



Agarttha

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When Isaac Asimov wrote, in 1953, *The Caves of Steel*, he did not think to reproduce the realm of Agarttha, even though he described an underground world. He had a different agenda, in accord with the plan followed by the Science-Fiction movement, which was to manipulate the modern people away from God and to intoxicate their minds, or better, to accustom their minds with various ideas, motivated by the uninterrupted progress of mankind.¹

As it is known, the modern mind accepted with enthusiasm the SF invention, which replaced the gods with aliens or extraterrestrial beings, and we have here an important element of the *Kali-yuga* mentality (of the profane or of the modern mentality): the modern mind is so corrupted that it prefers a SF explanation rather than believing in God. Even though the SF explanation cannot be proved (in a modern sense), it is considered much more plausible than the traditional teachings. The Americans use this motto: "In God we trust"; also they say: "God bless America"; however, in reality, they promote the inept theory of evolution, they believe in Darwin, and the scholars are embarrassed to say that the trusted God is the Creator. This situation is, of course, not specifically American, since it can be found in many countries. "God" is just a word; when somebody sneezes and you say, "God bless you," you don't really think that God will bless him.

We don't want to trace here the mankind's journey to its present state of mind, because we could not do a better job than René Guénon did, far from that, but we wanted to stress that the questions about Agarttha emerged in minds infected by the modern and profane perspective, minds ready to accept any SF explanation or to look for sensational elements, minds that are incapable to accept God, even though they think they do, minds that are ready to encourage a "quest" for "Guénon's Agarttha," but not anymore for the "Realm of Prester John."

¹ The modern world is so intoxicated with the idea of progress that, even when there is a serious crisis, it still thinks that this is progress. The idea of progress is used in the most ridiculous cases and the modern world considers as normal to see how a company wants to increase linearly its profits and sales for ever, how the sport contestants think they can improve for ever their results, how the universities believe they can have a better and better education, how the police proclaims that they can bring down the crime progressively, etc.

Agarttha

Herodotus narrated: “For myself, I have been told by the Greeks who dwell beside the Hellespont and Pontus that this Zalmoxis was a man who was once a slave in Samos, his master being Pythagoras, son of Mnesarchus; presently, after being freed and gaining great wealth, he returned to his own country. Now the Thracians were a meanly-living and simple witted folk, but this Zalmoxis knew Ionian usages and a fuller way of life than the Thracian; for he had consorted with Greeks, and moreover with one of the greatest Greek teachers, Pythagoras; wherefore he made himself a hall, where he entertained and feasted the chief among his countrymen, and taught them that neither he nor his guests nor any of their descendants should ever die, but that they should go to a place where they would live for ever and have all good things. While he was doing as I have said and teaching this doctrine, he was all the while making him an underground chamber. When this was finished, he vanished from the sight of the Thracians, and descended into the underground chamber, where he lived for three years, the Thracians wishing him back and mourning him for dead; then in the fourth year he appeared to the Thracians, and thus they came to believe what Zalmoxis had told them. Such is the Greek story about him.”²

The idea of finding Zalmoxis’ cave is, of course, not a very good idea, but the modern mentality tried to relate his underground disappearance with the theory of reincarnation and spiritism, which illustrates again how any real understanding of the traditional symbolism is forbidden to the modern mind.

And, of course, these same minds could not accept Guénon’s critics, and so, Guénon became their most terrible enemy and Agarttha their favourite subject. The fact that Agarttha received so much attention is in perfect accord with the modern thinking. The modern man is in a tremendous need for gossips, trivialities, sensational facts, indiscretions, and calumnies, and, consequently, the television, the radio, the magazines or the newspapers have only one goal: to quench this need. Of course, the modern man does not realize this absurd situation, since he is part of it, but if, by a miracle, he could wake up, he would be horrified.

René Guénon mentioned Agarttha in his book *Le Roi du Monde*. He wrote many books, but this specific one was very convenient for the modern mentality, since it spoke about something indeed sensational: an underground realm with a King of the whole World; it represented something that the profane and corrupted mind could understand. And some individuals hurried to find this realm! Can you imagine Marco Pallis entering the underground territory and meeting the Lord of the World? Sensational! Such a discovery could have been so profitable. Travel agencies could have book trips and holidays to Agarttha, the Lord of the World could have been on “Larry King Live” (or on a similar show)! And “Louis de Maistre” could have been their guide. We mention here that the Templars’ treasure, the Masonic secrets and the Grail’s mystery are all, together with the “Agarttha syndrome,” part of the same diabolic plan aiming at creating Kubin’s “Dream Land.”

² History, IV, 95.

Agarttha

Reading *Le Roi du Monde* today is an interesting experience, but a very disappointing one for the modern reader. The first chapter³ starts well: Guénon elaborates about Agarttha, as described by Saint-Yves and Ossendowski, and the modern reader is anxious to find in the following pages the secrets of the underground realm. The second chapter talks about the spiritual authority and temporal power, about the “Realm of Preaster John” (its mention should have been a clue for the “Agarttha hunters”), and not really about Agarttha. The third chapter is even worse, since it deals with the Jewish Kabbalah, with Shekinah and Metatron, with Mikael and Samael, and not a word about Agarttha.

