

Traditionalist Sufism⁽¹⁾

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In many cities in Europe and the United States, there exist groups which describe themselves as 'Centers' or 'Foundations' for 'Traditional [sometimes, 'Metaphysical'] Studies.' Normally, these groups derive from a French 'metaphysician,' René Guénon (1886-1951); often they are the public face of a Sufi tariqa, or occasionally of a Masonic lodge.⁽²⁾ There are also political Traditionalists, normally deriving more from the Italian writer Julius Evola, but often also acknowledging Guénon. The most important of these is perhaps the Moscow Center for Special Metastrategic Studies. This is a serious organization despite its fanciful name, or at least an organization which has to be taken seriously, to judge by the weekly print-run - 50,000 copies - of its in-house journal, *Elementy*.⁽³⁾

My purpose in this article is not, however, to survey the vast and growing influence of René Guénon, but rather to ask how traditional Traditionalists really are, concentrating on Sufi Guénonians. My choice of Sufism is based on two grounds: firstly, that it is arguably the mainstream of Guénonianism, since Sufism was the path which Guénon himself chose. My second ground is more pragmatic: Sufism in the Muslim world is my own principal field. A second limitation is that in this article I am asking how traditional Traditionalists are, not how traditional Traditionalism is. The 'perennial philosophy' of course sees itself as anything but new, but for various reasons I have no intention of approaching here the question of whether it is modern or perennial.⁽⁴⁾ Instead, I will look at practice, associating non-traditional or 'new' with organizations such as Encausse's *Ordre martiniste*, where Guénon's career started, and 'traditional' with tariqas such as the Hamdiyya Shadhiliyya, the almost entirely traditional Egyptian tariqa⁽⁵⁾ where Guénon's career ended.

In order to place my subject, I will start with a classification of Sufism in the West. Western Sufism can in general be divided into four groups: immigrants' tariqas, standard tariqas, novel tariqas, and non-Islamic groups.⁽⁶⁾ The two extremes are the easiest to describe. An immigrants' tariqa is a transplant: Senegalese Mourides in Italy or Egyptian Burhamis in Denmark, tariqas taken with immigrants to their new countries, following shaykhs who are also followed in the immigrants' home countries. Non-Islamic groups are usually self-identified as such - the 'Sufi Movement' of Idries Shah, for example, which argues that Sufism is separate from Islam, many of whose members are not and would never describe themselves as Muslim.

Non-Islamic Sufi groups are, clearly, not traditional - they are new. Though there have been occasional cases of Sufi shaykhs in the Muslim world having non-Muslim followers, and occasional cases of Sufi tariqas which stray outside Islam,⁽⁷⁾ it is axiomatic for a scholar of Sufism, or indeed for 99.9% of Sufis in the Muslim world, that Sufism is a path within Islam. Equally, immigrants' tariqas are clearly traditional. Although the new environment within which they exist inevitably has consequences and leads to changes, this is part of the

normal rhythm of Sufism. Sufi tariqas have been moving into new environments since first there were tariqas.

My two remaining classifications are less easily described. A standard tariqa is easiest to define by example: that of the Naqshbandiyya of Muhammad Nazim al-Haqqani (1922-), a Turkish shaykh who has many followers in Turkey, Syria and Malaysia. Al-Haqqani is a standard shaykh in terms of Islamic studies, but was educated in Cyprus under the British and so happens to speak English - and also has numerous English, German, American and other converts amongst his followers.⁽⁸⁾ His English Naqshbandiyya is not an immigrants' tariqa, since even though there are many immigrants amongst al-Haqqani's followers in London they did not take the Naqshbandiyya with them to England; there are also many non-immigrants amongst his followers. I would argue that this 'standard' tariqa is traditional (rather than new) in three senses. First, al-Haqqani is a shaykh on the classic Islamic pattern, taking his *silsila* [chain of spiritual descent] from a universally-accepted source, and recognized and followed by born Muslims in the Muslim world. Secondly, his tariqa is - in mainstream Islamic terms - orthodox. Although not every follower of his conforms to the Islamic Sharia [Sacred Law] in every respect, al-Haqqani does his best to hold his followers to the Sharia, and is in most cases successful. Finally, this tariqa is standard and traditional because its spread conforms to an established pattern. For a charismatic shaykh such as al-Haqqani to spread Islam in non-Muslim lands is something which has been happening for centuries, notably in Africa, but also in various parts of Asia - and now in Europe and America.

The remaining classification, then, is of 'novel' tariqa, into which I would put any tariqa which does not fit into one of my three other categories. It is into this category that Sufi Guénonians, or Traditionalist Sufis, fall. A 'novel' tariqa may be traditional, or may be new.

Guénon and Aguéli

Ivan Aguéli (1860-71), from whom Guénon took his first tariqa, and Guénon himself both made their débuts in Paris, in existing non-Christian spiritual and esoteric organizations. Aguéli, a painter, left his native Sweden for Paris at the age of 21, and, as well as painting and taking an interest in anarchism, joined the Theosophical Society in 1891. Guénon arrived in Paris from his native Blois a few years later, in 1904. He interested himself in various esoteric groups,⁽⁹⁾ initially those established by Gérard Encausse, 'Papus' (1865-1916). Encausse had also been a co-founder of the Theosophical Society in France (though he later opposed the Theosophists).⁽¹⁰⁾ The Theosophical Society thus features in Guénon's early years as well as Aguéli's.

Aguéli took the Shadhiliyya Arabiyya tariqa in Egypt in 1907, from Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad Illish,⁽¹¹⁾ and received an *ijaza* [authorization] to give the tariqa himself.⁽¹²⁾ Illish in fact gave so many *ijazas* 'to anyone applying for them' that Fred De Jong concludes that 'he does not seem to have taken the requirements of [his] position seriously.'⁽¹³⁾ Guénon, meanwhile, had taken part in the Spiritualist and Masonic Congress in Paris in 1908,⁽¹⁴⁾ and in the same year had founded his own *Ordre du temple rénové*, in which one authority has distinguished elements of Theosophy and of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor.⁽¹⁵⁾ As a result of the establishment of the *Ordre du temple*, Guénon and his followers were expelled from the *Ordre martiniste* by Encausse. In 1909, Guénon joined the Gnostic Church of Fabre des Essarts ('the Patriarch Synésius'), and edited until 1912 the periodical *La Gnose*, described as 'the official organ of the Universal Gnostic Church.'⁽¹⁶⁾

In 1910-11, Guénon published in *La Gnose* a series of articles on Hinduism which were later to form the basis of two of his most important works, the *Introduction générale à*

l'étude des doctrines hindoues and *L'homme et son devenir selon le Védânta*.⁽¹⁷⁾ It is unclear whence Guénon got the knowledge of Hinduism on which these articles and his later books draw.⁽¹⁸⁾ Chacornac states that both books were approved of by 'the orthodox pundits' of Benares,⁽¹⁹⁾ and they have met with approval from sections of the Indian public in recent years.⁽²⁰⁾ French orientalists however considered Guénon's work second-hand and his method unscholarly.⁽²¹⁾ The *Introduction générale* was rejected by Professor Sylvain Lévi of the Sorbonne, where Guénon submitted it as a thesis, 'because it was so thoroughly opposed to any form of historicity.'⁽²²⁾ The same might of course be said of many works originating from within a religion rather than from scholars outside a religion. In general, partisans of Guénon commend his understanding of Hinduism, and opponents criticize it.⁽²³⁾ I am not aware of any study so far carried out by an independent scholar, and am myself unqualified to perform one. It was through *La Gnose* that Guénon met Aguéli, and also Albert Puyoo, Comte de Pouvourville, a prominent Gnostic who had been initiated into a Chinese Taoist secret society a few years before; his Taoist name was Matgioi.⁽²⁴⁾ Both Aguéli and Guénon took Taoist initiations from Pouvourville; the three all wrote in *La Gnose* on various aspects of Eastern religion.⁽²⁵⁾ Aguéli, for example, wrote on the doctrinal identity of Islam and Taoism.⁽²⁶⁾ In 1912, Guénon became Muslim, taking the Shadhili tariqa from Aguéli; he took the name of Abd al-Wahid.

