

Islam and Tradition: Evola's Thoughts on Islam

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While he examined various traditions around the world, both occidental and oriental, Julius Evola also had things to say on the tradition of Islam that is predominant in areas between those two regions. In his valuable article “Islam in the Eyes of Julius Evola,” the Italian Muslim Claudio Mutti pays homage to his ideological father in regards to the latter’s views on Islam. Among the aspects he points to in Evola’s work is “a direct connection of this tradition to the Primordial tradition itself, such that Islam is independent from both Judaism and Christianity, religions whose characteristic themes he rejects (original sin, redemption, sacerdotal meditation, etc.).”(1)

This conclusion is essential, for it demonstrates the lengths to which Evola not only rejected those who want to separate Islam from the Primordial tradition as something “foreign,” but

even that he regarded it as superior in certain aspects to other traditions.

So from the outset we must not make the mistake of viewing Islam as a distinct culture, but rather as a filter of cultures that inevitably takes on the vibrant coloring of the people who accept it without detracting any from the message. With this brief but important backdrop to the Islamic tradition, let us now examine how Evola viewed different aspects of Islam.

Islam as Tradition

Evola characterized Islam as “a tradition at a higher level than both Judaism and the religious beliefs that conquered the West.”(2) Despite Islam as a message based on the Qur’an and the sunna, or way, of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) being a relatively recent phenomenon, Evola clearly includes it as a manifestation of Tradition.

Islam as an expression of the primordial *din al-fitra*, or natural way of disposition, is a reality expressed throughout the Qur’an.(3) It recognizes the spiritual foundations of humanity as one, with the various traditions of the world being local expressions of a common primordial origin. “Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other.”(4)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is regarded by Muslims as last in a line of 124,000 prophets, each sent to a distinct nation and tribe. “Every nation has a Messenger and when their Messenger comes everything is decided between them justly. They are not wronged.”(5)

Whereas their messages differed according to time and place, the core message remained the worship of the One God as the basis of human endeavors. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not only the last prophet, but also the one whose scope was universal such that the Qur’an identifies him as being sent “as a mercy to all the worlds.”(6)

There are a number of aspects Evola identifies as part of Islam’s primordial links to Tradition. “Although Islam considers itself the ‘religion of Abraham,’ even to the point of attributing to him the foundation of the Kaaba (in which we find again the theme of the ‘stone,’ or the symbol of the ‘center’), it is nevertheless true that (a) it claimed independence from both Judaism and Christianity; (b) the Kaaba, with its symbolism of the center, is a pre-Islamic location and has even older origins that cannot be dated accurately; (c) in the esoteric Islamic tradition, the main reference point is al-Khadir [Khidr], a popular figure conceived as superior to and predating the biblical prophets (Koran 18:59-81).”(7)

Indeed, a popular tradition identifies the foundations of the Ka’aba being raised by Adam.(8)

There is also interesting evidence to consider of the holy city of Makka being described in the Bible(9), thus linking the final revelation to those of the earlier Biblical prophets. As for what Evola terms “symbolism of the center,” then this is interesting to compare with the legend of the Grail as the Scottish Sufi master, Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi (Ian Dallas) writes:

“...as the occidental world, unsatisfied spiritually, reached out past Rome and Pope to find its source of healing in the tomb of the redeemer at Jerusalem, as, unsatisfied even there, it cast its yearning gaze, half spiritual, half physical, still further towards the East to find the primal shrine of mankind, so the Grail was said to have been withdrawn from our cynical West to the pure chaste unattainable birthplace of all nations. And so, the Grail was nothing other than the Black Stone of the Ka’aba, the central shrine of the world’s largest religion, purified judaeo-christianity, Islam. Makkah is named in the Qur’an as the Mother of Cities, and thus the ‘birthplace of all nations’ and the Ka’aba is named the ‘primal shrine of all mankind.’

Embedded in one corner of the Ka’aba stands the Black Stone which every Muslim raises his lips to and kisses when he arrives dusty and exhausted as a pilgrim, kisses as if quenching his thirst.”(10)

The Holy Grail can thus be viewed as a metaphor for the spiritual quest, which in Europe extends back to pre-Christian Indo-European and other indigenous traditions. It is certainly no coincidence that Celtic, Germanic and Iberian tribes tended to adopt the gnostic and unitarian

expressions of Christianity which can be traced back to remnants of the Primordial Tradition.