The next chapter though, the fourth chapter, seems to be about Agarttha; however, it is not really about Agarttha, since Guénon used what Saint-Yves and Ossendowski recounted as an opportunity to develop the doctrine of the three supreme functions. You have to be indeed narrow minded and have a profane mindset to continue, after studying this chapter, to think that René Guénon blindly, or mischievously, or by pure ignorance, or by naivety, promoted Agarttha as an underground realm similar to the one described by Kubin, for example, or similar to a subway station. You have to be especially malevolent, and even diabolical, to suggest that the author of *L’Erreur spirite* (1923), of *Orient et Occident* (1924), of *L’Homme et son devenir selon le Védānta* (1925), became in 1927 blind and ignorant, forgetting his metaphysical lore, that he decided to advertise a sensational place, competing with James Hilton and his Shangri-La. What his detractors and enemies try to hide is that René Guénon was not a scholar, not a pundit, not a university professor, not a theosophist or an occultist, for whom initiation meant nothing more than a parody, not a political agent, with a tenebrous agenda; René Guénon was a veritable initiate, who had the function to transmit the Truth. We are not sure that, in our days, people can comprehend what a real initiate means, in our days, when so many false prophets activate, when nobody listens and everybody talks, when to tell untruths is normal, when the words have no meaning. However, René Guénon was an initiate and, as we said before, he must be measured with the compasses; can anybody draw a line using compasses, instead of the square? In Guénon’s case, he could.

In the fourth chapter, René Guénon explained that the Lord of the World is not the modern minds’ dream as seen in James Bond’s movies, he is not a political dictator reigning over mankind, and implicitly he is not *princeps hujus mundi*. The Lord of the World is the “Lord of the Three Worlds.” This is what Guénon said at the beginning of this chapter. Maybe his detractors can imagine the Second World, but for sure they have no access, of any kind, to the Third World, not to say that they could not think about the Fourth World. The modern people look always downwards, their eyes are glued to our insignificant earthly world.

René Guénon prepared his reader, in the previous chapters, explaining what the “real presence” (Shekinah) and the spiritual influences mean, how Shekinah is the synthesis of the right and left sephirotic pillars,⁴ and how, in a similar way, the Center has two arms, the spiritual authority and the temporal power, the Peace and the Justice. In the fourth

³ There are 12 short chapters composing *Le Roi du Monde*.

⁴ In the Hindu tradition, there are the three “channels,” *sushumna*, *ida* and *pingala*. Since Guénon’s detractors mumbled repeatedly that they could not find in India or Tibet any reference to what Guénon said in *Le Roi du Monde*, it is not futile to turn to the Hindu tradition, from time to time.

Agarttha

chapter, Guénon developed what he said in the previous ones, stressing some essential truths. Saint-Yves' hierarchy (and also Ossendowski's) represents in fact the hierarchy of the Three Worlds. This truth is a universal truth, found in the Hindu tradition, but also in any other genuine tradition. As we explained in other works,⁵ the spiritual influences descend by countless degrees, arriving eventually at the state of the human being; correspondingly, Shekinah is present in all the Three Worlds, but even more, she is present, analogously, in each world or degree of the Existence. Equally, Agarttha is present in each world, and if the profane people hunt for it in the profane world, the seer's quest aims at a very sacred, very inaccessible Agarttha.

This fourth chapter of *Le Roi du Monde*, which apparently deals with Saint-Yves' Agarttha, is a real blow for Guénon's detractors, even though they seemed not to be aware of this. Presenting the traditional hierarchy, Guénon compared the three leaders of Agarttha to Ishwara, Hiranyagarbha and Virâj, who are respectively the lords of the Three Worlds, and to the Three Magi. This is enough to make us understand what the meaning of Agarttha was for Guénon. However, to elucidate further what he was transmitting, René Guénon wrote in 1929 (*Le Roi du Monde* was published in 1927) *Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel*, where he developed the traditional significance of the three functions. Much later, in 1942, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy tackled the same subject in his *Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power in the Indian Theory of Government*,⁶ and, for the benefit of Guénon's detractors, we will refer to Coomaraswamy's work to illustrate what René Guénon said in his *Le Roi du Monde*.

Coomaraswamy illustrated the concept of the "Lord of the World," in the Hindu tradition, with "the Mixta Persona of Mitrâvarunau, Supreme Identity of Conjoint Principles, [that] is the same as that of 'One Akshara that is both Agni the Sacerdotum [spiritual authority] and Indra the Regnum [temporal power].'"⁷ Guénon stressed that, in Agarttha's case, each of the three functions, Brahâtmâ, Mahâtmâ, and Mahânga, possesses in itself a double authority, sacerdotal and temporal, even though the first corresponds to the Lord of the World, the second to the spiritual authority, and the third to the temporal power. Likewise, Agni, is not only the spiritual authority,⁸ Coomaraswamy said, but he is "the marriage of the two Agni, kshatra and brahma, ... a union of mutually antagonistic principles, [that] reflects the natural opposition of Sacerdotium and Regnum."⁹ Moreover, Manu corresponds to the Lord of the World, and Yama, his brother, to the spiritual authority, and Yamî, his sister, to the temporal power.¹⁰

And Agni, united to Indra, represents the Lord of the World: "In the same way in SB X.4.1.8, in connection with the union of Sacerdotium and Regnum, here represented by Indrâgni..."¹¹

⁵ René Guénon et le Centre du Monde, pp. 74-75, *Free-Masonry: A Traditional Organization*, pp. 46-48.

