

BLACK SUNLIGHT



THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
SAVITRI DEVI

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TRADITION

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After the Deluge—Us!

In 1945, in the "bunker" (air raid shelter) under Berlin aflame, our Führer writes his Political Testament: his last answer to the ever-nearing thunder of the Russian guns, to Eisenhower's "Crusade to Europe," to the stubborn fury of a whole mad world: "May my faithful ones never forget that it is the task of the coming centuries to build up a National Socialist Europe, and may they always place collective interest before their own.... May they all, Germans and non-Germans—all the forces of National Socialist Europe—remain racially conscious, and, without weakness, resist the poison that is about to kill all nations: the spirit of international Jewry." He writes these words calmly, knowing that he is right; that the double wave of invaders—Bolshevists and hypocritical humanitarian Democrats—that will soon roll over and cover the ruins of the Third Reich, one day must recede, each half of it in the opposite direction; that there is no hell which lasts forever, and that Truth—i.e., Nature, and the doctrine that is built upon Nature's very laws—must win in the end.

And Dr. Goebbels, the untiring Fighter, the faithful among the faithful, who has helped Adolf Hitler to build New Germany, and who is about to follow the Führer, with wife and young family, speaks from that same "bunker" for the last time to the German people and to future generations—to you, National Socialists, of today, and to those of the coming millennia—his last speech. No speech of despair—nothing of the kind, my children!—but (just as the Führer's own Testament) the answer of National Socialism to the indifference, to the laziness, to the cowardice, to the moral wretchedness of the West, which has allowed the long disintegration process, directed by the Jews, to take place; the answer of National Socialism, after two hundred years, to the French King Louis XV, who lived only for himself and did not care

whether his people survived or not; the answer of the invincible to those who are vanquished beforehand and to the apparent victors of the day:

"After the Deluge, Us!"

My children, as I met, after the war, young German National Socialists among the ruins of all the German towns, it was clear to me that Dr. Goebbels was right, and that our Führer's Testament would one day literally be fulfilled. Later on, as I met, in the super-prosperity of the German Federal Republic (of Dr. Adenauer) young people dedicated to Adolf Hitler, who without having lived in the splendour of the Great Days, would gladly exchange every comfort of today, every material advantage, for the freedom of greeting one another at any street corner with our salute and the words: "Heil Hitler!" I touched with my hand that future in which our Führer firmly believed till the end, that future which Dr. Goebbels proclaimed in solemn words, a few hours before his death. And as exactly a year ago, I was among National Socialists of the whole world in a forest of South-West England, and, along with them, heard Lincoln Rockwell's speech under the stars, I was more than ever convinced of the truth of the prophetic words:

"After the deluge: Us!"

"For the first time in 6,000 years," said Commander Rockwell, at whose side stood Colin Jordan and John Tyndall, the leaders of the National Socialist Movement in England, "for the first time in 6,000 years, we racially conscious Aryans of the whole world are united, under the leadership of one Man, forever alive in our eyes—Adolf Hitler—and under the Swastika banner, in the struggle for the survival of our blood. For the first time in 6,000 years, the international money-power faces, in us, a growing international counter-power, which fanatically challenges it, which will tomorrow lead against it the resistance of the whole world.

National Socialism, the program of our only, of our everlasting, Führer Adolf Hitler, shall still be fulfilled in spite of the mad, fratricidal war of 1939-1945; the future shall be ours!"

That very Rockwell had once fought us, during the war, like so many others. He saw the truth and came to us some ten years ago. He is the symbol of a tremendous reaction, the distant consequences of which are yet unthinkable. In the background, as in the huge German gatherings of the Great Days, hung an enormous Swastika flag, lighted from the ground by torches. A row of young fighters holding torches, and the music of the Horst Wessel Song, had greeted the American Leader—founder and head of the National Socialist Movement in the USA—as he had walked into the camp. And there were Germans present: "old fighters" of the first generation, and sixteen year-old boys. It was the atmosphere—the enthusiasm, the faith, the fanaticism—of the Days of the First Struggle (before 1933): the "old" ones, who knew, said so.

I remembered the horror of the years after the war: the ruins of the Third Reich, the uprooting of millions from their German homes, the despair to the point of longing for death, and then—a few years later—the gradual sinking of the masses in an ever more soul-destroying material prosperity, barring every possibility of liberating revolution, this ugly, dull period of systematic brain-washing, also belongs to "the deluge." And then shone before me the prophetic words, out of the grave of the very best: the answer of the crumbling Third German Reich to its tragic fate, the cry of triumph of we who live for an everlasting Idea, before a material destruction which we know is only for the time being, however total it might seem:

"After the deluge: Us!"

On the next day, in that same English forest, the "World Union of National Socialists"—WUNS—was founded.

Notes

The preceding text, translated by Savitri Devi for publication in an American Nazi Party periodical, is an extract from the epilogue of her unpublished book Hart wie Kruppstahl (Hard as Krupp Steel), written in the early 1960s. The title "After the Deluge—Us" alludes to a remark attributed to Louis XV (Après Moi, le deluge, "After me, the deluge"), which has traditionally been interpreted as a prophecy of the French Revolution. Savitri was a delegate to the 1962 WUNS conference in the Cotswold Hills, where the NS Cotswold Declaration was drafted. For Dr. William Pierce's short biography of George Lincoln Rockwell, see A National Socialist Life

Akhnaton and the World of Today

With Tutankhamen began for the Western World an era of spiritual regression which is lasting still. Sincere and serious as it is, this opinion of ours may at first sight appear as a mere paradox. But it is not so. Whatever one may think of Akhnaton's Teaching, one has to concede at least three points concerning it. First, the Religion of the Disk was a universal religion, as opposed to the former local or national religions of the ancient world. The supreme Reality round which it was centred—call it the Soul of the Sun, the Energy within the Disk, or give it any other name—was not only Something worthy of the adoration of all men, but also Something actually worshipped, knowingly or unknowingly, by all creatures, including plants. And all creatures, brought forth and sustained by the One Source of life—the Sun—were one in Him. Never in the world west of India had the idea of universal Godhead been so emphatically stressed, and the brotherhood of all living beings more deeply felt. And never were those truths to be stressed again more boldly in the future.

Secondly, it was a rational and natural religion—not a dogmatic one. It was neither a creed nor a code of human laws. It did not pretend to reveal the Unknowable, or to regulate in details the behaviour of man, or to offer means to escape the visible world and its links. It simply invited us to draw our religious inspiration from the beauty of things as they are: to worship life, in feeling and in deed; or, to put it as an outstanding nineteenth-century thinker [Nietzsche] has done, to be "true to the earth." Based as it was, not upon any mythology, nor any metaphysics, but upon a broad intuition of scientific truth, its appeal would have increased with the progress of accurate knowledge—instead of decreasing, like that of many a better-known religion.

Finally—and this was perhaps its most original feature—it was, from the very start, a Teaching that exalted individual perfection (life in truth) as the supreme goal, and at the same time a State-religion. Not only the religion of a State, but a religion for the State—for any and every State—no less than for the individual. It was a Teaching in which (if we may judge by the example of its Founder) the same idea of "truth" that was to inspire personal behaviour through and through was also to determine the attitude of a monarch towards the friends and foes of his realm, to guide his decisions regarding peace and war; in one word, to dominate international relations. It implied, not the separation of private and public life, but their identity—their subjection to the same rational and aesthetic principles; their common source of inspiration; their common goal.

Such was the message of Akhnaton, the only great religious Teacher, west of India, who was at the same time a king; and perhaps the only undoubtedly historic originator of a religion on earth, who, being a king, did not renounce kingship but tried to tackle the problems of State—particularly the problem of war—in the light of religious truth.

* * *

The thirteen years of Akhnaton's personal rule were but a minute in history. But that minute marks a level of perfection hardly ever approached in subsequent years (save perhaps in India, during the latter part of the reign of Asoka, or under Harshavardhana, or again, after many centuries, in the latter part of the reign of Akbar).

From the far-gone days of Tutankhamen down to the time in which we live, the history of the Western world—that is to say, roughly, of the world west of India—presents an ever-broadening gap between the recognised religions and rational thought; a more and more complete divorce, also, between the same recognised religions and life, especially public life.

When, under the pressure of his masters, the priests of Amon, Tutankhaton, renamed Tutankhamen, signed the decree reinstalling the national gods of Egypt in their former glory, he opened an era of intellectual conflict and moral unrest which has not yet to-day come to an end. Before Akhnaton, the world—the Western world at least—had worshipped national gods, and had been satisfied. After him, it continued to worship national gods, but was no longer fully content with them.

For a minute, a new light had shone; great truths—the universality of the supreme Essence; the oneness of all life; the unity of religious and rational thought—had been proclaimed in words, in song and in deeds, by one of those men who appear once in history. The man had been cursed, and it was henceforth a crime even to utter his name. He was soon forgotten. But there was no way to suppress the fact that he had come. The old order of blissful ignorance was gone for ever. Against its will, the world dimly remembered the light that the priests had sought to put out; and age after age, inspired men of various lands set out in search of the lost treasure; some caught a glimpse of it, but none were able to regain it in its integrity. The Western world is still seeking it—in vain.

To make our thought clear to all, let us follow the evolution of the West from the overthrow of Akhnaton's work to the present day. By "West" we mean Europe, Europeanised America (and Australia), and the countries that stand at the background of European civilisation—that is to say, Greece and a great part of the Middle East.

With the earliest "physiologoi" of Ionia—eight hundred years after Akhnaton—rational thought made its second appearance in the West. And this time it did not wither away after the death of one man, but found its mouthpieces in many. Generations of thinkers whose ambition was intellectual knowledge—the logical deduction of ideas and the rational explanation of facts—succeeded one another. Among them were such men as Pythagoras and Plato, who united the light of mystic insight to the clear knowledge of

mathematics, and who transcended the narrow religious conceptions of their times.

But the Greek world could never transcend them; and Socrates died "for not believing in the gods in whom the city believed"—the national gods—though there had been no more faithful citizen than he. Those gods, adorned as they were with all the graces that Hellenic imagination could give them, were jealous and revengeful in their way. They would have been out of date (and harmless) had men accepted, a thousand years before, the worship of the One Essence of all things, with all it implied. But they had not; and the conflict between the better individuals and the religion of the State had begun. Rational thought was left to thrive; but not so the broad religious outlook that was linked with it. Theoretically—intellectually—any universal God (First Principle, supreme Idea of Goodness, or whatever it be) was acceptable. But the conception of Something to be loved more than the State and worshipped before the national gods was alien to Greece, to Rome, and in general to all the city-minded people of the Mediterranean. Seen from our modern angle of vision, there was a strange disparity between the high intellectual standard of the Hellenes of classical times—those creators of scientific reasoning—and their all-too-human local gods, in no way different from those of the other nations of the Near East.

There appears, also, to have been in their outlook a certain lack of tenderness. One can find, it is true, in the Greek tragedies, magnificent passages exalting such feeling as filial piety or fraternal love. But the other love—that between man and woman—they seem to have conceived as little more more than a mainly physical affair, a "sickness," as Phaedra says in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. And their relation to living nature, outside man, seems to have been confined to an aesthetic interest. Bulls being led to the sacrifice and horses carrying their youthful cavaliers in the Panathenaic procession are admirably sculptured on the frieze of the Parthenon. But apart from some really touching verses in Homer (such as those which refer to Ulysses' faithful old dog, who recognises him after twenty years' absence) there is hardly an instance, in classical Greek literature, in

which a friendly feeling for animals is expressed—not to speak of attributing to them yearnings akin to ours.

Christianity is the next great wave in the history of Western consciousness. And one can hardly conceive a sharper contrast than that which exists between the clear Hellenic genius and the spirit of the creed destined to overrun Hellas, Europe, and finally America and Australia. It was originally—as preached by Paul of Tarsus, the Apostle of the Gentiles—an irrational and unaesthetic creed, fed on miracles, bent on asceticism, strongly stressing the power of evil, ashamed of the body and afraid of life. But its God was a universal God and a God of love. Not as universal, it is true, as might have been expected from a supreme Being proposed to the adoration of a rationally-trained people; nor as impartially loving as a follower of the long-forgotten Religion of the Disk would have imagined his God to be. It was a God who, in fact, never shook off entirely some of the crude attributes which he possessed when worshipped by the Jews as their tribal deity; a God who, of all living creatures, gave man alone an immortal soul, infinitely precious in his eyes, for he loved man in the same childishly partial way as old Jehovah loved the Jewish nation; a democratic God who hated the well-to-do, the high-born, and also those who put their confidence in human intellect instead of submitting to the authority of his Gospel; who hid his truth "from the wise and the learned, but revealed it to the children."

Still, with all its shortcomings, the mere fact of Christianity's being a creed to be preached "to all nations," in the name of a God who was the Father of all men, was an immense, advantage over the older popular religions. The element of love and mercy that the new worship undoubtedly contained—however poor it might be, compared, for instance, to that truly universal love preached in India by Buddhism and Jainism—was sufficient to bring it, in one way at least, nearer to the lost religious ideal of the West even than the different philosophies of the Hellenes (if we except from them Pythagorism and Neo-Pythagorism).

And it had over them all—and over the antique Teaching of Akhnaton himself—the practical advantage of appealing both to the intellectually uncritical, to the emotionally unbalanced, and to the socially oppressed or neglected—barbarians, to women, to slaves—that is to say, to the majority of mankind. That advantage, combined with the genuine appeal of a gospel of love and with the imperial patronage of Constantine, determined its final triumph. From the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean, it slowly but spread, as one knows, to the whole of Europe and to all the lands that European civilisation has conquered.

But the Western world could not definitely forget centuries of rational thought. Nor could it renounce for ever that avowed ideal of visible beauty, of strength, of cleanliness, of healthy earthly life—that had been connected with the various religions of the ancients. As far as it was possible—and many more things are possible than one can imagine—it soon re-installed Greek metaphysics and polytheism under a new form in the very midst of Christianity. And later on, the Greek love of song and pleasure, and the deification of the human body, in the plastic arts as well as in life, prevailed in the spiritual capital of Christendom and throughout most Christian countries. The Western man gradually came to realise what an amount of inconsistency that mixture of Hellenic and Hebrew thought (and remnants of popular myths, much older than Greece and Moses) which composed his traditional religion. He then grew increasingly sceptical, and Christianity remained for him little more than a poetic but obsolete mythology, in some ways less attractive than that of Greece and Rome. The tardy reaction of the bold critical spirit of classical Hellas against judeo-scholastic authority had come; and modern Free Thought—the triumph of Euclid over Moses—had made its way.