“According to the pure doctrine of the *huda*, or ancient guidance that has adhered from the time of our father, Sayyidina Adam, peace be upon him, gnosis lies in the hands of the Prophet of the time....For six hundred years [before the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad] there was a living christian gnostic tradition.”(11)

Sufism is the carrier of the primordial spiritual wisdom, as bounded within the final message of that Tradition which is Islam. The inner wisdom was transmitted by the prophets to gnostic communities, and with the end of the line of prophethood this is now transferred to the spiritual pole of the age, or the *qutb*. The legend of Khidr can be seen here in a similar light as the “Green Man” who transmitted wisdom to seekers in medieval Europe.(12) As we will see later, Islam and specifically Sufism played an important role in shaping European chivalry.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) called others to the worship of the One God, in other words to recapture the primordial Covenant of Alast(13). Towards this end he also sent out letters to leaders, including the Byzantine emperor Heraclius. Although he refrained from accepting Islam, deep within his heart Heraclius felt drawn towards it and kept the letter in a golden casket that was passed down and gave rise to a legend that as long as the letter remained, so too would the kingdom. One Islamic scholar has identified this letter with the Holy Grail.(14)

Doctrines

Evola then moves to the spiritual doctrines of Islam, the highest pillar of which is to testify that there is only one God to be worshipped, without associating any partners to Him. Islam is distinct from all other faiths in how absolute it is in its doctrine of Divine Unity, or tawhid:

“Islam also not only rejected the idea of a Redeemer or Savior, which is so central in Christianity, but also the mediation of a priestly caste. By conceiving of the Divine in terms of an absolute and pure monotheism, without a ‘Son,’ a ‘Father,’ or a ‘Mother of God,’ every person as a Muslim appears to respond directly to God and to be sanctified through the Law, which permeates and organizes life in a radically unitary way in all of its juridical, religious, and social ramifications.”(15)

As we shall see, Evola also admires Islam for its action and it is exactly this reality that distinguishes Tawhid from monotheism. “Tawhid is not monotheism, it is not a metaphysical principle. Allah is beyond what is attributed to Him, therefore beyond logos. Allah is not a mono-theos, nor poli-theos, or tri-theos, or a-theos. Allah is not theo-logical or onto-logical. Allah is neither a theory nor a principle. Allah is not contained by definition.”(16)

Islam is not a “religion” that is confined to the realm of ideas and principles, but rather a Din or a higher wisdom that is organic in every sense of the word. It is a life transaction between an individual and their Lord, the simplicity of which serves as its greatest strength. It certainly appealed to the French anarchist Gustave-Henri Jossot, who converted to Islam and became a student of the Algerian Sufi master Shaykh Ahmad al-Alawi, as “the most rational religion in the world” because it had “no mysteries, no dogmas, no priests, almost no ceremonies.”(17)

The Tradition of Scholar-Warriors

“As in the case of priestly Judaism, the center in Islam also consisted of the Law and Tradition, regarded as a formative force, to which the Arab stocks of the origins provided a purer and nobler human material that was shaped by a warrior spirit.”(18)

One distinguishing feature of Islam is the access given to the Law, or Shari’a, such that every sincere seeker has the potential within themselves to become scholars of their own right. This is indeed the primary task of Sufism, which is to equip the seekers with the means to triumph over their own ego and through this against their external enemies. This is why the Sufi shaykhs have always been at the forefront of the struggle against temporal enemies as surely as they provided the wisdom necessary for the seekers to defeat their inner spiritual enemies:

“Such men as the Naqshbandi sheikh Shamil al-Daghestani, who fought a prolonged war against the Russians in the Caucasus in the nineteenth century; Sayyid Muhammad ‘Abdullah al-Somali, a sheikh of the Salihyya order who led Muslims against the British and Italians in Somalia from 1899 to 1920; the Qadiri sheikh ‘Uthman ibn Fodi, who led jihad in Northern Nigeria from 1804 to 1808 to establish Islamic rule; the Qadiri sheikh ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza’iri, who led the Algerians against the French from 1832 to 1847; the Darqawi faqir al-Hajj Muhammad al-Ahrash, who fought the French in Egypt in 1799; the Tijani sheikh al-Hajj ‘Umar Tal, who led Islamic Jihad in Guinea, Senegal, and Mali from 1852 to 1864; and the Qadiri sheikh Ma’ al-‘Aynayn al-Qalqami, who helped marshal Muslim resistance to the French in northern Mauritania and southern Morocco from 1905 to 1909.