⁶ Manshiram Manoharlai Publishers, 1978. French translation: *Autorité Spirituelle et Pouvoir Temporel*, Archè, 1985.

⁷ *Spiritual Authority*, p. 6. *Autorité Spirituelle*, p. 16.

⁸ "Agni and Indra, Sacerdotium and Regnum..." *Ibid.* p. 37 (French p. 58).

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 23 (French p. 40).

¹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 32, 34 (French pp. 52, 55).

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 39 (French p. 62).

Agarttha

Heinrich Zimmer described “the great Shiva-Trinity of Elephanta”: “The middle head of the threefold image is a representation of the Absolute... Over the right shoulder of this presence, perpetually growing out of the central form, is the male profile of Shiva... Correspondingly, to the left of the central mask is the profile of the female principle.”¹² Even though Zimmer is just a scholar, his descriptions are good illustrations of Agarttha’s symbolism in the Hindu tradition.

Regarding René Guénon sayings that Saint-Yves’ hierarchy (and also Ossendowski’s) represents in fact the hierarchy of the Three Worlds, we should quote again Coomaraswamy: “Agni, Vâyu and Âditya are the ‘Threefold Brahma’ ... To this ‘Threefold Sovereign’ correspond the ‘Threefold’ World of Rig Vêda, the ‘Three Bright’ Realms.”¹³ This three-partition found in Saint Yves’ work is common in the Hindu tradition; “the Three Gandharvas or Lights, Agni, Vâyu, Âditya (the Persons of the Vedic ‘Trinity,’ and the Universal Lights’ of the Fire-altar)...”¹⁴ “The King of Kings is thus the progenitive Solar Spirit, who takes the form of Agni, Vâyu and Âditya in relation to the triple Dominion or Three Dominions which are so often spoken as Dawn or Dawns, and are the Three Worlds.”¹⁵

With respect to this three-partition, we should add that at the end of the universal manifestation, the Three Worlds will be invaded by the counter-initiatory forces, by the demonic forces, in the same way Dante’s Dis was a city invaded and occupied by the devils.¹⁶ “The story goes, that, once again in the course of history, the demons, titans, or anti-gods (*asura*), half-brothers and eternal rivals of the proper rulers of the world, had snatched to themselves the reigns of the government. As usual, they were led by an austere and crafty tyrant... Maya [Mayasura] was this tyrant’s name... he constructed three mighty strongholds [as centers of the Three Worlds, these three cities being called *Tripura*]. By a feat of magic he then amalgamated his three fortresses into one – a prodigious center of demon-chaos and world-tyranny, practically unassailable.”¹⁷

This unassailable *Tripura* is not Agarttha. We know that the modern and profane individuals are easily tempted by the devil. We know that these people lack the power of discrimination, and, furthermore, they are manipulated to confuse Mikael with Samael, reality with illusion, Shiva with Mayasura.¹⁸ This unassailable *Tripura* was built by Mayasura, who is a master of illusion. At the end of the universal manifestation, the real, true and inviolable *Tripura* disappeared “underground” and became hidden. In its place, Mayasura deployed his illusory *Tripura* that only apparently was unassailable, since Shiva could destroy it with an arrow. There is no doubt that authors like “Louis de

¹² Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, Harper, 1962, pp. 148-9.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 40 (French p. 64).

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 42 (French p. 67).

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 43 (French p. 68).

¹⁶ See our *The Everlasting Sacred Kernel*, p. 76.

¹⁷ Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, p. 185.

¹⁸ For this reason, “Louis de Maistre” shamelessly suggested that Agarttha is a parody or a counter-initiatory center, and, moreover, that René Guénon himself is malefic and connected to the counter-initiation (*L’Énigme René Guénon et les “Supérieurs Inconnus,” Contribution à l’étude de l’histoire mondiale “souterraine,”* pp. 213, 214, 220, 231, 368).

Agarttha

Maistre” and others are completely under the power of Mâyâ. For example, the elephant is a sacred and divine symbol both in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions; but, because of Mâyâ, the elephant can be also a demon.¹⁹

As we said, Mâyâ has a peremptory role in confusing the modern minds, and we should give one more example. Mayasura is the king of the *Asuras*, *Daityas* and *Râkshasas*, representing the past cycles, the races that revolted,²⁰ and the counter-initiatory forces, which makes his symbolism complicated, since he appears also as the Lord of Tripura, the center of the Three Worlds (whose architect Mayasura is)²¹; but most of all, he symbolizes the “illusion.” Yet here this “illusion” is aggressive and deceptive, belonging to the counter-initiation, as attested by the *Râmâyana* episode of the “black cave,” when Hanumân and the *Vânaras*, in quest for Sîtâ, entered a dark cave in the Vindhya mountains and discovered a paradisiac-like center built by Mayasura.²² It is a deceiving center,²³ which tempts the hero of the quest away from the straight route, like the many other temptations present in various initiatory stories²⁴; it is an “illusory” center, but at the same time, from a higher perspective and obeying the *lîlâ* of Brahma, it appears like a subterranean, hidden, and inaccessible center, similar to Agarttha,²⁵ which is protected by a thick curtain of darkness,²⁶ and where Mayasura kept Hema captive.²⁷

Coming back to Guénon’s *Le Roi du Monde* and the other chapters, from five to twelve, we observe that all the other chapters are not about Agarttha at all (as understood by Pallis, “Louis de Maistre” and many others); they clarify the Holy Grail’s symbolism, the symbolism of Melki-Tsedeq, they expose the doctrine of the spiritual centers, insisting on

¹⁹ Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, p. 192.

