

February 28, 2023

Taken from Regeneration

After the article by Julius Evola released on “ Rome ” in September 1956, we continue with the theme of the so-called. “ Devil's Towers ”, that is to say of those places, more or less geographically defined, from which the forces of counter-initiation would radiate subtle influences capable of altering, suggest and divert minds and also generate real psychic aggregates “ at the service ” of certain opinion movements and “ cultural ” subversive revolutions.

Today we publish what on this issue, closely connected to the problem of negative influences generated on individual and collective consciences by psychic-subtle forces, René Guénon had the opportunity to write. These are three fragments and not organic texts: often, in fact, the master of Blois limited himself to “ clearing ” some themes in his writings or articles, sometimes postponing their deepening to possible subsequent writings which, unfortunately, have rarely been fully developed, also due to the premature disappearance of the great metaphysician.

In particular, Guénon spoke of these centers of emission of regressive psychic influences first on the occasion of a review of the book *Aventures en Arabie* by the American writer Seabrook (to whom Evola also mentioned in the article we proposed), which appeared in 1935 in the magazine *Études Traditionnelles*, then in a letter to Vasile Lovinescu of May 1936 (preceded, a few months earlier, by another letter in which Guénon made only a very vague mention of the question of “ towers ”, reported in note), which expressly mentions the review of Seabrook's book and, finally, a fragment of a letter addressed to an unidentified “ M. C. ”, dated March 1937. We offer all three writings, omitting the large part of the letter to Lovinescu not relevant to our theme; instead we leave the review intact to Seabrook's book, given that the reference to the seven centers (and, specifically, to what would be referred to the Yezids, in present-day Iraq) is placed only in the final part, in which, moreover, Guénon reveals particularly important information, and the fragment of the letter of 1937, in which it is repeated, in essence, what has already been said in previous writings. It should be noted that, apart from the phantom seven counter-initial centers, Guénon does not exclude, and indeed mentions, the existence of other places which, albeit in secondary ways, they are potentially capable of attracting and projecting harmful psychic influences.

by René Guénon

Review by Aventures en Arabie of W.B. Seabrook, Gallimard, Paris, 1934

(taken from « Études Traditionnelles », 1935, pp. 42-43)

This book, like the others of the same author translated previously (The île magique is Les Secrets de la jungle), stands out for its quality from the usual « travel stories », no doubt because here we are dealing with someone who does not carry preconceived ideas wherever he goes and, above all, he is not at all convinced that Westerners are superior to all other peoples. Of course, sometimes there are naivety, singular amazement in the face of very simple and elementary things, but this seems to us, after all, a guarantee of sincerity.

In truth, the title is a little misleading ' , given that the author was not in Arabia proper, but only in the regions located immediately north of it. Let's also say, to exhaust criticism immediately, that Arabic words are sometimes deformed in a bizarre way, as if one had attempted to reproduce sounds in an approximate way without worrying in the least about spelling, and that some quoted sentences are translated in a rather imaginative way. Finally, we were able to see once again a curious fact: in western books intended for « the general public » the shahâdah it is never, so to speak, exactly reproduced; it is an accidental fact, or, as it seems more likely, is there anything that prevents it from being pronounced to the mass of hostile or simply indifferent readers?

“ Towers ” Yazide: The mausoleum of Adi ibn Mustafa in Lalish

The first part, the longest, deals with the life of the Bedouins and is almost exclusively descriptive, which certainly does not mean that it is without interest; but in the following there is something more. In the part where we talk about the dervishes, there are in particular some considerations of one sheykh

mawlawî, whose meaning is, without any doubt, faithfully reproduced: thus, to dispel the misunderstanding expressed by the author regarding certain turuq, lo sheykh explains to him that « to reach God there is not a single narrow and direct way, but an infinite number of paths »; pity that he did not have the opportunity to make him understand that Sufism has nothing in common with pantheism or heterodoxy ... Vice versa, in the other two parts it is precisely seven heterodox, and also rather enigmatic: the Druze and the Yezidi; on both the volume contains interesting information, without however pretending to make everything known and explain everything. As for the Druze, a point that remains particularly obscure concerns the cult of a « golden calf » or a « calf head », which is attributed to them; it is something that could perhaps give rise to numerous combinations, of which the author seems to have only glimpsed a part; at least he understood that symbolism is not idolatry ... Regarding Yezidi, a somewhat different idea will be obtained from that given by the conference we have recently dealt with in our reviews of the magazines (November number); here we no longer speak of « Mazdeism », in relation to them, and, at least in this respect, the information is undoubtedly more exact; I ' « devil worship » could however provoke less easy to resolve discussions, and the true nature of the Malah Tâwûs still remains a mystery. But perhaps the most interesting part, unbeknownst to the author, who, despite what he has seen, refuses to believe it, is that concerning the « seven devil towers », projection centers of satanic influences in the world; that one of these towers is located near the Yezids, moreover, does not demonstrate at all that they are themselves « Satanists », but only that, as happens for many heterodox sects, they can be used to facilitate the action of forces they ignore. In this regard, it is significant that regular yezidi priests refrain from officiating any kind of ritual in that tower, where some species of wandering magicians often come to spend several days there; what exactly do these characters represent? In any case, it is not at all necessary for the tower to be inhabited permanently, if it is nothing more than the tangible and « localized support » of one of the centers of the « against-initiation », to which they preside awliyâ esh-Shaytân (1); through the establishment of these seven centers, they claim to oppose the influence of the seven Aqtâb or « Terrestrial » poles subordinated to the « Pole » supreme, although this opposition may however be only illusory, as the spiritual sphere necessarily remains precluded to the « counter-initiation ».