“Among the Sufis whose missionary work Islamized entire regions are such men as the founder of the Sanusiyya order, Muhammad ‘Ali Sanusi, whose efforts and jihad from 1807 to 1859 consolidated Islam as the religion of peoples from the Libyan Desert to sub-Saharan Africa; [and] the Shadhili sheikh Muhammad Ma‘ruf and Qadiri sheikh Uways al-Barawi, whose efforts spread Islam westward and inland from the East African Coast.”(19)

Although it is a complex matter whose essence has been distorted by Islamophobes and extremist Wahhabis alike(20), we must also caution against those modernists who subvert Islam

and seek to “pacify” it in service of their Zionist and Globalist masters, in order to accommodate it to the global banking system. But as a corollary to this, they also deny the spiritual struggle as this primordial wisdom is contrary to any consumerist vision they support. As Evola writes,

“Islam presents a traditional completeness, since the shariah and the sunna, that is, the exoteric law and tradition, have their complement not in vague mysticism, but in full-fledged initiatory organizations (turuq) that are categorized by an esoteric teaching (tawil) and by the metaphysical doctrine of the Supreme Identity (tawhid).”(21)

It is no accident that these same modernists are generally the same individuals who seek to distort the Sufi Path as not being bounded within orthodox Islam. There is indeed some parallel between Wahhabis and Orientalists who seek to deny that Sufism is founded upon the Prophetic Sunna and the Islamic Shari’a. Sufism is the fulfillment of Tawhid, to purify one’s lower self or ego and to elevate the soul to attain true gnosis, or ma’rifa in the Islamic tradition.

The four stages of understanding within Sufism are the (1) Shari’a, the Law which is the foundation for the next three stages and provides guidance within this world; (2) Tariqa, the inner practices as instructed by a Shaykh with a true path of initiation; (3) Haqiqa, the inner meaning of the practices and guidance found within the Shari’a and Tariqa; and (4) Ma’rifa, the highest stage or gnosis which is superior wisdom or knowledge of spiritual truth. It is a deeper

level of knowing beyond haqiqa and is the highest stage of Reality attained by few although each have the potential.(22)

The great Sufi Imam Junayd of Baghdad, who has truly defined the essence of Sufism to an extent that even modern seekers describe themselves as following the path of Junayd, said:

“Surely all the paths (turuq) are choked off by the creation except those following the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, those following his Sunna and his Tariqa.”

One later Sufi who treaded this path of a scholar-warrior, or what Evola would admire as the “asceticism of action,” was the Shehu Uthman dan Fodio of West Africa. He defined the scholar-warrior as the one who lived in simplicity and among the people, like all true zahids (people of asceticism) and awliya (friends of Allah). They walked the path and actually lived the Qur’an through their actions.

Umma as a Race of the Spirit

“It is precisely through the holy war, and not through preaching or missionary endeavor, that Islam came to enjoy a sudden, prodigious expansion, originating the empire of the Caliphs as well as forging a unity typical of a race of the spirit, namely, the umma or ‘Islamic nation’.”(23)

This spiritual nation called the Umma is, in every sense of the word, the fullest expression of the race of the spirit as it is founded on the Idea that is superior to and transcends the blood: “The Idea, only the Idea must be our true homeland. It is not being born in the same country, speaking the same language or belonging to the same racial stock that matters; rather, sharing the same Idea must be the factor that unites us and differentiates us from everybody else.”(24)

As Claudio Mutti said about the Islamic stance on race:

“Islam affirms in a radical way the prominence of the spiritual factor over the biological; but that does not mean that Islam does not recognize the racial differences at all and does not hold it in account. The Islamic doctrine relative to this argument is expressed synthetically in the following Qur’anic verse: ‘Among his signs are the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the differences of your languages and colors’ (XXX, 22). Islam therefore considers ‘languages and colors’, that is, the factors of cultural and racial identity, as ‘divine signs’.”(25)

The Islamic Roots of Medieval Chivalry

In his work, *The Mystery of the Grail*, Evola describes parallels between Sufis and Gnostic communities that survived in Europe into the medieval times. He identified the legend of the Grail with the Ghibelline tradition, as represented by Friedrich II der Hohenstauffen, who built a pan-European imperium and refused Crusades against Muslims and the Cathars in opposition

to the Papacy.(26) He then makes reference to the Knights Templars:

“Moreover, the Templars were charged with keeping secret liaisons with Muslims and being closer to the Islamic faith than to the Christian one. This last charge is probably best understood by remembering that Islam too is characterised by the rejection of Christ worship. The “secret liaisons’ allude to a perspective that is less sectarian, more universal, and thus more esoteric than that of militant Christianity. The Crusades, in which the Templars and in general the Ghibelline chivalry played a fundamental role, in many respects created a supra-traditional bridge West and East. The crusading knighthood ended up confronting a facsimile of itself, namely, warriors who abided by corresponding ethics, chivalrous customs, ideals of a ‘holy war,’ and initiatory currents’.”(27)

Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi described how these knights were devoted to honor, valor, and victory. The Crusades were partly an effort by the Church to break the chivalry code, but interaction with the Middle East intensified it. This took the form of efforts to break the knights’ tournament. In the ninth canon of the Council of Clermont in 1130, Pope Innocent II condemned the tournament and commanded knights killed in them not be given Christian burials. But the effort was largely unsuccessful and Pope John XXII reluctantly lifted the ban in 1316. Chivalry, or what Evola would undoubtedly identify as the struggle between the Ghibelline Hohenstauffens and the Papacy, was also symbolized in treatment of women:

“The final element of the new chivalric religion, having replaced a celibate and misogynist priesthood with a new elite brotherhood of warriors, was to introduce the honour due to women. Women were pure by nature and not, as the priests claimed, corrupted vessels of the flesh pulling men down to punishment and death. Part of chivalry was not only the respect due to good women but also the task of protecting them from slander and danger.”(28)

Thus, the medieval Christian “knightly attitude towards women is Islamic in origin.”(29) In his book on the history of medieval literature, the early nineteenth century French-Swiss historian Jean Charles de Sismondi described how Arabic literature and specifically that written by Sufis, was the source for “that tenderness and delicacy of sentiment and that reverential awe of women....which have operated so powerfully on our chivalrous feelings.”(30)

Chivalry manifested within the Indo-European traditions, but experienced decline over the centuries. Just as the Muslims preserved and transmitted ancient texts back to the Europeans, so too was it revived by the Muslims and passed back to the Europeans. “Between the seventh and twelfth centuries it was known among the Arabs, who became the instruments of the revival, in the medieval West, of the older legacy of the pre-Christian wisdom tradition.”(31)

Love Is Divine

Islam does not hold “the idea of sexuality as something blameworthy and obscene,” to the extent that the Spanish Sufi Shaykh al-Akbar (Great Shaykh) Ibn al-Arabi “goes so far as to speak of a contemplation of God in woman, of a ritualisation of the sexual orgasm in conformity with metaphysical and theological values.”(32)

In *The Metaphysics of Sex*, Evola describes the important role that Love plays in the Sufi Islamic tradition. Ibn al-Arabi says in *Fusus al-Hikam* that “the dissolution through woman” is the symbol of extinction in Divinity.(33) In applying the masculine symbolism to the seeker’s soul, “divinity is considered as a woman: she is not the ‘celestial bride’, but the ‘Beloved’ or the ‘Lover’. That is, for instance, the case in Attar, Ibn Farid, Gelaeddin el-Rumi, etc.”(34)

Evola admires the idea of love as a “force that kills” the individual self or ego.(35) He then quotes the Persian Sufi Shaykh and poet Jalal ad-Din Rumi, “He who knows the power of the dance of life does not fear death, because he knows that love kills,” as representing “the key to the practices of a chain or school of Islamic mysticism that has been transmitted for centuries and which considers Jalal ad-Din Rumi as its master.”(36) Evola concludes about divine love:

“In this Sufistic theology of love, one must see the amplification and the elevation to a more lucid conscience of the ritual world with which man from that civilisation has more or less

distinctly assumed and experienced conjugal relationships in general, starting from the sanctification which the Qur'anic Law confers to the sexual act in not only a monogamist, but also polygamist structure. Whence derives the special meaning which procreation can acquire, understood precisely as the administration of the prolongation of the divine creating force existing within man.”(37)

Imam Ali: A Perfect Example of Chivalry

The Sufis have a culture of chivalry (futuwwa) and courtesy (adab) consciously woven into nearly every aspect of their lives. The key to Islamic chivalry and good manners is to struggle against the ego. “Our master, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “The truly sincere faqir [impoverished one] is the one who is such that his enemy cannot find a way to injure him. This is his sign since his only constant occupation is his Beloved. His occupation with his Beloved veils him from his enemy. The Lover and the enemy are never joined’.”(38)

The Islamic Guilds were based upon futuwwa, and out of this futuwwa grew the tariqas or the orders of Sufism. Many of these guilds were founded by the Caliph An-Nasir and modelled after the character of Imam Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who served as the fourth caliph. The descendents of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through his daughter Fatima and her husband Ali, are called the Ahl al-

Bait (people of the Household) and hold a special place within Islam.