²⁰ To revolt against the normal hierarchy means to create disorder (“anti-Cosmos”) and confusion (Guénon, *Autorité spirituelle*, p. 17). Normally, the *Dêvas* are associated with the “truth” (*satyam*) and the *Asuras* with “falsehood” and “disorder” (*anritam*) (Coomaraswamy, *La doctrine du sacrifice*, p. 169).

²¹ In this case, Mayasura is comparable to Râvana, being described at the end of the cycle, when the unrighteousness reigned in Tripura and Shiva had to destroy the triple center. Nowadays in India, the capital-city of the small province Tripura is Agartala.

²² “Here the monkeys beheld choicest mansions everywhere made out of gold and silver, some with golden and some with silver domes, while some with golden and some with silver multi-stories, but all are studded with lapis gems with golden windows covered with laceworks of pearls. They have also seen everywhere flowered and fruited trees that are similar in shine to red corals and rubies, and golden honeybees, as well as honeys.”

²³ In the Grail stories, this paradise-like center is the initiatory starting point, and illustrates the adage that the “Paradise is a prison.” This paradise-like center was born at the same time with the need for initiation.

²⁴ The *Vânaras* decide to give up the quest and remain in the cave, which, as in the Grail stories, suggests how the “Paradise is a prison.”

²⁵ At the beginning of the cycle, the spiritual center was situated in the top of the mountain; at the end, it hid in the cave (Guénon, *Symboles fondamentaux*, p. 223).

²⁶ This tenebrous curtain could be penetrated only because Hanumân chanted Râma’s name as a *mantra*.

²⁷ We see the similarity with Râvana, who abducted Sîtâ; Hema is here the daughter of Mount Mêru. On the other hand, the same Hema was Mayasura’s beloved wife (not a captive) and Mandodari’s mother.

Agarttha

the fact that at the end of the present cycle the spiritual center became hidden (that is, “subterranean”).²⁸

Agarttha, as discussed by Guénon’s detractors, is just not there. For René Guénon, the works of Saint-Yves and Ossendowski represented only the opportunity to reveal the symbolism of the center, and he could not care less about the materialistic view regarding the underground world. For Guénon, Agarttha was another name for the Center; from the beginning of the present cycle (the Earthly Paradise) to the end of the cycle (Heavenly Jerusalem), he said, the Center had various names like those of Tula, Luz, Salem or Agarttha.²⁹ Guénon also said: “We must remark that the word *Salem*, contrary to the common opinion, has never designated really a city, but, if we consider it as the symbolic name of *Melki-Tsedeq*’s residence, it can be regarded as an equivalent of the term Agarttha.”³⁰

There is no doubt that, from René Guénon’s perspective, Agarttha was an equivalent of the Earthly Paradise. If we understand that, the “Agarttha-hunt,” pursued by Pallis and others, becomes a ridiculous, if not worse, enterprise. Anybody, with a normal, just, and traditional state of mind, when reading *Le Roi du Monde*, understands that this book is not about Agarttha at all; it is about the inaccessible, inviolable, and untouchable doctrine of the spiritual centers.³¹ Why would someone, after reading the book, want to go to Asia and find the “underground realm”? Why would many others write books about Guénon and Agarttha? The answer is obvious.

The idea of an “underground center” must be correlated to two other ideas: that of the “lost center” and that of the “hidden center.” In fact, the “underground” center illustrates the reality of the *Kali-yuga*, when the Tradition is lost and the center becomes hidden. Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival and Titirel* ended with the same conclusion. After Perceval fought and made peace with his brother Feirefiz Angevin, they left together Arthur’s center to acquire the Holy Grail. But only Repanse de Schoye could carry the Grail; she married Feirefiz and left the Occident, travelling to India, to the Realm of Prester John, which, as we know, represents the supreme center, *Oriens*, “near Paradise”; Munsalvaesche also left the West and was transported to the same *Oriens*.³²

What does a “lost center” or this withdrawal to *Oriens* mean? In Nicholas of Cusa’s words it would be a reabsorbing of the explication into complication, which means that the “lost center” will hide as an essential possibility into the supreme Center, which “is a ‘place’ not in a topographical or literal sense, but in a transcendental and *principal*

²⁸ “Louis de Maistre” thoughtlessly declared: “Without their [Saint-Yves’ and Ossendowski’s] revelations about the effective presence of a subterranean world, *Le Roi du Monde* would have remained just a work containing general and interesting views about the symbolism of the ‘center,’ but which in themselves are not at all sensational and upsetting” (*L’Énigme René Guénon*, p. 184); on the contrary, these views are fundamental and essential!

²⁹ Guénon, *Symboles fondamentaux*, pp. 108-109.

³⁰ Guénon, *Le Roi du Monde*, p. 49.

³¹ The Hindu tradition says: “The knowledge of the Three Worlds and their Rulers is the ‘Triple Science’” (*Spiritual Authority*, p. 44, *Autorité Spirituelle*, p. 68).