Extract from the Letter à Vasile Lovinescu of 19 May 1936

Al-hamdu liLlâhi wahdahu

Cairo, May 19, 1936

(...) Speaking of counter-initiation, I think you saw what I wrote last year about “ seven devil towers ”, in the Seabrook book review, in which it is brought up the one found in the Yazidis, that is, in Iraq. For the others, we speak of certain regions located towards the borders of the Siberia and of Turkestan; there is still there Syria, with the Ismailites of Agha Khan and some other rather suspicious sect; then the Sudan, where there is, in a mountainous region, a population “ licanropa ” of about twenty thousand individuals (I know through eyewitnesses); more in the center of Africa, on the side of Niger, there is the region from which all the sorcerers and magicians of ancient Egypt once came (including those who fought against Moses); it seems that with all this one could trace a sort of continuous line, which first heads from North to South and then from East to West, which in the concave part locks the western world. Of course, this does not mean that there are no other more or less important centers outside this line: you talk about Lyon and there is certainly something in Belgium.

San Francisco's Transamerica Pyramid, “ California's Tower ”

As for America, the most suspicious point seems to be there California, where many heteroclitic things are brought together; it is true that these are mainly pseudo-initiatory organizations, but there is certainly something else that directs them, even without their knowledge; the use of pseudo-initiation by counter-initiation agents, in many cases, appears less and less doubtful and I propose to talk about it soon in an article, on the occasion of a history of self-styled Rosicrucian organizations... Regarding Iraq and California, there is an issue that interests me a lot, since it is evident that it is related to a domain that is not mine at all: it is that of the relationships that seem to exist between these locations and those of oil sources; of these, unfortunately, there are also in your country; Could it not be for this reason (although there may still be other reasons) that it attracts a little ' too much attention from some people? Also note in this regard that Sir Henry Detering, the director of “ Royal Dutch ”, is a character quite comparable to B. Z. ; it is also said that he would be his designated successor ... For the famous list, I wondered if there were no names that could have been badly deciphered; but, if it is typed, the question does not even arise. I asked for information about English names that are unknown to us; I don't have the answer yet but, if I find out something, I will not fail to communicate it to you. (...) (2)

Fragment from Letter to M. C. of March 25, 1937

It seems that the atmosphere of 'Antwerp is something frightening, which even causes inexplicable physical ailments; but there, and the same goes for Lyon, as maybe for the Balearics and some other places in Europe, and for the California as for America (since it is undoubtedly not at all that so many strange things resemble each other), I think it is basically only secondary centers, which must not be counted among the " towers " proper. These seem rather arranged according to a sort of arc of circle that surrounds Europe at a certain distance; one in the region of Niger, whence it was said already in ancient Egypt that the most fearful sorcerers came; one in Sudan, in a mountainous region inhabited by a population " licanropa " of about 20,000 individuals (I know here eyewitnesses of the thing); two in Asia Minor, one in Syria and one in Mesopotamia; then one from the parts of the Turkestan, where there are " strange things " as in Syria, in good and bad; therefore there should be two more north, towards the Urals or the western part of Siberia, but I must say that, so far, I have not come to locate them exactly.

Editorial notes

(1) The so-called. " Saints of Satan ".

(2) in a previous letter to Vasile Lovinescu dated February 24, 1936, Guénon had only made a quick mention of the " towers ": "It has been a long time, on the other hand, that I know that Agha Khan is an important agent of counter-initiation; the group of which he is the leader also serves, apparently, from " coverage " to one of the ' seven Devil's towers ' ... Another character, of the same kind as B. Z., is Sir Henry Detering, of ' Royal Dutch ' : haven't you heard of it in your whole story? I also wonder if, on the list of B. Z., don't imagine Lloyd George, Philip Sassoon, Venizelos; do you know that? Be that as it may, all of this is by no means reassuring as to the turn they can take events (...)".

In the image in evidence, the so-called. Devil's Tower in Wyoming, United States