In addition to his prophethood (nubuwwa) and receiving revelation (wahy), the Prophet (peace be upon him) also possessed the spiritual guidance and initiation (walaya) which he transferred to his Household. This is why the spiritual lineage, or silsila, of nearly all the major Sufi tariqas are transmitted from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through Ali and the Household. The earliest Sufi ascetics surrounded themselves with the company of the Household. This is what Evola would consider a true chain of orthodox initiation.

Within the Islamic tradition, what Evola called the “divine kingship” was manifested in the khilafa (caliphate), which was the political leadership. However, there was a second which was the wilaya (spiritual leadership) that manifested within the character of the Prophetic Household. The manifest caliphs coexisted with the hidden caliphate of Ahl al-Bait, that was a spiritual position designed to transmit the spiritual wisdom down to succeeding generations of seekers.(39)

The perfect combination of physical heroism on the battlefield with a sanctity wholly detached from the worldly life, was personified in the character of Imam Ali. The Qur’anic verse, “You did not kill them; it was Allah who killed them; and you did not throw, when you threw; it was Allah who threw”(40), was revealed during a battle when the Prophet Muhammad (peace be

upon him) threw a handful of dust towards the enemy.

Rumi also explains it as an inner reality that all actions derive from Allah; actions are “good” only if one is conscious of this reality, and one is effaced in this consciousness.(41) This is similar to a verse from the Bhagavad-Gita: “Who thinks that he can be a slayer, who thinks that he is slain, both these have no [right] knowledge: He slays not, is not slain.”(42) Rumi devotes a poem in his Mathnawi to Imam Ali:

“He said, ‘I am wielding the sword for Allah’s sake, I am the servant of Allah, I am not under the command of the body.

“I am the Lion of Allah, I am not the lion of my passion: my deed bears witness to my religion.

“I have removed the baggage of self out of the way, I have deemed (what is) other than God to be non-existence.”(43)

These lines allude to an incident one day when Imam Ali was in battle and his opponent’s sword broke. The man fell and Ali stood above him, holding his sword to the man’s neck but refusing to kill him, despite the opponent’s personal insults. Ali then told him:

“I am not your enemy. The real enemies are the evil qualities within us. You are my brother, yet you spit in my face. When you spat upon me, I became angry, and the arrogance of that came to me. If I had killed you when I was in that state, then I would be a sinner, a murderer. I would have become the very thing I was fighting against. That crime would be recorded against my name, and I would have to answer for it later, when Allah questions me. That is why I cannot slay you.”(44)

Imam Ali described the battle that is waged in the soul: The intellect is the leader of the forces of ar-Rahman (the Compassionate); al-hawa (whim, caprice, desire) commands the forces of ash-shaytan (the devil); the soul itself is between them, undergoing the attraction of both (mutajadhiba baynahuma). The soul “enters into the domain of which ever of the two will triumph.”(45)

The Greater Jihad

In another section of *Revolt Against the Modern World*, Evola discusses the hadith (narration from the Prophet), “Raja’na min al-jihad al-asghar ila-l jihad al-akbar” (“You have returned from the lesser struggle to the greater struggle”). While the chain of narrators (isnad) for this hadith has been considered by classical Islamic scholars as being inauthentic(46), the essence of its meaning is confirmed in several verses from the Qur’an(47), as well as several sayings of the

Prophet (peace be upon him) that scholars of hadith have classified as authentic:

“The mujahid is he who makes jihad against his nafs (ego) for the sake of obeying Allah.”(48)

“The strong one is not the one who overcomes people, the strong one is he who overcomes his nafs [ego].”(49)

It is the inner warfare that distinguishes the true “warriors of the spirit” from the mass of ordinary believers. The Qur’an describes the companions of the right (ashab al-yamin) and the foremost (as-sabiqun). The spirituality of jihad, which is conducted within an established framework, is not synonymous with the modern nihilistic ideology of Jihadism, exactly because in Islam the ends do not justify the means:

“The true warrior of Islam smites the neck of his own anger with the sword of forbearance; the false warrior strikes at the neck of his enemy with the sword of his own unbridled ego. For the first, the spirit of Islam determines jihad; for the second, bitter anger, masquerading as jihad, determines Islam. The contrast between the two could hardly be clearer.”(50)

For Evola, this greater and lesser jihad “represents the general conception that the world of Tradition attributes to the warrior experience, and, generally speaking, to action as a path to realisation.”(51) As Evola writes in *Revolt Against the Modern World*:

“The relationship between the ‘greater’ and the ‘lesser holy war,’ however, mirrors the relationship between the soul and the body; in order to understand the heroic asceticism or ‘path of action,’ it is necessary to recognize the situation in which the two paths merge, ‘the lesser holy war’ becoming the means through which ‘a greater holy war’ is carried out, and vice versa: the ‘little holy war,’ or the external one, becomes almost a ritual action that expresses and gives witness to the reality of the first. Originally, orthodox Islam conceived a unitary form of asceticism: that which is connected to the jihad or ‘holy war’.

“The ‘greater holy war’ is man’s struggle against the enemies he carries within. More exactly, it is the struggle of man’s higher principle against everything that is merely human in him, against his inferior nature and against chaotic impulses and all sorts of material attachments.”(52)

This inner struggle is the animalistic instinct, the disorganized multiplicity of impulses, the limitations imposed on us by a fictitious self, and thus also including fear, wickedness, and uncertainty. Subduing the internal enemy is the only way to achieve inner liberation or the rebirth in a state of deeper inner unity and “peace” in the triumphal sense of the world. In the midst of external jihad, the inner enemy emerges and puts up a fierce resistance through these instincts; it is the task of the true warrior to overcome these instincts before entering the battlefield if he hopes to triumph over his enemies. The intention (niya) is what preserves the

sacred character and heroism of jihad.(53)

Parallels with the Indo-European Tradition

Just as with the role of Islamic mysticism in transmitting ancient Indo-European chivalry, so too did Evola see in jihad a “late rebirth of a primordial Aryan heritage,” such that “the Islamic tradition serves here as the transmitter of the Aryo-Iranian tradition.”(54) There is mention of this reality of the inner struggle in the verses of the Bhagavad-Gita: “Know Him therefore who is above reason; and let his peace give thee peace. Be a warrior and kill desire, the powerful enemy of the soul”(Bhagavad-Gita, 3:43).

Throughout the Qur’an, the verses about striking against the enemies and maintaining the upper hand are presupposed on the verses about sacrificing the illusions of this worldly life for the truth of the struggle. The Hereafter is regarded as the ultimate destination, and those who fall in battle are promised heavenly rewards so long as their intention was pure and they fought within the balance and justice of Shari’a.

There is a parallel here to a saying from the Bible, “Whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 16:25). Similar to the saying of the Qur’an that those who are slain are alive in Paradise, is a saying from Plato’s *The Republic*:

“And of those who are slain in the field, we shall say that all who fell with honor are of that golden race, who when they die, according to Hesiod, ‘Dwell here on earth, pure spirits, beneficent, Guardians to shield us mortal men from harm.’”(55) Throughout Indo-European traditions can be found this view that the slain warrior becomes immortal. Evola draws parallel between the Islamic view of the martyr (shahid) with the *mors triumphalis* of the Roman tradition.(56)

Distinguishing Features of Islamic Mysticism

Comparing Christian and Islamic mysticism, Evola notes that what lacks among Christian ascetics is going further than the vows of silence, “the practice of the most interiorised degree of this discipline, that does not only consist of putting an end to the spoken word, but also to thought (Ibn ‘Arabi’s notion of ‘not speaking with oneself’).”(57) He compares the practice of Sufi *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) with the Hindu mantra and the repetition of sacred names practiced in the Hesychasm of some of the Orthodox Christian and Eastern Catholic churches. (58)

Evola describes these doctrines as “recognizing in man the condition in which the Absolute becomes conscious of itself, and that professes the doctrine of Supreme Identity,” so that Islam constitutes “a clear and eloquent example of a system that, although including a strictly theistic

domain, recognizes a higher truth and path of realization, the emotional and devotional elements, love and all the rest losing here....every 'moral' signification, and every intrinsic value, acquiring only that of a technique among others.”(59)