³² See our *Free-Masonry: A Traditional Organization*, p. 385. See Guénon, *Le Roi du Monde*, p. 11.

Agarttha

sense”³³; therefore, as the Center can “realize itself in any ‘center’ established in regular way and consecrated,” so these centers, when the corresponding traditions were exhausted and invaded by the “outside darkness,” could withdraw into the Center, not *in corpus* but *in spiritus*. It signifies that the spiritual influences will be reabsorbed into the Center, but there were cases when also the *corpus* disappeared, being reabsorbed as essential possibility. When it is said that acquiring the Holy Grail means to obtain the “sense of eternity,”³⁴ this did not allude to a topographic “place” but to a *principial* one, representing the primordial state, the center of the time and space, and simultaneously the center of the integral being. Therefore, “it is useless,” Guénon said, “to look for a ‘geographical’ place where the Rose-Cross retreated,” and the most convenient appellation would be the “Realm of Prester John,” which is a representation of the supreme spiritual Center and where are guarded and preserved in a latent state, until the end of the present cycle, all the traditional forms that, for one reason or another, ceased to manifest externally, that is, ceased as explication.³⁵

René Guénon explained at the beginning of the seventh chapter of his *Le Roi du Monde*, how the cave can symbolize a “hidden” center. In the *Râmâyana*, at the end, it is said: “Then a heavenly throne rose up from within the earth, borne on the heads of mighty *nâgas*, decked in shining jewels; and the Earth stretched out her arms and welcomed Sîtâ and placed her on the throne, and the throne sank down again.”³⁶ Sîtâ retreating underground symbolizes the lost Tradition and is equivalent to the lost Holy Grail. Sri Aurobindo also said: “The Martanda or eighth Surya is the black or dark, the lost, the hidden sun. The Titans have taken and concealed him in their cavern of darkness.”³⁷

Even today the idea of a “subterranean” center is alive in India. There is at Haridwâr a *Shiva Lingam*, which naturally emerged, and which, with the evolvment of the cycle, progressively retracted underground. Today, you can see just its top, since it is the end of the *Kali-yuga* and the center is almost completely subterranean.

However, for the distorted minds of Guénon’s detractors, all this is just a huge “manipulation.” These individuals are so caught by their ridiculous game that they cannot see how absurd their affirmations are; they cannot see because, obviously, they are themselves manipulated.

In 1995, Marco Baistrocchi, published, in Italian, the article *Agarttha: una manipolazione guénoniana?* This article was brought to our attention only after we published our *Agarttha, the Invisible Center*, and so, we could not comment on it. Nevertheless, this

³³ Guénon, *Aperçus sur l’initiation*, p. 265.

³⁴ Guénon, *Symboles fondamentaux*, p. 40.

³⁵ Guénon, *Aperçus sur l’initiation*, p. 243.

³⁶ Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and Sister Nivedita, *Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists*, Dover, 1967, p. 114. There is another symbol of the throne that stresses how the absolute center is “underground.” On the “Island of Jewels” (*mani-dwîpa*), a symbol of the center, there is a throne with the goddess Mâyâ, and she sits on Sakala Shiva, who is laying on Nishkala Shiva (Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, p. 197 ff).

³⁷ Sri Aurobindo, *The Secret of the Veda*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971, p. 426.

Agarttha

year, Joscelyn Godwin translated Baistrocchi's article, which was recently published,³⁸ and the antitraditionalist Mark Sedgwick hurried to praise it.

We must declare that Marco Baistrocchi cannot be trusted at all. As Jean-Marc Vivenza is a "neo-martinist," so Baistrocchi was a "neo-theosophist," and both hated René Guénon, since Guénon has smashed the occultists and the theosophists. You need to have some qualities to be able to understand your errors and give up the arrogance, admitting that you have made a wrong choice, instead of using your energies to defend it because it's "your baby." But, of course, there are other reasons, more sinister, for Baistrocchi's article.

Joscelyn Godwin considers, in his *Introduction*, that "Baistrocchi's is the first attempt at a rational solution to the puzzle, supported by a formidable apparatus of erudition and documentation." Now, such a presentation kills any desire to read the article. To bring a "rational solution" to the doctrine of the spiritual centers, by using "erudition and documentation," is a futile and absurd endeavour. Yet Baistrocchi's endeavour was not so much about finding a "rational solution" as it was about fighting Guénon and praising the Theosophism.

Baistrocchi's "formidable apparatus of erudition and documentation" is based on very unreliable sources. But there is a shrewd technique that Baistrocchi used, and, of course, this technique, even if it is not original, at least is very efficient. At one moment Baistrocchi declared: "Now that the origin of the legend of Agarttha has been clarified..." (p. 24); in fact, nothing was "clarified," but this is the technique: you confuse the reader with all kind of elements and after a while you declare that everything is now solved, and after that, the reader is manipulated to think that, indeed, it is so. The same technique was used by "Louis de Maistre."

There is another technique. We do not have time to list here various examples, but there are many that illustrate how an author uses a reference without checking its validity, and then this author becomes a reference for another one, and now the error is not anymore an error. In Baistrocchi's case, using as references the works of Jean-Pierre Laurant and Marie-France James, it meant to perpetuate an error. What happened is that, because Laurant and James published their works about Guénon many years ago (1975 and 1981), they became some sort of taboo references, and Baistrocchi forgot to say that both Laurant and James wrote based on their own individual fantasies, and that they are not at all reliable sources.

