

We have 11 letters from Rene Guenon to Julius Evola in the span from 1930 to 1951. In earlier letters to Guido de Giorgio, we saw Guenon's frustration with some of Evola's views. Here, Guenon confronts Evola directly, although more politely than in his letters to de Giorgio. Evola claims to have read all of Guenon's books; nevertheless, it seems he either misunderstood or rejected some significant aspects of Guenon's view. I believe there is some of both.

For example, Evola does not seem to understand Guenon's notion of the Intellect and thus shows little interest in ideas like the Supreme Identity. On the other hand, Evola is committed to his own philosophical system which differs from Guenon's metaphysical writings in important ways. In a letter to Mircea Elide, as we will soon see, Evola points out indeed that his doctrine is contained in his philosophy of the Absolute Individual.

The first of the letters follows:

24 August 1930
Cairo, Egypt

You must have thought that I would not respond to your letter, which reached me in Paris a little more than a year ago.

The truth is that at that time I was quite ill and, subsequently, different unforeseen difficulties and commitments of every type made me always delay every correspondence that was not absolutely urgent. Time flew by quickly and I never succeeded in doing everything I wanted to. I'm taking advantage of the fact that I am close to a little stable in this residence to finally write you, asking you to excuse this excessive delay.

I have to tell you how little I was able to understand at all the interest that you showed in the reading of my books.

Obviously, the point of view you are assuming is quite distinctive and certainly cannot be mine, but I am pleased to see that that has not prevented you from getting rid of the anti-Oriental prejudice that, by your own admission, you used to hold. I wish that many others in the West would have the same attitude and come to understand the ancient doctrines of the Orient.

You ask me about [Jacques] Maritain; notwithstanding everything, I have always had friendly relations with him; as to ideas, we are in agreement especially on a negative point of view, that is, on anti-modernity. Apart from that, even he, disgracefully, is full of prejudices against the Orient; at least he was, because it seems that those prejudices since a short time ago have been attenuated; but, something strange, it is fed by a type of fear in the face of what one does not know, and it is a disagreeable thing, because it prevents him from broadening his own point of view.

But permit me to point out to you, from the moment that you read all my books that, after *The Crisis of the Modern World*, there is another, *Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power*, what was published last year.

Currently, I am working on *The Symbolism of the Cross* that will definitely be published toward the end of this year.

Excuse the briefness of my letter; I would like to be able to more or less get up to date with our correspondence.

23 February 1934
Cairo, Egypt

Forgive me once again for being so late in responding to your letter that I received with pleasure after such a long silence. But I have suffered from an

acute eyesight weakness, and your letter reached me exactly at the moment when I was able to read it only after a very long time. The quantity of things of every type that had accumulated while I found myself in that impossible situation of working is such that, ever since, I have not yet succeeded in freeing myself from it and to regain that lost time.

I thank you for all your appreciations in regard to my works; and I think that in effect we can find ourselves in agreement, at least, on what concerns the conditions of the current world and the necessity of a return to the tradition and spirituality, if indeed it is still possible for the West, at the point in which things have currently reached.

As far as living far from Europe, I cannot perhaps precisely take into account certain tendencies; I must confess that I do not excessively trust in a rene that, as much as I know of it, remains up to this point very superficial and somewhat confused: above all, except for rare exceptions, it is about vague and poorly defined aspirations, and it is very difficult to say what will result from it. But what is certain, is that we notice in very general lines how the people are no longer so satisfied with their own modern 'civilization', and that some begin to doubt the 'progressive' pretense: as far as that goes, it is insufficient, nevertheless it is already at least something â |

Regarding the problems brought up in your letter, permit me to tell you with great frankness that these difficulties appear to me especially to derive from the fact that you do not make a very clear distinction between the religious point of view of the one hand, and the metaphysical or initiatic, on the other. Whatever their relationships might be in certain respects, it is never necessary to confuse or mix them, since they refer to totally different domains, and they cannot consequently interfere with each other. The domain that defines religious truth belongs to what Hindu doctrine calls 'non-supreme' knowledge; it is sufficient to put everything in its place and in its order because there is no conflict possible. Above all, it is necessary not to forget that mysticism belongs totally to the religious ambit; any comparison is therefore not possible between mysticism and metaphysics.

The two ways, without considering the very relevant differences of their modalities, are not, in reality, absolutely marked out to reach the same goal; and the 'mystical union' is not the jivan mukta, no more than 'salvation' is 'Liberation' .

