

William Stoddart: An Appreciation

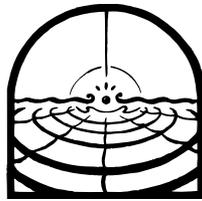
By Patrick Laude

Teachers and students of perennial wisdom are hardly interested in personal homages and celebrations unless they be opportunities to celebrate and pay homage to the truths that have been taught and lived by those to whom respect and gratitude is due. *Ego non vivo...*

While sometimes unfairly criticized for allegedly imposing a conformist mold on its advocates and followers the perennialist perspective is obviously not exclusive of human diversity, whether it be one of gifts, functions or perspectives. It is why each and every representative of this intellectual and spiritual world has had his or her own way of contributing to the edifice, from the summits of inspiring mastery to the more modest ways of continuators, from metaphysical heights to artistic insights, from intellectual *summae* to commentaries, syntheses or digests. Whether in degrees, modes or accents, the world of perennialism is one of diversity *in the name of Unity*. In this, the perennialist perspective is akin to the traditional world which, as René Guénon remarked in his *Reign of Quantity*, is centered on unity, but not on uniformity.

Readers of *Sacred Web* and those familiar with the world of *sophia perennis* are quite aware that William Stoddart has been a dedicated and effective teacher of the *Sophia Perennis* over a period of several decades, and they are grateful for the originality of his contribution. They will be happy to salute him and his work on his nineteenth birthday. Dr. Stoddart has worked on two fronts. On the one hand, he has published a number of short, introductory, and in a sense pedagogical, works, some of which have become authoritative in their own right, like his celebrated *Sufism—The Mystical Doctrines and Methods of Islam*. These include

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