For Baistrocchi, René Guénon was an "intellectual," a "scholar."³⁹ Let's say that someone wants to write about Baistrocchi and considers him to be a real estate agent. Now, there is nothing wrong with being a real estate agent; the only thing is that Baistrocchi was not such an agent, and therefore the article about him would be completely wrong. Baistrocchi's perspective, with Guénon considered to be a "scholar," is similarly wrong and, for this reason, his whole article is worthless.⁴⁰ He brings in his

³⁸ Marco Baistrocchi, *Agarttha: A Guénonian Manipulation?*, Theosophical History, 2010.

³⁹ Ridiculous and insulting is also Baistrocchi's affirmation that Michel Vâlsan was a "scholar" (p. 66).

⁴⁰ Baistrocchi says about Guénon that he is "an authoritative scholar who deserves every consideration from us on account of his high intellectual level" (p. 20). Baistrocchi belongs, doubtless, to the "Dream Land." Yet even though, let's say, Baistrocchi did not understand who René Guénon really was, after the above

Agarttha

article a lot of “professors” to support his hypothesis, but erudition has nothing to do with Agarttha.⁴¹

You have to have a distorted mind, indeed, to declare that “the Judeo-Christian documentation, which is Guénon’s truly innovative contribution to the subject, rather than being a response to Saint-Yves is intended to furnish a sort of doctrinal basis and consistency to the new myth of Agarttha” (p. 10). Baistrocchi, as many others, is so totally contaminated by the modern mentality, that he cannot (or want not) understand that a traditional writer, like Guénon (or a traditional painter, or a traditional architect), does not innovate and does not try to be original. Baistrocchi’s hypothesis is that René Guénon manipulated his readers to reject India and the Theosophism in favour of the “Judeo-Christian” tradition or Islam, and that Guénon was an agent of the Jesuits and of the Jews (pp. 25, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 38).

Baistrocchi wrote about the Theosophism: “The Theosophical Society’s noteworthy contribution to reviving the metaphysical and religious traditions of India was recognized ... by the most authoritative Western scholars of Indian spiritual traditions” (pp. 27-28). As Alvin Moore Jr. said, “Blavatsky was not a mere vulgar adventuress, she was a high skilled impostor.” Blavatsky was, no doubt about it, a crook. And the Theosophism is an invention, not because René Guénon said so, but because that is how it was built. Baistrocchi’s above declaration is so foolish, when talking about Western scholars recognizing how the Theosophism revived the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, that we must accept that it is the end of the *Kali-yuga*. Baistrocchi complained that people considered his article to be “impious”; it is not “impious”, it is pure and simple unintelligent.

Baistrocchi’s article is so immature, biased and malevolent that each sentence needs to be corrected and refuted, and this author does not deserve such an attention from our part.

However, we mention here that he attacked Guénon for his “baseless ... anti-reincarnationist statements” and for his “study of cycles, in which he seems basically ignorant of the Hindu doctrine of cosmic cycles” (p. 40). Both these subjects are fundamental parts of the Theosophism, and, of course, Baistrocchi cannot accept René Guénon’s “statements.”

Regarding the doctrine of the cosmic cycles, the numerous zeros composing the cyclical numbers, so dear to Baistrocchi, are, evidently, just a “cover,” and there is no need for a lot of elaborated and bright studies to understand that. Let’s review what we already said with another occasion.

Jean-Pierre Laurant suggested that Guénon followed the example of Creuzer and De Rougemont to present the doctrine of the cosmic cycles. Now, this is not true, but such a subject represents a good opportunity to try and undermine Guénon’s reputation. “Louis

affirmation how could he talk about manipulation? But, of course, Baistrocchi could not do anything else but take his own person as reference: Baistrocchi was a scholar and in his article he tried to manipulate the reader (as a diplomat, his mind was shaped in favour of manipulation).

⁴¹ Baistrocchi mentions “professor George Roerich,” but this Roerich, like his father, cannot be taken seriously at all. Then he mentions “professor Owen Lattimore” and “professor Julien Bayart” and “professor Suniti Kumar.”

de Maistre” declares: “Even though he [Guénon] always kept the Hindu doctrines in high esteem, the writings of this ‘Western’ school [Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor] were the main source for his theoretical developments about the cosmic cycles.”⁴² “De Maistre” should be content: eventually he found one of Guénon’s “sources”; moreover, the author considers that the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor was inspired by the work of Samson Arnold Mackey, which means that a second “source” was uncovered. If we remember how offended “De Maistre” was about Guénon’s lack of references, we would expect now an astral commotion, changing everything. Because now, we know! We have two palpable sources. Unfortunately, reality is more complicated. “Le Maistre” found the information about Mackey in Godwin’s *Arktos*,⁴³ where, as a committed theosophist, Godwin discussed the connection between Blavatsky and Mackey. He showed that Blavatsky called Mackey “the self-made adept of Norwich,” and knew his work. Blavatsky, who was all her life a shrewd crook, used Mackey in the same way she used Csoma de Körös, and made him an “adept,” because who cares about words? Godwin assumed that she discovered Mackey through the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, which “taught Mackey’s doctrine,”⁴⁴ without mentioning Mackey’s name (he was called “an initiate of our Noble Order”).⁴⁵ However, Godwin admits that Mackey’s theory was changed and the traditional cyclical values replaced his profane ones,⁴⁶ which undermined Mackey’s speculations; and in the journal of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, Mackey was presented as “the Neophyte of an Initiate of the H. B. of L.,” and from this Initiate, Mackey “acquired his knowledge of the Ancient Astronomy.” “Louis de Maistre” disregards this last part and prefers to consider Mackey an enigmatic genius who supplied René Guénon with the data about the cosmic cycles; he concludes: “the authority that is attributed to Guénon with respect to the doctrines of the cycles seems to need profound critical revisions. From now on, Guénon’s judgment regarding the refutation of the astronomers’ affirmation that the precession of the equinoxes lasts for 25,765 years, instead of the ‘real traditional duration’ of 25,920 years, also becomes quite questionable.”