Guénon and Islam

Guénon's conversion to Islam was followed by an unequivocal repudiation of his earliest connections and interests, testified to by two books in which he attacked and exposed Theosophy and spiritualism in general and, in particular, a number of organizations ranging from Aleister Crowley's Golden Dawn to the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor.⁽²⁷⁾ He however retained a conviction of the efficacy of magic, as we will see, as well as an involvement in Masonry, which he considered to contain the vestiges of 'valid' Western 'initiatic' traditions.⁽²⁸⁾ Lings suggests that Guénon's secluded lifestyle in Cairo - extending to a refusal to give his actual address even to regular correspondents - was the result of fear of attack by magic by certain Europeans.⁽²⁹⁾ These included, according to a slightly dubious source, Téder / Charles Detré, an enemy of his from the days of the *Ordre du temple*.⁽³⁰⁾ In a letter to Evola in 1948, Guénon wrote that an 'attack of rheumatism' in 1939 had been caused by 'une influence maléfique,' and disagreed with Evola, who had evidently said that such things could not hurt those who have spiritual stature. Guénon pointed out that the Prophet himself was made ill by sorcerers.⁽³¹⁾ Most Guénonian biographers tend to gloss over Guénon's concern with magic, sometimes referring to attacks of persecution mania when Guénon was ill, but in one sense such apologies are unnecessary. A belief in the efficacy of magic is not un-Islamic, as Guénon's own reference to the Prophet reminds us. Such a belief was (and is) widespread in Egypt amongst all types and classes of person,⁽³²⁾ and so may be described as traditional within Islam.

Guénon also retained his interest in non-Islamic religions; indeed, Oldmeadow (for example) argues that he had not abandoned Catholicism, but his evidence is far from conclusive.⁽³³⁾ Guénon's writings certainly continued to emphasize Hinduism; it has been suggested that this was because Westerners who might reject Islam as 'another religion' ('we have had enough of religion') might more easily accept 'truths' which came from something 'on the surface very different,' and possibly because Hinduism is an Aryan religion, and Westerners have an Aryan heritage.⁽³⁴⁾ In similar vein, Pallis writes: 'Guénon felt that a knowledge of the Eastern tradition, notably the Hindu and the Taoist, might be a means of

spurring Christians into rediscovering the deeper meaning which the teachings of the Church harbor implicitly and this, for Guénon, was the only remaining hope for the West.⁽³⁵⁾ Hinduism was certainly the tradition which most interested the Western reading public at that time.

Despite this continued interest in Hinduism and other religions, however, Guénon's own practice was (as far as we know) purely Islamic. He is not known ever to have recommended anyone to become a Hindu,⁽³⁶⁾ whereas (as we will see) he introduced many to Islam.

As well as the two important works on Hinduism already mentioned, Guénon also published in 1927 his *La crise du monde moderne*. These three works, expanded by his most important later work, *La règne de la quantité et les signes des temps* (1945), contain the heart of Guénonianism. Guénon is perhaps best described as an influential commentator on modernity, which - he argues - is the Last Age (*kali yuga*). His method is not to analyze modernity sociologically or to argue against it on the grounds of modernity's own characteristics. This sets him apart from other critics of the age, from Marx to Spengler or Baudrillard. He instead expounds the Traditions (principally, the Hindu tradition), and leaves the reader in this light to judge the modernity the reader himself has experienced.⁽³⁷⁾ Guénon is also the great exponent of Tradition in a second sense, in the sense of the need to adhere to one of the great orthodox religious traditions which embody 'perennial' Truth. This concept of the Transcendent Unity of Religions is one of Guénon's most important and problematic legacies; its compatibility with Islam is considered below.

Early Guénonians

The years after Guénon's conversion to Islam were devoted mostly to writing; Guénon wrote more than half of his books, and all save one of his most important works, in the 1920s. In 1914, excused military service on health grounds, he had begun a series of periods of employment as a high-school philosophy teacher which lasted until 1927, all either in Paris or his native Blois (save for the year 1917-18, spent at a school in Sétif, Algeria). In 1927, however, a new period in Guénon's life began. His wife died, and the niece they had been bringing up (having had no children themselves) was taken back by her mother in 1928. In 1930 Guénon went to Egypt to collect texts for an esoteric publishing house,⁽³⁸⁾ but remained in Cairo until his death in 1951, marrying an Egyptian in 1934. In Cairo, Guénon dressed in a *jallabiyya* [robe] and spoke fluent Arabic.⁽³⁹⁾ Although he shunned the company of most Europeans,⁽⁴⁰⁾ he continued to write books and articles for publication in France, and he also continued his involvement in Muslim and non-Muslim religious circles, in Egypt and abroad.⁽⁴¹⁾ He referred many of the Europeans he encountered or corresponded with in this period to Frithjof Schuon (1907-98).⁽⁴²⁾

Schuon, the son of a German musician resident in Switzerland, had left school at sixteen and later moved to Paris,⁽⁴³⁾ where an interest in religions⁽⁴⁴⁾ led him to read extensively on Hinduism and Buddhism, and finally led him to the works of Guénon. In the early 1930s, Schuon wrote from Paris to Guénon in Cairo, asking him to recommend a 'master.' Guénon replied that he should go to Ahmad ibn Mustafa al-Alawi (1869-1934), then at Mustaghanim (Algeria).⁽⁴⁵⁾

It is strange that Guénon sent Schuon to an Alawi shaykh in Algeria rather than to his own shaykh in Cairo, who was by then Salama ibn Hasan Salama (1867-1939), the founder of the Hamdiyya Shadhiliyya, later to become one of the largest tariqas in Egypt.⁽⁴⁶⁾ In the same way, it is strange that he subsequently sent European visitors to Schuon (whom he had met in

1938 and 1939)⁽⁴⁷⁾ rather than to an Arab shaykh. Had Guénon sent his European visitors to his own shaykh, Guénonian Sufis today would most likely be followers of the Hamdiyya Shadhiliyya, and there would be few or no 'novel' Guénonian tariqas for this article to examine. It is interesting that, towards the end of his life, Guénon seems to have decided that sending people to Schuon had been a mistake.

The most likely explanation of his sending Schuon to al-Alawi is that there are obvious reasons for sending a European aspirant to a shaykh who speaks his language and understands his culture. Guénon may have considered al-Alawi an especially suitable person to whom to send a European: although he was reluctant to speak French he understood it well, and in 1926 had led the prayer for the inauguration of the Paris mosque. Many Frenchmen, from his doctor in Algeria to Jacques Berque, were clearly very impressed by him and his *baraka* [grace].⁽⁴⁸⁾ After al-Alawi's death, Guénon may have considered his successor a less suitable person;⁽⁴⁹⁾ he may, alternatively, have considered Schuon a more suitable person, for reasons which will be explored below.