Everything that is religious, including mysticism, concerns individual possibilities, in the indefinite extension of which they are susceptible and does not go beyond them; on the other hand that is its reason for being. On the contrary, the reason for metaphysical realization is to proceed beyond [individual possibilities]; and this is why the one can serve as the base of the other. Nor was it the case for Christian esoterism of the Middle Ages, as it was always for Islamic esoterism; and, in this regard, I cited this aphorism that seems to me to be perfectly adapted to the argument: As long as a man desires Paradise or has fear of Hell, he will not be able to aspire to the least grade of initiationâ .

I must moreover bring to your attention the fact that the religious point of view is necessarily tied to certain historical contingencies, while the metaphysical point of view refers exclusively to the order of principles. To speak of â multiple avatarsâ , is to stick to the domain of appearances; nevertheless, in absolute reality, they are 'the same thing' ; the Christ principle is not multiple, whatever it can be made of its terrestrial manifestations or other types. The â Mediatorâ , according to all traditions, is the 'Universal Man' , which is also the Christ; whatever the name by which he is called changes nothing, and I do not see what difficulty there can be in regard to this.

The ascetic way would be, in its type, more comparable to the initiatic way of what is not mysticism, if only in that it implies a method and a positive

effort. Mysticism, for its part, is instead totally the opposite because of its passive character. The ascetic way can therefore be a preparation for a realization of another order, much more than the mystical way, which would even seem even incompatible with that goal.

But I do not think on the other hand that we can assert that some of what passes beyond elementary religion is open to all; asceticism belongs only to some, and mysticism to some other. As to what is beyond the religious domain, it is obvious that it concerns a much more restricted number of persons. Whoever finds his fulfillment at a certain level would make a very great error to try to pass beyond it. That concerns the question of a necessary hierarchy, against which all sophisms of democratic egalitarianism are impotent, though many of Catholics themselves today unfortunately are affected by it: and there are perhaps still a few of them who even suspect it.

In regard to your objection inherent to the domain of pure intellectuality, is it quite certain that it is even what it has as a goal? In that case it is still necessary to make an essential distinction: the texts that you cite are revolts against profane knowledge, not against sacred knowledge; and we absolutely do not confuse what is simply rational with what is purely intellectual. When I speak of profane knowledge, I understand by it, naturally, everything that is philosophy; the less the spirit is blocked from all those things, the better, certainly, and from the initiatic point of view even more than the religious. It would be necessary perhaps to include also a good part of theology, insofar as it contains many useless subtleties and is of a still quasi-philosophical nature. In any case, everything that is discussion and controversy is of a purely profane spirit. That said, it is necessary to add that pure intellectuality eludes on the other hand the religious domain; this is another thing and it stands to reason that sentiment and action have their part in it. Yet again, it is necessary to put all things in the place that belongs to them, without allowing them any influence over a domain that is not their own.

Finally, pure intellectuality is in the same way indifferent in regards both to pride and humility, two opposed notions that are of a sentimental order in the same manner; those who pretend the contrary show clearly in that case that they do not have the least idea of what is truly intellectuality.

I see that you consider as valuable the incomprehension of P. A.; it would be somewhat difficult to find a more limited spirit than his. Moreover, what a fine way of defending Christianity by continuing to deny that its doctrine reaffirms a higher meaning, instead of the nonsense of moral and social character that one admits to often see in it! I don't see in what a similar vulgarity would presuppose the intervention of a superhuman principle; fortunately, I have for my part a better idea of Christianity than his.

It is sad to see how persons of this type look to diminish all that is higher than them â | The Truth is too high to receive the least insult.

18 April 1949
Cairo, Egypt

About what you say in regards to Schuon's book, I don't see exactly how the affirmation of the metaphysical identity of the possible and the real could be an 'error', actually just the opposite. Nevertheless, if there is anyone to whom this should be attributed, it was I and not he, since, long before him, I devoted a whole chapter (the second) of the Multiple States of Being to this problem.

As to the esoteric character of early Christianity, of which later Christianity was only an exteriorization (i.e., no longer having anything initiatic about it); we have no doubt about that, all the more since the Islamic tradition asserts it explicitly, claiming that Christianity, in its origins, was tariqa [way] and not sharia [law]. The absence of sharia is in fact evident from the moment that it had to supply it through an adaption of Roman law (whence 'canon

law' was derived), therefore with the contribution of something that was completely unrelated to Christianity (and it is necessary to note in this regard that the word in Arabic *aqnun* is still used today, in contrast to *sharia*, to define every law that is not integrated in the tradition).