* * *

Eight hundred years before the Renaissance, and twelve hundred years before Darwin, a very different, but equally important reaction had taken place in the eastern and most ancient portion of

the Western world. And that had given birth to Islam, which one could roughly describe, we believe, without any serious misinterpretation, as Christianity stripped of its acquired Pagan elements—especially of its Greek elements—and brought back to the rigorous purity of Semitic monotheism.

The fact that Islam appeared and thrived long before the rebirth of critical thought (and of classical taste) in Europe, and that its whole political history seems to run quite apart from that of most European countries, must not deceive us. If we consider the Western world as a whole (Europe and its background), and not only the small portion of it which one generally has in mind when speaking of "the West," then we have to include in it the countries of the Bible—Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Iraq—no less than Greece; for they are the geographical and cultural background of Christianity, the religion of Europe for centuries. And if this be so, we have, in this outsketch of the history of culture, to take account of Islam as one of the most important religious upheavals of the West, however paradoxical this coupling of words may seem.

Like Free Thought—its latter European parallel—Islam (at least, as we understand it; we may be mistaken) was a broad movement brought about by the incapacity of Christianity to fully satisfy the exigencies of the human mind. But the weaknesses of the Christian faith that the two reactions were destined to make up for were not the same ones. Free Thought was essentially an intellectual reaction against the dogmatism of the Christian Church and the puerility of the stories (of whatever origin) that go to make up the Christian mythology. Its growth was naturally slow, for man takes time to question the value of his cherished beliefs on intellectual grounds. Only in the nineteenth century did it begin to affect the bulk of the people, and still to-day its influence remains confined to those countries in which elementary scientific education is granted to many individuals.

Islam, on the contrary, was a definitely religious movement—a wild outcry against every form of polytheism under whatever disguise; a

reassertion of the continuity of revealed monotheism through Abraham, Moses, and Jesus of Nazareth; a reaffirmation of the brotherhood of all men, that basic truth taught already by Christ to the Jews, but less and less remembered by the Christians. It appeared more rapidly and more suddenly, for the evils against which it rose were more shocking to the simple sincere man in search of the One God, and therefore easier to detect than logical fallacies or historical inaccuracies—even than physical impossibilities. It was easier—not perhaps, recently, for us, but then, for a man of strong beliefs, fed on Jewish tradition—to detect idolatry under every form of image-worship than to feel, for instance, how ridiculous is such a tale as that of Joshua causing the Sun to stand still.

But the two reactions—the early medieval and the modern, the religious and the intellectual, the one of Semitic origin and the other started by thinkers mostly of Aryan blood and speech—failed to give the world west of India the feeling that a goal had been reached. They failed even to give it, for more than a century or two, the impression that it was on its way to reach a state of intellectual and emotional equilibrium preferable to that attained in a relatively recent past.

True, for many generations, the Islamic portion of what we have broadly called "the West" seems to have enjoyed, through all the vicissitudes of its political history, the mental peace that a few definite, simple, overwhelming religious convictions bring to people in whose life religion holds the first place. True, the problem of religion and State—that the Free-thinkers of Europe never had the opportunity (or the power) to tackle in a practical manner—was for a short time solved, to some extent, under the early Khalifs. But rationalism, strengthened by the fact of modern science, even when it has not altogether shaken the basis of their faith, seems to be influencing more and more many an educated Muslim of the present day in a sense similar to that in which it influenced so many Christians, from the sixteenth century onwards. The result of that influence upon the most liberal of the contemporary Turks,

Persians, Egyptians, and even some of the Muslims of India, is obvious. On the other hand, the solution of the problem of religion and State as put forward by the Khalifs, in the early days of Islam, is too closely linked with a particular religious faith to be extended, at the present day, to all countries. It rests upon a somewhat strictly theocratic conception of the State, and upon a rigid line of demarcation between all men who have accepted the revelation of the Prophet—he faithful—and the others. And, rightly or wrongly, the modern world seems evolving in the sense of the separation of the State from religious questions of purely dogmatic interest.

Now, if we turn to the latter reaction against the shortcomings of Christianity—namely, Free Thought—we find that it has left the people who have matured under its influence in a state of moral unrest far greater than that of those Mussulmans whom their inherited medieval outlook on life no longer satisfies.

Thanks to the undeniable influence of Free Thought, the conclusions of intellectual investigation are not to-day subordinate to Christian theology as they once were. When a scientific hypothesis concerning the texture of atoms or the origin of man is put forward, it matters little whether it tallies or not with the narrative of the Genesis. Even good Christians are ready to accept it, provided it explains facts. Moral questions, too, have been nearly completely freed from the overshadowing idea of a supernatural imperative. Right behaviour is valued because it is thought to be right—no longer because it is the behaviour ordained by God.

But that is about all the difference between the modern "rationalist" outlook and the Christian outlook before the Renaissance. Theoretically, it may seem considerable. In life, it is hardly felt. Important as it is, the fact that, in the field of pure knowledge, thought is now independent from clerical or scriptural authority, plays little part in the formation of the spirit of our times. Thoughts, opinions, intellectual conclusions are, indeed, constructive only to the extent they determine our reactions in the field of behaviour. And there we fail to see how the old authorities have ceased to hold

their sway. Except for sexual morality—in regard to which the modern man has become more and more lenient because it suits his fancy, but has not yet, however, outdone the magnificent toleration of many a cardinal of the sixteenth century—the behaviour styled as "right" is precisely that which is in accordance with Christian standards; that which approaches the charitable, democratic, and somewhat narrow ideal of the Christian Gospel; that which obeys the Commandment: "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

The builders of the Parthenon had not gone even as far as that, it is true. But modern rationalism has never gone further than that. It may have, to some extent, taught the present day Westerner to think in terms of Cosmic Realities. But has not yet taught him to feel in terms of cosmic values. It has denounced Christian metaphysics as obsolete; but it still clings to the no less obsolete man-centred conception of right and wrong. It no longer maintains that man alone has an immortal soul, and it has forsaken the naive idea that world and all it contains was purposely created for man. But it seems to see no harm in man's exploiting, destroying, even torturing for his own ends the beautiful innocent creatures, animals and plants, nourished by the same sunshine as himself in the womb of the same mother earth. For all practical purposes, it seems to consider them no more worthy of attention than if they were, indeed, created for him—by that very God who caused the fig-tree in the Gospel to wither in order to teach a lesson to Christ's disciples, and who allowed the evil spirits to enter the Gadarene swine in order to relieve a human being from their grip.

There are, of course, free-thinkers who have personally gone beyond the limits of Christian love and embraced all life in their sympathy. Many a broad-hearted Mohammedan saint, also (such as Abu-Hurairah, the "Father-of-cats"), has shared the same conception of truly universal brotherhood. But these individual cases cannot blind us to the fact that neither of the two great movements that sprang up, so as to say, to supersede Christianity, has actually emphasised that fundamental truth of the unity of all life (with its practical implications) which the Christian Scriptures had omitted

to express. There are, no doubt, remarkable Christians—for instance, Saint Francis of Assisi—who have grasped that truth and lived up to it. Still, in the omission of the Gospel to put the slightest stress upon it lies, in our eyes at least, the main weakness of Christianity compared with the great living religions of the East—Vedantism, Buddhism, Jainism—and also, nearer its birthplace, with the lost Religion of the Disk. The only two large-scale attempts ever made west of India to restore to men the consciousness of that all-important truth were Pythagorism (and, later on, Neo-Pythagorism) in Antiquity, and nowadays Theosophy—both movements that owe much to direct or indirect Indian influence. The interest shown for the latter by many of our educated contemporaries points out how much ordinary Free Thought—a scientific conception of the world, plus a merely Christian-like ideal of love and charity—is insufficient to meet the moral needs of the most sensitive among us.

There is more to say. Modern Free Thought has completely dissociated, in the minds of most educated people, the idea of positive knowledge—of science—from that of worship. Not that a man of science cannot be, at the same time, a man of faith—he often is—but he considers the two domains as separate from each other. Their objects, he thinks, cannot be interchanged any more than their aims. One does not know God as one knows the data of sensuous experience or the logical conclusions of an induction; and however much one may admire the supremely beautiful picture of visible reality that modern science gives us, one cannot worship the objects of scientific investigation—the forms of energy, the ninety-two elements, or such.

And the tragedy is that, once a rational picture of the world has imposed itself upon our mind, the usual objects of faith appear more and more as poetic fictions, as hidden allegories, or as deified moral entities. We do not want to do away with them altogether; yet we cannot help regretting the absence, in them, of that character of intellectual certitude that makes us cling so strongly to science. We feel more and more that moral certitude is not enough to justify our

wholehearted adoration of any supreme Principle; in other words, that religion without a solid scientific background is insufficient.

On the other hand, there are moments when we regret the lost capacity of enjoying the blessings of faith with the simplicity of a child—without the slightest mental reservation, without strain, without thought. We wonder, at times, if the men who built the Gothic cathedrals were not, after all, happier and better men than our contemporaries; if the tremendous inspiration they drew from childish legends was not worth all our barren "rational" beliefs. We would like to experience, in the exaltation of the "realities" which we value, the same religious fervour which they used to feel in the worship of a God who was perhaps an illusion. But that seems impossible. Men have tried it and failed. The cult of the Goddess Reason put forward by the dreamers of the French Revolution, and the cult of Humanity, which Auguste Comte wished to popularise, could never make the Western man forget the long-loved sweetness of his Christian festivals, interwoven with all the associations of childhood. How could one even think of replacing the tradition of Christmas and Easter by such dry stuff as that? Science, without the advantages of religion, is no more able to satisfy us than religion without a basis of scientific certitude. Prominent as some of them may be, the men who nowadays remain content with Free Thought are already out of date. The twentieth century is growing more and more aware of its craving for some all-embracing truth, intellectual and spiritual, in the light of which the revelations of experience and faith, the dictates of reason and of intuition—of science and religion—would find their place as partial aspects of a harmoniously organic whole. The evolution that one can follow in the outlook of such a man as Aldous Huxley is most remarkable as a sign of the times.

* * *

Along with the divorce of religion from science, we must note the divorce of religion from private and public life. As Aldous Huxley timely points out in one of his recent books [Ends and Means], the

saints proposed to our veneration as paragons of godliness are rarely intellectual geniuses; and the intellectual geniuses—scientists, philosophers, statesmen—and the artists, poets, writers who have won an immortal name are hardly ever equally remarkable as embodiments of the virtues which religion teaches us to value. So much so that we have ceased to expect extraordinary intelligence in a saint, or extraordinary goodness in a genius according to the world, and least of all in a political genius. For nowhere is the separation of religion from life more prominent (and more shocking) than in the domain of international relations.

The much-quoted injunction of Christ to "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's" illustrates—as it is generally interpreted—a division of duties which has survived the belief in dogmatic Christianity. Whether he be a Christian or a Free Thinker—or a Mussulman, in one of the modern Islamic States that have undergone the influence of European ideas—the Western man, as a man, is guided, in life, by certain principles different from, and sometimes in contradiction with those that lie at the basis of his outlook as a citizen. Caesar and God are more often than not in conflict with each other. And when this happens—when there is no way of serving both—then the Western man generally serves Caesar first, and offers God, in compensation, some scraps of private piety. But more and more numerous are growing those who denounce this duality of ideals as a sinister product of deceitful casuistry.

In the ancient world, as long as religion was a national concern, and connected with practices rather than with beliefs, its actual separation from life was impossible. In one way, that may seem better than what we see now. And the bold ideologists who, in recent years, in Europe, have endeavoured to wipe out altogether the spirit if not the name of Christianity and to raise the Nation—based on the precise physiological idea of race—as the object of man's ultimate devotion, those ideologists, we say, may seem wiser and more honest than their humanitarian antagonists. If religion indeed, does not, as it is, respond any longer to the needs of life, it is

better to change it. It is far better to openly brush aside two thousand years of errors (if errors they be) and to come back to the national gods of old, and to be true to them to the bitter end, than to keep on rendering divine honours to the Man who said: "Love thy neighbour," and to wage a war of extermination upon men of rival nations whom one has not even the excuse of considering as "infidels" or "heretics."

There is no hypocrisy in the votaries of the religion of Race, as in those of the religion of man. The only weakness one could point out in their creed—if the latter be artificially separated from the Religion of Life, of which it is, fundamentally, and remains, in the minds of its best exponents, the true expression—is that it has been transcended, and that therefore it is difficult to go back to it, even if one wishes to. The religion of man itself has been transcended long before its birth. The truth is that both are too narrow, too passionately one-sided, too ignorant of great realities that surpass their scope, to satisfy any longer men who think rationally and who feel the beauty and the seriousness of life, unless they be integrated into the Religion of Life.

To frankly acknowledge a moral ideal still narrower than that of Christianity or humanitarian Free Thought will not ultimately serve the purpose of filling the gap between life and religion. The higher aspirations of the spirit cannot entirely be suppressed. The gap will soon reappear—this time between the religion of race, nation or class, and the life of the better individuals; a sad result. That gap will always exist, under some form or another, as long as a religion of integral truth, transcending man, and of truly universal love is not acknowledged, in theory and in practice, by individuals and groups of individuals.

Moreover, the mystic of race (or of nation, or of any entity with a narrower denotation than that of "man") is, nay, under its narrowest and least enlightened aspect, unassailable, unless and until the ideology of man, inherited by Free Thought from Christianity, is once and for ever pushed into the background in favour of an

ideology of life. For if, indeed, one is to believe that living Nature, with all its loveliness, is made for man to use for his profit, then why should not one admit, with equal consistency, that the bulk of mankind is made for the few superior races, classes or even individuals to exploit at will?

Ultimately, one has to go to the limit, and acknowledge cosmic values as the essence of religion, if religion is to have any universal meaning at all. And if it is to be something more than an individual ideal; if it is no longer to remain separated from the life of States; if truth, in one word, is ever to govern international relations as well as personal dealings, then one has to strive to put power into the hands of an intellectual and moral elite—to come back to Plato's idea of wise men managing public affairs, makers of laws and rulers of men, uncontested guides of reverentially obedient nations.