Within Sufism, “the word qutb, ‘pole’, does not only designate the sovereign, but, more generally, he who dictates the law and is the head of tradition of a given historical period.”(60)

The Sufi masters such as Ibn al-Arabi, illustrate “the inversion of roles in relation to the state where, duality having been created, the divine image incarnating the superior I become to the mystic like a different being.”(61)

The objective of the Sufi is to be continuously in a state of change, of waging the struggle against the lower self or the ego, and to continuously strive towards elevating the soul towards higher levels seeking the Divine Presence: “It is interesting to note that in Islamic esoterism there is a specific term to indicate that change: shath, which literally means ‘exchange of parts’ and expresses the level at which the mystic absorbs the divine image, feels it as himself and feels himself, instead, as something else, and speaks as a function of that image. There are, in fact, in Islam, certain ‘sure signs’ by which to distinguish the objective shath from a mere illusionary feeling in a person.”(62)

Conclusion

The current author makes reference to his attachment to the faith of Islam, although he remains proud of his European descent. There is no contradiction in the two, but rather through recapturing the essence of Islam that is primordial and a cultural filter, in every sense of the word it is valuable as an internal aid for spiritual awareness that allows him to hold onto the primordial traditions of his ancestors at the same time.

We have focused in Tasawwuf as the latest expression of the timeless spiritual wisdom that was always transmitted through the ages to sincere seekers, usually in the midst of fierce opposition.

The way of Islam is the final expression of the previous messengers who were sent to Indo-European nations and tribes, just as the reality of Tasawwuf is further the way of those communities of gnostics and mystics who protected the spiritual wisdom.

Just as these communities were responsible for the best of European art, architecture, literature, chivalry, and music, so too will it be left to a core vanguard of devoted men and women – European in blood, Islamic in faith, Sufi in devotion – to continue planting the seeds of a new Indo-European renaissance. We will do so infused with the doctrines of the Qur'an and its accompanied spiritual wisdom, and through it recapture the essence of what was lost from our primordial traditions.

NOTES:

(1) Claudio Mutti, "Islam in the eyes of Julius Evola," February 11, 2007,

<www.claudiomutti.com/index.php?url=6&imag=1&id_news=130>.

(2) Julius Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World*, Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1995, p. 245.

(3) All verses are from the interpretation of the meaning written by Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley, *The Noble Qur'an: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English*, Norwich, UK: Bookwork, 1420/1999.

(4) Qur'an, Sura Al-Hujurat, 49:13.

(5) Qur'an, Sura Yunus, 10:47.

(6) Qur'an, Sura Al-Anbiya, 21:107.

(7) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 244.

(8) A popular tradition holds that Adam first built the Ka'aba but it was destroyed, until the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael later rebuilt the foundations. In this sense, not only is the Ka'aba primordial but also a reflection of the so-called "Abrahamic tradition" and thus its location as a place of worship predates its current status within Islam.

(9) Makka is identified in the Bible as being in "the wilderness of Paran" (Genesis 21), and as the place where Abraham built a "House of God" (Genesis 35:15, 28:18). The Prophet David speaks of "Bakka" (Psalm 84:6), a parallel noted in the Qur'an (Sura Al-Muddaththir, 74:1-3).

(10) Ian Dallas, *The New Wagnerian*, Freiburg Books, 1990, p. 171.

(11) *ibid.*, pp. 288-289.

(12) Pierre Ponsoye, *L'Islam et le Graal: Étude sur l'ésoterisme du Parzival de Wolfram von Eschenbach*, Paris: Donoel, 1958.

(13) Qur'an, Sura Al-A'raf, 7:172-173.

(14) Shaykh Riyadh ul Haq, *al-Tajrid al-Sarih*, Lesson 7.

(15) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 244.

(16) Umar Ibrahim Vadillo, *The Esoteric Deviation in Islam*, Cape Town: Madinah Press, 2003, p. 332.

(17) *Dépêche tunisienne*, 10th February 1913.

(18) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 244.

(19) Shaykh Nuh Keller, *Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law*, Beltsville, Maryland: Amana Publications, 1997, p. 863.

(20) As on so many issues, there are more commonalities than differences between the Islamophobes and Wahhabis. Each have a monolithic view of Islam that denies its true inner spiritual realities, by turning it into an ideology and presenting an interpretation of Islam that contradicts the classical scholarship upon which this faith has been sustained. The Qur'an is the perfect remedy to both these maladies.