In the event, Schuon had moved from Paris to Marseilles before Guénon's reply arrived, but in Marseilles he met some Algerians who belonged to an Alawi *zawiya* [lodge] there. These Alawis not only insisted that Schuon visit their shaykh, but even raised the money to buy him a ticket on a boat to Oran. In 1932, Schuon traveled to Mustaghanim, where he stayed four months, taking the Alawi tariqa.⁽⁵⁰⁾ He took the Muslim name of Nur al-Din Isa.

Probably before leaving Mustaghanim, Schuon received from al-Alawi's *snib* [deputy], Adda ibn Tunis, an undated document which has been described by later followers of Schuon's as a 'Diplôme de Moqaddem.' This is a curious document, in which Ibn Tunis gives Schuon permission to spread the message of Islam (*qad adhantu fi nashr al-dawa al-islamiyya*, we have permitted him to propagate the Islamic summons), accept people into Islam (*talqin kalimat al-tawhid 'la illaha ila Allah'*, dictation/inculcation of the Words of Unity 'there is no deity save God') and teach them their basic religious practices (*al-wajibat al-diniyya*, religious duties).⁽⁵¹⁾ Since no mention is made anywhere of representing or of giving the Alawiyya, this can hardly be considered an appointment as *muqaddam* [representative] in any normal sense. Indeed, all the things 'permitted' to Schuon are things for which no permission is needed, and which are actually incumbent upon any Muslim anyhow. The 'diplôme' thus has the *form* of an appointment without any substance.⁽⁵²⁾ It is hard to think of any reason for Ibn Tunis to produce such an empty document, save perhaps to respond tactfully to a request for an *ijaza* with which he was unwilling to comply.

Schuon began writing on his return to France, publishing his first articles in *Le Voile d'Isis* in 1933.⁽⁵³⁾ These articles are Islamic, but not unsurprisingly also reflect the wider esoteric interests of the periodical in which they were published and of Schuon himself.⁽⁵⁴⁾ In 1934, following the death of Ahmad al-Alawi, Schuon established *zawiyas* of his own in Amiens and then Basel and Paris.⁽⁵⁵⁾ He had no independent fortune, and continued working as a textile designer in France, living just over the border from Switzerland, making weekly visits to his *zawiya* on the banks of the Rhine in Basel, reached down a winding staircase from the Münstergasse.⁽⁵⁶⁾ His *locum tenens* in Basel was Titus (Ibrahim) Burckhardt (1908-84).⁽⁵⁷⁾ Burckhardt, who was born in Florence into an established Swiss artistic family, had known Schuon since their schooldays together.⁽⁵⁸⁾ In the 1930s, Burckhardt spent some years in Morocco, during which time he had learned Arabic⁽⁵⁹⁾ and encountered Sufism.⁽⁶⁰⁾ It is unclear at what point he became Muslim. In Paris, Schuon's *muqaddam* was Michel

(Mustafa) Vâlsan (1907-74), a Romanian diplomat who took the Alawi tariqa from Schuon in 1938.⁽⁶¹⁾

Schuon is the second European Guénonian Muslim to act as shaykh. Aguéli, the first, had received his *ijaza* from an Egyptian shaykh who may not have taken his position seriously; Aguéli is not known to have used his *ijaza* to give his tariqa to anyone save Guénon.⁽⁶²⁾ Schuon, on the other hand, gave his tariqa to hundreds; he seems to have received his *ijaza* from al-Alawi after al-Alawi's death, in a dream. That this dream included the Buddha Amitabha did not augur well for the future Islamic orthodoxy of his tariqa.⁽⁶³⁾ It was not widely known that this had been the nature of Schuon's *ijaza*.

Later followers of Schuon make a distinction between the ability and the authority to pass on a tariqa, arguing that any 'initiate' has the *power* to initiate others even in the absence of *authorization* to do so, and that what came to Schuon in his dream was the 'title of shaykh,' i.e. authorization, not the power to initiate, and that he had already been appointed *muqaddam*.⁽⁶⁴⁾ While it is true that the meaning of *ijaza* is 'authorization,' this is not a distinction normally made in Sufism, and (as we have seen) Schuon's appointment as *muqaddam* was not one which had any real meaning in the context of the Alawi tariqa. In 1937, Schuon received, in a vision, 'Six Themes of Meditation' from God; these themes were introduced into the Alawi practice of his *zawiya*.⁽⁶⁵⁾ The receipt of some special practice, often in a vision, frequently heralds the creation of a new tariqa; receipt from God directly, without any intermediary, is highly unusual, if not otherwise unheard of.

New Traditionalist Groups

In 1951, Guénonianism entered a new phase. This year saw a breach between Schuon and Guénon, and Guénon's death; by this time his fame had become sufficient for his death to be reported on the French radio.⁽⁶⁶⁾ The immediate grounds of the breach between Schuon and Guénon were the ever problematic question of the Transcendent Unity of Religions.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Schuon went further than Guénon on this point, holding that Christian initiation retained 'virtual' validity, and needed only to be somehow 'activated.' Whilst Guénon agreed with Schuon in accepting the validity of Masonic initiation, he held that Christian baptism had ceased to have any esoteric value at the end of the Middle Ages.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Schuon held that it was impossible for the Christian baptism to lose all validity, since this would be a betrayal by the Holy Ghost.⁽⁶⁹⁾ The implications of this dispute in terms of Islam will be considered later. Guénon was also concerned about the laxity of religious practice at Schuon's *zawiya* in Lausanne; this point will also be considered later.

Lings took Schuon's side in this dispute, even though he was Guénon's close associate, and Vâlsan took Guénon's side, even though he was Schuon's *muqaddam* in Paris.⁽⁷⁰⁾ As a result of this dispute the first non-Schuonian Guénonian tariqa arose, since Schuon instructed Vâlsan to establish his own separate *zawiya* in Paris, and to receive into it whoever he wanted.⁽⁷¹⁾

Following on this dispute, on Guénon's death, and on the Revolution in Egypt, the history of Guénonianism can be divided into three streams: Schuonian, non-Schuonian Muslim, and non-Muslim. Of these, the most important is the Schuonian stream: Schuon already had a large following before Guénon's death, and if anyone can be said to have inherited Guénon's position as the leading Traditionalist, it is Schuon. The non-Muslim stream falls outside the scope of this article; the other two streams are clearly 'novel' in the sense established above.

Taking my earlier criteria in reverse: their spreading is not so different from the established Islamic pattern, and on these grounds they might be classified as 'standard.' However, leaving aside for the moment the question of orthodoxy (which, as we will see, is central to the question of how traditional these groups are) groups in both streams must be classified as 'novel' if only because the shaykhs in question are not on the classic Islamic pattern. Schuon, for example, does not take his *silsila* from a universally-accepted source - while the source may be accepted, the taking is problematic. Schuon has later attracted a following among born Muslims in the Muslim world, but those non-Schuonian Guénonians who have a more normal *silsila* have not. Thus, although some Traditionalist Sufis may fulfill one of the two conditions established here, none fulfill both. We will now take Schuon's tariqa, later known as the Maryamiyya, as one case study, and a non-Schuonian tariqa, that of Abd al-Wahid Pallavicini in Milan, as another.