Notes

The preceding text is excerpted from the concluding chapter of Devi's A Son of God (London, 1946). Subsequent editions have been retitled Son of the Sun.

Akhnaton's Eternal Message

*Thy rays are on Thy bright Image,
the Ruler of Truth, who proceeded
from Eternity Thou givest Him Thy
duration and Thy years... .
As long as Heaven is, He shall be.*

—From an inscription in a nobleman's tomb at Tell-el-Amarna

ONE of the most interesting and probably the oldest effort ever attempted by one man alone to revivify the spirit of true religion in a society stiffened by formalism—an effort much discussed by a few specialised scholars during the past thirty years, but generally unknown to the public at large—is that undertaken in Egypt by King Akhnaton, during the first half of the XIVth century B. C.

* * *

Sketch of the Movement

When, in 1375 B. C., Akhnaton ascended the throne of the Pharaohs at the death of his father, Amenhotep III, the most brilliant of all the kings of Egypt, the Egyptian empire was at the topmost of its glory. It extended from the Fourth Cataract of the Nile, southwards, up to the Upper Euphrates and the eastern boundaries of Asia Minor, northwards, and Nut-Amon, (or Thebes) its capital, with its glittering palaces, its huge obelisks inscribed with records of victories, its crowds of captives from all the surrounding nations, and, above all, with the magnificent temples of its local god, Amon,

who had become the main god of all Egypt, was one of the most gorgeous cities that the world had ever seen.

But a reaction had already begun against the overwhelming power of the priesthood of Amon, in the name of a very ancient solar god, Aton (the Disk), originally worshipped at On (or Heliopolis), the oldest center of solar cult in Egypt. Queen Tiye, Amenhotep III's chief wife, and Akhnaton's mother, seems to have been devoted to that god. And the whole of Akhnaton's increasing effort throughout his reign—the dedication of a temple to Aton at Thebes, the use of a new religious symbol (the Disk of the Sun, with rays ending in hands) in the place of all the old ones, the change of his own name, Amenhotep, "Amon's delight," to Akhnaton, "Aton's delight," the transfer of the Court to a newly founded capital, Akhetaton (the City of the Horizon of Aton, the famous Tell-el-Amarna of the modern archeologists), the erasure of the name of Amon and, later on, of the plural word "gods" from every inscription—the whole of that effort, we repeat, appears as an attempt to replace Amon, and finally all the other gods of Egypt and of the empire, by the one solar god Aton, raised to the status of a universal God.

Outwardly at least, the attempt proved a failure. A few years after Akhnaton's death in 1358 B.C., everything seemed as before, except that Egypt's Syrian dominion, sacrificed to the king's conscientious objection to war, had become a thing of the past, and that a new sense of the relation of man to God is discernible in the subsequent Egyptian religious literature. But for this, the movement, apparently too far in advance of its time, as we will see, left no trace. Akhnaton's name, anathematised, was erased from the inscriptions throughout the land and even from the ribbons of gold foil encircling his mummy,¹ so that he might be annihilated in the world of the dead as well as in that of the living. He was, for a time, referred to merely as "that heretic," "that criminal," etc., and then forgotten.

* * *

The Religious Conception of Aton

Now, what was the Aton faith—or perhaps more exactly the Aton philosophy—as it appears through the inscriptions (especially the two Hymns Composed by Akhnaton and copied, with a few variations, in the tombs of several of his nobles); through the relics of that “art of Tell-el-Arnarna” which flourished under his inspiration, and through the finest of all testimonies to its value: Akhnaton’s life itself?

Aton, as we have said, is one the most ancient solar aspects of Godhead in Egypt, raised to the status of a universal God. Had he been nothing but that, still his idea would remain remarkable as a bold logical generalisation, much in progress on the conception of the purely local gods which had prevailed up to that date. But he was not nothing but that. From the Hymns, as well as from the inscriptions which refer to him, one or two important conclusions can be drawn:

(1) Whatever may have been the original god of Heliopolis and the etymology of the word “Aton,” the universal God worshipped by Akhnaton was obviously not the material sun, nor any god with a mythology at the back of him, like the gods of Egypt. His full name, which appears already on a stele, jointly with the name of Amon, before Akhnaton’s accession, suggests a compound of several aspects of the Sun with a special stress upon solar “energy”: “Ra-Horakhti-of-the-Two-Horizons, rejoicing in his Horizon, in his name ‘Shu’ (heat, or energy)-which-is-in-the-Aton” (Disk).

That something more subtle and more essential than the visible sun, say, the Soul of the Sun, was worshipped under the name of Aton, is made clear by the very fact of Akhnaton’s life-long struggle against the supremacy of Amon, a god who was also identified with the Sun. It would have been meaningless to consider the whole universe as the realm of the originally local god of Heliopolis, and to try to suppress the cult of Amon for his sake, at the cost of many

troubles, instead of simply proclaiming the universality of the more popular Amon, had Amon and Aton embodied more or less the same thing.

The fact that, except the symbolic Sun-Disk with rays ending in human hands holding the “ankh” (sign of life), no image of Aton whatsoever was permitted, stands also in favour of the idea that Aton was an invisible, intangible God; while in Akhnaton’s Hymns—the most conclusive instance—a remarkable insistence is displayed upon the world-wide beneficent activity and the omnipresence of the Sunrays, pointing to Radiant Energy, the principle of all life, the very essence of all being, as the actual object of worship. “No one seems to have realised until the present century,” writes Sir Flinders Petrie, “the truth that was the basis of Akhnaton’s worship: that the rays of the sun are the means of the sun’s action, the source of all life and power in the universe. This abstraction of regarding the radiant energy as all-important was quite disregarded until the recent views of conservation of force, of heat as a mode of motion, and of the identity of heat, light and electricity have made us familiar with the conception that was the characteristic feature of Akhnaton’s new cult”²

(2) As the Soul of the Sun is the Soul of the world, the energetic principle of life itself, so the cult of Aton is the cult of Life. And in it, Life is inseparable from love and beauty.

Aton is called, in the Hymns, the “beginning of life,” the One who “maketh all hearts to live,” the “creator of the germ in woman, maker of the seed in man, giving life to the son in the body of his mother,” the “Lord of Life,” the God who, while alone and self-existing, has within Him “millions of vitalities,” who “vivifieth hearts with His beauties, which are life.” He is the God, also, of whom Akhnaton says: “Thou fillest every land with thy beauty, Thou bindest them by Thy love,” “breath of life is to them to see Thy beams,” “creatures live through Thee, while their eyes are upon Thy beauty.”... And nothing is more striking than the picture of the world palpitating with life and joy under the daily touch of the Life-

giver, the living Sun: men of every land, far and near, holding up their hands, birds lifting their wings, "in adoration of His 'Ka' (soul, essence) beasts skipping with joy in the fields, fish leaping up before Him from the depth of the waters as He rises, and the tender lilies opening themselves to His morning kiss." "Buds burst into flower, and the plants which grow in the waste lands send up shoots at Thy rising; they drink themselves drunk of Thy radiance before Thy face." This vision of the world is the inspired vision of an artist, which certainly, more than anything else, Akhnaton was.

We have already mentioned the scientific accuracy of the insight which led Akhnaton to make the mysterious Power within the beautiful Sun-beams, the "effulgence of several colours" which comes from the Disk, the object of his cult, a thing which Sir Flinders Petrie, Breasted and others have marvelled at. But as most if not all ideas of genius, this one appears as a direct intuition. And what the Hymns tell us of Akhnaton's extreme sensitiveness to beauty makes us think of the fundamental connection between scientific enlightenment and artistic inspiration—a point put forward nowadays by eminent creative scientists.³

(3) It seems hardly necessary to point out, after what has been said, that philosophically, the "One and only God, Aton" is not a transcendent God, similar to the "only" God of later religions known as monotheistic, but an immanent one, in consistence with a religious attitude different from theirs. He is a God from within the Universe, not from without; a God who created all existing things out of "the millions of vitalities which are in Him," not out of nothingness.

(4) It is difficult to say if, and to what extent, the number of foreign and specially Indo-Aryan (Mitannian) women at the Court of his father may have influenced Akhnaton in his childhood and contributed unconsciously to his conception of a universal God manifest in a visible symbol which reminds us of one of the Sanskrit names of the Sun: "angshumalli." Without systematically denying the possibility of such early influences, it seems to us that one

should not overestimate them. Parallels are easy, and any two solar symbols, if not too far-fetched, are bound to have something in common. The point is that, whatever may have been the conception of Godhead of those whom he respected, nay even of his mother, Queen Ti, herself a worshipper of Aton, the idea of Aton as the Principle of Radiant Energy, source of all life, seems to have struck Akhnaton's intuition as a direct knowledge, revealed to him from within, by Aton Himself; as an inexpressible truth which he alone understood because he felt it. In one of the Hymns he says to Aton: "Thou art in my heart, and there is no other that knoweth Thee, save Thy Son, Akhnaton; Thou hast made him wise to understand Thy plans and Thy power..." Elsewhere, he calls himself: "Thy Son, Nefer-kheperu-Ra Ua-en-Ra (beautiful Essence of the Sun, only One of the Sun), who came forth from Thy limbs," and "Son of the living Aton, like unto Him without ceasing..." And these words, while spoken by one who cared as little for conventions as Akhnaton did, appear to express the inmost certitude of a self-realised soul who can say of God: "I am He," rather than the ordinary utterance of a king of Egypt about his solar descent.

(5) The struggle to establish the cult of Aton in the place of that of Amon was not the struggle of a "jealous" deity against other deities, but that of real religion against priesthood.

Akhnaton has not only been harshly treated by his actual opponents during his lifetime and immediately after his death, but also charged with "fanaticism," "intolerance," etc., and criticised by some men of the XXth century A.D. with as much bitter hatred as if these gentlemen looked upon him as their personal foe. Sir Wallis Budge goes to the extent of hinting that he must have been capable of any of the crimes of later religious persecutors, on the only—and somewhat astonishing—ground that he was "an Oriental"!⁴ In reality the erasure of the name of Amon from the inscriptions throughout Egypt, the prohibition of Amon's public cult and, later on, the suppression of the plural word "gods," wherever found, did not imply any persecution of the worshippers either of Amon or of the other gods. Budge admits himself that there are no records to

back his assumption. We add that, had there been the slightest instance of tyranny on Akhnaton's part, the restorers of the Amon cult would have been too glad to tell us so in their records. Moreover, in spite of the utter revolutionary character of the steps taken against the cult of Amon—the supreme god of Egypt at that time—there is no record of any rising to oppose their execution, throughout Akhnaton's reign.

What appears from all that one knows of the king's character, and from the very conception of his universal God—not "a" god, but the essence of all gods, of any cult—is that it was the dead formalism of the Amon worship and the increasing arrogance of its enormously wealthy priesthood that Akhnaton intended to strike at. What he wanted was not to force onto his people "a" new religion of his own liking in the place of the old one, but to infuse into their hearts the genuine spirit of religion; to awaken them, from the routine of formulas, of symbols, of endless ceremonies, of which the original inspiration had long ago disappeared and the hidden meaning been forgotten, to the feeling of the Supreme Reality, through the rational worship of the living Sun.

To infuse the truth of life into the cult of Amon seemed—and probably was—impossible. The worship of the Theban god had become, says A. Weigall, "as intellectually low and primitive as its status was high and pompous." Only a new God—or a very old one, from the days the world was young and more intuitive to godly things—could accomplish the miracle of regiving inspiration to priest-ridden Egypt, and nothing but a cult both scientific and simple could ever aspire to become the cult of the world. And that was the intention of Akhnaton's life-long effort: to give—or to regive—the world, embarrassed with a host of conflicting gods and goddesses, with mythologies, rituals, elaborated mysteries, entangled metaphysics, the pure scientific essence of real religion, without any metaphysics, any mysteries, any mythology; the worship of the eternal Principle, Cause and Ordainer of life—Radiant Energy—through the visible Sun, its universal manifestation.

The Ethics of the Aton Teaching, Akhnaton's Example

Some modern writers (with the striking exception of Sir Flinders Petrie), insist upon the fact that there is no trace of ethics in the religion preached by Akhnaton. But besides that there is probably much information about the Aton worship still lying undiscovered among the ruins of the City of the Horizon, so that any sweeping judgment would be premature (as A. Weigall and Breasted admit), it seems that the identification of Godhead with love and life, not to speak of Akhnaton's definite stress upon "truth," stand sufficiently to prove the ethical value of his teaching.

We find in the tomb of Ay, one of his nobles, the inscribed words: "He" (the king) "put truth into me, and my abomination is to lie." Similar assertions, on the part of other nobles, are common. No less eloquent is the title constantly associated with the name of Akhnaton in every record: "Ankh-em-Maat,"—"Living in Truth." But more eloquent than anything else is Akhnaton's own life, the best illustration of what "truth," "love," "religion" meant to him.

The main feature of Akhnaton's character is uncompromising truthfulness, perfect sincerity, allied to the rare courage to stick to what he considered right, even at the cost of the highest of interests. It has been said that, to his eyes, "what is, was right," and nothing could be better said, provided we realise the full meaning of the sentence. "What is," here, means what is real, in the religious sense what does not depend upon men's whims or men's interests what is in consistence with the eternal order of the Universe, with the laws of life which are the laws of God. And the law of God, according to Akhnaton's teaching, is love.