“Profound critical revisions”? “De Maistre”’s verdict is more than ridiculous; it is malicious and witless. But he is not alone. Jean-Pierre Laurant, researching some documents of the so called “Ordre du Temple rénové” (year 1908), found some reviews regarding the cosmic cycles, where the precessional duration was 25,765 (as mentioned by “De Maistre”),⁴⁷ and even though Laurant did not say it, we are left to believe that Guénon, as the leader of the Order, would accept this number and other calculations existing in the document.⁴⁸ On the other hand, Marcel Clavelle (Jean Reyor), in his “Document confidentiel inédit,” affirmed that he saw some notebooks belonging to the OTR, where the “theory of the cosmic cycles was correctly restored.”

⁴² *L’Énigme René Guénon*, p. 731.

⁴³ Joscelyn Godwin, *Arktos, The Polar Myth*, Thames and Hudson, 1993, pp. 196-202.

⁴⁴ Probably we could say “Mackey’s theory,” but never “doctrine.”

⁴⁵ Godwin 201.

⁴⁶ For the precession of the equinoxes, the traditional value of 25,920 years replaced Mackey’s.

⁴⁷ *Le sens caché*, p. 48.

⁴⁸ Feydel, commenting on Laurant, says that everybody agrees not to consider the reviews “guénonian.” See Pierre Feydel, *Aperçus historiques touchant à la fonction de René Guénon*, Archè, 2003, p. 30.

Agarttha

The traditional doctrine of the cosmic cycles is based, obviously, on the cyclic numbers. If we consider the four lunar phases as reflections of the four *yugas* and we multiply 4 by the number of *Nakshatras* asterisms,⁴⁹ we will have: $4 \times 27 = 108$, a fundamental cyclic number. If we multiply the number of *Nakshatras* asterisms by 16 (the parts of the lunar disc), we obtain: $27 \times 16 = 432$ ($108 \times 4 = 432$), another fundamental cyclic number.

Symbolically, the four *yugas* last 4000, 3000, 2000 and 1000 years (we note the proportion $4 - 3 - 2 - 1$). Each *yuga* is preceded and followed by a dawn and a dusk, which link the cycles together; therefore, the Golden Age, *Krita-yuga*, is valued at 4800 years ($4000 + 400 + 400$), *Treta-yuga* at 3600 years, *Dwapara-yuga* at 2400 years, and *Kali-yuga* at 1200 years. Consequently, a *Manvantara* or a *Mahâyuga* will be valued at 12,000 years. Because each divine Year lasts 360 terrestrial years, a Manu Age will last 4,320,000 years.⁵⁰ Now, $4320 \times 6 = 25,920$,⁵¹ which is the precessional duration.

Leonard Woolley's research produced a list of the antediluvian Chaldean kings, which specified the traditional duration of king A-lu-lim's reign – 28,000 years, of king A-lal-gar's reign – 36,800 years, and of king En-me-en-lu-an-na's reign – 43,200 years.⁵² $28,000 + 36,800 = 64,800$ years and this last value René Guénon considered to be the traditional duration of a *Manvantara*, composed of five Great Years ($5 \times 12,960$).⁵³

There is almost no “enigma” regarding the doctrine of the cosmic cycles and René Guénon's knowledge of it. That Guénon possessed traditional data, other than those from the Hindu tradition or from the Chaldean and Persian antiquity, it could also be possible, but it is more important to stress that he was very cautious in presenting these data, because there is no benefit for us, as all traditions affirmed, to find out in more details when the end will come; therefore, with the exception of one article published in English, in 1937, in the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, he did not mention the values of the cycles directly. What we also have to point out is that, as René Guénon said, because perfection is not to be found in our world, the planets, like Earth, are not spheres, and their trajectories are not circles but ellipses.⁵⁴ Similarly, we cannot expect to find the

⁴⁹ With respect to the Vedic astronomical science (*ijyotishavedanga*), there were 27 *Nakshatras* asterisms (half of the fundamental number 54), which made it possible to observe the variable positions of the sun, moon and planets, and to correlate the movements of the sun and moon.