The Maryamiyya

Schuon moved to the US in 1981,⁽⁷²⁾ settling outside Bloomington, Indiana. A Schuonian community had come into existence there under the leadership of a professor of comparative religion at Indiana University who had been using Schuon's books in his courses. One of these followers of Schuon had established a *zawiya* near Bloomington, and offered Schuon adjoining land.⁽⁷³⁾ The reason normally given for Schuon's move is his interest in Native American religion,⁽⁷⁴⁾ to which we will return.

I have not visited Bloomington,⁽⁷⁵⁾ and the Maryamiyya is a more secretive organization than is normal amongst Sufi tariqas (though no more than is normal amongst Western esoteric organizations). My conclusions must therefore be tentative, and may be excessively negative, since criticism sometimes spreads faster than other varieties of fame. The later Maryamiyya, for example, is widely criticized for having 'left Islam' - an accusation normally based on the presence of non-Muslim followers of Schuon's, and on Maryami failure to observe the Islamic Sharia.

In having Christian (and Buddhist) followers,⁽⁷⁶⁾ Schuon was not alone. The US Khalwatiyya-Jarahiyya of the Turkish shaykh Muzaffer Özak, a non-Guénonian tariqa which might be classified as 'standard,' allows non-Muslims to be *muhibb* [fan, lover; unaffiliated follower] of the shaykh, though only Muslims may be *murid* [affiliated follower; disciple].⁽⁷⁷⁾ The Naqshbandiyya of al-Haqqani also accepts non-Muslims as visiting participants in the tariqa's activities, and many of these take the Naqshbandiyya *before* becoming Muslim, though in most cases Islam follows within a few days. It is not possible for a non-Muslim to follow the practice of the tariqa, and though there may be a few cases of non-Muslim Naqshbandi followers, these are anomalous. It is suggested that these individuals may be Muslim without acknowledging it.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Özak and al-Haqqani thus both make pragmatic concessions. In contrast to Schuon, neither is known to consider Christian sacraments in any way 'valid' - Schuon saw the Christian sacraments as 'initiatory' and Christians as thus able to follow a Master while remaining Christian.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Although Schuonians point to great shaykhs of the classical Islamic period who had Christian followers,⁽⁸⁰⁾ none of these had non-Muslim followers on the scale that Schuon did. Pragmatic concessions such as those made by Özak and al-Haqqani are well within Sufi tradition. Schuon's stance was not, and so can hardly be described as traditional.

Similarly, Schuon's tariqa is probably not alone in having (reportedly) relaxed the Sharia somewhat for its adherents, at least in principle. According to Hermansen, all Sufi orders in the US allow for some laxity in the practice of the Sharia, especially for new Muslims,⁽⁸¹⁾ and this is also true of al-Haqqani's Naqshbandiyya in Europe. Pragmatic

concessions in this area, though in some ways dangerous, are understandable. The question is one of degree and duration: while al-Haqqani may permit new Muslims to pray three times a day rather than five, the clear understanding is that five times a day is the norm, and that this norm should be reached as soon as practicable. There is some indication that Schuon's concessions went further. Although I do not know to what extent this represented Schuon's own position, other Schuonians have argued, for example, that it is permissible to delay the dawn prayer in an age of electric light, or to miss Friday prayers and conceal one's Islam in the hostile environment of the contemporary United States. This is an approach different in kind from al-Haqqani's, and - again - seems to go beyond the tradition of pragmatic concession to verge on modification of the Sharia.

One especially problematic relaxation of the Sharia is Schuon's own. In the late 1940s, for example, he kept in his room a statue of the Virgin Mary. Of this, he wrote later 'I was always strict in matters of sacred law, yet on the other hand I took my stand above all on the Religio Perennis and never allowed myself to become imprisoned in forms which for myself could have no validity.'⁽⁸²⁾ This seems a clear following of Traditionalism in preference to the Sharia. We will return to this question of priorities

The place of the Virgin Mary in Schuon's tariqa also caused concern. In 1965, Schuon had a vision of the Virgin (*Maryam* in Arabic), as a result of which he changed the name of his tariqa to 'Maryamiyya.'⁽⁸³⁾ Shortly afterwards, rumors of unorthodoxy were circulating, notably of the display of pictures of the Virgin in the Lausanne *zawiya*. Such pictures, referred to as 'icons,' were used (at least by the 1980s) as a focus for meditation in the practice of the tariqa.⁽⁸⁴⁾ Maryamis stress that these icons are not used 'in the *zawiya*,'⁽⁸⁵⁾ but this is a distinction which would mean little to most Muslims. In 1985, in a further vision of the Virgin, Schuon received the unusual *wird* [element of litany; office] 'Ya Maryam aleyka al-salam ya rahman ya rahim' [O Mary, on you be peace, O Compassionate, O Merciful].⁽⁸⁶⁾

Most problematic of all, however, is Schuon's interest in Native American religion. In 1959 he and his wife were 'adopted officially by the Lakota tribe' of Crow Indians, whom they had first met in Paris on 1958.⁽⁸⁷⁾ In 1963 Schuon and his wife 'were received as members of the Sioux tribe' during the second of their two early visits to the United States to see the Sioux and Crow Indians of South Dakota and Montana.⁽⁸⁸⁾ By the 1980s, Schuon was holding events variously known as 'Primordial Gatherings,' 'Pow Wows' or 'Indian Days,' at which ceremonies such as the 'Rite of the Sacred Pipe' and the Sun Dance were held. Schuon presided over such occasions, sometimes wearing a Native American feather head-dress with two horns, and carrying a feathered staff.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Maryamis stress that Muslim 'initiates' of Schuon were forbidden to *participate* in Native American religious *rites*, though not in dances which were not 'rites.'⁽⁹⁰⁾ This distinction, like that between an icon of the Virgin in different places, indicates a Schuonian concern to avoid syncretism, but again would satisfy few if any non-Guénonian Muslims. It is in no way a traditional distinction.

A further non-Islamic element in Schuon's practice is nakedness. Following his 1965 vision of the Virgin, Schuon (in his own words) had 'the almost irresistible urge to be naked like her little child; from this event onwards I went naked as often as possible;'⁽⁹¹⁾ in at least the 1985 vision, the Virgin herself was naked.⁽⁹²⁾ Both Schuon and the Virgin appear naked in certain 'Tantric icons' produced by Schuon and one of his wives, Sharlyn Romaine (Badriyah),⁽⁹³⁾ and at Primordial Gatherings 'women w[ore] what amount[ed] to American Indianized bikinis' or, at the 'Rite of the Sacred Pipe,' (usually attended only by 50 or 60 followers in the 'inner circle') loin-cloths.⁽⁹⁴⁾ Schuon maintained that sacred nakedness was compatible with Islam,⁽⁹⁵⁾ a highly unusual position, again far from traditional.

Another non-Islamic element in at least Schuon's own personal life was the application to marriage of a distinction unknown to the *fiqh* [codification of the Law] or the Sharia, that between the 'vertical,' which reaches to God, and the 'horizontal,' which is of earth, which is frequently made in other contexts by Schuonians.⁽⁹⁶⁾ In 1965, Schuon (first married in 1949) 'married' Barbara Perry (Hamidah), in a 'vertical' marriage. That this was a 'vertical' marriage is important: Mrs Perry was still married (in a 'horizontal' marriage) to her husband, Whithall Perry, at the time.⁽⁹⁷⁾

There is thus little room to argue that the practice of the contemporary Maryamiyya is traditional. Though it undoubtedly contains traditional elements, and although Schuon's published works may often be compatible with Islamic tradition, the totality of his followers' practice contains sufficient non-Islamic elements to be described as 'new.'