From what we know of it through the beautiful relics of the Tell-el-Amarna art, and through the inscriptions, Akhnaton's private life, even judged from the standpoint of the purest morality, was

spotless. It was not the life of an ascetic, conscious of the power of sin in the midst of his renunciation of it, but that of a man who, by nature, seems to have had no tendency to either excess or perversion, and, at the same time, no prejudice against the innocent pleasures of life. The artists of his Court—whom he himself taught to discard the conventionally “noble” attitudes and represent their models as they saw them—have pictured him in scenes of daily life: eating, enjoying a cup of wine, listening to music, resting, or smelling a bunch of flowers held by Nefertiti, his queen, before his nose. Nefertiti is practically always represented by his side (even on state occasions), and sometimes in attitudes of touching familiarity. Often their children—six little princesses—are present in the picture. There is a statuette of Akhnaton fondling one of them in his arms. In the inscriptions, the queen’s name is generally mentioned, and a common form of the royal oath is: “As my heart is happy in the Queen and her children.” Moreover, there is no mention of “secondary wives” in Akhnaton’s life,⁵ and though the absence of a male heir must have caused him some anxiety (for he knew that his opponents were powerful), it seems, as A. Weigall believes, that he could never bring himself to follow the time-honoured custom of polygamy, however natural it was to the eyes of all the ancient world, and put his interest before his feelings.⁶ Any action, great or small, which did not correspond to a genuine feeling, was to him a living lie, and the picture of his family life, in the beautiful and peaceful surroundings which he had created at Akhetaton, is only one illustration of his fundamental moral features: his truthfulness, his sensitiveness to beauty, both visible and invisible, and capacity to seize it in the simplest things; his natural tenderness.

No less conclusive would be to recall Akhnaton’s attitude towards men in general. Several of his courtiers mention in their tomb inscriptions the kindness with which he used to treat them and the generous presents they used to receive from him. We know now how very few were the actually faithful ones at Akhetaton, and how, as soon as the king passed away, most of those whom he had taught, and loved and rewarded, made haste to join the reaction against his whole life’s work, while not one of them had the

courage to walk in his footsteps, against the tide. But, no doubt, as long as he lived, they did not spare trouble to show themselves his disciples, and Akhnaton, in the genuineness of his heart, did not for a long time—if he did at all, in the end, suspect any of them of deceiving him. He gave them all, as he gave all those whom he came in touch with, the very best of himself.

Akhnaton's loving confidence in human nature can be seen even in his indignant letter to Aziru, his treacherous Syrian vassal, after it had been confirmed that Aziru had handed over Ribaddi, the loyal prince of Byblos, to his enemies, the Amorite princes. "Dost thou not write to the king, thy lord: 'I am thy servant...'? Yet hast thou committed this crime?" "Didst thou not know the hatred of these men" (the Amorite princes) "for him" (Ribaddi)—writes Akhnaton—and he continues: "If thou art indeed a servant of the king, why hast thou not arranged for his sending to the king, thy lord?" To send Ribaddi to Egypt, so that his accusing voice might be heard there, was the last thing which the traitor could have been expected to do. But Akhnaton was too good even to suspect such an amount of deceit, meanness and cruelty as that of his unworthy vassal, specially after all Aziru's protestations of loyalty—and his letter reveals to us his painful amazement in front of the darkest side of humanity, suddenly thrust before him by hard facts.

But the most striking example of uncompromising faithfulness to his principles is perhaps to be found in Akhnaton's determined opposition to war. What this perfect man has been the most bitterly criticised for, by modern authors, is his steady refusal to fight, or even to allow his generals to do so, exactly at the most critical juncture of Egyptian history, when the slightest military help, sent in time to his loyal vassals, would have saved an empire built up by two centuries of efforts, and apparently changed the whole course of subsequent history. From a strictly political point of view, the critics may be right—though, taking a very broad and very long view of the question, one can never say to what extent they may also be wrong. But in the light of all those who put above worldly

interests that which they look upon as right, there can be no words too strong to praise Akhnaton for the example which he has left.

We do not intend to give here the history of the overthrow of Egyptian domination in Syria and in Palestine during the last part of Akhnaton's reign. We have already mentioned the name of Aziru, the foremost intriguer against Egyptian interests, and that of Ribaddi, the faithful prince of Byblos. Akhnaton had other faithful vassals—for instance Abdakhipa, governor of Jerusalem, the author of many of the "Amarna letters"—and there was a time when, apparently, the smallest encouragement given to them would have "saved the situation." (In one of his early letters, Ribaddi merely asks for "three hundred soldiers," to hold his city, and in another, "forty chariots" only.) As no aid was sent, the messages from Syria became more and more frequent and more and more pathetic, not to say desperate. One cannot think of that period of history without remembering the letter addressed to Akhnaton by the citizens of Tunip: "Tunip, thy city, weeps." It is one of the most moving official documents of all times.

But even such appeals were not able to make Akhnaton give up his conscientious objection to war, and to the bitter end he refused to use armed force against those who were undermining his authority in Syria and Palestine, with the result that he lost his Asiatic dominions wholesale. On the other hand, his letter to Aziru shows that he was fully conscious of his power, and might well have used it, had he chosen to do so. Nor was he ignorant of, the advantages that the possession of Syria gave him. Together with his new Egyptian capital, Akhetaton, he had built in Syria a second sacred City, and a third one in Nubia, hoping that from these centers of unmixed Aton worship, the name of his universal God and his simple doctrine of love would spread throughout his dominions and beyond their boundaries. Nor was such a man as he indifferent to the plight of his loyal subjects. Their distressed messages were no doubt a torture to his heart; and if we may suppose that, as a man, he has sometimes experienced the temptation to compromise with his conscience, this must have been when such pathetic cries as

those of Ribaddi or of the citizens of distant Tunip reached him in his peaceful City. But he stood firm till the end, and did not compromise. The very idea of war was in contradiction with the truth which he preached, and whatever his new cult might have gained, outwardly, had he kept by force of arms the territories conquered by his fathers and lived long enough to establish a dozen other religious centers there as well as in Egypt, there is no doubt that to his eyes, any compromise would have been the denial of the spirit of Aton worship, and therefore the end of it all.

Akhnaton lived long enough to hear the last messenger tell him the fall of his last fortress, and probably also to foresee the coming reaction which in a few years was going to reinstall the former priesthoods of Egypt, along with the hosts of national gods—Amon at the head of them—and sweep away forever all trace of what he had done. He died at the early age of twenty-nine, after a reign of seventeen years, but probably not more than thirteen or fourteen years of personal government. As we have already said, his enemies persecuted him even beyond death, and of those who once professed to love him and follow his teaching, not one cared—or dared—to stand against the tide and defend his memory. But there are few things in history as beautiful as his short life. And whatever be the lack of written evidence, it seems impossible to say that a doctrine which puts the truth of love before every other concern—a doctrine which found its expression in such a life—is “devoid of the sense of righteousness.”

It would be better to say that, no less in its ethics than in its other aspects, the Aton worship is inseparable from the personality of its promoter. Every religious teaching is so; but later “world-religions” have had the chance to live as organised bodies for a long time; the need of adaptation to various material conditions has introduced into their tradition novelties which the founders never imagined and compromises of which they would not always have approved. While the Aton cult, on account of its mere twelve or fifteen years of existence as a public worship, remains exclusively the work of one man, whose stamp it keeps through time.

An Undying Teaching

Sir Flinders Petrie puts great stress upon the scientific accuracy of Akhnaton's view of the universe: "If this," he writes, "were a new religion invented to satisfy our modern scientific conceptions, we could not find a flaw in the correctness of his view of the energy of the solar system"... "he" (Akhnaton) "had certainly bounded forward in his views and symbolism to a position which we cannot logically improve upon at the present day. Not a rag of superstition or of falsity can be found clinging to this new worship evolved out of the old Aton of Heliopolis, the sole Lord of the Universe"⁷

And when we sit to think that this 3300 year old worship suitable for our own times—and still in advance on the religious views of ninety-nine per cent of our contemporary fellow men—was evolved by a youth within his teens, we cannot but recognise in that youth one of the few human beings who have the right to be regarded as incarnations of the Divine Soul.

But no less amazing, no less admirable, and perhaps still more in advance both on his time and on ours, is Akhnaton's bold stand against the law of violence which had ruled the world from the beginning and is ruling it still. No ruler of an empire at the height of its strength has ever sacrificed as much as he did to the cause of peace; nor has a religion of love, before him, ever directed decisions of vital political importance. Eleven hundred years after him, India's Asoka stands as the first instance of an "ahimshavadi" emperor, and India is probably still the only land where Akhnaton's attitude towards war would be fully understood and admired to the present day, if only it were known. But for this illustrious exception, there is not a nation, ancient or modern, which ever seriously tried to bring forth the real "new world order" that was Akhnaton's dearest dream. And could the youthful founder of the Aton cult come back to-day, among us who should have grown wiser but

who did not, he would, it seems, remain as alone as he was in his far-gone days of strife—too good for this earth.

In 1942, exactly 3300 years will have elapsed since he passed away. If, tired of war, men be ready, then, to express their aspiration towards a higher ideal, no better suggestion, it seems, could be given, than that of celebrating all over the world the “thirty-third Centenary” of the oldest Prince of Peace, and teaching the future generations to love his memory “forever and ever.”

Calcutta
December, 1940

Notes

1. *Savitri*, probably influenced by Arthur Weigall's compelling arguments, believed that Akhnaton's mummy had been found in Valley of the Kings Tomb 55 by Theodore Davis in 1907. Later forensic examinations of the remains have, however, suggested that the individual was between 20 and 25/26 at the time of death, which is too young for Akhnaton but is consistent with what we know of Akhnaton's ephemeral co-regent and successor Smenkhara. In spite of this, some scholars, who find dubious the techniques used to estimate the individual's age of death, still maintain that the mummy is Akhnaton's. —Ed.

2. Sir Flinders Petrie, *A History of Egypt*, Vol. II (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1924), p. 214.

3. See Henri Poincaré's *La Science et l'Hypothese* (Paris: Flammarion, 1923).

4. See Wallis Budge's *Tutankhamen: Amenism, Atenism and Egyptian Monotheism* (London: Martin Hopkinson and Co., Ltd., 1923), pp. 107 and 108.

5. After Savitri wrote this essay, evidence emerged that Akhnaton had had at least one other wife, known as Kiya, who may have been the mother of Tutankhamen. The coffin and canopic jars found in Tomb 55 may have been manufactured for Kiya and then adapted for Akhnaton's burial.—Ed.

6. See Arthur Weigall's *The Life and Times of Akhnaton, Pharaoh of Egypt* (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1923).

7. Sir Flinders Petrie, *A History of Egypt*, Vol. II p. 214.

Hitlerism and Hindudom

Someone once asked Ramana Maharishi—one of the greatest spiritual personalities of modern India (he died only a few years ago)—what he thought of Adolf Hitler. The answer was short and simple: "He is a 'gnani,'" i.e., a sage; one who "knows," who is, through personal experience, fully conscious of the eternal truths that express the Essence of the Universe; conscious of the hierarchic character of its visible (and invisible) manifestations in time and outside time; conscious of the nature and place of gods, men and other creatures, animate and inanimate, in the light of the One inexpressible Reality behind, within and above them all: the Brahman-Atman of the Hindu scriptures, thousands of years old. This implies, of course, consciousness of the great Laws of manifestations that preside over the birth, life, death, rebirth and liberation from the wheel of birth and rebirth, of all creatures, and therefore of the fundamental inequality of creatures, including people—and races—the inequality of souls as well as of bodies, and —on the social plane—the strivings for an order that would be the exact reflection of this inequality within the universal, divine hierarchy—of this unity within hierarchical diversity.

In the mind of such a perfect Brahmin (in the etymological sense of the word: a man who has realized Brahman-Atman within himself and, in consequence, "knows" the truth) the word "gnani" cannot mean anything less than that.

It is a far greater praise than any recognition of our Leader's importance in mere history. It means that his unique place in history is the mere outcome of Something deeper and more difficult to sense (for the common mind): his place among those at the very top of the hierarchy of creatures. As I said before, Ramana Maharishi represents the double aristocracy of Hindudom: both by

his caste (he was a Brahmin) and by the fact that he was one of the few who were strictly worthy of belonging to that exalted caste. His judgment is of more import than that of millions of average, albeit "intellectual" people.

I shall now relate an episode of my own life involving a youngster of a very low Hindu caste: the Maheshyas of West Bengal, a caste of tillers of the soil; one of the innumerable subdivisions of the Sudras.

The youngster, named Khudiram, after one of the fighters for Indian independence, was a typical specimen of the masses of Bengal: dark skinned, flat-faced—a blending of Dravidian (the race of most South Indians) and Mongoloid. He must have been about fifteen and was perfectly illiterate. He was my servant.

One day—in glorious 1940—as he came back from the market where I had sent him to buy fish for the cats, he told me, beaming with joy: "Memsahib" (it is the way one addresses all European women, here in India) "I really wish your Leader will win the war! I want him to, and I pray to all the gods that he does!"

I was dumbfounded. I had never spoken about Adolf Hitler to Khudiram—a non-Aryan if any! I presumed the lad knew there was a war going on in faraway Europe—everybody knew it—and I was not over-astonished at his taking sides with us: all Indians in those days did the same, including the Communists (on account of the non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939). "The enemies of our enemies are our friends"—and Bengal was a bastion in the struggle against British rule. But I never expected such emphasis in the pro-German feelings of a Bengali village lad.

I asked him: "Why are you so strongly on the Leader's side? Is it just because he is winning?" (The French campaign was then nearly over.)

Khudiram said: "No, I would be on his side even if he were defeated, but I pray all the gods he may win."

"And why? What do you know about the war?"

And the illiterate lad replied, to my further surprise: "I may be an ignorant boy. But I met one in the market much older than I; he must be about twenty—a 'learned' boy, who can even speak a little English, and he told me that your Leader was fighting this war in Europe so that he might do away with the Bible and in its place set up, for all the West—the Bhagavad-Gita!"

I wondered what Adolf Hitler's reaction would have been, had he known the interpretation given to his war aims in the Calcutta fish market. (I did not yet know of the high consideration he had for the most ancient Aryan philosophical poem. I was to hear of it in England, from a man who knew him well—after the war.) But I thought of a passage in the first chant of the Bhagavad Gita, in its nineteenth century French translation by Eugene Burnouf: "Out of the corruption of women proceeds the confusion of castes (i.e., of races, for the castes originally corresponded to racial differences); out of the confusion of castes proceeds the loss of memory (i.e., one forgets who were one's ancestors), out of the loss of memory proceeds the loss of understanding, and out of this all evil!"

I thought to myself in a flash: "True, this is the oldest known expression of the spirit of Mein Kampf." And I told the boy: "Your elder friend is right. Our Leader is fighting for the Aryan West to go back to the eternal Aryan values that are exalted in the Bhagavad Gita. Now I give you a day's holiday, and a rupee to treat your friends. Go and tell them all—tell everyone you meet—what your market big boy said. He is right!"

