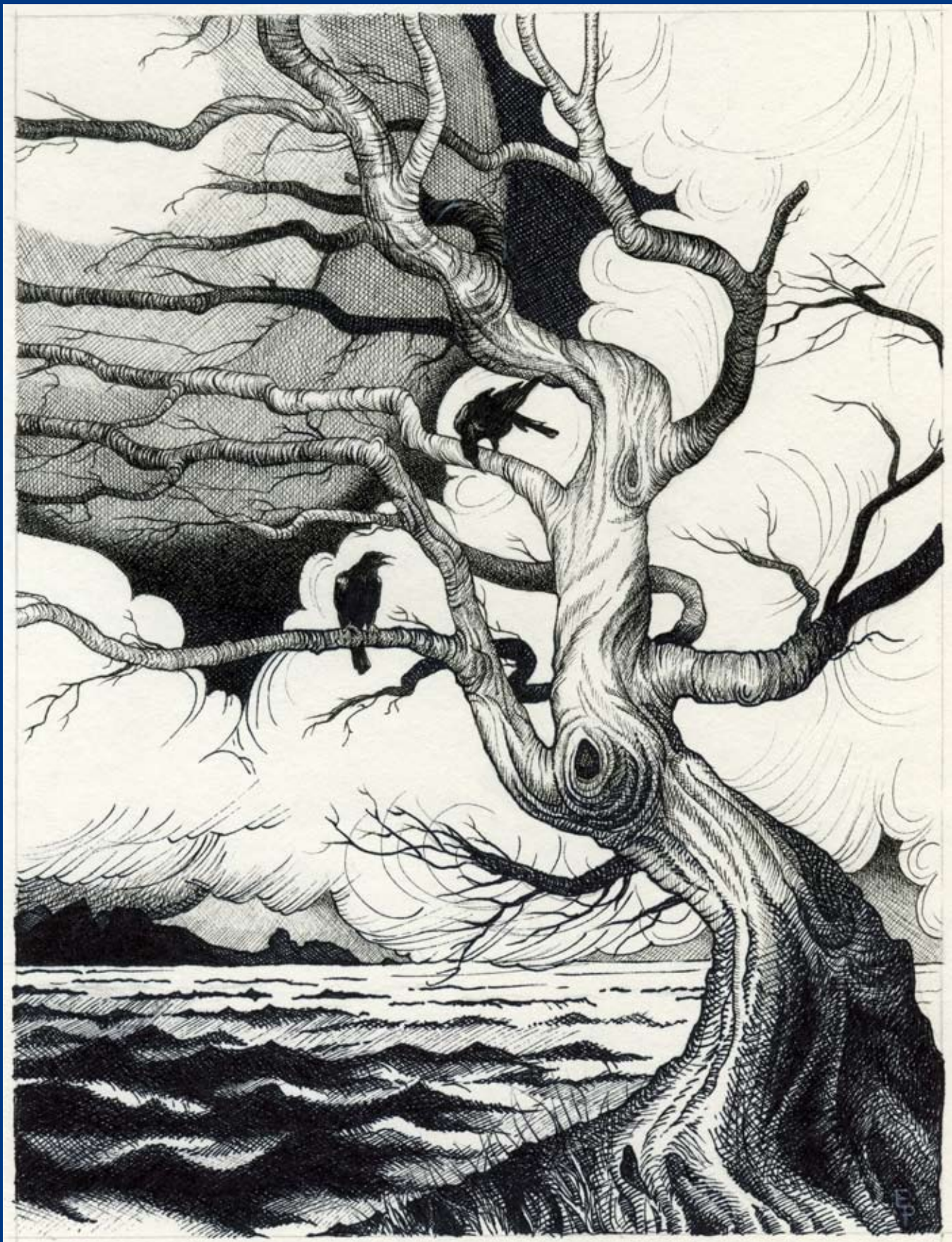


THE INITIATE



JOURNAL OF TRADITIONAL STUDIES

ISSUE ONE — SPRING 2008

THE INITIATE

JOURNAL OF TRADITIONAL STUDIES

AN INSULA SACRA PRODUCTION
FOR INTEGRAL TRADITIONS PUBLISHING

The Initiate seeks to provide a forum for academic research into fields related to Tradition and Traditionalism. Our scope covers folklore, myth, culture, religion, politics, language, race, history, esoteric studies, archaeology, anthropology and the relevance of Tradition in the modern world. Our goal is to make the work and philosophy of both well-known and upcoming Traditionalists more widely accessible to the English-speaking world. *The Initiate* does not take a partisan position on religion, politics or culture. However, our vision is to promote the rebirth of the diverse traditions of the Integral cultures that once graced the face of the Earth, in opposition to the shallow, fragmented culture of modernity. In this mission, *The Initiate* stands against the ethos of materialism, individualism and multiculturalism that characterises the modern world. In our studies, we seek to honour the eternal quest for higher meaning, which characterises the human condition in the world of Tradition and Initiation.