The Ahmadiyya

In about 1949, Abd al-Wahid Pallavicini (1926-), a wealthy young Italian who had read Guénon's *Crise du monde moderne*, visited its Italian translator, Evola. Evola told Pallavicini that his own interests were more in temporal than spiritual power, and referred him instead to Burckhardt. In 1951, Pallavicini became Muslim at Burckhardt's hands and took the Alawi tariqa, and the name of Abd al-Wahid Yahya.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Having earlier broken with Schuon over the vexed question of the validity of Christian initiation, Pallavicini visited (in 1971) the *zawiyain* Singapore of the Ahmadi shaykh Abd al-Rashid ibn Muhammad Said (1918-92), an Azhari *alim* [scholar trained at the prestigious Azhar mosque-university in Cairo] as well as an important shaykh.⁽⁹⁹⁾

The Ahmadi *zawiya* and the *dhikr* [communal invocatory prayer] very much impressed Pallavicini, who took the Ahmadi tariqa. During the six months he spent with his new shaykh, Pallavicini learned the Ahmadi *awrad* [office; litany].⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Although he could only understand Abd al-Rashid through an interpreter, he also had numerous conversations with Ali Salim, later Abd al-Rashid's *khalifa* [deputy].⁽¹⁰¹⁾ On one occasion, Abd al-Rashid suggested that they should pray for the conversion to Islam of Pallavicini's parents. Pallavicini demurred, saying that they were all right as they were, as People of the Book, and could expect to go to Heaven as non-Muslims - a Guénonian view more than an Islamic one. In order to resolve their disagreement, the two wrote to the Azhar for a fatwa [*opinio*, ruling] - which, unsurprisingly, supported Abd al-Rashid.⁽¹⁰²⁾ Either before or despite this dispute, Pallavicini was given an *ijaza* by Abd al-Rashid.⁽¹⁰³⁾ Given that the two earlier *ijazas* of which we know which were received by Guénonians were somewhat unusual, it is interesting to see how Pallavicini came to receive his. Abd al-Rashid is only known to have given four other *ijazas*, and of these only one was to someone who was not a long-established Ahmadi, the Director of Dakwah [calling to God] in Brunei, already an important Muslim dignitary. Pallavicini was a very different case, and seems to have been a departure from Abd al-Rashid's normal practice. It is impossible to say why Abd al-Rashid decided to give Pallavicini an *ijaza*,⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ but shaykhs in any tariqa do sometimes give *ijazas* for their recipients to 'grow into.' Another partial explanation is that Abd al-Rashid was perhaps reverting to an earlier Ahmadi practice, evidently followed at some times by his father, of distributing *ijazas* almost wholesale. At any rate, Pallavicini's *ijaza*, unlike Schuon's, seems to have been entirely regular; on this basis his tariqa might almost be classified as 'standard.'

On returning to Italy, Pallavicini went first to Rome; he had at that time no particular intention of doing anything with his *ijaza*.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ It was not until the end of the 1970s that a fortuitous combination of circumstances led to the establishment of an Ahmadiyya in Europe.

Pallavicini became involved in Muslim-Christian dialogue and so became famous, and used his fame to spread the Guénonian message. One of the high points of Pallavicini's involvement with this dialogue was the Day of Prayer held by Pope John Paul in Assisi on 27 October 1986, at which representatives of twelve religions met together to pray for peace.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Ten delegations represented Islam; Pallavicini went with the CICI, the main Islamic organization in Rome, made a speech to a 'round table of the representatives of religions,' and issued a press release.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Pallavicini became a popular interviewee for the Italian newspapers,⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ reflecting the role he had played at Assisi, both because a much interviewed person becomes newsworthy anyhow, and because at this time the position of Islam in Italy was changing significantly. By 1990, Pallavicini had become the most interviewed Muslim in Catholic papers, a sort of Muslim 'de confiance.'⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ He was even being described by the major newspaper *Corriere della Sera* as shaykh 'of one of the most important *Sufi* brotherhoods.'⁽¹¹⁰⁾

During his Muslim-Christian dialogue, Pallavicini did not try to proselytize for Islam, but found that many of those persons with whom he was trying to carry out an inter-religious dialogue became Muslim (and Ahmadi), so that in the end the 'dialogue with Christians' became a 'monologue of Muslims.'⁽¹¹¹⁾ By 1996, three buildings in Milan housed Pallavicini's Milan home, the *Centro Studi Metafisici 'René Guénon*,⁽¹¹²⁾ the *zawiya* of the Ahmadiyya in Italy, the *Associazione Italiana per l'Informazione sull'Islam* (AIII),⁽¹¹³⁾ and *Sintesi* (a small publishing house).⁽¹¹⁴⁾

Pallavicini's followers see themselves more as members of the *Centro Studi Metafisici* than as Ahmadis. During their monthly meeting in January 1996, time was divided more or less equally between considering their next step in a new round of the old controversy over the validity of Christian initiation (being held with a Greek Orthodox Guénonian in the pages of the Guénonian publication *Vers la tradition*),⁽¹¹⁵⁾ and such recognizably Sufi activities as prayer, *dhikr*, and communal living in the *zawiya*. This dual identity - as Ahmadi Muslims and as Guénonians - persists at other times. Various Ahmadis spend much time attending almost every conceivable possible forum to spread the Guénonian view, but also perform the normal Muslim duties and the Ahmadi *awrad*. The strong identity of Milan Ahmadis as Guénonians combines, in many cases, with a somewhat weak identity as Muslims. Milan Ahmadis are separated from most other Muslims not only by disputes, but by geography and language. This is not true of Pallavicini himself or of his son Yahya, both of whom have contacts with the Islamic world and with various sections of the Ahmadiyya, but it is true of almost everyone else. It is less true, in contrast, for the Western followers of al-Haqqani, who are inevitably in contact with the significant numbers of immigrants among his followers in the West, and who may also from time to time visit their shaykh in the Muslim world, as well as seeing him on his regular visits to the West.

Were it not for the dual identity of its followers, Pallavicini's Ahmadiyya could be described not only as a standard tariqa, but also as traditional. The Milan Ahmadis are all Muslim, and no significant variations of the Sharia are known; their practice is orthodox and their *silsila* recognized. The spread of the Ahmadiyya from Singapore to Milan differs little from the spread of the Ahmadiyya from Singapore to Brunei or the Naqshbandiyya to Germany. Pallavicini himself was evidently accepted as an Ahmadi shaykh by Ahmad ibn Idris al-Idrisi (a descendant of Ahmad ibn Idris, fount of the Ahmadiyya) when they met in Dubai, since Ahmad ibn Idris al-Idrisi instructed Pallavicini to give the Ahmadiyya to his son Yahya, then aged fifteen.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ The dual identity however produces conflicts in the area of Transcendent Unity, both in doctrine (Pallavicini's recognition of the validity of Christianity,

if not of Christian initiation) and in practice (a tendency to urge Italians to return to Catholicism rather than to become Muslim).