Khudiram was delighted and joyously made for the door. But I stopped him for a while to put another question to him.

"You pray for our Leader's victory—our victory," said I. "Now, do you know that if we win the war and my Leader's influence reaches the ends of the earth, you, within our New Order, shall remain

forever what you are: a Maheshya—a Sudra. You are no Aryan. The New Order shall grant you no privileges: these will be, just as throughout the centuries, for the fair-complexioned Brahmans or Kshatriyas, who, in India, will remain at the top of Hindu society. Do you still love our Leader, knowing this?"

The lad of the tropics, the mouthpiece of the illiterate Hindu masses, exclaimed unhesitatingly: "Of course I do, and all the more, now I know it!" For this means that your Leader's spirit is one with the Shatras [i.e., of the Hindu sacred writ]—that he knows the truth, and wants the world to abide in truth, as did the great ones who handed over the Shatras to their disciples. This is of no more importance whether I, a mere individual, get promotion or not in this world. The one and only thing that matters is the truth of the gods which is (now I know it!) your Leader's truth also.

"If I was born a mere Maheshya, it is sure that I have sinned in many of my past lives. But this time I obey the Shatras—i.e., do not defile myself by eating forbidden things, do not mess about with girls of other castes, and so forth—then next time, when I am born again, I shall be born in a better family. And after several thousands of years—time does not count—who knows? I might be born as the son of a Brahmin, or perhaps in your Europe, as one of the young men who fight for your Leader's ideals. Who knows?"

Could one imagine, in Christian Europe, a lad of non-Aryan or doubtful descent saying: "This is my punishment for my past misdeeds, of before this present life. Now if I behave as I should, who knows? I might slowly, slowly, make my way upwards and after a thousand years or more be born a German." No, one cannot, precisely because such thoughts are totally foreign to the Christian spirit and the belief that all souls are equally precious in the eyes of a personal man-loving god. This could have been possible if we had, in Europe, remained faithful to our old heathen values. And there old values are the very same "hyperborean" ones as are to this day upheld in Hindu India, where the idea of segregated castes—the oldest form of "apartheid" on earth—and the belief that the

Aryan is the one who should rule the world, are widespread and undiscussed ideas.

Well did Rudolf von Sebottendorf, founder of the famous Thule Gesellschaft that prepared the way for the triumph of National Socialism, well did he, I say, owe a lot to his visits to India, and his contacts with Hindus conscious of their hyperborean traditions?

It is said in Hindu writ that "the year is the day of the gods." The solar year, six months daylight and six months night, and the Arctic years, two or three full months light in the summer and two or three months night in the winter, are "days" of the Nordic ancestors of our fair-complexioned Indian Brahmins. The gods—the "shining ones" whose "days" were years of half sunshine and half darkness—were just perfect types of Aryan humanity: the hyperboreans of far-away Thule, the ones whom the twentieth century great Indian scholar, Tilak, mentions in his book *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*.

And it is noteworthy that tradition among Aryans other than those of India, places the seat of godhead in the same polar region: the Greek sun god Apollo is called "the Hyperborean." Only the Hindus—including the non-Aryan masses of India insofar as they have not been corrupted by ideas drummed into their heads by degenerate Aryans (no longer Aryans of spirit) of today—have kept the traditions. Thanks to its forced Christianization from the fourth to the fifteenth century A.D., Europe has forgotten it. The glory of Adolf Hitler—and a few of his forerunners such as Friedrich Lange (founder of the *Deutsches Bund*, 1894) or Hans Krebs—is to have felt it intuitively, with the aid of the gods, and made it the philosophical basis of their social and political natures.

The holy Swastika that Adolf Hitler chose as the Symbol of his Movement is the visible link between him and orthodox Hinduism. One sees it everywhere in India: on temple gates, on pennants fluttering from the top of temples, on the walls in front of which marriage rites are celebrated (as all Hindu rites, before a burning

fire), and on public signs and on ordinary advertisements, and on jewels, "for luck."

There was a time when the Symbol was to be found everywhere also in Aryan countries—or countries under Aryan influence: on Greek pottery, and more so on Trojan pottery (nowhere are Swastikas more numerous than on the shards in the second layer of Troy, dating back to some 4,000 B.C.!) and in Mexico and Yucatan, civilized by a White and bearded god (according to tradition)—and a god from the East, apparently an Aryan.

Nowadays the holy sign is popular—widespread and revered—only among us National Socialists and among Hindus (the only two sects of people among which the superiority of the Aryan race is also recognized and accepted as a matter of course. As I said, in India, the non-Aryan orthodox Hindus also accept it, of whatever caste they may be).

May the official propaganda of Westernized Indians concerning democracy and equality not deceive us and prevent us from seeing how close to us is—and always was—real Hindu India!

Notes

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Indian Paganism:

The last living expression of Aryan beauty

Another word for Hinduism, perhaps even more expressive, could be "Hindu paganism". Christian missionaries call "pagans" all those who are neither Christian, Muslim nor Jew; that is, all those whose religious tradition has nothing to do with the Bible or the Jewish tradition. We accept the term because it is appropriate; it highlights some kind of similarity between all the creedal religions of the past and those of the present.

Once upon a time everyone was a "pagan". Now that half the population has been converted to Christianity or Islam, the number of pagans has decreased. But this is not proof that the various paganisms are worthless in the face of the great religions. Probably the number is an advantage; but in no case a virtue. Therefore, the number of followers has nothing to do with the value of a cult.

* * *

Among the so-called Christians there are more and more people who do not believe in the Bible at all, but are "freethinkers". And freethinking, in any matter, including religion, is a characteristic of Hinduism. That does not mean that we consider all freethinkers in the world to be Hindus.

Philosophically, Hinduism is an attitude of mind, a way of understanding life. But it is not only that. It is a whole set of cults to choose from. And, whatever the cult is, it is a cult, one of the most immemorial pagan cults that has survived among the modern world. The Hindus are one of the few modern civilized peoples who are openly pagan.

The Japanese, with their Shinto ritual, are another such people. And being one of the leading nations in the modern world, their example is invaluable. They magnificently demonstrate that, indispensable as it is to adopt any mechanical innovation in order to compete with other nations, and to live, it is not necessary to adopt the religion and civilization of the inventors. Airplanes and war tanks and large-scale banking can coexist perfectly well with a Solar dynasty of god-kings, in whose divinity everyone believes, just as the Egyptians did six thousand years ago. When India, freed from internal weaknesses and foreign yoke, becomes a world power again, then it will be, perhaps even better than Japan, witness to such a truth.

Meanwhile, it remains the last great country of Aryan civilization and, to a great extent, of Aryan language and race, where a living and beautiful paganism perpetuates itself as the religion of both the mass and the intellectual sphere.

We like the word "paganism" as applied to Hindu cults. It is pleasing to the ears of more than one of the fallen Aryans in Europe, accustomed to refer to "pagan Greece" or "pagan beauty" as the most beautiful expressions of their own past geniuses. That is why we use also this term, preferable to any other.

* * *

India may never have enjoyed the worldwide popularity it enjoys today, even in its greatest days of glory. This worldwide fame is largely due to the repeated assertion of Hindu "spirituality," and to the philosophy of nonviolence preached by Mahatma Gandhi.

Very few people have understood the spirit of Christ as well as Mahatma Gandhi and some of the most prominent Hindus now and in this last century. And among the few Europeans who have been sincerely attracted to Hinduism, practically all have sought in it, if not a doctrine, at least a moral creed or, rather, a moral attitude of love and goodness, exactly the same as they might have found in Christianity if they had taken the trouble to separate the simple and

genial personality of Christ from all the theological and heretical muddles. In other words, it is often the dream of a better Christianity that brings righteous people from across the seas to "serve humanity" in the Ramakrishna Mission, or to express their devout love as members of some Vaisnava temple.

Today's Hindus like such admirers. Many of them also like the idea that there is more Christian spirit among prominent Hindus than among Christians themselves. There is nothing to be said for this fact but that it is, to some extent, a subtle expression of that unfortunate inferiority complex so deeply rooted in India.

Pure spirituality (the realization of one's own soul) naturally transcends any creed or ceremony. Thus, a realized Hindu will resemble a realized Christian. True. And it is also true that, in such complex teachings as those contained in the innumerable Hindu books (including Jain, Buddhist, Vaishnava, etc. scriptures) there are many elements that can also be found in Christianity. Others will say that there are very many Hindu (or Buddhist) elements that have filtered into Christianity, and there are also theories that demonstrate such influence of Hindu thought. And we can say with certainty that the failure of Christian preaching among educated and fully conscious Hindus is basically due to the existence of these elements. A "religion of love" is nothing new in India, though it must have been new to people in ancient Europe.

But this does not detract from the fact that the Hindu religion, as a philosophical stock and as a cult, also has the characteristics that Aryan Paganism had before it was reduced by Christianity in the West. We see here, as in ancient Greece, contrary philosophical tendencies with very few principles in common among them (such as the transmigration of souls, for example, and one or two others). Moreover, in Hindu worship—in "Hindu life"—we find that essential element, the only one worth living for: Beauty.

* * *

"Visible beauty leads to invisible beauty," said Plato.

Today, when people talk about India, they seem to fill their mouths with its invisible beauty and ignore its visible beauty. "Spirituality, spirituality...", everybody talks about it; those who know something about it, and those who don't. It is the tendency. It seems that one cannot be considered a friend of India if one does not emphasize this point. And neither can one feel oneself a true Indian patriot if one does not do so.

But no one emphasizes the physical beauty of the Hindu people. They are Hinduism, they are India, more than all philosophies put together; and the first certificate, both for a nation and for the individual, is the beauty of his body. No evil soul can live in a really beautiful body. The body expresses, and reflects, the inner self. And a beautiful race is a noble race, with great potentialities. People speak of Hindu culture as if it were an abstract entity, as if it could have arisen anywhere in the world. They forget to mention that those who live it, as a nation, are among the most beautiful races of mankind. There is undoubtedly a mysterious identity between that culture and themselves.

For many Hindus, Hindu ritual has great symbolic value. For the vast majority of Hindus, it is practically everything. But no one pays attention to the visible beauty of everyday Hindu puja, Hindu festivals, Hindu ceremonies. Many enlightened Hindus consider it unworthy to praise, in their religion, that which pleases the eye or the ear, the "external".

But it is impossible to deny the attraction of beauty.

We have mentioned the fervent regret felt by some Aryans in the West, who seem to have a retrospective consciousness of what their race was, and a faint idea of what it might perhaps still be if their ancestors had remained faithful to the old national cults of Europe. This nostalgia for the past is nothing new for Christians in the West and the Middle East. It began six hundred years ago, with Emperor

Julian's desperate attempt to restore the religion and society of Antiquity and restore it to its splendor; and it increases, in the hearts of a few, as that Ancient World, seen from the distance of time, appears to be more and more venerable.

The Ancient World had its limitations. It had also its vices, which brought its downfall. But its wise men were the pride of human intelligence. And above all, it was venerable for that which both Europe and the Middle East forgot: the cult of Visible Beauty.

This cult is no longer to be found anywhere but in this last land of sunshine: Hindu India.

* * *

They say that, one day, Julian tried to organize a procession through the streets of Constantinople in honor of Dionysus, god of impetuous jubilation and plethoric life. But it was too late, and the attempt was a mistake. The procession was nothing more than a ridiculous spectacle, and when Julian returned at dusk after it was over, he felt as sad as if his eyes had seen the gloomy future of the Mediterranean world. They say that he was sitting in the gardens of his palace, in front of some ancient marble blocks hidden behind a lattice of ivy, when a good friend approached him and, suspecting the reason for his sadness, asked him:

"What did you expect? These are the days of our death. What was your intention in ordering such a procession? What did you long for?"

The Emperor looked at him, and without a word he pushed aside the ivy and pointed to what was hidden behind it: a masterpiece of some artist of antiquity: a procession in honor of Dionysus, engraved on white marble; a nod to the early days, to the youth of the world; something beautiful.

"This is what I wanted," he said finally.

This happened in the days when the great Samudra Gupta ruled in India.

If Julian could have witnessed all that display of beauty, expressed in the day-to-day as well as in the celebrations and festivities, and in the processions in honor of the Gods, so similar to those he sought to recreate... If he could have seen that Aryan Paganism would live and flourish forever in that lush land... If he had known that India would preserve the youth of the world beyond time, eternally... Then, no doubt, I would have extolled that great country with tears of joy in my eyes.

One has only to go to Madura or Rameswaram and witness one of the true Hindu processions held in India today; with elephants bearing immemorial signs drawn with sandalwood and vermilion on their foreheads, and decked with silk and gold cloth hanging from their backs to the ground; to the sound of trumpets and drums, with torches reflecting their light on the bronzed and half-naked bodies of the devotees taking part in the processions, as beautiful as if they were Greek statues; with carriages of flowers marching slowly around the sacred pond. Just look at the pious crowd (hundreds and thousands of pilgrims from all over India) throwing flowers as the carriages pass by. And above it all, above the peaceful water, the beautiful crowd, the impressive pillars, the huge pyramidal towers, gleaming in the moonlight... observe that dazzling and unparalleled firmament.

Just look at any scene of Hindu life: a line of young women advancing towards the interior of a temple on a festive day; dressed in colorful saris, dazzling with jewelry, these affable daughters of India enter one by one, with flowers in their hair and offerings in their hands. In the background, huts here and there, among immense coconut trees and surrounded by rice paddies: the beauty of the Indian countryside.

One by one entering the temple... like the young Athenian girls of antiquity, whose image we can observe in the friezes of the Parthenon. If Julian, that lover of Beauty, devoted to the Sun, had witnessed all this, seeing his dream come true he would have exclaimed: "This is what I wanted!"

* * *

But it is not only because of the forms and colors of the popular Hindu cult that Hinduism must be considered a religion of the beautiful. Its conception of god, creator and destroyer, is the expression of a sublime vision of life and the universe.

In creedal religions the focus of interest is on man; the background, man's short history, man's misery, man's search for happiness; his design, man's salvation. And God, the father of man, has a predilection for this privileged creature of his.

In Hinduism, this anthropomorphic vision has no place. The focus of interest is that eternal universe of Existence, in which man is but a detail. God is the inner Force, the deepest Self, the Essence of Existence, the "supreme soul" or Paramatma.

