

The Peregrine Falcon¹

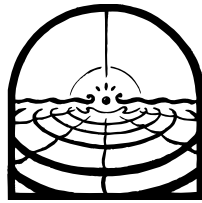
By Mateus Soares de Azevedo

In 1945, at the age of 20, William Stoddart made a discovery which proved to be the most decisive in his life: the discovery of the Perennial Philosophy through the writings of Ananda Coomaraswamy. This fundamentally changed, and gave direction to, his life. For the first time, he began consciously to understand what was meant by “objectivity” and absolute truth. In one of Coomaraswamy’s books he came across the name of René Guénon and, having sensed that this was someone of significance, he experienced, in 1946, his first encounter with Guénon’s works. Of this experience, he said: “I found it difficult to believe that anyone could go much further than Coomaraswamy, but Guénon certainly did.” But there was more—much more—to come.

Soon after the end of the Second World War, Stoddart began his Continental explorations. He started by visiting France and Belgium in 1947, Spain and Portugal in 1949, and Italy in 1950. On his first visit to Paris in 1947, Stoddart discovered, in a Left-Bank bookstore the journal *Études Traditionnelles*, which was the vehicle for Guénon’s writings. He immediately subscribed to this journal, and bought all the back numbers that were available. He described the sequel to this as follows: “I went through these numbers one by one, systematically reading all

¹ The Peregrine is a bird of prey which comes to São Paulo, Brazil, located on the edge of the Tropics, to escape the rigors of Winter. As the bird’s visits coincided with those of William Stoddart, his Brazilian friends have given him that name. Also, both share some characteristics. The bird has a striking hunting technique, which makes him the fastest animal on earth - 389 km per hour (242 mph), according to *The National Geographic Review*. It is associated with princes in the “hierarchies of birds”, more armed by its courage than its claws. The Persian sage Suhrawardi, in his book “The Red Intellect”, also refers to the symbolism of this royal bird.

To read the balance of this article, please subscribe to this volume.



SACRED WEB

A JOURNAL OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

www.sacredweb.com