The Milan Ahmadiyya came to be on very bad terms with most of the rest of the Islamic community in Italy, largely for this reason. Pallavicini's high exposure in the press, his unorthodox views on Transcendent Unity - the belief that revelations preceding Islam still remain valid for '[their] believers... not only because they believe in them, but also because [they] are indeed true relative to the community for which [they] are destined'⁽¹¹⁷⁾ - and his emphasis on 'Sayyidunâ 'Isâ [our lord Jesus] (on whom be Peace), the Christ, 'the Seal of Sanctity'⁽¹¹⁸⁾ could hardly be expected to pass unremarked, and they did not. He has been criticized for his views on the transcendent unity of religions, for ignorance of the Arabic language, for 'fill[ing] the deficiencies [of his knowledge of Islamic] doctrine with his own personal theories, the enunciation of which is a clear form of *kufir* [apostasy],' and for actually discouraging Christians from becoming Muslim.⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Relations at one point became so bad that many non-Ahmadi Muslims refused to return Pallavicini's *salamat* [ritual salutations] (which is *haram* [strictly forbidden] unless the greeting comes from a non-Muslim). A demonstration against him was on one occasion organized outside a bookshop in Rome where he was speaking, and on another occasion he was physically ejected from the CICI in Rome. The Ahmadiyya had to change the mosque in which they prayed on Fridays, and finally retreated to their own *zawiya*.⁽¹²⁰⁾ This state of affairs did not last, and by 1995 Pallavicini had to some extent been 'rehabilitated.'

Sections of the Muslim community in Italy, then, clearly rejected Pallavicini's Ahmadiyya as being (in our terms) other than traditional, but this rejection took place within a particular context. At about the same time as it attacked Pallavicini, however, *Il Messaggero dell'Islam* also ran a full-page article with the title: 'Sufism is not Islam!'⁽¹²¹⁾ This view is itself also far from traditional: it is characteristic of the Salafi reformers and their descendants, and while it may now have become part of a strong current within the Islamic mainstream, rejection of Pallavicini on the grounds that he is a Sufi is inconclusive. Some of the further grounds for Pallavicini's opponents' rejection of him, however, are indicative: his views on the status of Christianity, for example, are Guénonian rather than Islamic.⁽¹²²⁾

Conclusion

Immigrants' tariqas in the West are commonly as traditional as those in non-Western countries with significant Muslim minorities or as those in the Muslim world itself. Only those Western Sufi tariqas which can be classified as 'standard,' however, can safely be assumed to be traditional. Whilst non-Muslim groups are clearly 'new' in the sense of 'New Religious Movements,' the intermediate category of 'novel' tariqas, and especially the Traditionalist or Guénonian tariqas, may sometimes be significantly 'new' like the Maryamiyya. They may also be broadly traditional, within certain limits, like the Milan Ahmadiyya.

This conclusion is open to dispute, above all by those who see religion as a cultural construct. For those who stress the differences between Moroccan and Indonesian Islam, and who would even dispute that there *is* 'one' Islam, the implication that the Singapore Ahmadiyya and the Milan Ahmadiyya are the same thing might appear little short of preposterous. It is implicit in this article that I do not share this view. Though it is clear that not all Muslims at all times and in all places have believed exactly the same things and behaved in exactly the same way, there is a central core of beliefs and practices which all Sunni Muslims have always shared, and these - in my view - constitute 'one' Islam. Secondly,

as has been pointed out by other scholars,⁽¹²³⁾ horizontal distinctions may matter more than vertical ones. The son of the Shaykh Abd al-Rashid of Singapore from whom Pallavicini took the Ahmadiyya holds a Ph.D. from a French university and teaches at a Malaysian university, and probably has more in common with Pallavicini than either have with an illiterate Ahmadi peasant in the remote northern Malay state of Kelantan.

This conclusion is also open to more serious dispute on grounds of motivation. The dual identity of the Milan Ahmadiyya, as Guénonians and as Muslims, gives rise to the suspicion that an Ahmadi may be Muslim *because* he is Guénonian, rather than be Muslim *and* Guénonian. In the case of Schuon and many of his followers, this Guénonian motivation towards Islam is clear: it is implicit in Schuon's reasoning over his statue of the Virgin in the 1940s, and almost explicit in what some Maryamis say in private conversation. Being Muslim and Guénonian potentially gives rise to the same difficulties as does being Muslim and, say, Marxist: to what extent can a Muslim legitimately defer to an authority which derives its bases from outside Islam? Being Muslim *because* one is Guénonian is even more difficult: who comes first, the Prophet Muhammad or Guénon? That Pallavicini, for example, parted with Schuon because Schuon disagreed with *Guénon* - not with the Prophet or with Islam - would make most Muslims uncomfortable, as would Pallavicini's habit of taking Guénon (rather than God or the Prophet) as his standard authority in his speeches and articles. This question of motivation may be the final irreducible difference between Guénonian Sufis and all others. While it is not really within the realm of practice, to which I limited myself at the beginning of this article, it results in an almost tangible difference of orientation between followers of al-Haqqani, who have become Muslim because the truth of Islam and the *baraka* of their shaykh burst upon them as a blinding light, and the Sufi inhabitants of Traditional Studies Centers.

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Notes

1. This article was originally given as a paper ("How Traditional are the Traditionalists? The Case of the Guénonian Sufis") to the eleventh international congress of the Center for Studies on New Religions, Amsterdam (Netherlands), August 7-9, 1997. A version is also forthcoming in the Proceedings of that congress, ed. Mikael Rothstein and Reender Kranenborg (Århus University Press).
2. Tariqa, here spelt tariqa for aesthetic reasons, is normally translated as "brotherhood" or "order." It is the physical embodiment of a tariq or spiritual path within Islam, the group consisting of a shaykh [master] and his followers (male and female).
3. Paillard 1993.
4. For fuller consideration of questions such as this, see *ARIES* 11, 12 and 13, and Quinn 1997.
5. Gilsenan 1973 of course argues that the Hamdiyya Shadhiliyya was, in Islamic terms, novel. Whilst not wanting to enter this dispute here, I would merely observe that the Hamdiyya Shadhiliyya is sufficiently well within the Egyptian Islamic mainstream for its novel features not to need to concern us.
6. I find this more useful than the binary definition adopted by Hermansen 1997 & Hermansen forthcoming.
7. One of the most interesting of these is the 'Ahl-i Haqq' - see Mir-Hosseini 1994.
8. Almost the only published study of this tariqa, Habibis 1990, is somewhat disappointing. My information is drawn from my own fieldwork and from Holdijk 1997.
9. Chacornac 1958, 25-27, 31-33 & 42-43.
10. Waterfield 1987, 33.
11. Chacornac 1958, 45.
12. Rawlinson 1997.
13. De Jong 1978, 173-74.
14. Chacornac 1958, 31-33. One of the Masonic orders followed the Rite national espagnol, and the other the Rite primitif et originel swédenborgien.
15. Godwin 1996. The Hindu terms for symbolic metaphysics can be traced to the Theosophists, and the conception of cyclic periods to the HB of L.
16. He was consecrated a bishop (Chacornac 1958, 33-39); there was no lower rank than this (Rawlinson 1997).
17. Guénon 1921a and Guénon 1925.
18. Chacornac points out this problem and is unable to suggest a solution (Chacornac 1958, 39-42). Martin Lings suggests that the Hindus in question must have been of the Advaita Vedanta school (Lings 1995, 21-22), since Guénon's views on Buddhism were uncharacteristic of other Hindu schools (Lings 1996).
19. Chacornac 1958, 72. It is unclear in what language these works were available in Benares.
20. The *Introduction générale*'s English translation was published in New Delhi in 1992 (Munshiram Manoharlal), as was *L'homme et son devenir*'s English translation in 1981.
21. Borella 1992, 335.
22. Rawlinson 1997. Rawlinson's interpretation of Lévi's views should probably be understood in the context of the gulf between Guénon's methodology, assumptions and interpretations and those of the professional orientalist of his time.
23. A one-time follower of Guénon, for example, later wrote: 'Vedanta is not the heartless, aloof and repellent body that it seems to have become in the hands of Mr. Guénon, [who]

seems often to aim more at promoting his peculiar theory of the oneness of spiritual tradition than at laying bare the truth itself' (Levy 1951, 98, quoted in Rawlinson 1997).

