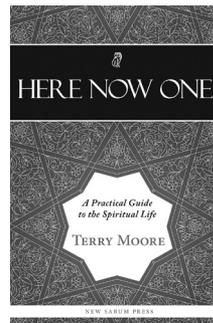


Here Now One: A Practical Guide to the Spiritual Life

By Terry Moore, Salisbury, UK: New Sarum Press, 2021

Reviewed by Abdullab Khademi



In situations where ignorance begins to preponderate over knowledge, societally speaking, the desire to popularize truths of fundamental import is readily understandable. Indeed this is one way of understanding the nature of prophecy itself—God, who is not stingy, sends guidance to a people who need it. However, as a concomitant of this divine wont, there is also the prophetic practice of tailoring one’s speech to the spiritual and intellectual level of one’s audience, since what is appropriate and beneficial for one person or group may confuse or even harm another.

Now, regarding this second principle, it is crucial that a distinction be made between varying modes and degrees of explanation of one and the same truth and a popularization that, regardless of the quality of the intention motivating it, denatures the truth it purports to communicate. It is in the face of this very real danger that, in the second of his two main works on initiation, René Guénon decried the “sort of vulgarization which ... aims at things that by their nature ought most of

all to be sheltered from such attempts”—namely, “traditional doctrines and, more particularly, Eastern doctrines.”¹

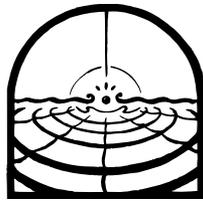
While the work under review—*Here Now One: A Practical Guide to the Spiritual Life*, by Terry Moore—is very far from committing the worst of the offenses censured by Guénon, it does fall into the category of those popularizing writings that, although sincere in their intentions and overarchingly correct in their basic message, nevertheless involve errors whose seriousness proceeds not from their egregiousness but rather from their subtlety. Notwithstanding the risk for any given discourse of devolving from consequential distinctions into captious academicism, the fact remains that “the devil is in the detail.” And if one accepts that “there is no right superior to that of the truth,” one is obliged to defend it dispassionately. It is in this spirit that we hope to discuss Moore’s book, which, despite its broad basis in traditional doctrines, is more specifically representative of recent trends in contemporary spirituality, the intellectual-historical roots of which we can now summarily address.

As many readers will doubtless already be aware, spirituality in the West has undergone a significant transformation in recent centuries, as it is no longer confined to the domain of traditional religion. The proliferation of various forms of spirituality that borrow elements from such mystical traditions as Zen, Advaita, Sufism, Taoism, and the Kabbalah and that moreover claim that teachings such as “non-duality” lie at the heart of these traditions attests to this fact. Although there are exceptions, these spiritual forms tend to operate outside the boundaries of organized religions so as to cater to the needs of seekers in quest of an enlightenment or liberation to which religion is deemed inessential or even antithetical. But in order to make full sense of these new spiritualities, one first has to consider the momentous shift that has occurred in the West from pre-modern to distinctively modern conceptions of selfhood and identity—a complex subject that has been studied and ably analyzed by such theorists as Philip Rieff, Charles Taylor, and Alasdair MacIntyre.² In particular, Rieff’s notion of a self-identity

¹ René Guénon, *Initiation and Spiritual Realization*, trans. Henry D. Fohr, ed. Samuel D. Fohr (Ghent, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2001), 2-3.

² See Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith after Freud* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

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