After my latest books (especially the *Perspectives on Initiation and the Reign of Quantity*, since in the *Great Triad* I only used two or three articles), there currently remain very few of my articles, as you noted, that have not yet been republished, at least among those that were intended to be copied in *Ur*. As for the articles on the *Fedeli d'Amore*, I must say that I had the intention for a long time to include them in a new edition of the *Esoterism of Dante*; I was not able to find the time to systematize it, but I did not abandon them and moreover it is likely that the edition is about to go out of print very quickly.

On the problem of Masonry, I believe that it will truly be very difficult for us to agree; but there are a few things that astonish me about what you say in this question. First of all, you make me say (without any qualification, for I had made quite clear that it concerned only the West) that the only initiatic traditional organizations existing are the *Compagnonnage* and Masonry, and then you assert that I should not logically write that some Masons would seem to not take into account Oriental initiatic organizations, that otherwise exist and among which some have more or less numerous members in Europe itself. It stands to reason that it can at least write also for them. I add, to finish with this subject once and for all, that my writings can furnish to some people, unless they are associated with an initiatic organization, a theoretical knowledge of traditional doctrine that in itself is not unimportant. As to the Masons, they have had in this circle, in recent times, many more results than I myself had hoped.

Another thing: I said that in the Western world itself there still survive certain organization tied to Christian Hermetism and dating from the Middle Ages. If I have not stressed this more strongly, it is because they are so closed (one of those that I knew more in depth restricted its membership to just twelve) that the possibility of being admitted is in practice not even to be considered.

I come to another problem; if you take Masonry to be considered, or rather its origin, as an idea similar to what you express, I ask myself how you could have once had, as you had told me some time ago, the intention of developing a work on the rituals aimed at eliminating its anti-traditional elements that were introduced into it. Under these conditions it would be a totally useless task, and there is in that, I confess, something that is absolutely incomprehensible to me. [Before he was injured in Austria, Evola had been doing research on a book on Masonic rituals.]

However, what I would like you to take notice is this: the date of 1717 does not mark the origin of Masonry, but the beginning of its degeneration, something that is quite different. Furthermore, because we can speak of a utilization of *â @psychic residuesâ* in this time, it would be necessary to suppose that operative Masonry had then ceased to exist, something not true, from the moment that it subsists still today in different countries, and that in England, between 1717 and 1813, it participated effectively to complete certain things and to straighten up others, at least in the measure in which that was still possible in a Masonry reduced to being only speculative. In reality, the schism of 1717 involved just four Lodges, while there still existed a number of much higher Lodges that did not take part in it. On the other hand, where a regular and continuous filiation exists, the degeneration did not interrupt the initiatic transmission; it only reduced its efficacy, at least in general lines, because in spite of everything there could always be exceptions. As to the anti-traditional action of which you speak, it would be necessary in this regard to make some precise distinctions, e.g., between the Anglo-Saxon and Latin Masons; but, in any case, that only proves the incomprehension of the great part of the members of one or another Masonic organization, simply a question of fact and not of principle. Fundamentally, what could be said is that Masonry was the

victim of infiltrations of the modern spirit, as in the exoteric order even the Catholic Church is in its current state even to a greater degree.

Of course, it is that I do not want at all to attempt to persuade you or anybody, only to make you see that the problem is much more complex than what you seem to believe.

Regarding the 'initiatic strain' you mention, without denying at all their existence (and what I just said of certain existent Hermetic groups could otherwise be connected to them), I have to say that, for many reasons, I am very skeptical in the great number of cases, and that even the examples you cited are among those that seem to me to be more than dubious. Eliphaz Levi was a Mason, and certain English circles with which he was in relationship were, to summarize, study groups, without a proper initiatic character, and were reserved exclusively to Masons. Apart from that, I never found the least proof that he had received any other regular initiation, and all the stories that some have told about this can only be placed in the category of occultist fables.