24. See Laurant 1982.

25. See Rawlinson 1993 for Aguéli; for Guénon, Lings 1996. See also Rawlinson 1997.

26. Rawlinson, 1993.

27. Guénon 1921b and Guénon 1923. See Chacornac 1958, 61-62, 65-66.

28. See, for example, the articles he published to this effect in 1913-14 (Chacornac 1958, 51-53). The relationship between Guénon and Masonry is an important and interesting one, which however falls beyond the scope of this article.

29. Lings 1995, 31-32. Guénon advised Lings never to have anything to do with magic, since a person who did thereby made himself more vulnerable to magic (Lings 1996).

30. This said to be from letters written by Guénon in 1932, referring to 'the blood of black animals,' which Robin glosses as 'Sethian magic' (Robin 1986, 261, 266-67). I describe this source as 'somewhat dubious' since, amongst other things, Robin describes Aleister Crowley as 'a notorious spy, working simultaneously for France and Britain' (Robin 1986, 272). Whilst I know little of Crowley, this sounds like the fruit of an over-heated imagination.

31. Robin 1986, 265-66.

32. That Guénon might have earned the enmity of European practitioners of magic is also likely.

33. A full consideration of Guénon's relationship with Catholicism falls beyond the scope of this article. Oldmeadow bases his argument (Oldmeadow 1982, 24-25) largely on Guénon's 1912 marriage to a Catholic wife, and his continuing social and intellectual contacts with Catholics, and on the view of Olivier de Fremond, a friend of Guénon's at this time.

Rawlinson, similarly, points out that Guénon married according to the Catholic rite despite his 'initiation' (Rawlinson 1993). I am unsure of the value of the views of Fremond, but the mere fact of social and intellectual contacts with Catholics seem to me to prove little, since Guénon maintained such contacts with believers in a variety of religions (including Catholic Christianity) until the end of his life. It is possible that Oldmeadow (himself a Catholic Guénonian) may be tempted to read more into them than they bear. Both Guénon's conversion to Islam and his marriage happened in the same year, 1912 - I am unsure which happened first, but if Guénon did marry in a Catholic ceremony whilst a Muslim, this is not inexplicable. His (French) wife's relatives would presumably have been less than delighted at the idea of a Muslim ceremony, even supposing that one were possible in France at that time; and so long as steps were taken to ensure that the legal requirements of marriage under the Sharia (*mahr* [bridewealth] etc) were also met at some point, it would not be hard to make a case for the acceptability of participation in (as opposed to belief in the elements of) a Christian ceremony.

34. Lings 1995, 24 & 29.

35. Pallis 1978, 183-34.

36. Lings 1995, 29.

37. The two most important recent collections of Guénon's works are probably Laurant 1985 and Sigaud 1984.

38. Chacornac 1958, 55-56, 67, 83-84 & 91-92.

39. Chacornac 1958, 92-105. Arabic was the language he used to communicate with his wife (Lings 1995, 32).

40. Guénon used a post office box for many years, and finally had people write to him c/o Martin Lings (Lings 1996).

41. In Egypt, he was a follower of the Hamdiyya Shadhiliyya and was also involved in discussions with non-Muslim foreigners. Guénon continued a sizable correspondence with various figures in Europe, as well as occasionally receiving visitors (Lings 1996).
42. Lings 1996.
43. He was born in Basel, Switzerland, of a German father and a (French) Alsatian mother. See Nasr 1991, 2-3.
44. This interest seems to have been a family interest. Schuon's father, originally a Protestant, on his deathbed requested his two sons to become Catholics. Schuon's brother later became a Trappist monk (Lings 1996).
45. Lings 1996.
46. Guénon's first shaykh, Abd al-Rahman Illish, had died soon after his arrival in Cairo. Rawlinson gives the date of Illish's death as 1929 (Rawlinson 1993), but Guénon clearly met him, since Vâlsan reports Guénon saying that Illish had explained the esoteric meaning of the letters of the name Allah to him, and it was to Illish that Guénon dedicated his *Symbolisme de la Croix* in 1931 (Vâlsan 1984, 30-31).
47. Nasr 1991, 4.
48. See Lings 1961, 14 & *passim*, and pp. 79-82 & 116. Although Guénon never met Ahmad al-Alawi (Lings 1996), it is unsurprising that he knew of such a famous shaykh: in 1923, al-Alawi had as many as 100,000 followers, mostly in North Africa but also in Damascus, Palestine, and Aden (Lings 1961, 116). He had *zawiyas* [lodges] in Marseilles and Cardiff, but his followers in these places were mostly Algerian and Yemeni, respectively.
49. According to Caspar 1974 & 1975, the tariqa went into decline after Al-Alawi's death.
50. Lings 1996. Schuon found Guénon's letter on his return to France.
51. Quoted from a photocopy lent me by 'Maryami.' The photocopy was accompanied by an accurate type-written translation into French on another sheet; the title of 'Diplôme de Moqaddem' had been added at the top of the translation in an unknown hand.
52. It is notable that Ibn Tunis uses *idhn* [permission] rather than *ijaza* [authorization].
53. After Guénon's departure from Paris, *Le Voile d'Isis* was edited by Marcelle Clavelle, who was in correspondence with Guénon (Lings 1996).
54. The first was 'L'aspect ternaire de la Tradition monothéiste' (June 1933), followed by 'Shahadah et Fatihah' (July 1933); in February 1934, he published 'Réflexions sur le symbolisme de la pyramide.' See Bibliography in Nasr & Stoddart 1991.
55. Rawlinson 1993 states that the first Swiss *zawiyawas* in Lausanne, but according to Lings (1996) it was in Basel, moving with Schuon to Lausanne during the Second World War.
56. Lings 1996.
57. So it would seem, since it was Burckhardt who, in Schuon's absence, was called to the *zawiya* to meet the young Martin Lings.
58. Stoddart 1987, 3-5. His father, Carl, was a sculptor; his most famous relation was his great uncle, Jakob Burckhardt (1818-97), whose *Geschichte der Renaissance in Italien*, written in the 1870s, remains a standard work. Carl Burckhardt fills six pages in the catalogue of the British Library. Titus Burckhardt was evidently not related to Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, the explorer of Nubia, Egypt, etc.
59. Sufficiently well later to translate the *Fusus al-hikam* of Ibn Arabi and Jili's *Al-insan al-kamil* (Stoddart 1987, 9).
60. Stoddart 1987, 8-9.
61. James 1981, 335-36.
62. Rawlinson 1997.