⁵⁰ The cyclic numbers 10,800 and 432,000 are to be found also in other traditions. Censorin mentioned Heraclitus' *Great Year* of 10,800 years and the Babylonian Berossos pointed out a cosmic period of 432,000 years. Often, the ancient Greeks and Persians evaluated the *Great Year* as having 12,000 or 13,000 years (see René Guénon, *Formes traditionnelles et cycles cosmique*, Gallimard, 1980, p. 23). The *Satapatha Brahmana* stated that Prajâpati (the Principle of universal manifestation) is the Year, his Word, which produces the World, being collected by the *Vêda*, which is divided into 10,800 moments of the Year, as the *Rig-Vêda* contains 10,800 units of 40 syllables each, that is, 432,000 syllables in total.

⁵¹ See Guénon, *Formes*, p. 22.

⁵² C. W. Ceram, *Gods, Graves, & Scholars*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1968.

⁵³ Each Great Year values half of the precessional duration.

⁵⁴ Therefore the Sun is not in the center of a circle, but in one of the ellipse's focus. In Godwin's *Arktos*, all the diagrams show erroneously the Sun in the middle (center?) of the ellipse.

cyclical numbers and the traditional value for the precession of the equinoxes in this world, especially now, at the end of the *Kali-yuga*.⁵⁵

Coming back to Baistrocchi, we should say a few words about the theory of reincarnation. The theory of reincarnation is antimetaphysical and a modern invention. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy said that “The notion of ‘reincarnation’ in the ordinary sense of a rebirth on Earth of departed individuals, represents only an error of understanding of the doctrines of heredity, of transmigration and of regeneration.”⁵⁶ If transmigration means the passing from one state of being to another, metempsychosis represents, as René Guénon said, “the transmission of certain psychic elements from an individuality to another” and only this metempsychosis could be somehow confused with reincarnation.

As Coomaraswamy said, the only one transmigrant is the Self, *Âtmâ*. And this Self is the One that gives reality to any “incarnation,” which is called *jîvâtâmâ*. The body and the soul, *Corpus* and *Anima*, they have no existence without *Âtmâ*, and therefore they cannot “reincarnate” by themselves. If we understand the Chinese concept of the “current of forms,” and having in mind the example of the river, which in a specific spot will present continuously different waters, we will comprehend that the body and the soul will be disintegrated and their components will reintegrate in other combinations. *Âtmâ*, because is not different from Brahma, is Infinite, and we have to conceive the universal manifestation not from a temporal perspective (as succession), but as a sum of simultaneous events, like an infinite (in fact, indefinite) canvas, a canvas weaved by the “incarnations” of *Âtmâ*, and where there is no place for “reincarnation.”

The modern mind and the sentimentalism and arrogance of the profane people cannot accept that death is a change of state and everything belonging to this state will remain in this state. There is transmigration, but never reincarnation. The Theosophism enthusiastically helped the spreading of this inanity regarding reincarnation in the Western world, and hence Baistrocchi’s foolish reaction.

Before to end our contribution, let us mention a last element from Baistrocchi’s article. Baistrocchi quoted René Guénon about his comparison concerning the Hindu and Islamic traditions, and he interpreted Guénon’s words as suggesting that, today, the salvation can come only from Islam (p. 36). It is strange that Baistrocchi, with his conclusion, is in concert with Charles-André Gilis, who in his recent works, and especially in his *L’héritage doctrinal de Michel Vâlsan*,⁵⁷ declared the same thing.

Guénon wrote: “the accomplishment of the cycle must have some correlation, in the historic order, with the encounter of two traditional forms that correspond to its beginning and to its end, and which have the Sanskrit and the Arabic for sacred languages: the Hindu tradition, which represents the most direct heritage of the primordial Tradition, and

⁵⁵ Likewise, the number of days in a year is not 360. Another important thing would be to understand how the duration of the cycle harmonizes with the fact that a cycle is not a smooth continuous descending path and how the activity of an *avatâra* or of the sages could influence this duration.

⁵⁶ *Hindouisme et Bouddhisme*, Gallimard, 1980, p. 14.

⁵⁷ *Le Turban Noir*, 2009.

Agarttha

the Islamic tradition, insofar as it is the ‘seal of Prophecy’ and consequently the ultimate form of traditional orthodoxy for the present cycle.”⁵⁸

Using this text, Charles-André Gilis, a disciple of Michel Vâlsan, tried to demonstrate that the Islamic tradition is destined to engulf the whole world, to save it from profanation, and to bring it under the Islamic law. Gilis, who wrote many good things in the past, but who became at the end of his life obsessed with the task of “Islamizing” Guénon, made a fundamental mistake, because he did not want to accept two traditional truths. First, René Guénon did not say that the Hindu tradition is the primordial Tradition and the unique tradition; he only said that the Hindu tradition is the most direct heir of the primordial Tradition, and, therefore, together with the Hindu tradition have coexisted other orthodox traditions; similarly, the Islamic tradition is *not* the primordial Tradition and the unique tradition, but the last revealed tradition, which will coexist with other orthodox traditions until the end of times. Second, the revival Gilis dreams of, and which means that the whole world will embrace Islam, is too much similar to the New Age fantasies, where it is said that the return of the “Golden Age” will occur in this present cycle. In fact, the “reversal of the poles” happens *outside* this cycle, and the only event that we can expect inside the cycle is its end. The revival Gilis talks about already happened when Islam was revealed.

Today, we are in the last phase of this *Manvantara*, and nobody must think that the people of Agarttha will surface to recreate a “Golden Age” for this cycle

⁵⁸ *Symboles fondamentaux*, p. 176.