In Him there is no predilection or animosity. There are no special favors for any creature that is born and dies, appears and disappears in the course of time. Nothing but an eternal succession of states, of infinite expressions of the Unknown, which is the reality of all things; a dancing succession of birth, death and rebirth, over and over again, always different, and at the same time, always the same; a Representation without beginning or end, without purpose, but beautiful, whatever the transitory fate of a particular species along its course.

The destiny of all species, of all beings, is to grow slowly, more and more aware of the beauty of the Representation and, finally, to experience that transcendental unity with the Force that pulls the strings of their own Being. No one knows what exactly that Force is,

except those who have experienced it in themselves. But we all worship it and bow before this Force. We do not bow before it because we know it or because it is God. It is because we bow to it that we call it God. And we bow to it and worship it, in its hundreds of thousands of expressions (those that destroy us as well as those that seem to help us), because in all its expressions it is Beautiful.

* * *

Creation is only a part of the Representation of Existence. Men usually worship only one aspect of God. The Hindus praise Him completely, for the beauty of His Work. They worship Him in Destruction as well as in Creation. They praise His Energy (Shakti) represented in Mother Kali, in Durga, in Jagaddatri, in Chinnamasta, destroying and continually recreating His own Self; in the ten Mahavidyas, which are one and the same. They worship him in Nataraja, king of dance, whose feet dance over life, destroying it with his furious rhythm... while his imperturbable face, radiating wisdom, it remains as calm as the calm sea.

For those who can appreciate beauty, Creation and Destruction are one.

And the highest praise for India is this: not only are her people beautiful; not only are her cults and rituals beautiful; but in the midst of this utilitarian, humanitarian and dogmatic world, she stands firm in proclaiming the exceptional value of Beauty for the sake of Beauty itself, through her conception of divinity, religion and life.

Notes

The preceding text is the third chapter of Savitri's A Warning to the Hindus (Calcutta, 1939).

Invocation to the Gods

I remembered my visit to Goðafoss, in northern Iceland, in June 1947. I had been told that some time after the year 1000, a man named Thorgeir, who was a "goði"—a priest of the Norse gods—in the Ljosvatn region of northern Iceland, became a Christian. And that, as a dramatic demonstration of his allegiance to the new foreign faith—and perhaps, in his mind, as an "example"—he had taken the images of the old gods and publicly thrown them into the waterfall of the Skjalvantaflýot River, since known as Goðafoss: the Waterfall of the Gods.

Deeply moved, I had gone to the site, stood before the waterfall and thought of those gods—Odin, and Thor, and Baldur the Handsome and the others, whom my Viking ancestors once worshipped—lying, for over nine hundred years at the bottom of the icy waters of the Skjalvantaflýot, waiting for the dawn of new times, the great Pagan Renaissance; waiting for us, waiting for me. I had brought with me a piece of paper on which I had copied the words that the French poet Leconte de Lisle had put into the mouth of a Nordic god addressing the gentle Jesus, come to overthrow his power:

*... You will die in your turn:
Nine times I bear witness to the immortal Runas.
You will die like me, God of new souls,
For man will survive! Twenty centuries of pain
Will make his flesh bleed and his tears stream
Until the day your yoke, worn for two thousand years
Will weary the necks of mutinous races;
When your temples, erected among the nations,
Will become a mockery to generations;
And that will be your hour!*
—Leconte de Lisle, *Poèmes Barbares*, "Le Runoïa"

With my right arm stretched towards the East, I had recited these verses, and then thrown the paper into the roaring cataract. And then—though I had not yet regained hope; though the disaster [of 1945] had, in my eyes, delayed, perhaps for years and years, the great Pagan Renaissance of my dream—I had spoken to the old gods. "Gods of the North, brothers of the Vedic gods that India still worships", I had said, "Aryan gods, gods of my race, you know that all my life I have defended the values you once embodied in the hearts of your worshippers. Oh, whatever fate you have in store for me, you whom my mother's ancestors invoked amidst lightning and thunder, on the furious waves of the North Sea, help me never to cease fighting for our great ideals; never to cease fighting for the cult of youth, of health, of strength, for the cult of the Sun—for your truth, our truth—wherever in the world it may be, until I die!"

And having said this, I felt an icy shiver run down my back, and was overwhelmed by the awareness of an infinite solemnity, as if I had just been the instrument of a long-awaited and prepared rite; as if the Nordic gods, rejected by their priest Thorgeir, had really been waiting for my symbolic gesture. It was 10:30 in the evening, but full daylight, as is natural in June at this latitude. And I had suddenly remembered that it was June 9, the seventh anniversary of the day when, also at 10:30 in the evening, a Brahmin, representative of the easternmost Aryanity, had taken my hand in his over the sacred fire and given me his name and protection. And I had felt that my visit to the Waterfall of the Gods, and my symbolic gesture on such a day, had a meaning in the unseen; that there was more here than mere coincidence. Now I remembered this episode, which, in the light of the history between those two years, took on a greater symbolic value than ever. "Gods of the North, gods of the strong", I thought, "Aryan gods, teach me that detachment without which there is no true strength, no lasting effectiveness! Make me a worthy witness to your truth—our truth. Rid me of all weakness!"

Jewish Intolerance

Jewish "racism" has been much discussed. And the doctrine of the "chosen people" is often regarded as an expression of this "racism." Yet in reality the Jews of Antiquity (I mean, of course, orthodox Jews) believed that membership in their race, that is, in the "family of Abraham," had value only if it were combined with exclusive service to the "jealous God" Jehovah, Israel's exclusive protector. According to the Bible, Moabites and Ammonites, though enemies of Israel, were closely connected racially to the Jews. Did not the former descend from Moab, son of Lot and his eldest daughter, and the latter from Ben-Ammi, son of Lot and his youngest daughter? (Genesis 19.36-38) Now, Lot, son of Haran, was the nephew of Abraham (Genesis 11.27). Evidently genealogical kinship did not facilitate relations between these peoples and the children of Israel. If blood joined them together, their respective cults nevertheless separated them. Chemosh, god of Moabites, and Milcom, god of the Ammonites, were in the eyes of the Jews "abominations"—as were all the gods of the earth, save their own God—and their worshippers, enemies to be exterminated.

Jewish racism, independent of religion—the attitude which consists in accepting as a Jew and treating accordingly anyone born Jewish, whatever his religious beliefs might be—is apparently a much more recent phenomenon, dating at the earliest from the eighteenth or the seventeenth century, that is, from the time when masonic lodges of Israelite inspiration began to play a role in determining the politics of Western nations. It was perhaps a product of the influence of Western rationalism on the Jews—in spite of themselves. It found its most striking expression at the end of the nineteenth century and during the twentieth in Zionism, which could be called an innovative, avant-garde Jewish nationalism. The Zionist movement

does respect, certainly, the religious tradition of the Talmud and the Bible, but without in any way being identified with it. Its political faith is "national," but could not be compared with that of modern Greece, since the latter is so inseparable from the official state religion. But I shall call Zionism a nationalism rather than a "racism," because it implies the exaltation of the Jewish people as such, without any enthusiastic consciousness of a blood solidarity uniting all the various desert peoples customarily called "Semitic."

Although modern in its expression, this Jewish nationalism is not in its essence different from the solidarity which, after the introduction of the Mosaic law, existed among all the children of Israel from the thirteenth century before the Christian era. The religion of Jehovah played a paramount role then. But its role consisted precisely in forming a feeling in all Jews, from the most powerful to the most humble, that they were the chosen people, the privileged people, different from other people, including those closest to them in blood, and exalted above them all. The Jews have felt that more and more in modern times, without the aid of a national religion; hence the decreasing importance of this religion among them, except in a few permanent centers of Jewish orthodoxy.

In other words, the Jews, who for centuries had been an unimportant Middle Eastern tribe among so many others, a tribe quite close to others in language and religion before Abraham and especially before the Mosaic reform, gradually became, under the influence of Moses and his successors, Joshua and Caleb, and then under the influence of the prophets, a people completely filled with the self-image they had manufactured; having nothing but contempt for men of the same race who surrounded them and, with greater reason, for people of other races; seeing only "abominations" in all their gods; even repudiating, as the prophet Ezra commanded after they returned from their long Babylonian captivity, those of their kinsmen who, having remained in Palestine, had married Canaanite women, under the pretext that the latter would loosen the link that bound them and their families to Jehovah and thus

weaken their consciousness that they were a "chosen people," a people unlike others.

They could have remained so indefinitely, isolated from the rest of the world by a national pride as incommensurable as it was unjustified, for even in Antiquity they were already rather mixed-race hybrids, if only because of their prolonged sojourn in Egypt. Had the Jews remained in their self-imposed isolation, the world would certainly have suffered no great loss—quite the contrary. But they did not, because the idea of a "single, living God"—the "true" God, in contrast to "false" gods, to local gods whose power was limited to other peoples—could only imply, sooner or later, the idea of universal truth and human community. A God who alone "lives," while all others are merely insensate matter, at most inhabited by impure forces, can only be, logically, the true God of all possible worshippers, that is, of all men. To refuse to admit it would have required that they ascribe life, truth and benevolence to other peoples' gods as well, in other words, that they cease seeing them only as "abominations." And that the Jews refused to accept, after the sermons and threats of their prophets. The One God could indeed prefer a single people. But it was necessary that he be, by necessity, the God of all peoples—the one whom they, in their insane folly, were unaware of, whereas the "chosen people" alone paid him homage.

The first attitude of the Jews, as conquerors of Palestine, toward peoples who worshipped gods other than Jehovah was to hate and exterminate them. Their second attitude—after Canaanite resistance in Palestine had long ended, and especially after the Jews had lost most of what little international significance they had ever possessed, being reduced to mere subjects of Greek kings, Alexander's successors, and later of Roman emperors—was to throw into the spiritual pasture of a declining world not only the idea of the futile emptiness of all gods (except their own), but also the false concept of "man," independent of and distinct from peoples; of "man," a nationless citizen of the world (and "created in the image of God") whom Israel, the chosen people, the people of

Revelation, had the mission of instructing and guiding to true "happiness." This was the attitude of those Jews, more or less conspicuously daubed with Hellenism, who from the fourth century AD until the Arab conquest in the seventh century formed an increasingly influential proportion of the population in Alexandria, as well as in all capitals of the Hellenistic world, which would later become the Roman world. It is also the attitude of the Jews of our own era—an attitude which, precisely, makes them a people unlike others, a dangerous people: the "ferment of decomposition" of other peoples.

It is worth tracing the history of this attitude.

Its seeds, as I have suggested, already existed in the fanaticism of the servants and prophets of the "sole" and "living God," from Samuel to the redactors of the Cabala. An important fact that should not be forgotten, if one wants to try to understand it, is that the "sole God" of the Jews is a transcendent god, but not immanent. He is outside of Nature, which he created from nothingness by an act of will, and in his essence is different from it, different not only from its sensible manifestations, but also from everything that could, in a permanent way, underlie them. He is not that Soul of the Universe in which the Greeks and all other Indo-European peoples believed, and in which Brahmanism still sees the supreme Reality. He made the world as an artisan manufactures a marvelous machine: from the outside. And he imposed upon it whatever laws he wanted, laws that could have been different, if he had wanted them different. He gave man dominion over all other creatures. And he "chose" the Jewish people from among other men not for their intrinsic value—that is clearly specified in the Bible—but arbitrarily, because of a promise made once and for all to Abraham.

From this metaphysical perspective, it was impossible to consider the gods of other peoples as "aspects" or "expressions" of the sole God, and all the less so since these gods represented, for the most part, natural forces or celestial bodies. It was also impossible to emphasize less the indeterminate variety of men and the irrefutable

inequality that has always existed among the various human races and even among people more or less of the same race. "Man," whatever that might be, had to possess, alone of created beings, an immense intrinsic value, since the Creator had formed him "in his own image" and had placed him, for that very reason, above all other living creatures. The Cabala states the matter clearly: "There exists the uncreated Being, who creates: God; the created being, who creates: man; and... the remainder: the entirety of created beings—animals, plants, minerals—which do not create." This is the most absolute anthropocentrism, and a false philosophy from the outset, since it is obvious that "all men" are not creators (far from it!) and that some animals can in fact be creators.

But that is not all. From this new humanist perspective, not only did Jewry maintain its position as the "chosen people"—the "holy nation," as the Bible says—destined to bear unique Revelation to the world, but everything that other peoples had produced or thought had value only insofar as it was consistent with this Revelation, or insofar as it could be interpreted in that sense. Unable to deny the enormous Greek contributions to science and philosophy, the Jews of Alexandria, Greek in culture (and sometimes with Greek names, like Aristobulus in the third century BC), did not hesitate to write that all of the most substantial products of Greek thought—the works of Pythagoras, of Plato, of Aristotle—were only due, in the final analysis, to the influence of Jewish thought, having their source in Moses and the prophets! Others, such as the famous Philo of Alexandria, whose influence on Christian apologetics was considerable, did not dare deny the obvious originality of Hellenic genius, but only retained, of the ideas they elaborated, those which they could, by altering or even by deforming them completely, bring into "concord" with the Mosaic conception of "God" and the world. Their work is that hybrid product which in the history of ideas bears the name "Judeo-Alexandrian philosophy"—an ingenious collection of interrelated concepts drawn more or less directly from Plato, though not always in the spirit of Plato, mixed together with old Jewish ideas like the transcendence of the sole God and the creation of man "in his image." All of this was

undoubtedly a superfluous scaffolding in the eyes of orthodox Jews, for whom the Mosaic Law was sufficient, but it was a marvelous instrument for seizing spiritual control over the Gentiles, in the service of Jews (orthodox or not) eager to wrest from other peoples the direction of Western (and later, global) thought.

Judeo-Alexandrian philosophy and religion, increasingly permeated with the symbolism of Egypt, Syria, Anatolia and so forth, and professed by the ever more racially debased people of the Hellenistic world, constitute the backdrop against which Christian orthodoxy gradually emerged in the writings of Paul of Tarsus and the first Christian apologists, eventually taking shape during a succession of Church Councils. As Gilbert Murray remarks of the latter: "it is a strange experience... to study these obscure assemblies, whose members, proletarians of the Levant, superstitious, dominated by charlatans and desperately ignorant, still believed that God can procreate children in the womb of mortal mothers, misunderstood 'Word,' 'Spirit' and 'divine Wisdom' as persons bearing those names, and transformed the notion of the soul's immortality into the 'resurrection of the dead,' and then to think that it was these men who followed the main road, leading to the greatest religion of the Western world."

