



A commentary about “The Spiritual Fascism of René Guénon and His Followers”

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Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.
(Matthew 7:6)

A long essay, entitled “The Spiritual Fascism of René Guénon and His Followers”, has recently been published on the internet by an anonymous author who has also participated to various negative online reviews of books related to Tradition. As a matter of fact, from the very first lines of his introduction, the author declares his hate for “Traditionalism,” which apparently appeared after having spent two years in a traditionalist “group” in the early 90s (a cult as he calls it). His claims are that René Guénon has been supporting fascism, and that “Traditionalism”¹ is a fascist ideology. Some of his other affirmations are that “Traditionalism,” as defined by Guénon, is a religion supposed to replace all existing religions, and that Guénon “wants to reinstate the monarchical and mythological powers of the far distant past [...] He wants to return to the Pantocrator-Christ as judge throwing lightning bolts at poor sinners [...] Guénon wants to return to the age of mythological deceit, where Kings lord over subjects and swat them down like flies and the Church controls the thoughts of the populations”. A fierce partisan of the materialistic and individualistic modern world (“democracy, human rights, science and the enlightenment, all of which are basically good things”), the author therefore defines “Traditionalism” as a threat, a return to the glory of the past, a product of paranoid people, and he totally denies the existence of a true spirituality: “of course, there are no “true initiations” - all that is mythology too”.

¹ We use quotation marks to indicate that there is a difference between Tradition and traditionalism, as René Guénon explained it.

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So from these few excerpts it appears very clearly that the anonymous author is an atheist, a profane, whose understanding of metaphysics, and particularly of the concepts related to the Primordial Tradition, is completely corrupted, almost diametrically opposed to the original meaning offered by Guénon and by the other “traditionalist” authors. Such a down-to-earth and materialistic approach, regarding highly elevated metaphysical concepts, is the direct cause of political ideologies similar to the one the author claims to denounce. What the author does not realize is that he is the source of his own paranoia...

His hate and opposition for everything that is related to spirituality, and his misunderstanding of relatively simple symbolical concepts, lead him to twist the words of Guénon out of their context and apply them to materialistic ideas (applying them to the political field for example)... Hence his insistence in calling Guénon a spiritual fascist, putting him side by side with George Bush or Jesus Christ (“*They [the traditionalists] have a paranoid, cultish ‘Them versus Us’ attitude’ rather like Christ or George Bush*”). This very clearly shows that he is using the word *fascism* for any reason. Refusing to make compromises on critical issues is not fascism. Shame on the author for categorizing people with such a strong word.

Once again, and we’ve seen it with another recent author, the historian Mark Sedgwick, who wrote about Guénon, academic and historical knowledge about a spiritual subject do not automatically offer objectivity, and impartiality regarding that subject. Metaphysics is not a “science”, the world of symbols cannot be approached objectively. It is to be “lived”, integrated, since the person who works on these subjects hopes to be transformed, realized. So approaching spirituality as an outsider, to observe it “scientifically” and in a profane way, makes absolutely no sense. It is similar to the approach of scholars reading masonic rituals and criticizing them. The rituals are just the support to an esoteric knowledge and experience. Reading them will never give the scholars a hint of what initiation is truly all about, as there need to be the participation of a spiritual influence that cannot be transferred through a book.

And observing spirituality from a historical and down-to-earth point of view has very little interest if any at all, because the human beings being observed are not perfect. The universal Truth shows itself through many aspects, most of the time diametrically opposed according to the point of view It is seen. Human beings will denature the metaphysical concepts due to limitation in their spiritual development. About the religions for example, since the author hates them so much: should we judge a religion based on the action of its people? Of course not. Some people who at a time were leading the Christian Church led atrocities like the Inquisition, but other people within the same Christian Church also realized acts of kindness that were absolutely out of this world, in the name of the same ideal spiritual concepts. And the same could be said of the fundamentalists and extremists within Judaism, Islam and any other minor or major religions or masonic fraternities. This is why Guénon insisted that only his writings are to be remembered, not his personal life, which has nothing remarkable.

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René Guénon was before all a metaphysician who asserted, based on his deep knowledge of the many major spiritual traditions around the world, that all of them emanated from a single Primordial source and that the major traditions were different expressions of the same metaphysical order. In regards to the negative reference to the monarchy, by the anonymous author, René Guénon was the first one to detail the metaphysics of the function of the King of the World, as the ultimate spiritual mediator on earth. The anonymous author declares that his “*knowledge of Guénon is considerable*” and yet, he completely misunderstands the deep meaning of all of Guénon writings.² This modern way of interpreting symbols in a materialistic way today opened the path to popular books like the Da Vinci code, where the symbol of the Holy Grail is degraded from the very rich and metaphysical symbol of the Center of the World, emanation of the divine source, to the womb of Mary-Magdalen. Not only was the symbol “materialized” into something totally secular, but it was even corrupted in a sexual way, which is absolutely typical of this modern world and its tendency to desacralized everything it cannot understand. As Matthew 7:6 says, *do not throw your pearls to pigs...*

² We must add that, unfortunately, there are other individuals with a considerable genuine knowledge of Guénon’s work, and yet, their ego and mischievous nature do not let them be anything else than pitiable.