of the world to know and respect."

He said Sharlyn Romaine, who does the re-enactment of the coming of the Pi San Win, "Does a recreation of the legend of the Buffalo Calf Woman. She does not use a Pipe, and sometimes she does it bare-breasted."

Mr. Romaine is allegedly one of Mr. Schuon's three "spiritual wives." Catherine Schuon is his legal wife.

"That is a recreation of the legend as we understood these original legends. Some speak of her coming completely naked or covered by hair," Mr. Fitzgerald said.

Roger Byrd, who does not claim to be a medicine man or a spiritual leader, but an Inke wicasa or common man, said he felt disturbed when he viewed pictures taken by the former society member who fell..."
It's About Buckles
SAFETY BELT

Mr. Schuon does not proselytize. He tries to lead a private life. He is well known in scholastic circles. He does not actively promote, or try to have people come to him. He is not like one of the pseudo medicine men you have written about. He doesn't charge or accept money.

Mr. Schuon is a controversial character. He has attracted attention by his participation in the Black Hills Sun dance. He is known for his dedication to his beliefs and his willingness to live according to them.

The Lakota Nation, in the Lakota tradition, most chiefs were chosen for their ability to lead the people and for their wisdom. Mr. Schuon is no exception. He is a respected leader among the Lakota people.

In conclusion, Mr. Schuon's dedication to his beliefs and his commitment to leading a life according to Lakota tradition make him a unique and interesting character. His efforts to preserve and promote Lakota culture and religion are commendable, and his role as a medicine man is respected by many.

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It is important to note that the Lakota tradition is deeply rooted in the land and the people. Mr. Schuon's dedication to his beliefs and his willingness to live according to them is an inspiration to many. His efforts to preserve and promote Lakota culture and religion are commendable, and his role as a medicine man is respected by many.

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A photograph of the shield presented to Frithjof Schuon when he was adopted into the Sioux tribe in 1959. Names on the shield include, Regina Looks Twice, and Verbera Black Tail Deer of Manderson. Levi Fasthorse of Donby, Bon Chief of Pine Ridge, and Nellie and Allux Showaway of the Warm Springs Tribe. Other names on the shield are Chief Tom Yellow Tail and Susie Yellow Tail.
Aug. 15, 1992

Dear Avis Little Eagle;

Thank you very much for your courageous and accurate article of July 29, 1991.

I wish to respond to a number of things said in this article: firstly, the Schuon group of Bloomington, Indiana is listed in the files of the Cult Awareness Network, an international organization which follows such groups, as a dangerous religious cult.

Since the indictments against Schuon for child molestation were surprised last year the Schuon cult has initiated six harassment law suits against various individuals who possess information regarding Schuon's secret rituals and other criminal activities of the group.

Despite the fact that the Schuon cult denies the existence of nude rituals called "primordial gatherings", there are now three eyewitness accounts of these rituals. All of the accounts describe Schuon wearing a Headdress with his genitals exposed pressing himself up against nude or scantily clad females who circle around him and press their bodies against him in order to receive the blessing and "grace" that is supposed to exude from his body. One thing that is not brought out in your article is that this ritual is compared by Schuon in his most recent book, to the Sundance. In some of the essays of this book Schuon calls himself the "deified man" and implicitly compares himself to the Sundance Tree. The women who dance around him are compared both to the female lovers of the Hindu god Krishna and to the dancers who dance around the Sundance Tree. Like the Sundance Tree Schuon's naked body is supposed to confer blessings and cures. The Schuon cult wishes to hide this profanation behind calling these events "pow wows", but there is enough documentation to prove both the existence of these rituals and the effort to create a cover-up of them.

There are nude "icons" of Schuon to which his followers pray and when they pray to them they call him "Jesus, Son of Mary". There are also many paintings painted by Schuon and his fourth wife, Sharlyn Romaine, of the naked Virgin Mary descending out of heaven to "console" Schuon with her body. Schuon says in his writings that he is "a man not like other men" and that his mission is to synthetize all the religions and in the words of Romaine, "to determine their respective directions". He and his followers maintain that he is "the manifestation of the perennial religion at the end of time" and thus he thinks he stands above the religions and above the law. This is why he thinks he can use and abuse Native American religion and mythology in any way he wishes. When I was in the cult I was told he is greater than Crazy Horse, Black Elk or any of the Wichasa Wakan of the past. The Lakota are nothing to him except one spoke in the wheel of his universalist ambition. When Mrs. Schuon writes to your paper that Schuon
is "the first philosopher and writer to elevate Plains Indian religion to the same level of the other great religions of the world" one sees an example of this extraordinary pride and presumption in action. The Plains Indians do not need anyone to elevate them to anything; on the contrary, Schuon is a spiritual colonialist who does not steal Indian lands, rather he tries to steal something more precious than land: Native American religion. The Lakota do not need Schuon to "elevate" them; Schuon needs the Lakota to elevate himself.

Please thank Mr. Roger Byrd and Dr. Bea Medicine for pointing out Schuon's "perversion" of Sioux beliefs. Also, if I may point out another aspect of Schuon's abuse of the story of the White Buffalo Calf Woman: the man who has lustful thoughts about her is not simply guilty of this; perhaps more profoundly, his sin is not to desire a woman but to possess the Sacred Woman to whom no man has a right. The sin here is not simply lust, but spiritual presumption and pride, and it is this same offensive presumption that makes Schuon's nude paintings of the White Buffalo Calf Woman as well as the Virgin Mary so offensive.

