

Correspondence

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REINCARNATION

Sir,

SEEING that you published an article on "Reincarnation," by René Guénon in your spring issue and a criticism of it by my namesake in summer, I request you to remove possible misunderstanding by publishing what the *Mountain Path* Arthur Osborne has to say about it in your next issue.

That is that neither side has gone to the root of the matter, which is that (as I said in my editorial to *The Mountain Path* of July 1966): "It is possible to discuss rebirth only from the point of view of ignorance, because from the point of view of knowledge there is no one to be reborn. Therefore the Maharshi would generally brush the question aside when asked about it. He would make some such reply as: 'Find out first whether you are born now before asking whether you will be reborn.

I admitted that: "That does not, however, imply that it (discussion of reincarnation) is completely invalid, inasmuch as posthumous states of being, although no more real than this life, are also no less real. It is best to wake up from the whole series of dreams, but for those who are unable to do so it is possible to describe their sequence." Nevertheless it is rather disturbing to find a spiritual writer discussing the subject without even referring to the deeper question of whether there is an ego to reincarnate.

ARTHUR OSBORNE

Tiruvannamalai, India, 15.1.67

(Original editorial inclusions that followed the essay:)

One night a certain young man was crying "Allah" till his lips were growing sweet with praise of Him.

The Devil said, "Prithee, O garrulous one, where is the response 'Here am I' to all this 'Allah'?"

Broken-hearted, the man laid down his head to sleep. In a dream he saw Khadir (legendary figure of a saint who stood also for the perfect spiritual director) amid the verdure.

Khadir said to him, "Hark, you have ceased praising God : how is it that you repent of having called upon Him?"

He replied, "No 'Here am I' (Ar. 'labbaika, the customary response of the faithful when they hear the Muezzin's call to prayer) comes to me in response, so I fear lest I be a reprobate, turned away from His door."

Said Khadir, "(God saith), That 'Allah' of thine is my 'Here am I', and that supplication and grief and ardour of thine is my messenger to thee . . . Beneath every 'O Lord' of thine is many a 'Here am I'(from me)".

Rumi