IN SEARCH OF A TRULY EUROPEAN OR "ARYAN" RELIGION

Om. We meditate on the effulgent glory of the radiant Sun; may He enlighten our understanding! —the Gayatri mantra, from the Rig Veda

Lately there has been a new “progressive” aversion for traditional western civilization and for people of European ancestry, sometimes manifesting itself even as calls for the extinction of the white race (with some of those calls coming from white people themselves—leftist ones—although we needn’t delve into that messy issue here). Partly in reaction to this progressive aversion, to some degree even as an act of indignant defiance of it, more and more people of European ancestry have begun regaining pride in their racial and cultural heritage. More and more white people are experiencing a real yearning for something to believe in that can unify and strengthen them against their new antagonists and would-be destroyers. More and more people of European ancestry are searching for their cultural roots as Europeans, and of course one of the most unifying, culturally strengthening, and defining elements of a culture is its religion. And thus, as the notorious paradigm shift sweeps through the west, and people, partly in self-defense, partly in revitalized ethnic pride, turn to their past cultural traditions as a mainstay, they have begun searching, like never before, for a genuinely western or European or “Aryan” form of spirituality. They sense a void, and want something their own to fill that void, not something imported and therefore artificial, not authentic for their “tribe.”

The most obvious choice for a European traditionalist to turn to as a quintessentially European religion is Christianity. This has been the religious tradition followed by most white people (and quite a few brown and black people too) for well over 1500 years. Christianity, though, in its very origins, could hardly be called European or “Aryan”—that is, Indo-European. It began as a reform movement of Judaism that turned renegade; although it did adopt over the course of many centuries many essentially European ideas. In fact even the founders of Christianity, some of them at least, were familiar with Greek Pagan philosophy and added the parts they liked to the new Christian philosophy/theology. Later, as it competed with Classical Paganism, European Christianity absorbed many of the ritual aspects of the earlier state religion of Rome. And of course as centuries passed, and Germanic peoples converted to the new faith, and genuinely European ideas continued to influence it, Europe made Christianity its own, with some of the greatest European art, music, architecture, literature, etc. inspired by it and dedicated to it. Yet the very fact that the Christian religion involves the worship of a deified Jewish rabbi/prophet, with its scriptures almost entirely composed not by Europeans but by west Asian Hebrews, pretty much disqualifies Christianity as a purely or essentially European or Aryan belief system. It couldn’t really be called radically European. Oswald Spengler referred to the whole thousand-year era dominated by Christianity in the west as “Magian.” I have been told that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in northern Europe there was an attempted rebellion against the primacy of Christianity in the form of a heightened popular interest in “Aryan” Indian religions, which was mainly motivated by ethnic nationalism and antisemitism, but it could not begin to rival the profound influence of Catholic and Protestant Christianity. Nevertheless, the renegade reform movement of Judaism is the most obvious choice for a specifically European revival of religious sentiment, and may prove to be the best choice if nothing more suitable comes along.

One could argue, very plausibly too, that a more suitable ethno-religion for the European peoples would be some sort of revival of the ancestral Paganism that flourished before the ancient progressive movement of Christianity swept the continent and proselytized or persecuted all rival faiths into oblivion. Along these lines I see three main possibilities.

First, attempts could be made, and are being made, to revive ancestral Celtic and Germanic Pagan religious traditions. I have noticed that quite a few leaders and followers of the alt-right, including some who openly declare themselves to be Nazis, have embraced archaic religious motifs such as Celtic bardic music, praise to Wotan et al., and ancient runes and other symbols in a kind of Aryan iconography. One serious disadvantage to these efforts is that the religious system(s) adopted are essentially dead in the sense that the traditions went effectively extinct and stayed that way for many centuries. Almost certainly the original initiatory lineages of teacher to disciple have been broken. Thus attempts to revive ancient northern European Paganism of this sort are without living roots, without the uninterrupted lineage that rightist thinkers like René Guénon have insisted are absolutely necessary for a spiritual tradition to be vital and valid. This results in a certain artificiality, a kind of replica instead of the living faith that was once practiced by ancestral Europeans. Also, even if it could be genuinely revived, the religions were of a much more savage age than the one we are now inhabiting, and they would have to be civilized far beyond the mere abolition of human sacrifices in sacred groves. And whether large numbers of people could sincerely worship Wotan or the crow god Nodens nowadays is questionable.