It is not simply a matter of nudity that is offensive about Schuon; it is rather the fact that Schuon thinks he can go into other religions like the colonialists went into other countries; they stripped and raped these countries just as Schuon strips and takes the White Buffalo Calf Woman, the Virgin Mary and all the religions for his own.

Proof that Sharlyn Romaine does reenact the coming of the Sacred Pipe entirely naked may be found in the evidence collected by the State Police; and therefore Mr. Fitzgerald's statement that she only does it "bare-breasted" is a deliberate understatement. Also this dance is performed while another completely naked woman sings one of the most sacred and secret ceremonial Pipe songs. I have a recording of this if you want it. Furthermore, in this dance Schuon is presented with the Pipe and as the man in the story who receives the Pipe represents all the Lakota people, here is another example of Schuon's extraordinary presumption.

I would also add that Schuon has been supported in great luxury for many years by various wealthy patrons, and that the Schuon cult collects money from followers and moreover, the cult has given Mr. Yellowtail, the Sundance leader of the Crow, both money and a house. If, as Mr. Fitzgerald maintains in your article, a "true medicine man" does not receive money, then why does Mr. Fitzgerald give money to a Sundance leader?

I am very grateful for your article; my purpose in this is not to hurt anyone, or to claim to be an Indian when I am not, but to try to let the truth be known. I wish to thank Tony Ironshell, Joseph Epes Brown, Raymond DeMallie, William Powers and Peter Nabokov who kindly answered all my questions and helped me understand better both what Lakota religion is and what it is not. May God help the Native American people.

Sincerely,

Mark Koslow
Both Frithjof Schuon and Hossein Nasr are well-known Sufi writers. Through his numerous books, Schuon has established himself as both a champion of Islam as well as a recognized Sufi master. By defending tradition against modernity and spreading the ideas of Schuon, Nasr has become one of the most popular authors in the Muslim world. The Festschrift and Essential Writings provide a distillation of Schuon's ideas, and by extension the thought of Nasr, while Mark Kolsow's account, micrographied and distributed to selected individuals, provides complementary insights into their work.

Frithjof Schuon, Nasr tells us, is 'the foremost expositor of traditional doctrines' and 'a metaphysician of the highest order to be compared to the foremost metaphysicians of history.' But he is much more than a mere 'metaphysician': Schuon is a 'theologian, traditional philosopher and logician, master of the discipline of traditional religion, expositor of traditional art and civilization, authority in the science of man and society, spiritual guide and critic of the modern world in not only its practical but also philosophical and scientific aspects.' His works are 'comprehensive and all-embracing in the sense that they include practically the whole mountain of knowledge understood in the traditional sense, ranging from its metaphysical peak which touches the infinite expanse of the heavens to particular fields such as formal theology, anthropology and psychology.' His perspective is 'truly universal in the sense of embracing all orders of reality from the Divine to the human'. This sublime and superhuman being presents us with a 'fresh vision of the Truth'. In Knowledge and the Sacred (SUNY, 1989), Nasr is much more precise: 'Schuon seems like the cosmic intellect itself incarnated by the energy of divine grace surveying the whole of the reality surrounding man and elucidating all the concerns of human existence in the light of sacred knowledge' (p. 107).

So, what do we know about this 'cosmic intellect'? Nasr admits that 'little is known of the life of this most remarkable spiritual teacher and metaphysician who has preferred to remain outside the gaze of public eye'. What he chooses to tell us, however, is even less than a potted biography at the back of a standard paperback. Born in Basle, Switzerland, in 1907, Schuon showed signs of genius right from the beginning. By the time he was a teenager he had mastered Greek philosophy and oriental metaphysics and consequently left school at the age of 16. He travelled to Morocco and met the Sufi Sheikh Ahmad al Alawi. In 1968, he visited Turkey and saw the 'House of the Holy Virgin in Kusadasi, near Ephesus'. In North American Indians, he 'saw something of the nobility and majesty of the Primordial Tradition' and migrated to America in 1981.

From these influences emerge Schuon's teachings on the transcendental unity of all religions. The theory, as Nasr explains, goes like this: 'each religion lives within a world of form and yet is based upon and issues from the formless Essence. It also possesses an esoteric dimension which is in fact concerned with the inner reality above forms and an esoteric dimension which governs, orients and sanctifies the domain of multiplicity and forms within which human beings live and act. The unity of religion can only be found on the level of the formless, the inward, the esoteric.' However, these esoteric dimensions of religion are not accessible to everyone, only 'saintly' folks who possess 'wisdom' have the capability of grasping the esoteric essence of religion, only such individuals are qualified to 'engage in... the enterprise,' known as comparative religion.

