



The Secret: pseudo-traditional scam

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The Secret, book written by Rhonda Byrne, was one of the 2007 best-sellers. Its content is simple: the author claims she has uncovered the secret of ancient knowledge, kept by the Rosicrucians, alchemists and ancient Egyptians among many others. The secret itself is what the author calls the *law of attraction*: by the use of positive thoughts, anyone can obtain anything from the universe: particularly wealth, health and happiness. And vice-versa, negative thoughts attract illness, depression, and other problems.

We are not going to enter into details on the formidable battery of marketing used to persuade the readers of how effective the Secret is. From the references to spiritual writings, to the support from pseudo-scientists and suggestion that Einstein knew the Secret, the writer uses every mean possible to convince the readers that they could be part of an exclusive group of knowledgeable and successful people.

Our concern is how the author uses real traditional elements for some specific *anti-traditional* means. There is no doubt that a person on a true spiritual path will notice “effects”, in the form of small miracles or synchronicities, in his human life but these effects in the manifestations are of no interest to the spiritual seeker. Indeed, wealth, health and happiness are of the Substantial domain, and of relatively no interest for the person whose only goal is to be reunited to the divine Principe. The influences surrounding the initiate are of a supra-individual essence and do not involve the “power of the mind” at all.

Our author, instead, interprets ancient spiritual and initiatory documents from the “power of the mind” point of view, which is of the psychic order. And the psychic order has nothing to do with spirituality. René Guénon himself warned several time in some of his books¹ how the use of psychic “powers” attract infra-individual entities, entities that most of the time act as pseudo-spiritual beings, completely separated from the Essence of things, and take men lower and lower into the Substance. These “demoniac” entities will make things happen, the same kind of miracles mentioned above, but they are all missing the spiritual component. A man without proper knowledge will be blinded by the apparent impression that he is blessed by the gods, when in reality he is brought deeper and deeper in the Substance, with no hopes of going back to the Essence. And the fact

¹ See *The Spiritist Fallacy*, *Theosophy: history of a pseudo-religion*, and *Initiation and Spiritual realization* by René Guénon.

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that Byrne's book is uniquely oriented towards materialistic results shows without any doubt that the influences that inspired this book are of the worst kind. With the release of DVDs, and seminars all around the world, the content of The Secret is somewhat turned into a pseudo-religion where each individual becomes the center of the universe (the universe obeys to each man), and where the most powerful entity is the human mind.

This is a complete inversion of the traditional view of the universe, where there is one Principe, source of all manifestation and particularly of all beings. The individuality is just a modality of the being from the point of view of the manifestation and individuals have no "power" over the Principe at all. This inversion is unfortunately another evidence of the modern derivations of ancient spiritual texts by counter-traditional forces to form a pseudo-initiation accessible to everyone, leading the modern world further away from the divine Essence.