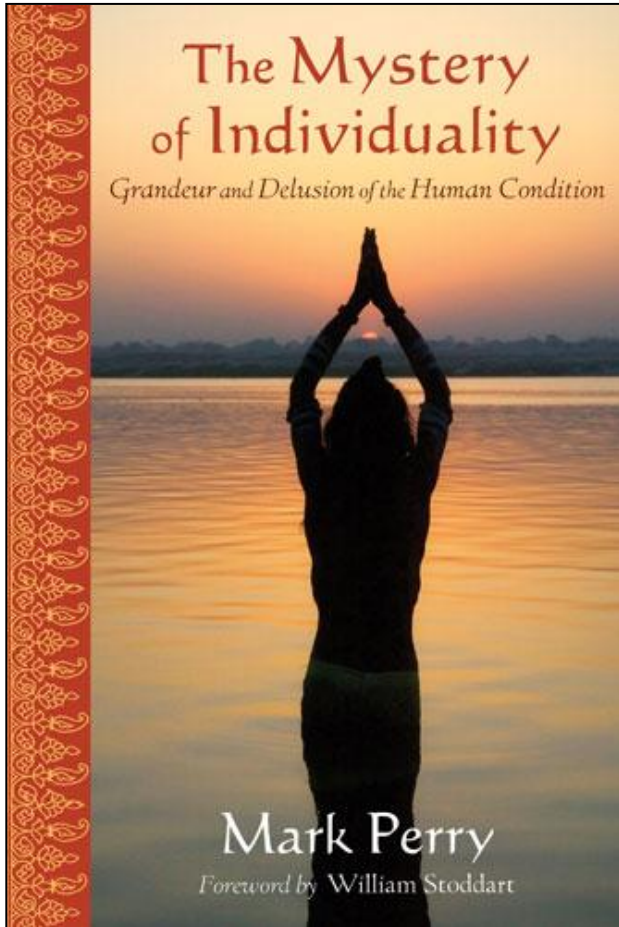


The Mystery of Individuality: Grandeur and Delusion of the Human Condition

by Mark Perry

Foreword by William Stoddart



This book explores the nature of human individuality through twelve chapter-mirrors, whose main focal points are spirituality, psychology, sociology, and love, and also the meaning of sacred art. The issues of leadership and justice, as well as of politics, and even crime, are also examined in depth, along with the roles of sexuality and marriage. Finally, man and woman are defined in the context of both cosmology and society, with a special emphasis on the divine nature of a human being and what this entails morally and socially. Perry bases his assessments on the guiding image of archetypal man, namely of a being created in the image of God. At the same time, he does not shy away from addressing what the distortion of this archetype entails. He asserts that in creating man, God lent him His own immortal personhood, namely all that we find most lovable in another human creature, in other words his personality. But finally the question for each of us comes down to remembering our divine essence without forgetting our human nothingness.

This Book Features

- ❖ A Foreword by Perennialist author, William Stoddart.
- ❖ An extensive glossary of foreign terms and phrases.
- ❖ Detailed biographical notes.
- ❖ A comprehensive index.

Publication Details

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- ❖ Price: \$24.95
- ❖ Trim Size: 6x9
- ❖ Page Count: 328 paperback

World Wisdom



Praise for *The Mystery of Individuality*

“Few writings in recent years have done as much to further—in ways that make life feel different—my understanding of the ultimate nature of things. Perry’s thoughts are as advanced as one will find anywhere—this is clearly the higher mathematics of the human spirit.”

—Huston Smith, author of *The World’s Religions*

“In this wise and insightful book, the author defines what a human being is according to his perennial archetype *in divinis* while, at the same time, situating him in the context of the spiritual wasteland of the contemporary world, which he contrasts with what an integrally sacred tradition is meant to be. His writing exhibits an unusual succinctness and clarity, coupled with a profound compassion.”

—William Stoddart, author of *Outline of Hinduism* and *Outline of Sufism*

“These seasoned reflections show how any authentic understanding of the human condition must be rooted in our inviolable relationship with the Absolute. Mark Perry exposes the decrepit foundations of humanism, and many other modern follies, and calls for an urgent return to the ever-fresh wellsprings of Tradition.”