The key concept in Schuon's thought is 'tradition'. But by tradition is meant 'neither custom nor habit', nor 'what has been believed or practiced'; rather, it is a supraformal reality, hence impossible to define. Tradition is 'all that has its origins in the Heavens, in revelation in its most universal sense, along with the unfolding in a particular spatio-temporal setting determined by the Source from which the tradition originates.' This supraformal traditional esoterism is there in Orphic mysteries, in the Kabbals, in the Dionysiac, Eirgenas, and Eckharts of Western Christianity, in the writings of the Sufis in the Islamic world; it can also be found in the 'works of such men as Nagarjuna and Sankara, of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu'. But the most authentic expression of this 'metaphysical doctrine of an ultimate Divine Origin' is to be found in the 'intellectual tradition' known as 'Platonism and especially Neoplatonism'. Schuon, Nasr asserts, has elucidated this prismatic and principal reality of religion in its 'most perfect and complete form'.

But there is another dimension of Schuon's thought that needs attention:

It is important to mention the central role that the one female prophetic being in this world, namely the Virgin Mary, plays in the spiritual universe of Schuon. He has written eloquently about her role not only in Christianity and even in Judaism, through the House of Aaron, but in Islam; where she is called the woman chosen by God among other women of the world. Schuon speaks of the Virgin's invincible...
investigations he had interviewed 30 people in connection with the case and concluded that Schoum is a powerful, aloof man who was 'obsessed with nudity', and who led his followers who wore American Indian garb, in rituals during which he pressed himself against bare breasted women while placing his hands on their hips'. Search of Schoum's house had 'turned up photographs of nude and semi nude members of the group participating in ritual dance'. The same day, Schoum refuted the notion that he was the head of a cult but admitted that he was the Shikib of a Sufi order called Tariga Maranamiah, a spiritual society for prayer which exists for those Sufi followers of my principles' (17th October 1991). Defending Schoum, Nasr told the Herald Times of 20th October that 'he belongs to a different world. He is very much a premodern man'.

That there is much more to the 'genius', who unlike any other 'single human being', surpasses all in both metaphysics and plastic arts, became quite evident in the Winter of 1991. The Herald Times of Bloomington, Indiana, reporting on the front page of its 15th October 1991 edition, declared:

The 84 year old leader of a religious sect living in Inverness Woods southeast of Bloomington has been indicted on felony charges of child molesting and sexual battery in connection with alleged sexual abuse of three teenage girls during the sect's rites... Frijol Schoum of 3700 Inverness Farms Road was the child target of three indictments issued by a Monroe County grand jury.

Two days later, State Police Detective, Sgt Jim Richardson, told the Herald Times that during his Dance, as well as the sexual alchemy in rapid succession. I studied painting with Schoum and painted 5 icons under his direction. While a member of tariga, Koslow believed that Schoum was 'a prophet, an Avatara and the equal or more of Solomon'.

Whatever the merits or demerits of the indictment, the investigation revealed certain important features about Schoum. He had established an hitherto unknown tariga revolving around Virgin Mary. Nudity plays an important part in the rituals (zikr) of this tariga. And despite the language and terminology, Schoum's innovation had little to do with Islam or Sufism.

The case against Schoum was brought by Mark Koslow, a former disciple and member of the Tariga Maranamiah. Koslow was initiated into the tariga in June 1989. 'I was given', he says, 'the fifth and sixth themes of meditation, the Alchemy and the Primordial (Perennial Books, 1982) where he suggests that ease and the cosmological principle of the universe and Hindu caste systems is based on 'natural properties of humankind'; that races have distinctive human and natural characteristics and that people's physical features reveal all. It is not unnatural for a man who believes in social hierarchy to be a divine principle to actually structure his own sect on a strict hierarchy. Koslow claims that Schoum insists that his disciples 'define history as leading up to Schoum'. Well, Nasr himself says so in so many words as I have shown above! Koslow says that Schoum insists that the members of his sect should only read his books - no other books are worthy of attention. Well, have you ever met a Guru who says otherwise?

The bible of Tariga Maranamiah is 'Memories and Meditations' of Frithjof Schoum. Disciples get portions of the 'Memories' according to their station; and only the top officials have the complete book. But it is an ever expanding work that serves not only as a guide to behaviour of the sect but also for theory building.

As Schoum's behaviour becomes more and more
Leader of sect indicted
Sexual abuse alleged in rites

By Kartal Duran

The spiritual leader of a cult that makes pilgrimages to the site of the ancient temple in Bountiful to worship the Pte San Win, the Buffalo Cow Woman of the Sioux, and Lallah Yogishwari, a naked Hindu saint, has been arrested and charged with sexually abusing several children. The police say the accused, known as Koslow, was operating a cult that used the temple as a base for its activities.

The charges against Koslow include charges of rape, sodomy, and sexual abuse of children under the age of 14. The police say they have evidence that Koslow used the temple as a place to abuse children and that he had been living there for several years.

According to the police, the cult members were forced to stay in the temple and were subjected to abuse. The victims were between the ages of 8 and 14. The police say they have evidence that Koslow used the temple as a base for his activities and that he had been living there for several years.

The police are currently investigating the activities of the cult and say they will be seeking additional charges against Koslow.

The temple is located on the border of Utah and Idaho, and the police say they have received reports of similar activities at other sites in the area.

The police say they are seeking the public's assistance in identifying other potential victims of abuse.

The temple is a place of worship for the Pte San Win cult, which believes in the worship of the Pte San Win, a sacred cow that is said to have saved the lives of the Sioux people. The cult members believe that the Pte San Win is a being of great power and that she can help people in times of need.