Meyrink was certainly in the current of very numerous traditional ideas, especially of a Jewish source; but, not to mention that this presupposes precisely an initiation (I do not think that he was able to receive a truly Cabalistic initiation, the only thing without doubt to be taken in consideration in a case of the type), the burlesque manner and caricature with which he often presented these ideas leaves a truly sinister impression (a shame that I cannot tell you by letter all the efforts that I made to remediate certain detrimental consequences of The Green Face). Besides, his relations with the school of Bo Yin Ra (whose true origin I am probably the only one who knows, because I noticed that his own disciples did not know it) are not certainly a very favorable indication.

As for Kremmerz, there would be much to say, and it would require too much time. But what I saw of his writings and even certain rituals that were too clearly *à fabricadâ*, gave me the impression of something of rather scant consistency, and that recalls the worst parts of Eliphaz Levi's work; in any case, the different groups into which his disciples split give the impression of not knowing absolutely how to direct themselves, and some admit to finding themselves at a true impasse.

I will add that, every time that it concerned self-styled Egyptian organizations, there were more serious reasons to be suspicious of them, because nothing authentic is found there and not even, quite often, of any consistency. As for an initiation received outside of the ordinary way of joining a known organization, there are certainly some examples of them, but in these cases it was a question of extremely rare exceptions, and no one can be confident of finding himself in a similar condition to avoid a normal tie; to think of it differently would be self-delusion in a very serious way. As for me, since the age of 22 or 23, I have been attached with some initiatic organization both Oriental and Western, from which you can take account that the supposition you advanced could not in any way be applied to my situation.

The doctrinal question that you speak about at the end of your letter is, fundamentally, less difficult than what it seems at first view: every *à true manâ* has instead realized all the possibilities of the human state, but each one following a way that is congenial to him and thanks to which he differentiates himself from the others. Moreover, if it were not so, how could there be a place here, in our world, also for other beings that have not reached this level? The same thing can also be applied, at another level, for the *à transcendent manâ* or the *jivan mukta*; but then it is a matter of the totality of the possibilities of all the states.

Only, what is real, as weird as it can seem, is in fact that beings who have reached the same level can then be, in a certain sense, *à indistinguishableâ* from the outside, as far as it concerns the corporeal appearance. It happens in effect that they encompass a 'type' that no longer has any individuality, and

that occurs above all for those who carry out certain special functions: the 'type' is then that of the same function, something can make one believe that it is always the same being to exercise it over the course of a period of several centuries, while the reality is something completely different.

According to what you explained to me this time, it seems that you consider the words 'possible' and 'real' in the sense of 'non-manifested' and 'manifested'; if that were so, one could say that it is merely a question of terminology and that, in spite of this expressive difference, we are basically in agreement on the point in question. However, such a use of the words 'possible' and 'real', in a sense much different from how we use it, does not seem to be acceptable, because the non-manifested is not only just as real, but even more real than the manifested.

What I said last time regarding my ties with initiatic organizations (even though I don't really like to speak of these things that ultimately can be of interest to no one outside of myself) was in response to what you wrote: most often out of that secret society those capable of greater comprehension with respect to initiatic things were found, something that perhaps was verified in your own situation.

That made me think you gave yourself the idea that, in my case, it could be a question of one of those pretended initiations without any regular ties, which, in my opinion, I could consider only purely imaginary. By the way, I will point out to you that, in Perspectives, I dedicated an entire chapter to explain the reasons why the word 'secret society' is absolutely unacceptable in cases of the type of those which you referred to.

You think that, in Perspectives, we do not speak of Christian Hermetic organizations; but to the contrary, I expressly mentioned them even in the note to which you referenced and, if I didn't talk about it more, it is because those whose existence I was able to come to know admits such a restricted number of members that they can be considered as inaccessible for all practical purposes. I also see that you have not well understood in what sense I spoke of 'complex problems'. I only wanted to say with what in reality they have many more elements than what can be known through a study made 'from the outside'; it is therefore totally contrary to something that could be defined as you thought.

As for the source itself of the question concerning Masonry, I clearly mean that I do not at all claim to convince you, and that otherwise you would have no interest in it. You say that in that case, it is a question for you only of the truth, but it is also the same even for me. You know moreover that I have never been concerned to entice anyone to join one or another organization, no more than to distance him from them. I only said in a very clear way that that could not be my role. I never had the time nor the interest to be concerned with individual cases and I always refused to give particular advice to anyone, for this thing as for any other. That said, I must however make two or three observations on what you tell me this time, and first of all on what concerns the other grades, since the true nature of the relationship between those and Masonry seems to elude you. When I speak of Masonry without further clarifications, it is always about Masonry properly called, including only the three grades of Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason, to which can only be added the English grades of Mark and Royal Arch, totally unknown in 'continental' Masonry.