—Harry Oldmeadow, La Trobe University Bendigo, author of *Frithjof Schuon and the Perennial Philosophy*

“This remarkable book could qualify as a genuine introduction to the perennialist and traditionalist perspective. The breadth and depth, as well as the analytical rigor of the insights offered by the author, go well beyond the central topic indicated by its title, and will be welcomed with gratitude by the attentive and perceptive reader.”

—Patrick Laude, Georgetown University, co-author of *Frithjof Schuon: Life and Teachings*

An Excerpt from the Introduction

“To speak of man is to speak of an immortal soul, and this soul, however busy and absorbed man is with his daily pursuits, seeks release finally in something permanent and blissful that no earthly achievements can satisfy to a lasting degree. Turned away from its true end, our immortal soul gets trapped in futilities, all the more seductive if pleasurable, and as a result the soul risks finally becoming identified with the accidental and ephemeral instead of the essential and eternal. Or, it can be drawn to love creatures and objects outside of God, that is to say to idolize man in some degree, be it unintentionally, when the ideal is ‘to see all things in God and God in all things’, to borrow a formulation from Schuon.” (p. 2)

About the Author

MARK PERRY is an author and professional translator. Although of American parents, he was born in Cairo, Egypt, in 1951 and raised in Switzerland close to Frithjof Schuon. He is the son of eminent American Perennialist author Whitall N. Perry. He is the author of the book *On Awakening and Remembering* (Fons Vitae, 2000). Perry is currently in the process of updating the translations of all of Frithjof Schuon's books from the original French into the English language, and has also translated a large number of Schuon's French and German letters.



Mark Perry's article, "The Forbidden Door" appeared in World Wisdom's anthology of spiritual anthropology entitled, *Every Branch In Me: Essays on the Meaning of Man*. The book is part of World Wisdom's Perennial Philosophy series. Perry has also contributed articles to the French metaphysical quarterly *Connaissance des Religions*, including "De la nescience divine" and more recently, "Frithjof Schuon par son écriture". That article also appeared in English as "Frithjof Schuon Seen Through his Handwriting" in the journal *Sophia*. Mr. Perry's article entitled "La compassion intellectuelle" appeared in France in the collection *Dossier H: Frithjof Schuon* (Les Editions de l'Age d'Homme, 2001).

About the Author of the Foreword



WILLIAM STODDART was born at Carstairs in Scotland in 1925. He studied modern languages, and later medicine, at the universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin. He spent most of his working life in London, England, and retired to Windsor, Ontario, in 1982.

He has made a life-long study of the great religious traditions of the world, and in this connection has traveled widely: in Europe, North Africa, Turkey, India, Ceylon, and Japan.

His books include: *Sufism: The Mystical Doctrines and Methods of Islam* (1976; editions in seven languages), newly released in an expanded version as *Outline of Sufism* (2012), *Outline of Hinduism* (1993), and *Outline of Buddhism* (1998). His works have been widely acclaimed for their clarity and dependability.

Stoddart was for many years assistant editor of the British journal *Studies in Comparative Religion*. He contributed the chapter on "Mysticism" to the volume *The Unanimous Tradition*, edited by Ranjit Fernando (1991), and the introductory essay "Meaning behind the Absurd" to *In Quest of the Sacred*, edited by S.H. Nasr and Katherine O'Brien (1993), which contains the proceedings of the Congress on Traditional Studies held at Lima, Peru, in August 1985. Along with S.H. Nasr, he edited *Religion of the Heart*, a *Festschrift* in honor of Frithjof Schuon on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

He has translated, from French and German, numerous books within his field of interest, amongst them *Sufism: Veil and Quintessence* (1981) and *Esoterism as Principle and as Way* (1981) by Frithjof Schuon, and *Fez: City of Islam* (1992) and *Chartres and the Birth of the Cathedral* (1995) by Titus Burckhardt. He was also editor and translator of the collected essays of Titus Burckhardt, published under the title *Mirror of the Intellect* (1987), as well as *The Essential Titus Burckhardt* (2003).