The police say they will be seeking the public's assistance in identifying other potential victims of abuse and urge anyone who may have information to come forward.

The police say they are seeking the public's assistance in identifying other potential victims of abuse and urge anyone who may have information to come forward.
the first of these, with the large drum in the background and the tariqa Indian singers singing Indian songs, Schuo, with genitals exposed, goes into the centre of the Indian Lodge. The women circle around him clockwise, shoulder to shoulder. From the centre towards the periphery, Schuo goes up to each woman in turn and gives them a kind of embrace, pressing his chest and belly against the breasts and abdomen of the women. In yet another dance, he sits on his bench on the side of a lodge and as the women circle the lodge, each woman as she approaching a few feet from Schuo, directly in front of him, stops and does a 360 degree turn, giving him an opportunity to look each one up and down back and front.

Schuo compares these dances, says Koslow, to the dance of Krishna with the Gopis, to the Sun Dance since the sun dancers go in and out from the centre and to the circum-ambulation of the Kaaba.

During these zikr sessions, and not all of them are held outdoors, disciples go ecstatic and have incredible mystical experiences. Koslow provides an account of an experience by one of the devotees:

On the night of the maulis, as Sidi Junayd’s first chant began, the light above the centre of the circle of faqara turned into the sun... Isaw... a nocturnal vault of heavenly stars... earlier the Shaykh had moved over to the right of his normal position so that Sidi Husein could read a text in Arabic. Between the sun and the Shaykh between Heaven and Earth floating upon her knees with arms outstretched towards him, appeared the Blessed Virgin, clothed in muted but rich hues of blue... she stretched out Her arms towards the Shaykh’s head, as if to bless and console him... Surrounding the Virgin on her own level... were five circles of majestic angels, winged and dressed in simple and costless robes in hues of white... they circum-ambulated the Virgin counter clockwise...

occasionally one or another would glide down and brush with his hand the crown of the turban of a faqir, but then return to his place in the celestial dance. Later... the Virgin stood facing the Shaykh her breasts unveiled in the centre of the circle of the faqara she was at the heart of our gathering, in the centre... Her attention solely upon the Shaykh, she gazed upon him gravely and sweetly, with an intention of benediction and love. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, her hands stretched out towards the Shaykh alternately turned from palms down to palms up, back and forth, from signs of dogmatic exposition to gestures of inviting love: her arms and hands were extension of her heart...

This then sums up the ‘metaphysical essence’ of all religions. This is the final product of ‘sacred knowledge’, the esoterism of centuries, relgious perennials, tradition based on divine revelation. This is the demonstration with blinding evidence of ‘the possibility of all embracing knowledge’. This is the fate fresh vision of the Truth’ that Fritjof Schuo has given to the world.

If we were to trace the development of Schuo’s thought through his books, starting from the Transcendent Unity of Religion (1953) (1 recommend a reading from the first section of the first edition for an insight into the role of Man in Schuo’s thought) to Language of the Self (1959), Light on the Ancient World (1965) and Survey of Metaphysics and Esoterism (1986), we would see that Koslow’s revelations are but a logical conclusion of the entire enterprise. Signs of a doctrine which he represents and which he even personifies by virtue of his “being” or “substance” (Essentials, p.282). The step from an ‘infallible’ master whose very being personifies revelation to a prophet, or Avatar, or Shiva, or any other kind of god head, is not just insignificantly small but totally natural. Moreover, since religion perennials represents the essence of all religions, the human instrument and the manifestation of the religion perennials at the end of time cannot just be the godhead of a single religion he must be the Logos through which all religions emanate. Schuo thus has to be an Avatar as well as Shiva, Christ, Red Indian god, the primordial religion per se and esoterism personified. It’s pure logic of the transcendence.

Much of what Schuo has to say about tradition, metaphysics, authority, caste, race and primordial man is taken from nineteenth century German philosophy and the Symbolic movement of the twenties and thirties in which he grew up. The symbolist movement which influenced his father, had a romantic attachment to the esoteric and the primordial. The symbolists were scavengers of India, China, Islam and other non Western cultures and developed an eclectic philosophy which was a mish mash of all cultures and religions. In its most extreme form, this philosophy produced the volkisch ideology and the rise of Hitler. Like Schuo’s thought, the volkisch ideology was based on Gnosticism, Occultism, the Hermetic corpus, Pythagoreanism, neo-Platonism, the Hindu belief in reincarnation, karma and cyclic time, the Kabala and religious trappings of Christianity.

Schuo has ushered this lethal brew into Islam and Sufism with predictable consequences. (A more thorough analysis of the connection between the metaphysical structure of the volkisch ideology and Schuo’s and Nasr’s thought appears in my Explorations in Islamic Science, Mansell, London, 1989, p14-129). Such a disciplinarian and occultist metaphysics, with its obsession with secrecy and sacred rites, could only produce an authoritarian cult. The suspicion was confirmed in 1986, when after an split in the tariqa, Victor Donner and Joseph Brown, two noted disciples, denounced Schuo as an impostor. Now Mark Koslow’s revelations can have no one in any doubt.