63. 'I had in dream seen all the prophets, and their voices were sometimes like rushing water; the Buddha Amitabha also arose, golden, before my inward eye. Sidi 'Addah ben Tunes, sitting beside the tomb of Shaykh Ahmad, gave me the Shaykh's instructions. I was then appointed muqaddam.' (Schuon NDa, 127-28, quoted in Rawlinson 1997). The context makes it possible that Adda appointed Schuon muqaddam in response to a dream, but it seems much more likely that Adda formed part of the dream.
64. Maryami 1997.
65. Rawlinson 1997.
66. Chacornac 1958, 10.
67. Rawlinson 1997 mentions other grounds: that followers of Schuon felt that Guénon should become Schuon's muqaddam, likening the role of Abd al-Wahid Yahya Guénon in relation to Nur al-Din Isa Schuon to that of a more famous Yahya [John] and Isa [Jesus].
68. This, of course, is not the view of Islam, which is more concerned with the Prophet Muhammad than the end of the Middle Ages.
69. Lings 1996.
70. Lings describes himself in those years as 'young and tactless.' Relations between him and Guénon deteriorated further because Guénon became concerned that Lings was not merely transmitting his letters, but also opening them. This suspicion is voiced in a letter of Guénon's dated 18 September 1950, excerpted in Devie 1996. It is likely that Guénon's letters had indeed been opened, but by the Egyptian censorship: Lings had been on one occasion summoned by the police to explain apparently coded writing (in fact, Masonic symbols) in one letter addressed to Guénon c/o Lings. Although Lings's wife continued to visit Guénon's wife, relations between Lings and Guénon were interrupted: Lings only saw Guénon once again, when he took a doctor to see him shortly before his death.
71. Lings 1996.
72. Nasr 1991, 5.
73. Schuon 1993. Catherine Schuon does not give the name of the professor, and there is no obvious choice from the IU faculty in 1997. Catherine Schuon does not say that there was a 'zawiya,' but since she talks of 'a house where friends could come to pray' a *zawiyam* must be meant, despite her later denial that there was any 'community' in Bloomington.
74. This is the explanation, for example, given by Nasr.
75. When I was considering a visit there two years before Schuon's death, one senior Maryami told me that it was unlikely that Schuon would agree to meet me.
76. Various reports.
77. Hermansen 1997, 153. Nasr is evidently on good terms with the Khalwatiyya-Jarahiyya, since he wrote the foreword to an English translation of the works of their shaykh (Stenberg, email to the author, November 1996).
78. Observation and various interviews.
79. Pallavicini 1996. Guénon, on the other hand, saw medieval European Christianity as retaining esoteric validity. That he saw any 'validity' in Christian esotericism even after the revelation of Islam is difficult, though not impossible, to reconcile with Islamic teachings.
80. This point was made both by Maryami 1997 and by Nasr 1996.
81. Hermansen 1997, 153.
82. Schuon NDa, 264, quoted in Rawlinson 1997.
83. Rawlinson 1997.
84. Rawlinson 1997 and Sardar 1993, 35.
85. Maryami 1997.

86. Sardar 1993, 35. 'Compassionate' and 'Merciful' are Divine Names and attributes; the formula is reminiscent of that used for the Prophet.
87. Schuon 1993.
88. Nasr 1991, 5.
89. Sardar 1993, 35, and Rawlinson 1997. Photograph of one such Gathering were given to the author by Rawlinson.
90. Maryami 1997. The same distinction between 'rites' and 'dances' was made by Catherine Schuon in a marginal comment on a draft sent her by Devie (reproduced in Devie 1994, 10-11).
91. Schuon NDb, quoted in Rawlinson 1997)
92. Sardar 1993, 35.
93. Rawlinson 1997. Rawlinson has provided the author with a photograph of such a painting.
94. Sardar 1993, 35, and Rawlinson 1997. Rawlinson's photograph of a Gathering shows bikinis.
95. Rawlinson 1997.
96. For example, Nasr - see Stenberg 1996. The distinction may derive from Guénon's *Symbolisme de la croix*.
97. Rawlinson 1997.
98. Pallavicini 1996. Burckhardt was no sympathizer of Evola's: when Pallavicini passed on a question of Evola's to Burckhardt - why was Burckhardt no longer publishing his articles - Burckhardt replied in surprise: 'Does Monsieur Evola not remember that he trained the SS?' The question of a link through Guénon and Evola to the occultist elements of the NSDAP is a fascinating one, which lies far beyond the scope of this article.
99. For details, see Sedgwick 1998.
100. Pallavicini 1996.
101. Ali Salim, 1994 & 1996. Some of these conversations took place while Pallavicini was playing his piano, and are remembered by Ali Salim as amongst the more bizarre episodes of his life.
102. Ali Salim 1994.
103. Pallavicini 1996.
104. He is said by his son to have later been 'very angry' with Pallavicini, though again it is not clear exactly why (Muhammad Zabid 1996).
105. Pallavicini 1996.
106. The twelve were: African and Amerindian animists, Baha'is, Buddhists, Christians, Jains, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Shintoists, Sikhs and Zoroastrians (New York Times 28 October 1986, p. A3).
107. Numerous verbal reports confirm his attendance.
108. Allievi & Dassetto 1993, 195.
109. Allievi 1996.
110. Trabucchi 1990.
111. Pallavicini 1996.
112. Later called simply the Metaphysical Studies Centre of Milan, after objections from Guénon's family (Yahya Pallavicini, interview, January 1996).
113. In non-Italian contexts, the meaning of the first 'I' in AIII is usually changed from Italiano to Internazionale.
114. Where no other source is given, information such as this derives from my field trip to the Milan Ahmadiyya in January 1996.

115. Nikos Vardhikas had reviewed Pallavicini's *L'Islam intérieur in Vers la tradition* 61 (Sept 1995), pp. 55-57. The review had been generally sympathetic and complimentary, but raised questions over Pallavicini's rejection of Christian baptism as a valid rite of initiation. The following edition (62, Dec 1995) carried a reply signed by the Centro Studi Metafisici objecting principally to Vardhikas's views on initiation (pp. 49-51), and a one-page reply to this by Vardhikas (p. 51). A five-page draft 'response to the response to the response' was discussed on at least three occasions over the weekend, for a total of several hours. The controversy was obscure to a non-Guénonian; in mainstream Islamic terms it was also incomprehensible, if not entirely meaningless.
116. Pallavicini 1996.
117. Pallavicini 1990.
118. See for example Pallavicini 1992. The description of Jesus as *rasul* [the title reserved for the Prophet Muhammad] (Pallavicini 1985) is presumably a slip of the pen.
119. Letters printed in *Il Messagero dell'Islam* from Abdu-l-Rahim Yahya (5:3, 15 Dec 1986), Ali Schutz (5:5, Feb/March 1987) and Abdu-l-Hadi Ibn Yahya (5:16, 15 Apr 1987). Schutz 1996 stated that his name had been borrowed by the then editor of *Il Messagero*, Abd al-Rahman (Danilo Rosario) Pasquini, who may also have been the author of the other two letters.
120. Schutz 1996 and Allievi 1996, confirmed in part by Pallavicini 1996.
121. *Il Messagero dell'Islam* 5:17 (15 May 1987), p. 5.
122. While Guénonians may argue that this view should be the proper Islamic view, it is undeniable that, in general, it is not the mainstream Islamic view.
123. See, for example, Abaza 1993.
124. References to this work are to a manuscript version containing some information not included in the shorter, published version. For this reason, no page references are given.
125. Ali Schutz is the Secretary of the UCOII, a major Italian Islamic organization.