Regarding the many other grades like those you refer to, it is obvious that internally there are some things of a quite different character, and that the connection which you wanted to establish between the different 'system' is completely artificial. I am furthermore less inclined to question what I myself wrote formally in a recent article; but, as that is the way with which all these things ended up by agglomerating themselves around Masonry, they do not form an integral part of it to any qualification and consequently it is not what is in question. Another point on which I would like to bring your attention is that when you say that the Lodges that had not adhered to the 'speculative'

schisms were not able to do anything to stop or rectify its consequences, it seems that you do not take into account things that nevertheless cover a certain importance, like the reestablishment of the grade of Master, totally unknown by those of 1717, or the action of the Ancients Great Lodge, whose independent existence continued up until 1813. To say so frankly, I have the impression that you always think only of what Masonry became at a certain period in Italy and France, and that you have no idea at all what concerns Anglo-Saxon Masonry.

To move on to other issues, I confess that I do not understand at all what realizations you mean concerning Eliphas Levi; in fact, like his filiation (or rather like drawing inspirations in his writings, since he himself died before that), there was nothing other than the occultist French movement of the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX, on whose insignificance I think we find ourselves in agreement.

For Kremmerz, I know well that a very unclear story is concealed underneath, but that it gives rise to many doubts, at least because I was never able to find any proof about the real existence of the organization to which he would have belonged. In any case, even if he had personally received an authentic initiation, that would still demonstrate nothing for the organization he founded, insofar as there were other cases of the same type (e.g., that of Inayat Khan, who belonged to a regular tariqa in India, but whose self-styled 'Order of Sufis' corresponded absolutely to nothing); everything that I can say, is that his rituals are more or less 'Egyptian' like those of Cagliostro!

There could nevertheless be certain realizations totally within that circle, as you say, but they do not go beyond the psychic domain, something that entails nothing of the truly initiated. I add that, after Kremmerz' death, the different groups into which his organization divided appear absolutely not to know where to turn. I notice that, concerning Eliphas Levi, I forgot to cite the use of his works by Albert Pike; but in that case it is a matter of an influence exercised (otherwise indirectly) on the interpretation of the other grades of the Scottish Rite, something that does not proceed even in the direction you have seen.

There are certainly cases in which an influence of the counter-initiation is quite visible, and among them, it is necessary to include those in which traditional information is present in a manner of a willful parody. This is above all Meyrink's case, something that, well intended, does not mean that he was perforce conscious of the influence that was exercised over him. Here is why I am amazed that you seem to have a certain esteem in regard to Meyrink, and all the more so, since he had belonged to Bo Yin Ra's movement, for which you clearly had no regard.

NOTE: As long ago as 1924, Evola reviewed some of Bo Yin Ra's works. Although Evola did not render a fully positive judgment, he conceded that his doctrine had some interesting points.

In this regard, it is necessary on the other hand for me to make a rectification: certainly there was in Bo Yin Ra a little bit of charlatanism and mystification, but there was at least still more to him, because he was connected with a very strange organization that had its own headquarters in parts of Turkestan and represented a more or less deviant type of Tantrism. About that, I can certainly be certain (and perhaps I am the only one), at the time when the future Bo Yin Ra was still called Joseph Schneider and studied painting in Paris, some members of the organization in discussion made it known to me one day that he was the only European to be a part of it. Later, I also saw the portrait that Bo Yin Ra had made of his 'Master' and that it was perfectly recognizable for me; in such occasions, I was able on the other hand to question whether even his most intimate disciples knew absolutely anything at all about that, and I was very aware of letting them in on what I myself knew of it.

2 August 1949
Cairo, Egypt

[Discussions about publishing, translations, and the proofs of Revolt omitted]

Regarding Revolt, you are doubtlessly correct: it will be simpler if you send me the proofs and I send back my observations after reading them, because otherwise you may have already modified something that I had noted.

Inayat Khan, whom I also knew, was regularly associated with the tariqah Chishtiya, one of the most widespread in India and totally orthodox; something that did not prevent the organization he founded to be completely the fruit of his fantasy and lacking any value; the name, "Order of Sufis" that he gave it is also truly absurd.