Ziauddin Sardar
...I have read your book. It is an extraordinary document and of irreplaceable value. It sheds light on the "Frithjof Schuon enigma", and it also shows all that you must have suffered. Even though you cannot guarantee the perfect exactness of the reported facts, since you have only repeated what M.M. has told you, none the less what remains is that, in many ways (self-idolatry, scorn of adversaries, anger and asthmatic crises), and above all in his strange relationship with the Holy Virgin, this portrait bears an altogether striking resemblance and confirms what one could otherwise guess. In many respects I am thankful to you for having acted in such a way that the situation has been clarified considerably. God has permitted this to occur so that each one might take sides.

Like you, I believe that the relationship of F.S. with the Holy Virgin is at the heart of the Schuonian deviation. But I see there a symptom and an effect rather than a cause.

I hope that after all of these events you will return to peace of soul and serenity of spirit.

What I have appreciated most in your book is that you strove not to judge the man. In any case, we must not keep any resentment in the depths of ourselves.

For my part, I feel the necessity of my break with him as an exigency of my fidelity to Jesus Christ. It is not against Schuon that I have completed this break, but for Christ. I say this in all truth, at least in as much as it is possible for me to read in my heart. I no longer recognize Christ in the Schuonian way. And, despite my efforts, I did not succeed in adhering fully to his metaphysical doctrine. For me the rest, even the important events which have transpired, is secondary.
René Guénon and the Signs of Our Times:
A Critical Appraisal of The Reign of Quantity

by David Fidelier

A Youthful Infatuation

While the late French intellectual and esotericist René Guénon has a larger following in Europe, there is an increasing interest in his life and ideas in the United States. Because English language translations of his major writings are currently out of print, one is most likely to hear about Guénon through secondary sources.

My first encounter with Guénon was through his Symbolism of the Cross which I was fortunate to stumble upon in a used bookstore. It is hard to describe how impressed I was with this work, for Guénon approaches the symbolism of the cross from a metaphysical as opposed to a historical perspective. Rather than treating the symbol of the cross from the standpoint of a merely Christian symbol, Guénon demonstrates the symbol’s universality, and then goes on to show how the cross, as best exemplified by the three-dimensional coordinate system, symbolizes the various levels of being. Much of this work is quite similar to the work of Mircea Eliade’s observations on the symbolisms of the axis mundi, the world axis or central pillar of the universe, which is represented in such varied symbolic types as the Cosmic Tree, World Mountain, the Omphalos at Delphi, etc. For Guénon, whenever the symbol of the cross appears in a religious tradition, it is a reflection of a metaphysical, cosmic reality which underlies not only the many different symbolic types, but the very structure of Reality itself.

Because of my sympathetic predilection toward Platonic thought — the notion that there are certain universal forms underlying particular phenomena — the approach of Guénon immediately appealed to me. Guénon also seemed to expand the boundaries of religious studies, for taking this ontological approach to religious symbolism seemed to open the way to the knowledge of, and perhaps experience of, these higher cosmic realities. An interesting thought for someone with mystical leanings. Guénon’s seeming authority also appealed to me, in addition to his dispassionate, detached, and penetrating intellec
tual style. While I had never been a sucker for authority figures, it seemed to me from reading this little book that Guénon had some type of inner knowledge about things that most other people were only speculating about.

I later came to discovery that there was a whole school of Guénonian followers known as the Traditionalists. Guénon had conversed to ban, and many of his followers were Modern too. They even had their own journal published in England called Studies in Comparative Religion. How interesting, I thought. Perhaps there was hope for religious studies after all!

Unfortunately, as I investigated further, my youthful and idealistic infatuation with Guénon and the Traditionalists started to crumble. The major turning point was my encounter with Guénon’s book The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times. Welcome to the Dark Side. Ultimately, the Reign of Quantity (hereafter referred to as RoQ) led me to squarely reject the idea that Guénon was an intellectually dispassionate thinker.

The Reign of Quantity

Günon introduces RoQ by noting that, since he wrote an earlier work, The Crisis of the Modern World, he has had it in mind to follow it up “with a work of a more strictly ‘doctrinal’ character.”

Günon’s basic argument in RoQ, if you can call it that, is that the historical flow of events represents a kind of “metaphysical entropy;” a ‘descent’ or ‘degradation’ from the Primordial Golden Age to the new of the modern era. Starting with the premise that “Satan is the age of God;” Guénon states that the modern era, which he identifies with the Kali Yuga, the Iron Age of Hindu cosmology, represents the inversion of all true, traditional spirituality. We have moved from the divine Unity of the Primordial Tradition — the spiritual Tradition which underlies all authentic religious traditions — to the mass produced units of consumer society. As the degradation of time inevitably continues, and the pandemonium of chaos becomes more pronounced, the principle of Quality will continue to give way to that of Quantity. Finally, when this process reaches a crescendo — and one gets the feeling that this cannot be very far away — we will reach the “end of a world,” with an inevitable reversion to the Golden Age.

It should be kept in mind that the RoQ represents not so much a theory as a form of certain knowledge, arrived at through Guénon’s “pure intellectual intuition of a supra-individual nature.”