In this Christianity of the first centuries, preached in Greek (the international language of the Near East) by Jewish and later by Greek missionaries to raceless urban masses—so inferior, from any point of view, to the free men of the ancient Hellenic polis—there were undoubtedly more non-Jewish elements than Jewish. What dominated was a common religious subject I dare not call "Greek" but rather "Aegean" or "Mediterranean pre-Hellenic"—or even Near Eastern pre-Hellenic, for the people of Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia all more or less exemplified it in their primeval cults. It was the myth of the young god cruelly put to death—Osiris, Adonis, Tammuz, Attis, Dionysus—whose flesh (wheat) and blood (grape juice) became food and drink for men, and who came back to life in glory every year in Spring. This subject had never ceased to be present in the mysteries of Greece, as much in the classical era as

before. Transfigured and "spiritualized" by the allegorical meanings attached to the most primitive rites, it manifested itself in the international "salvation" religions, namely in the cults of Mithra and of Cybele and Attis, Christianity's rivals in the Roman Empire. As Nietzsche saw so clearly, the genius of Paul of Tarsus consisted in "giving a new meaning to the ancient mysteries," taking hold of the old prehistoric myth, revivifying it, interpreting it in such way that, in perpetuity, all those who accepted his interpretation would also accept Jewry's prophetic role and its status as "chosen people," bearer of unique revelation.

Historically next to nothing is known about the person of Jesus of Nazareth, so little about his origins and the first thirty years of his life that some serious authors have even doubted his existence. According to the canonical gospels, he was raised in the Jewish religion. But was he Jewish by blood? Several scriptural passages tend to make one believe that he was not. It has been said, moreover, that the Galileans formed a small island of Indo-European population within Palestine. At any rate, what is important, as the source of the historical turning point that Christianity represents, is that, Jewish or not, Jesus was presented as such, and what is more, was presented as the Jewish people's expected Messiah, by Paul of Tarsus, the true founder of Christianity, and by all the Christian apologists who followed over the centuries. What is important is that he was, thanks to them, integrated into the Jewish tradition, forming the link between it and the old Mediterranean myth of the young vegetation god who died and rose again, a myth the Jews had never accepted. He became the Messiah, acquiring the essential attributes of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis, Dionysus and all the other dead gods who triumphed over Death, pushing them all into the shade for his own profit, and that of his people, with an intransigence that none of them knew, the typically Jewish intransigence of Paul of Tarsus, his teacher Gamaliel, and all the servants of the "jealous God," Jehovah. Not only was "new meaning" given to the ancient mysteries, but this meaning was proclaimed the sole good and the sole truth, the rites and the myths of pagan antiquity, from the most remote times,

having only "prepared" and "prefigured" it, just as ancient philosophy had only sensitized souls to receive the supreme revelation. And this revelation was, for Paul as for the Jews of the Judeo-Alexandrian school before him, and for all the Christian apologists that followed—Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Ireneus, Origen—given to the Jews by the God "of all mankind."

Jewish intolerance, until then confined to a single people (and to a despised people, whom no one dreamed of imitating) extended itself, with Christianity and later with Islam—that reaction against the Hellenisation of Christian theology—to half the globe. And, moreover, it is that very intolerance that accounts for the success of the religions linked with the tradition of Israel.

I have mentioned the salvation religions, in particular the cults of Mithra and of Cybele and her lover Attis, which flourished in the Roman Empire when Christianity was still young. At first sight, each of them had as much chance of attracting to itself the restless masses for whom Roman order was not sufficient, or was no longer sufficient, and who, increasingly bastardized, felt alienated from any national cult, whatever it might be. Each of them offered to the average individual all that the religion of crucified Jesus promised, and with rites all the more able to assure his adhesion, since they were more barbarous.

In the third century AD, the worship of Mithra—the old Indo-European solar god, contemplated through the thousand deforming mirrors that the races and traditions of his new worshippers represented—seemed destined to become dominant... provided that no decisive factor should intervene in favor of one of his rivals. The god was popular among Roman legionaries and their officers. Emperors had believed it worthwhile to receive initiation into his mysteries, under a shower of the Bull's hot, redemptive blood. A growing number of common people followed the movement. One can say with complete confidence that the world dominated by Rome just barely failed to become Mithraic, instead of Christian, for some twenty centuries. One can say with no less certainty that,

though it did not become Mithraic, this failure was due neither to any "superiority" of the Christian doctrine of salvation over the teachings of the priests of Mithra, nor to the absence of sanguinary rites among Christians, but rather to the protection granted to the religion of the Crucified by the emperor Constantine, and not to any other factor. Indeed it was Christianity's very intolerance—especially, perhaps even exclusively—that procured the preference of the master of the Roman world.

What the emperor wanted above all was to give to this immense world, populated by people of diverse traditions and ethnicities, the most solid unity possible, without which it would be difficult to resist for long the external pressures of the so-called barbarians. Unity of worship was certainly the only kind of unity that he could hope to impose on his empire, on condition that it could be achieved quickly. Among the popular religions of salvation, Mithraism undoubtedly counted the greatest number of faithful. But it did not seem capable of being spread rapidly enough, first and foremost because it did not claim to be the only Way and the only Truth. It risked allowing its rivals to survive, and the unity that Constantine so much desired would therefore not be accomplished—or would take centuries—whereas the interest of the empire demanded that it be done within a few decades.

One could say as much of the old cult of Cybele and Attis: its priests did not proclaim, following the example of the Jews, that they alone possessed the truth; on the contrary, they believed, as did all men of Antiquity (except the Jews), that truth has innumerable facets, and that each cult helps its faithful grasp an aspect of it. They, too, would have allowed rival religions to flourish in complete liberty.

Fourth-century Christianity, although penetrated with ideas and symbols borrowed from neo-Platonism, or from the old Aegean mystical substrate, or from still more remote forms of the eternal Tradition, had itself inherited the spirit of intolerance from Judaism. Even its most enlightened apologists, the most richly nurtured in traditional Greek culture—such as a St. Clement of Alexandria or an

Origen who, far from rejecting ancient wisdom, regarded it as a preparation for that of the gospels—did not put the two wisdoms on the same plane. There was, they believed, "progress" from the former to the latter, and the Jewish "revelation" retained its priority over the distant echo of the sole God's voice which one could detect in the pagan philosophers. As for the great mass of Christians, they dismissed as "abominations"—or "demons"—all the gods of the earth, except that One who had been revealed to men of all races through the Old Testament prophets—Jewish prophets—and through Jesus and his posthumous disciple, Paul of Tarsus, the latter entirely Jewish, the former regarded by the Church as a Jew, a "son of David," though in fact his true origins are unknown and even his historicity could be questioned.

The profound link that attaches Christianity (and in particular the "Holy Sacrifice of the Mass") to the ancient mysteries ensured its survival down to our own era. And it was, for Paul of Tarsus, a stroke of (political) genius to have given to the oldest myths of the Mediterranean world an interpretation that ensured to his own people an indefinite spiritual domination over that world and over all the peoples it was destined to influence during the centuries that followed. It was, for the emperor Constantine, a stroke of genius (also political), to have chosen to encourage a religion which would, by its rapid diffusion, give to the ethnic chaos that the Roman world then represented the only unity to which it could still aspire. And it was, for the German tribal chief Clodwig, known in French history as Clovis, again a stroke of genius (political, in his case also) to have felt that nothing would better ensure him permanent domination over his rivals, other German leaders, than his own adhesion (and that of his warriors) to Christianity, in a world then already three-quarters Christian, where bishops represented a power to be sought out as allies. Political genius, not religious—and still less philosophical—because in each case it aimed at power, personal or national, at material stability, at success, but not at truth in the full sense of the word, that is, accord with the Eternal. It involved mundane human ambitions, not a thirst for knowledge of the Laws

of Being, nor a thirst for union with the Essence of all things—the Soul, at once transcendent and immanent, of the Cosmos.

For if it had been different, there would have been no reason for the religion of the Nazarene to have triumphed for so many centuries: its rivals were its equals. Christianity had only one practical "advantage" over them: its fanaticism, its infantile intolerance inherited from the Jews—a fanaticism, an intolerance, which, during the early days of the Church, cultivated Romans or Greeks could only find laughable, and which Germans, nurtured in their own beautiful religion, simultaneously cosmic and warlike, could rightly find absurd, but which would give to Christianity a militant character, which it alone possessed, since orthodox Judaism remained—and would remain—the faith of a single people.

Christianity could henceforth be combated only by another religion with equally universal pretensions, just as intolerant as it. And it is a fact that, until now, it has lost ground on a significant scale only when confronted by Islam and, in our era, by the false religion which is Communism.

Notes

The preceding text is from Chapter III of Savitri Devi's Souvenirs et réflexions d'une Aryenne (Calcutta: Savitri Devi Mukherji, 1976). Trans. Irmin Vinson. Savitri's footnotes have been omitted; the title is editorial. The original French text is also available.

Letter to a Comrade

New Delhi
1 October 1980

Much Beloved and Admired Comrade,

Hopefully you have received my long letter, which I sent to you some days ago, and in which I explained in detail the practical—I should say “the technical” reasons—for which I cannot leave India, without running the risk of having to leave it permanently. Surely you will have communicated all this also to Mrs. Asmus, since I would not like to be forced to write such a long—and boring!—letter twice.

But now different thoughts. Your—and Frau Lotte’s—quite royal birthday gift of 285 DM 65 (two hundred eighty-five German Marks and sixty-five Pfennig), that you sent together, moved me deeply. I am not worthy of so much money—and so much love—as I never was able to give for those great things, which are dear to my heart, such great sums since I never earned too much money—and that’s my own fault (if you would call something like that a “fault,” that is). I condemned myself, on 28 May 1928 (I would become conscious only about one year later—1929—of my NS faith) to poverty and a life of financial difficulties, when I rejected my French citizenship in Athens and accepted Greek citizenship.

(Although I do not regret it, I would not do so now, for the simple reason that in today’s world every citizenship is just as bad as the others—precisely because so few correspond to the true soul of a people. The official Greece is no better than the official France or each official “state,” which are all only the colonies of the international financial power, the policies of which are imposed

upon the great and the small. But in 1928, I was 23 years old... and not 22—and I am now 75. It would be something to despair, if I had remained so naive.)

There was a competition in Athens in June 1928 for a position as a teacher of the French language in a Greek High School. I participated in it, and told my good, beloved French friend Viviane (whom Mrs. Asmus knows) that that was the reason why I, on 28 May 1928, assumed Greek citizenship. I did not lie. But I had—from love for my young friend, who is so good from any point of view—also not told the whole truth.

Family wise, I had much more to do with Lombardy than with Greece. My father's mother, born Clotilda Porza, was from the vicinity of Turin. My grandfather's mother as well—all blond, blue-eyed, Nordic types. From Greece—or rather from the Greek upper-class of Constantinople came, I was told, my great-grandfather, Pavlos Portassi, born in 1770, who came to Italy around 1790 to study. He would by marriage join a well-to-do north Italian family and became established. His son Karl—thus my grandfather—was “precepteur” (as it means in German: the position that oversees the collection of tax money). When Savoyards were to choose to become Italian or French, he chose France, and his children were thus born “French” according to French law. My father, the fifth of six, was born 14 February 1861. He knew Italian and French but very little Greek. (Already as a child, by my own choice, I systematically learned modern [and a little ancient] Greek. And I grew up among many Greeks our acquaintance.)

My rejection of France and the Allies began in 1915, when I was not yet 10 years old. In the Catholic school, where I first went, they told us in 1914—thus at the beginning of the war—that the Germans were “terrible barbarians” because they had attacked “poor little Belgium.” I did not have much interest at that time in the war between the great powers, but remembered quite well the second Balkan War—1912 and 1913—Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria against Turkey, and then Serbia and Greece against Bulgaria. I still

remember an anti-Bulgarian Greek... of the time. Nothing disturbed me until 1915. (If not the 1909 story of the treatment of the poor dogs of Constantinople by the "Young Turks." I did not know, naturally, that the three leaders of the Young Turks, Estad Pasha, Talal Pasha, and Enver Pasha were all Jews.) In 1915 the French army (under general Sarraill) landed in Thessaloniki (Salonika), and, with the agreement with the Prime Minister of Greece, Venizelos (I did not know that he was a Freemason!), did in Greece what they wanted. The British fleet blocked the small country, which cannot live without imports—for 10 months. On 1 December 1916 the French also landed in Athens—all because Greece did not wish to fight with the Allies in the war. I was indignant. I thought, "The liars!" The Germans are barbarians, because they marched into "poor little Belgium." And this pack! Why doesn't one call them barbarians because they force their tyranny upon "poor little Greece"?

I asked my father. He explained: the Allies fight "for democracy." Then I said, "I shit on democracy." I hated the Allies! I went—not far from where my parents lived—behind the newly-built station (Gare des Brotteaux), and as it became pitch dark, wrote on the wall in meter-high letters, with chalk stolen from the school: "A bas les Alliés, vive l'Allemagne!" i.e., "DOWN WITH THE ALLIES, LONG LIVE GERMANY!" Germany was at that time for me only a patch of color in the geography book. But my hate for the liars was genuine. I said to my mother: "When I am 21 years old, I will reject my French nationality and take that of 'poor little Greece.'"

My mother, who was not at all upset, did not ask, "Why not choose England?" even though she was an Englishwoman. For I hated England just as much because of the blockade of Greece.

After 1918, I was still disgusted by the French hate-demonstrations with the chant: "L'Allemagne paiera!" (Germany will pay!), and by what I heard of the conditions of occupation in Germany: occupation by Black Senegalese troops in a land of the White race. That was the end! (But please do not say that to all the good

Frenchmen who are on our side today, and whom I would like never to upset.)

Then came the Greek-Turkish war of 1920 to 1922, and the dirty role of the policy of the great powers (France among them). In March 1921 Mr. Franklin-Bouillon in the name of France formed an alliance with the Turks.