All articles are the author's own interpretive work, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Editors, Insula Sacra Productions or Integral Tradition Publishing.

For comments, subscription information or submission guidelines please write to
David.Wingfield@integraltradition.com

For further information on the range of publications offered by Integral Tradition Publishing, please visit www.integraltradition.com or write to info@integraltradition.com

CONTENTS

HUGINN AND MUNINN by Emma Parkin	COVER
EDITORIAL by David J. Wingfield	4
THE CLAN by David Griffiths	6
ANTHROPOTHEISM by Sergio Knipe	11
THE WEST REBORN? by David J. Wingfield	15
THE GREAT TRIAD AND NORSE RELIGION by Martin Häggkvist	20
FENRIR'S LAIR by Emma Parkin	29
MISSA ASINORUM by J. D. Todd	30
THE CONCEPT OF INITIATION by Julius Evola	37
HEATHENDOM by Tage Lindbom	48
THE METAPHYSICS OF HISTORY by K. R. Bolton	50
BOOK REVIEW by David J. Wingfield	60
CONTRIBUTORS	63

THE DEMON HAUNTED WORLD

TRADITION AS A CANDLE IN DARKNESS

EDITORIAL

There has been much development in the world of Tradition and of Traditionalism since the pioneering work of Guénon and his coterie of French intellectuals in the nineteen twenties. In the sixty years plus since Julius Evola planted his flag in the sand with the publication of *Revolt against the Modern World*, the world as he knew it has changed immeasurably. The next sixty years will likely see change of a similar, or even greater magnitude. At the time of the painful birth of the “Traditionalist” school in the nineteen twenties and thirties, the optimistic bubble of modernity had recently burst and the sword of Damocles of a second world conflagration hung over the head of Europe. The Enlightenment certainties of a rational world on a path of perpetual progress towards ever-greater happiness and prosperity lay tattered and ruined in the mud of Flanders field like a discarded flag. The shock of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia shattered the pan-European monarchical consensus, which had already been sorely strained by the horrors of World War One. Following in the wake of this war, the breakdown of traditional nation states and the extension of American consumerism and universalism continued the steady alienation of Europeans from their ancient culture and heritage. For the first time in their history, Europeans became a people truly on the defensive, with their identity and will to fight being progressively eaten away from the inside.

This crisis of the modern world, so lucidly portrayed by Spengler and Guénon, beginning as a European crisis of confidence, was made global by the series of world conflicts in the nineteen forties. Following this, and the failed nationalist revolutions of the inter-war period, not only Europeans, but also all traditional societies across the globe were left prostrate before the modernist giants of Marxist communism and American capitalism. The latter twentieth century bought the sterility of the Cold War, the beginnings of climate damage, the resurgent forces of Jihadist Islam and the economic eclipse of Europe in the face of a reborn China. Standing at the dawn of the twenty first century, the challenges we face from potentially catastrophic climate damage, unchecked immigration, global terrorism and the deculturating effects of the neo-liberal world order are no less severe than those faced by our forefathers.

The analysis and predictions of twentieth

century Traditionalists have to a large extent been vindicated. The decline of the West has indeed continued unabated. Traditionalists have become experts at accurate cultural criticism but have been unable to make any significant impact in the objective world. Several broad schools of Traditionalist thought have emerged, as a result of different intellectual responses to changing social trends and philosophies. The Evolian/Guénonian School of “Perennialist” Traditionalism gives a conservative critique of the modern world whilst looking for evidence of innate or universal forms lying behind the diverse expressions of different traditional societies. The Radical Traditionalist movement bases its approach on a reconstruction of folkish pre-Christian social ethics and religions as an antidote to the dissolution of the modern world and the non-European focus provided by Christianity. The ‘New Right’ identitarian movement seeks the revolutionary rebirth of European identity and culture from a post-modern position. As well as these broadly defined groups, there persists a Conservative Traditionalist tendency, rooted in the remnants of the “old right” and the philosophy and institutions of the Catholic Church.