(21) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 244.

(22) James Fadiman and Robert Frager, *Essential Sufism*, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997, pp. 12-13.

(23) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 244.

(24) Evola, *Gli uomini e le rovine*, Roma: Edizioni Settimo Sigillo, 1990, p. 41.

(25) "Interview with Claudio Mutti," *Junges Forum*, no. 3, January 2005, <<http://www.regin-verlag.de/index.php?id=3,12,0,0,1,0>>.

(26) Evola, *The Mystery of the Grail: Initiation and Magic in the Quest for the Spirit*, Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions/Bear and Company, 1997.

(27) *ibid.*, pp. 130-131.

(28) Ian Dallas, *The Interim is Mine*, Cape Town: Madinah Press, 2010, p. 54.

(29) Titus Burckhardt, *Moorish Culture in Spain*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1972, p. 93.

(30) Quoted in Roger Boarse, *The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love*, Manchester, UK:

Manchester University Press, 1977, p. 20.

(31) *The Mystery of the Grail*, p. 150.

(32) Evola, *Metafisica del sesso*, Roma: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1969, pp. 256-257.

(33) *ibid.*, p. 349.

(34) *ibid.*, p. 293fn1.

(35) *ibid.*, pp. 108-109, 288, 345.

(36) *ibid.*, p. 370.

(37) *ibid.*, p. 258.

(38) Shaykh Mawlay al-Arabi ad-Darqawi, *The Darqawi Way*, Norwich, UK: Diwan Press, 1979, p. 179.

(39) Shaykh Dr. Tahir-ul-Qadri, *The Ghadir Declaration*, Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Qur'an

Publications, 2002, pp. 5-10.

(40) Qur'an, Sura Al-Anfal, 8:17.

(41) Reza Shah-Kazemi, "Recollecting the Spirit of Jihad," in *Islam, Fundamentalism and the*

Betrayal of Tradition, ed. Joseph Lombard, Bloomington, Indiana: World Wisdom, 2004.

(42) *Hindu Scriptures*, trans. R.C. Zaehner, London: Dent, 1966, p. 256.

(43) *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'ddin Rumi*, trans. R.A. Nicholson, London: Luzac, 1926, book 1, p. 205.

(44) Quoted in M.R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, *Islam & World Peace: Explanations of a Sufi*, Philadelphia: The Fellowship Press, 1987, pp. 82-83.

(45) Cited in Abd al-Wahid Amidi, *Ghurar al-Hikam*, Qom, Iran: Ansariyan Publications, 2000, 2:951, no. 9.

(46) Ibn Hajar, *Takhrij Ahadith al-Kashshaf*, p. 114; and *Al-Ahdab, Zawa'id Tarikh Baghdad*,

9:309-311, no. 2077. Also, the more recent scholars of hadith such as Shaykh Ahmad al-Ghumari, *Tahsin al-Khabar al-Warid fil-Jihad al-Akbar*; and Shaykh Abd al-Fattah Abu Ghudda, margin notes on al-Lacknawi's *al-Ajwibat al-Fadila*, p. 156.

(47) Qur'an, Suras Al-A'raf 7:176, Al-Furqan 25:43, Al-Ankabut 29:6, 69, Al-Nazi'at 79:40-41, and Ash-Shams 91:7-10.

(48) Ibn Hibban, nos. 1624, 2519; Tirmidhi, Ahmad, al-Hakim, and Tabarani.

(49) Ibn Hajar Al-Haythami, *Majma' al-Zawa'id*.

(50) Shah-Kazemi, *op. cit.*

(51) Mutti, "Islam in the eyes of Julius Evola," *op. cit.*

(52) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 118.

(53) *ibid.*, pp. 118-119.

(54) Evola, *The Metaphysics of War*, Integral Tradition Publishing, 2007, p. 96.

(55) *Revolt Against the Modern World*, p. 137.

(56) *ibid.*, p. 120.

(57) Evola, *Introduzione alla Magia*, a cura del Gruppo di Ur, III, Roma: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1971, p. 281.

(58) *ibid.*, I, pp. 396-397.

(59) Evola, *Oriente e Occidente*, Milano: La Queste, 1984, p. 212.

(60) Evola, *Ricognizioni. Uomini e problemi*, Roma: Mediterranee, 1974, p. 50.

(61) *Introduzione alla Magia*, a cura del Gruppo di Ur, I, p. 71.

(62) *ibid.*