Günon’s followers often gloss over the master’s more exact observations, but that need not detain us here. Some of Günon’s main “insights” in RoQ include the following:

■ The Reign of Quantity involves a “debasement of coinage.” While in the past money was a more indicative token of spiritual value, it has now “lost all guarantee of a superior order.”

■ Because of the metaphysical entropy which is dragging the world closer and closer to absolute materialism, there is a corresponding solidification of the world, i.e., “matter” is becoming more “real.” Therefore, the reason that we cannot gain much archaeological evidence about the nature of life in the Golden Age is because matter was much more subtle then, certainly not solid enough to result in the formation of lasting physical artifacts.

■ On the “proliferation of utilizations” of metals, “by virtue of the subtle influences attached to them, metals can also play a part leading more directly to the final dissolution.” Moreover, the “guardians” or psychic “entities” associated with metals are “extremely dangerous for anyone to approach who has not got the required qualifications.”

■ There are “fissures” developing in “the Great Wall” which surrounds the Earth and normally protects the inhabitants “from the invasion of malevolent influences coming from the inferior subtle domain.” Following “Islamic tradition,” Günon notes that these “fissures” are “those by which, at the end of the cycle, the devastating hordes of Gog and Magog...
will force their way in, for they are unrelenting in their efforts to invade the world. Not only is the world "exposed defenseless to all the attacks of its enemies," but now in the profane, modern era, it is more so than ever, for "the present-day mentality being what it is, the dangers which threaten it are wholly unperceived."

The appearance of humanism and rationalism in the Renaissance marks the beginning of "the anti-tradition." The "anti-tradition," however, is just a preparation for the "counter-tradition." The "counter-tradition" represents an "inversion," "subversion," and "great parody" of traditional spirituality. The "counter-tradition" is a "satanic counterfeit" of true spirituality, and is associated with such phenomena as shamanism and spiritualism, which accelerate the leakage of negative, subconscious real psychic forces into the human sphere. The "counter-tradition" involves the confusion of the psychic with the truly spiritual. (Guénon didn't care very much about the psyche, seeing that the soul is "inferior" to Divine Intuition.)

On the "static" character of psychoanalysis: "The only effect of psychoanalysis must be to bring to the surface, by making it fully conscious, the whole content of those lower depths of the being that can properly be called the 'sub-conscious': moreover the being concerned is already psychologically weak by hypothesis, for if he were otherwise he would experience no need to resort to treatment of this description: he is already much the less able to resist 'subversion,' and he is in grave danger of finding himself in the chaos of dark forces thus imprudently let loose; even if he manages in spite of everything to escape, he will at least retain throughout the rest of his life an imprint like an irremovable 'stain' within himself."

Last but not least, before the profane world of modernity will flash out of existence, the Anti-christ will make his appearance. He will be "an impostor," the very personification of the "Great Parody." As Guénon notes, "After the 'egalitarianism' of our times there will again be a visibly established hierarchy, but an inverted hierarchy, indeed a real 'counter-hierarchy,' the summit of which will be occupied by the being who will in reality be situated nearer than any other being to the very bottom of the 'pit of Hell.'"

The Cosmic Conspiracy? or Against the Cosmic Millenniumists

For some time I have pondered in what fashion Guénon might be categorized as a thinker. Many enjoy referring to him as a "metaphysician," while others prefer "esotericist." The term "Fundamentalist" has been suggested by some, and I have personally toyed with the idea of "conspiracy theorist" insofar as RoqQ seems to bristle with the type of dark paranoia one often finds in works of that genre. It is, in any event, probably to Guénon's credit that he cannot be easily categorized.

While some of Guénon's works might conceivably fall into the "metaphysics" category, RoqQ certainly does not, at least in a "traditional" sense. In fact, the whole argument of RoqQ is philosophically anti-traditional, for Guénon has come up with a system of metaphysical utopology which has no parallel anywhere in the history of Western metaphysics. Guénon is famous for his supposedly cold and impartial intellectual style, but RoqQ is anything but an impartial work of metaphysical philosophy. Quite simply, it is a spiteful and vindictive polemic against the modern world. Philosophically, Guénon can be criticized on the grounds of being unphilosophical. Philosophy, at least in the Platonic sense, involves dialogue and dialectic. As Guénon states at the beginning of RoqQ, his work represents a doctrine, and his approach does violence to the principles of philosophical inquiry. Of course, in the glorious Golden Age there probably wasn't a need for philosophy. Yet another weak point, which undermines Guénon's entire "argument," is his naïve simplistic use of dualistic typologies, i.e., spirit vs. matter, quality vs. quantity, unity vs. multiplicity. Guénon was smart enough to realize that Unity underlies all polarities in theory, but his work demonstrates an inability to see how this works in practice, in the living, breathing world. It even becomes worse when he assigns a temporal dimension to these extratemporal polarities: to suggest that history consists of a metaphysical movement from quality to quantity is unprecedented to say the least.