This brings us, at the start of the new Traditionalist project that *The Initiate* represents, to the vexed question of “Tradition” itself. What is this concept we understand as Tradition? What are its defining features and, more pressingly, why do we feel that it is important to protect, extend, rediscover and/or reinvent it? Can there, in fact, be any definable sense of Traditionalism or Traditionalists, when the term has meant, and continues to mean, so many different things to so many different people? Is Traditionalism to be understood as a cultural movement, a primarily political concern or an antiquarian interest in social anthropology, linguistics or crafts? Is the exclusive focus of some identitarian and New Right groups on “metapolitics”, or cultural struggle bringing about the brave birth of a new culture from within, a tacit realization of their profound political impotence? What is a Traditionalist stance on the pressing concerns of our age in the West: immigration, the Muslim Question, capitalism, alienation from the land, biotechnology, the welfare state, Europeanism and Nationalism and so on? What do self-styled “(Radical) Traditionalists”, “(Revolutionary) Conservatives”, “National

Anarchists”, “Nationalists”, “Third Positionists”, “Odinists”, “New Rightists”, “Identitarians” etc. have in common, if anything, beyond a general opposition to modernity? Are these coherent positions, and to what extent do they overlap, complement or contradict each other? In the course of its life, *The Initiate* aims to field these questions, strip them, debate them, and maybe, just maybe, find some resolution.

Most thinkers who subscribe to a Traditional word view of some kind will agree that a people is an organic entity, a living organism which can prosper, decline or die. To defend against this, a people needs a common heritage to bind it together, to define it and to strengthen its will and to maintain its collective destiny. In this sense, the traditions of a people or nation serve as the superstructure around which it constitutes itself. If there is no transmission (*traditio*) of this common culture, a nation has nothing to live for and no means to stay together. In a very real way, the cultural corpus of history, traditions, rites and values inherited from the past are the lifeblood of a nation, without which it would wither and die. Tradition is the horizon, in reference to which the nation’s orientation and direction is worked out. Without this point of reference, all common activity begins to lack moral resonance, and thus falls into decay. The revival of these traditions, especially the early mythic traditions of European culture, is therefore an essential cornerstone for any European renaissance. However, in the modern West a barrage of hostile forces stand in the way of such a rebirth. Not least of these is the premise on which modern society is based, that the gift of reflexive reasoning frees mankind from the need to root his identity in these traditions. The pseudo-aemonic concept of “progress”, as understood in the modern world, is hinged on the fallacy that to develop, the past must be abandoned. Even in its mildest form, “progress” treats the lessons of the past with skepticism or contempt. Secondly, the astonishing rate of social and technological change throughout the 19th, 20th, and, so far, the 21st centuries has stripped many of the former traditional references and practices of their historic relevance. In opposition to this naïve rationalism, Traditionalism holds that, quite aside from hindering human aspiration, traditional culture forms the bedrock of all we can achieve in the present. Having grown organically from the history, culture and geography of a particular people, the web of tradition forms a collective well of wisdom and a shared consciousness, uniquely suited to their needs and temperament. This sort of tradition is not an ossified body of meaningless customs and stifling practices. Rather it is a timeless living oracle, or eternal matrix from which a people gain strength, guidance, and direction whilst building the present and safe-guarding

the future on their own terms. Each generation leaves its own imprint on this venerable lore, which grows and changes as a living organism. When seen in this sense, it becomes clear that the first duty of a person is to connect themselves to their tradition and to develop their own synthesis and understanding of it. If the Latin *tradere*- ‘to interpret’ is taken as a root of our word ‘Tradition’ alongside *traditio*- ‘to transmit’, we understand that Tradition is the projected *dynamis* and inner life of a folk, and has little to do with what is commonly meant by “traditionalism”. The disturbing revelation for Men of The West in the 21st century is that the opposite of Tradition is not modernity but nihilism. There can be no life without the oxygen of our higher selves, a horrifying vista which is portrayed clearly in the outside world.

Sadly, outside the self-defined ante-chambers of the new “Imperium”, there is no sign of the Revolt against the modern world taking place. In fact, such a change is looking increasingly unlikely as the constituency who would naturally support it is rapidly eroded and divided by the fragmenting effects of the modern world. What then is to prevent the various Traditionalist schools from remaining an angrily vocal but irrelevant minority, on the sidelines of a world in which they have no impact? The editors of *The Initiate* do not presume to have answers to this question. However, in the spirit of Tradition we present this journal as an English language forum for the voices of Traditionalism to be heard, and perhaps to find some synthesis. In a demon haunted world, stripped of meaning by liberalism’s reign of quantity, Tradition can still stand as a candle in the darkness, a focus around which forces of hope and regeneration can gather. Each aspect of the Traditionalist movement can be bound together in a mosaic of complementary difference, reflecting a common heritage and a bold, alternative future.

David J. Wingfield
Colston Bassett, 8th August 2007.