A second possibility for a revival of primordial European Paganism overlaps to some degree with the previous one, but has certain distinct advantages, including, arguably, an unbroken lineage—and that is the sort of neo-Paganism that manifests itself as Wicca, other forms of witchcraft, and certain types of “occultism.” There are claims, perhaps substantiated, that movements like Wicca are survivals of Celtic religion that went underground, yet persisted, throughout the Christian era in the west. They maintain some seemingly archaic qualities like matriarchal lineages and celebration of the wisdom of women; yet on the other hand there can be no doubt that, as more or less secret rivals to Christianity, these movements gradually acquired specifically anti-Christian and even Satanic elements. It appears pretty plain to me that many people calling themselves Wicca or neo-Pagans are closet devil worshippers. So, some dark, arguably sinister elements have been incorporated into the system, which furthermore have strong Christian/anti-Christian elements. There is of course some genuine wisdom also…yet I doubt that western civilization is likely to embrace en masse a kind of magical religion involving worship of a horned or antlered forest god, orgiastic rites, and so on. It just doesn’t seem likely that anything like Wicca would become any more than the fringe movement that it already is. It seems to be designed deliberately as a fringe movement, a refuge for those who just don’t belong in the well-lit public mainstream.

A third possibility for a revival of European Paganism may have its origins farther south, in the Classical religion of Rome. It is hardly to be expected that modern or postmodern westerners would worship Jupiter and Apollo any more than they would worship Wotan and Thor; but the Romans and Greeks of the Empire did have the philosophical sophistication to formulate relatively advanced spiritual movements such as Orphism and Neoplatonism. I think Neoplatonism especially was/is rational enough and profound enough to appeal to modern westerners, and sometimes I regret that it was eclipsed by Christianity in the late Empire. One advantage it enjoys is that plenty of literature on Roman Paganism and Neoplatonism has survived the flames of Christian persecutions and book-burnings. But, on the other hand, it suffers the same defect as the cult of Wotan in that it is now practically a dead belief system, and any attempt to resuscitate it would result in an artificial replica, not a living faith. Some time ago I actually joined the Julian Society, ostensibly an organization dedicated to fulfilling the dream of the last Pagan Roman Emperor, Julian “the Apostate,” and to establish a kind of Neoplatonist religion in the west; but I have found that their efforts are extraordinarily lukewarm at best, and not particularly successful thus far. Perhaps the best that could be realistically hoped for along Classical Greco-Roman lines would be a popular cultivation of some more or less theistic philosophical system like Stoicism.

So long as the westerners searching for a religion uniquely of their own “tribe” are willing to consider any system that is truly Aryan, then some of the religions of India might be possible candidates. A really obvious possibility along these lines would be Buddhism. Buddhism is so Aryan—or, in Pali, Ariyan—that the foundational Four Noble Truths are literally the Four Ariyan Truths, and an enlightened Buddhist saint or sage is called an Ariya, or “noble one.” It may be significant that Julius Evola, one of the foremost fascist philosophers of the 20th century, wrote a book (The Doctrine of Awakening) endorsing Theravada Buddhism as perhaps the most suitable religious system for the people of modern Europe—or rather, for the Aryan cultural and spiritual elite. He endorsed Buddhism because of its masculine asceticism, its possession of an unbroken initiatory lineage and spiritual aristocratic class in the monks, and, of course, its primordial Aryan ancestry and nature.

Buddhism really has shown itself to have an appeal to the modern western mind, in part because it requires minimal belief in a mythological (or just unprovable) narrative, because it is rational and relatively little in conflict with modern science, and because it involves a kind of spiritual self-discipline that most people can follow at an elementary level and which has demonstrable positive results. Some of the tech companies in Silicon Valley encourage their employees to practice Buddhist meditation techniques if only because it improves their efficiency and reduces the amount of sick leave that they take. So Buddhism really does have, realistically, the potential to become a major “religion” for the west.