In addition to failing as a philosopher and metaphysician, Guénon also fails as an esotericist. Esotericism involves penetrating to the inner meaning of traditional teaching, symbol, or form; yet in seeing the Golden Age as a realm of spiritual per-
fection in the distant past, Guénon sees against the first tenet of esoterism, which demands that one never take mythology in a literal sense. The true esotericist, conversely, realizes that the Golden Age and the Kali Yuga both represent the consciousness of certain levels of being. The Golden Age, or realm of perfection, is not to be found in the distant past or future but here and now. The Greeks identified the Golden Age with the Age of Kronos, and as the great philosopher Plotinus observed, the Age of Kronos is not primordial perfection but the ever present level of Nous or Divine Mind. The realm of Kronos is also the realm of wholeness, whereas Guénon’s dualistic, intellective and abstract hierarchy splitting in “Kali Yuga” in orientation.

Guénon’s so-called Primal Tradition also does an injustice to the individuality of the world’s spiritual traditions: the merging together of Hindu time cycles and the Judeo-Christian speculations about the end of time and the “Anti-Mas.” For example, is quite unfair to both traditions involved. Moreover, in deciding what cosmic truths make up the Perennial Tradition behind all traditions, Guénon made some rather personal and arbitrary decisions.

If RoQ cannot be seen as a work of metaphysical philosophy, what is it then? I believe that Guénon’s work is, for the most part, a piece of poetical rhetoric directed at the modern world, a world from which Guénon was severely alienated. From the standpoint of Guénon’s intellectual posturing — that is to say, from the standpoint of “Metaphysical Truth” — a person’s emotional and feelings are totally insignificant. But despite this premise, RoQ is a supremely emotional work, couched in the rhetorical style of the discursive intellect.

Despite Guénon’s rejection of psychology, RoQ ultimately tells us more about Guénon himself than it does about the nature of the cosmos. More ironically, the harder he strove to transcend his individuality, the more he was imprisoned in his own subjectivity. The more he strove to be a being of universal and abstract intellect, the more his thought was poisoned by his childish and vindictive feeling. The more he tried to be purely rational, the more irrational and paranoid he became: witness the Anti-Christian, cosmic conspiracy, the end of the world, the extinction of spirit and triumph of matter, the forces of darkness seeping into the world at once sacred sites, the anti-tradition, the insidious invention. Guénon’s outlook makes for good science fiction, but not for a very good philosophy to base one’s life on.

It is fascinating that the French writer Jacques Lacarrière — himself a radical world-rejecting, geocentric dualist — in his book The Gnostics, rejects Guénon as being too extreme. Guénon seems to have had little aesthetic sense, little appreciation for the beauty of the natural world and its propensity to elevate the soul. Rather, like most apocalyptic thinkers he seems to have hated the world, secretly delirious in the possibility of its annihilation. Guénon sought refuge in the narrowness of the polished, discursive intellect, and after the death of his first wife he moved to Cairo where he lived the life of a recluse. While Guénon does have some good insights into the problems facing the modern world, it is ultimately the Guénonian type of mentality — the “eye without a heart” — that is to blame for many of our contemporary problems. That is to say, as Philip Sherard has pointed out in his excellent book The Eclipse of Man and Nature, our contemporary problems spring not from the imperative of a metaphysical principle but from a lack of the living vision and inner certitude of the sacredness of Nature. This intellectual detachment from the natural world, which characterizes the perspective of Guénon, also involves a detachment from humanity, not to mention a detachment from the realm of feeling and the soul, both personal and transcendent. It is only when one is thus detached from the living realm of the soul and the divine cosmos that the exploitative and mechanistic excesses of “modernity” can begin to manifest themselves. Yet the Guénonian perspective, as springing as it does from detachment and alienation, if adopted as a living creed can only lead to more of the same. The Guénonian position allows, and perhaps even encourages, us to abrogate our personal, social and ecological responsibilities. Because the End is predetermined, there is nothing we can do about it.

Civilizations rise and fall. To suggest that all is fine with the modern world would be as fateful as to embrace the opposite extreme. One of the contributing causes of our modern predicament is doubt the ideological desacralization of the cosmos. Yet despite the fact that the organized religions are experiencing tumultuous times, there is currently a greater interest in traditional metaphysical and spiritual paths than perhaps at any previous moment — if anything, the existence of this magazine is a reflection of that interest. While it would be overly optimistic to suggest that we are standing on the verge of a “New Age,” it’s certainly overly pessimistic to suggest that The End Is At Hand. If organized religion is breaking down that could very well be due to the possibility that organized religions, as predominately social organizations, are not meeting people’s inner spiritual needs. Organized religions, after all, only approximate the Truth and, under the most beneficent conditions, can lead the individual to some experience of the eternal. It does not follow, as the Guénonians hold, that diversity and individuation are “kantian” in character. Perhaps they are even worthy of being prized and cultivated. Greater knowledge leads to greater individuation, freedom and personal responsibility. No longer can we dare to believe that either the organized church or the organized state can provide for our salvation — we must save ourselves. All is not fine with the modern world, yet as Philip Sherard has observed in his thoughtful critique of modernity: “...however perilous our situation, we do not on that account regard it as inevitable that we are doomed and that there is no alternative except progressive materialization leading to the Armageddon and the coming of the Anti-Christ. One of the great dangers is precisely that we become spellbound before the sphinx-like monster of the world we have brought into existence. We even forget that it is we who have produced it, not it which has produced us. In this way we are reduced to a kind of helpless passivity, lamenting the world of natural simplicities and sacred forms that has gone, and seeing in the present and the immediate future the necessary and inescapable decline of the cosmic cycles into a pre-ordained dark age ending in the emergence of the Beast from the abyss. We commit a kind of apostasy. We surrender to the image of negation and purposelessness which we are summoned to overcome.