As for the Masonic question, I think like you that it is useless to revisit it again. I only point out that as you say yourself this time, it is good to understand how it is not possible to speak of 'Masonry' meaning a type of global entity, that in reality does not exist, or rather, if you prefer, exists only in the line of principle and which one cannot attribute it to any more or less exterior action: the refusal by some of its branches to recognize others whose deviations they criticize sufficiently proves on the other hand that there does not exist in this regard any unity.

The problem of the possible and the real seems very simple and obvious to me, but, of course, under the condition of examining it from the metaphysical point of view. It is obvious that, from the philosophical point of view, one can always think anything whatsoever and discuss a problem endlessly without ever reaching a conclusion; it is even what characterizes profane speculation, and I have never been able to entertain any interest for those so-called 'problems' that fundamentally have only a verbal existence.

Melchizedek corresponds, in Islamic esoterism, to the function of the Qutb, as I have otherwise explained in King of the World. On the other hand, El-Khider is the Master of the Ahrif, which are found outside the jurisdiction of the Qutb and is said that they are not even known by it; in this regard, the Koranic story of the meeting between El-Khidr and Moses (Surat El-Kalif) is otherwise very significant. The way of the Ahrif is something absolutely exceptional, and no one can choose it on his own initiative. It is about an initiation received beyond the ordinary means and belongs in reality to another chain (perhaps you can find an article of Abdul-Hadi in which he deals with these two chains, even if his definitions are not perhaps very clear).

In the Jewish Kabbalah, the same distinction is found expressed through the duality of Metatron and Sandalphon.

The invisible Imam is something completely different: those who admit his existence generally think that it is he who has to appear as the Mahdi. He is on the other hand defined as 'el-Muntazer', that could mean, the 'expected one', but that is interpreted almost always as 'he who waits'.

Doctrinal infallibility belongs to whoever exercises legitimately a traditional function, naturally within the limits of that same function.

The issue of 'impeccability' is quite different, and it is usually considered, at least in orthodox tradition, as reserved to the Prophet: if it happens that he sometimes performs some acts that could seem reprehensible from an exterior point of view, it is only a question of an appearance, and such actions should in reality justify for the reason that elude the understanding of ordinary men.

I can provide you some news about Mircea Eliade: he published, as you might know, three articles from his journal Zalmoxis, the last of which in 1942. After that, he spent the rest of the war in Portugal, and subsequently he returned to Paris where he still is today. He has had many items published recently: Yoga: Immortality and Freedom, the Myth of the Eternal Return, and the History of Religious Ideas (which I have not yet had time to read), without mentioning the

many important articles in the Revue de l' Histoire des Religions. I don't have his address, but I think I can easily find it out and will then let you know.

As for Leon de Poncins, it is a matter of a rather unpleasant story. Shortly before the war, a certain Eve Louguet was his secretary who took part in a group of dangerous sorcerers. He himself was a victim of these people and concerning the people who by chance saw him again around 1940, they reported to me that he seemed to have undergone a true collapse. I never knew what became of him since, but, in such conditions, I have many doubts that he can still be alive. [He actually outlived both Guenon and Evola. ~ ed.]

What is strange is that in the same period, one of the individuals in question tried to start a correspondence with me for some reason. At that time I did not know what it was about, but very soon the affair appeared suspicious to me, so that I immediately gave him a clean break.

I recently had the chance to speak about you with Mr. M., who has for more than a year been representing Argentina in Cairo and he informed me that he had known you at one time.

He intends to translate Man and his Becoming into Spanish; up until now, only the General Introduction has been translated into that language, in a version published in Buenos Aires during the war.

Since you asked me my age, I am 62 years old; I knew that you had to be younger than I, but I didn't think that the difference was so great. [Evola was 51 at the time.] As for my photograph, I am sorry that I cannot satisfy your request, but the truth is that I don't have any, and for many reasons. In fact, first of all what could be called a matter of principle that commits me, as you say, to give no importance to anything that is of a simply individual character. But, beyond that, I am also cautious that it could present some danger. About 15 years ago, I was informed that a certain Jewish lawyer was poking all around here to procure one of my photographs, claiming to be willing to pay any price. I never knew what he truly wanted to do with it, but what is certain in any case is that his intentions were not at all benevolent. Since one never knows where a photograph can end up, I concluded from the episode that it was much more prudent to not take one.

29 October 1949
Cairo, Egypt

I received your letter of 4 September about eight days ago; I wonder if you were able to reach Eliade, since I rushed to send you his address in Capri. A short time after I wrote you, I knew that he had already returned to Paris; it seems that he did not take a very long vacation.

