
RENÉ GUÉNON ON THE REALIZATION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Barbara Batista Santos and John Giordano
Assumption University, Thailand

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the ‘metaphysical’ perspectives of the French philosopher named René Guénon. Although Guénon was French, he was often critical of Western ways of thinking. Especially with regard to the concept of the metaphysical. Turning to the etymology of the word metaphysics, for Guénon metaphysics stands for whatever lies ‘beyond physics.’ This is different than the Aristotelian understanding of metaphysics, since it is always directed to the idea of the natural sciences viewed as a whole. This is a kind of thinking recognized by ancient traditions. So based on this perspective of thought, Guénon is known as a traditionalist or perennial philosopher. The preservation of traditional knowledge is becoming an important issue today with the pressures of conformity with Western models of science and rationalism. So this paper will investigate his viewpoint on ‘realization of traditional knowledge’ and its relevance today. The conclusion of this study shows that this ‘realization’ can be preserved by the harmonious integration of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, where traditional practices of initiation, oral transmission, performance of rites and use of symbols, are in balance with modern forms of codification and information.