...We surrender in fact to what is the most negative and ugly side of our nature.”

David Fideler, in addition to being publisher of Phoenice Press and a contributing editor to Gnosis, is in many ways a traditionalist, but in no way a Traditionalist.

5. Ibid, p. 188.
8. Ibid.
10. Ibid, chap. 29.
11. Ibid, p. 278.
Why Esoterism Can Lead To Fascism.

Reading Peter Lamborn Wilson's letter in the last Gnosis Forum, André Vandenbroek's Al-Keli (reviewed in this issue), and some other material, has led me to contemplate the relationship which has historically existed at times between esoterism and fascist political movements. It has even led me to formulate a very simplistic, and perhaps naive, theory to help "explain" this relationship.

Esoterism purports to reveal the true, inner dimension of a spiritual teaching. This inner dimension is portrayed as having some type of universal significance, and the knowledge of this inner meaning is usually arrived at through means not generally apparent to the "many" who follow the esoteric or "outer" form. There is obviously a bit of dualistic tension here between the esoteric and the exoteric.

To the intelligent, spiritually aware person, it is obvious that there is an esoteric dimension to the teachings of the world religions. The great masters speak in parables. There is an inner meaning to be arrived at. I take this for granted and feel that there exists an "esoteric imperative" we should feel impelled to quest for this inner essence.

By its very nature, esoterism appeals to the intelligent individual who realizes that there is a more to reality than that which merely meets the eye. Possessing a glimpse of the true potentials of humanity, such individuals are also likely to be sorely conscious of the generally sorry-state of affairs in this world of ours. This is very admirable.

The shadow side of esoterism is that the esoteric perspective can lead to either alienation or elitism, and sometimes both at once. The esotericist who falls into this trap essentially sees himself as different and superior to others. This is very tempting, especially because esoterism appeals to "higher," "superior" forms of consciousness. Perhaps the surest safeguard against this sin of esoteric hubris is a good sense of humor, especially the ability to laugh at yourself. Everyone knows someone who lacks this faculty and the unpleasant effect that taking one's self too seriously can have—personally believe that this is a hallmark of the fascist mentality.

What little I know about "esoteric fascists" is that some of them may have stated out with "good intentions" and worthwhile social critiques, probably like Schwallers de Lubicz's Les Velleurs group, only to arrive at an ultimately unsavory position—an inverse reflection of their initial positive insights. That, in essence, is my "theory."

Fascism becomes dangerous if it makes a cult out of the "supra-human intellect." I believe that Guénon and the Traditionalists in general are guilty of this, in addition to possessing a tendency toward spirituallism. Mixed with politics, the combination can be explosive. While it must be firmly emphasized that Guénon was not himself a fascist, I find it personally fascinating that this type of "Traditionalism" appeals to people who are fascists. Based as it is on the Revealed Truth of Eternal Metaphysical Doctrine, and a healthy dose of good old Extremism, it is easy to see why the Guénonian position inherently appeals to the authoritarian personality.

The perfect case in point is Julius Evola (1898-1974), René Guénon's Italian "collaborator," with whom he corresponded and with whom he appears to have met a couple times. Evola wrote many books on esoterism, Hermetic and magical topics, and was also a leading Italian Fascist "philosopher." His only critique of Guénon was that he didn't go far enough. In his book The Revolt Against the Modern World, he spouts out the Guénonian paradigm of metaphysical entropy and the spiritual philosophy of "Traditionalism," but a "Traditionalism translated into the political sphere." Evola presents his philosophy as a supranational insight into the nature of reality and the traditional teachings about hierarchy are naturally translated into the political sphere as well. Evola's work is also full of racism, and his work Synthesis of the Doctrine of Race was hailed "as the official statement of Fascism's 'spiritual' racism as against Nazism's merely biological racism." (Thomas Sheehan, Myth and Violence: The Fascism of Julius Evola and Alain de Benoist, Social Research, vol. 48, pp. 45-73.) Evola was also one of the Fascist intellectuals that met with Hitler in September 1943 to discuss the formation of the Fascist Republic of Salò, after the fall of Italy to the Allies.

In reading a few snippets from Evola's work in translation I have been impressed by his verbal precision, his obvious "intelligence," and some of his statements which are so extreme as to be quite amusing (e.g. "All American women are frigid.") Evola was smart, but seemed to lack all common sense. Atis, the two are not synonymous.

Common sense, I believe, also involves a respect for humanity and a willingness to engage in discourse... perhaps even a bit of compassion as well. Yet as Sheehan observes in his fascinating article, the supranational metaphysics of "Traditionalism" does violence to discourse. It is precisely this violent "interruption of discourse" which Evola's Fascism translates into the political sphere.

Evola would perhaps represent something of a sadly amusing historical curiosity if it wasn't for the fact that his work is still in print and a major inspiration to the contemporary "Third Force" Eurofascism that Wilson refers to in his letter. Like the eminently quotable robot from "Lost in Space," one can only voice a note of warning.

—David Fieler, Grand Rapiods, Michigan

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