[Discussions and complaints about publishing and editors omitted]

Abdul-Hadiâ's article, which I spoke about, entitled Pages dedicated to Mercury, was republished in 'Etudes Traditionnelles', but I realized that occurred only after the war, which explains the reason why you aren't familiar with him.

As for 'impeccability', it goes without saying that it must belong equally to all who have reached a certain spiritual level. But, excluding the case of the prophetic mission, the possession of such a state concerns only the person who received it, and no one else can speak of its merit or care about it, hence the absence of every explicit affirmation in this regard in orthodox doctrine.

If I learn something about Leon de Poncins, I will let you know, but I still don't know what happened to him. I believed, I no longer know exactly why, that he had to retreat to Switzerland during the war, but I was not able to confirm that.

Regarding evil spells, there is a great difference between true sorcerers like

those with whom he had to deal and simple occultists. The latter, notwithstanding all their pretenses, never reach any effective result. There have often been some of them who attempted to do something against me and, also like you, I never heard anything about it at all.

On the other hand, when you think that things of that type should not be able to strike those who have a true spiritual vocation (however I don't think that can be said to have been that the case of Leon de Poncins), it is also necessary to make a distinction: if you want to speak of the psychic and mental side, you are absolutely correct, but things are quite different from the corporeal point of view and anyone can always be struck in this regard. Furthermore, since it has been passed down that some sorcerers succeeded in sickening the Prophet himself, I don't even see who could boast of being secure from their attacks.

Thomas Palamidessi, whose writings you inserted into your letter, is again obviously another charlatan of the type of those who currently abound everywhere. But what is astonishing is that he again appropriated ideas found in your and other's books, to use them in a way that can only discredit them; in such conditions, the works that he publishes should not require much effort to write.

I heard about Meher Baba in the past and his vow of silence, which does not seem to prevent him from responding in other ways to the questions that are asked of him, but I did not know that he has reappeared in recent times. I do not know if he ever was associated with any regular initiatic organization, but it seems dubious to me because he is a Parsi. Nothing of the type seems to exist among the Parsis of India, who moreover have conserved only rather incomplete fragments of their tradition (I speak of the Parsis of India, because those of central Asia have quite other knowledge, even if they keep it hidden).

I am quite astonished about how much you tell me in regards to Karoly Kerényi, because I remember that in the past he had spoken very favorably about me; it had to be in 1939 or 1940, and at that occasion he had sent me his book *Religion in Antiquity*. On the other hand I reviewed it, but because of the suspension of 'Etudes Traditionnelles', I was able to publish it only after its resumption.

As for Carl Jung, his influence unfortunately is gaining ground everywhere, in France as in Italy and Switzerland, and he seems to me still more dangerous than Freud because of his pseudo-spiritual pretense. Recently I had to write an article about the deformations of the very idea of Tradition provoked by his theory of the 'collective unconscious'.

The Golden Dawn was a self-styled Hermetic organization that fundamentally did not seem to have a very serious character, because it was from its beginnings an authentic mystification. It is true that this could serve to conceal some rather suspect things. Internally, the principle role was developed by MacGregor and his wife (Bergson's sister). Only much later was Crowley introduced to it, as he also did in many other things. Even when it was not about rather insignificant pseudo-initiations (perhaps that was not at all the case for the Golden Dawn), his involvement introduced truly sinister influences into it, if only making of it something much more dangerous. The Golden Dawn has ceased to exist, following a misunderstanding among its members, but a part of them followed it up under the name of Stella Matutina.

To come back to Aleister Crowley, what you told me reminds me of the story that turned up in 1931 (I believe at least that was the exact date): while he was in Portugal, he suddenly disappeared. They found his clothes on the border of the sea, something that made them believe he had drowned. But it was only a simulated death, since they were no longer concerned about him and did not try to find out where he had gone. Actually, he went to Berlin to play the role of secret adviser to Hitler who was then at his beginning. It is probably this that had given rise to certain tales about the Golden Dawn, but in reality it was only about Crowley, because it does not seem that a certain English colonel named Etherton, who was then his 'colleague', had ever had the least

relationship with that organisation.

A little later, Crowley founded the Saturn Lodge in Germany; have you ever heard of it? There he called himself Master Therion, and his signature was to mega Therion (the Great Beast), something that in Greek gives exactly the numeric value 666.