

Episode One Hundred Forty - The Letter to Menoecus 07 - Completion of the Letter

Post by “Julia” of November 8, 2024 at 4:13 AM

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

Nonetheless, it seems like supernatural religion lends itself to misinterpretation

Please be aware that phrasing it like this can be misleading with regards to cause and effect.

I posit that, because human nature is constant, it is a group's *structure*, which will dictate its behaviour in the long run. This implies that supernatural religions behave the way they do because of the structure of their social hierarchies and their group interests, not because they are supernatural religions. While it is possible for a group to hold a supernatural belief with no power structures, no hierarchies, no organisational interests (eg public image, spreading, political power), it is not possible for such a group to maintain its cohesion and coherence to one set of texts and one interpretation long-term. This is to say: Either you do *not* manage to keep the religion frozen in time, or you create a group structure which lends itself to abuse; to freeze a religious practice without creating structures which will invariably be abused sooner or later, is impossible.

A few humans have an intense drive towards power, and most humans have an intense drive to conform. Furthermore, it is not just that power attracts the corrupt, it is also that the majority of humans (including good people) will become corrupt and abusive if they are given power (and having a firm ideology, religious or otherwise, *guards and assists* an individual against this). This is why a group's *structure* will eventually be exploited, unless it is built in a way that specifically prevents that. Supernatural religion, by attracting certain types of personalities more than others, is almost always build to freeze the religion in time and to support positions of power. Furthermore, *organised* religions exhibit the same tribal effects that every organisation has: expand in size, expand in reach and power. This, too, is part of human tribal nature. This is why we see these things happen in religion time and again; but it is neither due to nor limited to religion, supernatural or otherwise.

Once the individuals have made up their mind, they will twist words and misinterpret their sources, to make them fit; but this is a [rationalization](#), it happens *after* they made up their minds. The same order of events is at work in secular organisations which commit heinous crimes: First they decide, then they rationalize.

If anyone wants to dig deeper, here are a few links to start out with:

- [Ash Conformity](#)

- [Milgram Experiment](#)
- [Stanford Prison](#) (note how hard it was for some to quit after it was aborted)
- [Hofling Hospital](#)
- [Strip Search Phone Calls](#)

Being very clear about cause and effect here is important, because secular groups can be just as vicious and harmful; the 20th century is riddled with examples of that, and we have yet to see the end of history. This means we should remain aware of the mechanics at work, because similar things can happen pretty much anywhere, any time.