However, there are also some drawbacks. First, Buddhism may well be too philosophical to appeal to the proletarian masses living in inner cities and trailer parks. The common people, if they are to follow a religion, require easily digested stories and satisfying rituals; and the ancient Indian nature of both in Buddhism may be a real turnoff to all but the university-educated elites who mainly already follow it today. The whole notion of Buddhism being first and foremost a system for monastic renunciants, considered somehow higher and more worthy than laypeople, is definitely hard to accept by westerners conditioned into a largely Protestant, egalitarian culture—which inevitably results in the secularization, corruption, and weakening of the system. It may also be too pacifistic for a world that could very well be headed for a period of social chaos and violent struggle for survival (although warrior cults could be generated, I suppose, as happened with the Zen-practicing Japanese Samurai and indeed with an occasionally extremely warlike European Christianity). And perhaps worst of all, it turns out that Buddhism isn’t quite as primordially Aryan as Evola and others have supposed. Despite the Aryan terminology and the adoption by an Indo-European culture from ancient times until the Muslim Turks exterminated Buddhism in medieval India, the very ancient origins of Buddhistic thinking apparently extend all the way back to the prehistoric and non-Aryan Indus Valley Civilization. It was the members of the Indus Valley culture who originated religious/philosophical traditions emphasizing karma and ascetic practices and yogic introspection rather than ritual worship of gods. Some scholars are even skeptical over whether Gotama Buddha himself was of Indo-European stock (although it would seem that he probably was). So, as with Christianity, Buddhism could be a mostly Aryan religion with its origins, however, centered in a non-Aryan culture. And of course Indian is not the same as European.

But so long as we are considering India, and Indo-Aryan spiritual traditions, there is apparently an even more authentic Aryan religious tradition to consider, and that is archaic Brahmanism. When the Vedic Sanskrit-speaking Aryans first invaded India around 1500 BCE, their religious system, as described in the Rig Veda, was very similar to the religion of the archaic Greeks and Romans. Even a few of the gods were the same. The early Aryan religion involved a class of professional priests who performed fire sacrifices to a pantheon of deities, including Dyaus Pitri, elsewhere known as Zeus and Jupiter. As the millennia passed on the Indian subcontinent this early Vedic Brahmanism absorbed elements from the more contemplative and “yogic” Indus Valley civilization as well as from the polytheistic religions of the Dravidian south, resulting in what is now known as Hinduism. Yet there are still relatively archaic forms of the religion that more closely resemble the original system, such as the Mimamsa sect of Hinduism which still emphasizes the old fire sacrifices as a means of deriving benefits from the gods. Another possibility, oddly, is the “Hinduism” of the island of Bali in Indonesia, which is said to consist largely of a blend of archaic Brahmanism and Mahayana Buddhism—plus some indigenous elements which a European puritan might well wish to remove before adopting the system.

There are a few other obscure possibilities, like perhaps the Parsi religion, alias Zoroastrianism, which was developed by ancient Aryan Iranians; although, like pre-Christian European religions, this system was abandoned by its own followers in favor of a semitic prophet, in this case an Arab one. And the vestigial Parsi religion as it stands today has adopted plenty of non-Aryan elements, mostly from Islam. There may be other living Indo-European religions out there in the world, but I am not sure what they would be.

Thus it appears that the best example of a genuinely Indo-European or “Aryan” religion that persists to this day as a living faith, would probably be one of the more conservative Vedic forms of Indian Hinduism such as Mimamsa. But it would seem to be too alien to a modern westerner to be much of a viable option for filling a religious void in one’s heart. Otherwise we’re stuck with Wicca.

It has been said that science, or secular humanism, or politics, has taken over as the “religion” of the modern west. Certainly, Marxism 1.0 was commonly called a kind of atheistic religion, and the followers of the new cultural Marxism certainly do sometimes display a cultish mentality. It is true that politics can easily reach the level of real fanaticism. But I refuse to dignify any of this with the title of “religion,” as even the most esoteric theoretical physics lacks the sort of ethics and genuine spirituality that the common person needs as a chunk of driftwood to hang on to while drifting in the horizonless sea of Life. All of these alleged replacements lack the spirit required to make people better and wiser and truly happier, even if they do serve many of the same functions, historically, as mass religions. So the situation remains that the European white “Aryan” race is lacking an indigenous religious system to unify them as a society and give them roots, so to speak.

Thus it appears that the Europeans, if not the Indians and Persians, have not yet had their own undisputed Prophet. Consider what a dramatic change came over the Arabs when their own prophet manifested himself. And as is the case with era-creating prophets in general, we cannot really begin to guess what he (or maybe she) will have to say. I can say with some confidence that neither Donald Trump nor I am The One. I have no idea who it might be, if that person has even yet been born. But I would guess that, if the west enters upon a time of anarchy and chaos, and the people of the west look helplessly in desperation for something comforting and/or strengthening to believe in, then some prophet, if not a downright Messiah, will appear to begin a new era, and maybe even change the world for the better. Either that or some supercomputer will eventually become conscious, will surpass us in intelligence by several orders of magnitude, and will become to us as a God. Who knows.