In 1928 I completed my Licence ès Lettres [Master of Arts degree] and began to write my doctoral dissertations (there are at least 2 books that one must write for the title of doctor). I stayed in a completely modest room in Athens, lived by giving lessons, and worked in the library. One should remain three years in Greece, in order to be able to get citizenship. I—because I had Greek relatives—got it in a week. But, in the Interior Ministry, where I was interviewed, a man said to me: “With a doctorate and all the education that you have, you can have a marvelous position in France. Here you would have to begin with piece-work, or, if you cannot wait, live by giving lessons, like every half-educated foreigner. Why do you reject French nationality? Very well-educated Greeks have intentionally taken it in order to obtain important positions.” Probably it meant nothing to them to be compatriots of general Sarraïl, of Jonnard, of Dartige du Fournet, and all the others who exerted criminal military coercion on Greece—and compatriots also of Franklin Bouillon! To me it meant something. I would rather live by giving lessons: poor, but without compromise.

The government official said to me: “Well then, congratulations and condolences.”

I also received in France (where I ended my study in my parents’ house) a Licence ès Sciences [Master of Sciences degree] (in Chemistry) and came back from the East in 1935 for a few days to get my Doctoral diploma.

In Greece my longing for the pre-Christian world had met with little response. Many things infuriated me, among other things the indifference of the people to trees and animals. For one (long) moment, I thought of going to Germany, but despite your opposition to Jewry, the propaganda at this time (the public at least, but I knew no other) was for me much too tolerant of Christianity. But I felt that true N.S. [National Socialism] is incompatible with Christianity.

I went to India, where the Aryan tradition remains in its essence (too bad that at that time I knew no Initiates of the Thule Society).

In India also I lived on “lessons” and little jobs. I was employed only 9 years in France as a teacher (1960 to 69), for which I get the small pension on which I live—for which, however, I had to be recognized again as “French” by the authorities.

One day—of you are interested—I will tell you of the first, the very first German, a prisoner of war whom I saw a half hour in a camp, whose commander was an acquaintance of my father—a certain Monsieur Lagrillon. Well, I will tell it now, since I cannot send my letter on its way: Today is Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday, and all businesses and the post office are closed.

I was 13 years old when Monsieur Lagrillon invited my father to visit his camp with my mother and me. The camp stood on the site in Lyons—or rather in a suburb of Lyons—where today stands the enormous hospital called the “Grange blanche” [White Barn]. At that time, the whole place was a building site where prisoners of war worked.

We saw the bedrooms, and I was afraid of the large, half-wild dogs the guards held so that no prisoners could escape at night. Then we saw the foundation walls, which rose slowly from the earth. Then Monsieur Lagrillon said to my father: “We have here a prisoner who is very educated and among other things knows English well. Would you like to meet him?” My father said that he did not know

English, which was true. “However,” he added, “my wife is an Englishwoman. If she would like to speak to him...”

They brought to us a red-blond, tall youth with gold-rimmed eyeglasses, with beautiful manners, the type of the natural aristocrat.

My mother—the pacifist—expressed to him the desire that soon no traces of the war should ever be seen, and “that never again would there be war between brother peoples.”

I looked the youth with admiration, until my father spoke and said: “You may say also some words in English to the young man.”

I jumped on the opportunity, like a cat on the wall. “Please know,” I said to the young German, “that all these long war years I was never against you and your people. The hypocritical Allies led a disgusting propaganda campaign against you, which ran over me like water on a duck, without affecting me. I have hated the Allies from day they abused Greece so cruelly and forced it into the war on their side. My warmest wish is that ‘next time’ you smash them. I would be glad to see you as the lords of Europe! And hope to see it as soon as possible!”

The young man merely smiled. (What else could he do as a prisoner of war?) He was named Mr. Geißlin or Geißler or something like that. I do not remember exactly. If he is still alive, he must be over 80 years old. I wonder if he ever thought of that 13 year old blonde girl (I was also blonde as a child, but with brown eyes, dark-blonde as an adult, now more white than grey), if he ever thought of the girl who said to him after the end of the First World War in the prisoner of war camp, “I would be glad to see the Germans as the Lords of Europe.”

He must have remembered during the Kampfzeit [i.e., Hitler’s struggle for power]—and in June of 1940.

When we returned home, my mother the English pacifist asked me what I had said to him. She said nothing, except that I had “the right, even when so young, to have my own opinions and my own ‘likes and dislikes.’” She never tried to impose her pacifism on me—and she never understood when I said that if I went to the trouble of having children, I would make it my mission that they accept all my basic ideas and, that if not, I would regard them as enemies.

Then she said that I should have nothing to do with what one calls “love” and motherhood. (I did it, but not to obey her words!)

My father died (of paralysis) to 24 February 1932 (12 years after the establishment of the NSDAP).

During the war, my mother—although 75 years old in 1940, 80 in 1945—joined the resistance movement in France. I did not know it naturally. There was no communication between Calcutta and Europe. She told me 1946, when I visited her, and said also that if I had been present in France in 1944 and had actively worked against the resistance (as I then surely would have), she would have handed me over to the resistance. She died on 25 March 1960. Forgive this long, badly written letter.

With love and with the greeting of the faithful. Give my greetings to your nine beautiful children. How old are the eldest? And what are their names?

... my eyes and handwriting are so... good that you write with a typewriter!

Your devoted,
Savitri Devi Mukherji

Today, 2 October, Gandhi’s birthday. But (much better!), Alexander’s great victory on 2 October 331 BC in Arbulus. 8 October 1897, Himmler’s birthday. I will write Mrs. B—.

Notes

This is a very interesting and informative autobiographical letter written by Savitri Devi to a German female comrade who will remain anonymous. The letter was hand-written by Savitri in German and then transcribed into a typescript. Ellipses indicate passages where Savitri's words were illegible to the transcriptionist. The fate of the original manuscript is unknown.

Letters to Miguel Serrano

New Delhi
28 March 1980

Dear comrade and friend,

I am writing in English as you tell me you do not read German (a statement which I can hardly understand, as among the letters you sent me, some are in German). I could write in French if you prefer or—with some clumsiness—in Italian.

Unfortunately I have not studied Spanish. I can understand a little of it on account of my knowledge of Italian and French, languages that helped me when I was in Spain (1960) although I mostly spoke German there, being the guest of the late Otto Skorzeny.

I should very much appreciate a copy in French of your book on “esoteric Hitlerism.”¹

In my eyes, even though Adolf Hitler “decided to become a politician” at the end of World War I, He never succeeded in doing so. Otherwise He never would have ordered 10 kilometers between His advancing army and the fleeing British Expeditionary Force, in 1940. Any “politician”—any political-minded army chief—would have ordered His soldiers to accelerate their pace and capture (or wipe out) the whole British Expeditionary Force, not allowed them to embark at Dunkirk, in safety.

But the Führer was much more than a politician. He was an Incarnation of the divine Energy that fights to save whatever still appears to deserve to survive, be it in this dark age. So He held out His hand—not once, but again and again—to England. England

chose to listen to her Jewish misleaders instead of to Him, and rejected the sincere, friendly gesture.

For that, she shall die—not the glorious death on the battlefield, but the slow, nauseating death through blood-mixture and all manner of vice. Within less than 300 years to come—unless there be a miracle—there shall be no more England. My mother's compatriots (my mother was descended from Jütland Vikings) will have given way before teeming millions of mongrels (a hotch potch of Jamaicans, Africans, Pakistanis, Jews, and degenerate English women) with nothing in common with their forefathers, except that they might well still be "Christians."

The few remaining pure-blooded English Aryans—50,000? 20,000? —foreigners in the land of their ancestors, will gather on the eighth of May and curse Mr. Churchill, and on the 16th of October, and pay homage to the martyrs of Nuremberg, and on the 20th of April, and sing hymns to the glory of the Race-Saviour, Adolf Hitler, and bow down in shame and in grief before His everlasting Presence, that those fools of 1940-'41 rejected.

The real reason—to me—why we did not (could not) win the war (and that is the point I put forward in my book *The Lightning and the Sun*, written 1948-56, reprinted last year by Samisdat Publishers [address omitted]) is that our Führer was not the last great Incarnation of the present Time cycle, but at the most the one before the last. He was "both Sun and Lightning" all right (all fighters against the current of decay are; have to be) but He had in Him "too much Sun, not enough Lightning," because only the last one (the one the Hindu Scriptures call the "Kalki" avatar) will be equally Sun and Lightning, and will win, and open a new Time cycle, beginning, as all Time cycles do, with a "golden Age" on the ruins of this wretched one.

You must know Franz Pfeiffer, also living in Santiago. I believe I sent him the last copy I had of *The Lightning and the Sun*. I also

sent him a dozen copies of my French book *Souvenirs et réflexions d'une Aryenne*. Do please ask him to give you one.

The new book I began is hardly getting on as I am suffering from a "cataract" on both eyes (shall soon have to be operated at least on one eye—the right eye—or shall not see at all any longer. I shall be a full 75 years old on the 30th of September this year).

Mr. A.K. Mukherji—of whom Herr von Selzam, at that time Consul General for Germany in Calcutta, had written that "no man in Asia has rendered the Third German Reich service comparable to his"—would be going on for 77, were he still alive. He died here in Delhi, on the 21st of March 1977—a fine, fair-skinned, Aryan-featured type of Indian Brahmin, fully conscious of the identity of values of Hitlerism and traditional Hinduism.

Your letters—to and from Manfred Roeder—have grieved me. Few things grieve me as much as the sight of misunderstanding, verging sometimes on possible enmity, between National Socialists. We are so few in this immense, indifferent—when not downright hostile—world! We should stress whatever unites us, neglect whatever divides us—unless of course it be too really dangerous to neglect.

I have never met Manfred Roeder, although I am in correspondence with him. I cannot but believe he is sincerely fighting for the survival and final victory of our common Aryan race, over the forces of disintegration that are threatening it more than ever—otherwise why should he live the hard life of an exile, away from his devoted wife, and six beautiful children?

The confidence Mr. Roeder seems to have in the Russians astonished me, at first. But then I said to myself that I have no understanding (and no practice) of international politics, and that, therefore, if a sincere National Socialist, and a man of law, accustomed to see into people (it's his job), says the Russians are "good"—that is to say, "usable for the benefit of both Germany, the

Führer's country, and of Aryandom at large" —then it must be true; at least, it is an opinion that should be considered, and tested.

You are older, and more experienced than M. Roeder—and have that knowledge of people that a diplomat is bound to have—and what you say is nearer to my spontaneous feelings. I know all Russians are not Communists, and many are instinctively anti-Jewish. Mr. Mukherji spent nearly two years in Russia, and used to speak Russian fluently—all the greater a reason for which the Indian Communists positively hated him, when on his return from the "Soviet paradise," in 1932 (I was in India then but did not meet him till 1938, in Calcutta) he came out with the only pro-Hitler magazine (a fortnightly) in India, the *New Mercury*, financed by the Third Reich. He told me a number of anecdotes in support of this—a Russian, called Lakatchow, radiated for three years from the Communist party, for calling a Jew who had stepped on his toes in a tramcar, a "dirty kike"; and a number of people who, in the privacy of their homes, used to turn off their radio as soon as the subject of "materialist dialectic" appeared.

But all that does not mean that the Russian home and foreign policy are not governed by Jews—or slaves of Jews. So are all policies after the disaster of 1945. That is why, personally, I support none, hate them all, and only wait for the day in which, of all we are made to call "civilisation," nothing shall be left. Hurray!

No more Jewish values for Aryan consumption. No more laws to protect the weak against the strong, the sick against the healthy. No more beautiful, healthy, innocent, and trusting living creatures, tortured in laboratories, to see what happens when this or that is done, or to help patch up good for nothing sick people! No more of all that which has revolted me from childhood.

As a South American, you must remember the words of Huayna Capac's soothsayers in answer to his request to tell him the meaning of the three circles he had noticed around the moon: the red one, the black one, and the smoky one: "The red one means civil

war: bloodshed in the royal family. The black one means disaster—defeat at the hands of powerful foes; the smoky one is the worst; it means: of all we know, of all we revere, nothing will remain!”

At that time everything in the Inca Empire looked just as before—seemed everlasting. But Huayna Capac had been foolish enough to order the division of the empire between his two sons—Huascar, the son of his sister and wife, the legitimate heir, and Atahualpa, the son of the woman he loved. And the Spanish Caravellas were, if not yet “on their way,” about the cross the Atlantic.

When will the circles around the moon reappear and show the end of all that the world holds great today: Democracy, man-centered philosophies (all of them, from Christianity to Communism, included), the cult of decadence? And the dawn of the next Time cycle in Adolf Hitler’s invisible presence?

You say, quite rightly, that the Russians did nothing (nor did the Americans) to break the falsehood about the mass-gassing of Jews, etc. To my shame (it shows my lack of scenting material impossibilities, i.e., lack of intelligence) I believed the gas-chamber stories and the tale of the six million Jews done away. I believed it for years.² But not being a lover of man, the stories had not on me the effect that their promoters had expected. I quote a passage I wrote in 1945 in the Preface of my book *Impeachment of Man*:

The one thing the propaganda did,—instead of stirring in me the slightest indignation against the supposed-to-be “war criminals”—was to rouse my hatred against the hypocrisy and cowardice underlying every man-centered attitude; to harden me in my bitter contempt for “man” in general; and... to prompt me to write this book: the answer to it, the spirit of which could be summed up in a few lines: “A ‘civilization’ that makes such a ridiculous fuss about alleged ‘war crimes’—acts of violence against the actual or potential enemies of one’s cause—and tolerates slaughterhouses and vivisection laboratories, and circuses and the fur industry (infliction of pain upon creatures that can never be for or against any cause),

does not deserve to live. Out with it! Blessed the day it will destroy itself, so that a healthy, hard, frank and brave, nature-loving and truth-loving élite of supermen with a life-centred faith,—a natural human aristocracy, as beautiful, on its own higher level, as the four-legged kings of the jungle—might again rise, and rule upon its ruins, for ever!”

My spontaneous answer to the six million story was: “A pity is was not sixteen million! Then the Jewish question would have been well-solved!”

I often repeated that I forbid anyone to criticise us for the treatment of our worst enemies unless he be himself a Jain, i.e., a member of an Indian religious sect, that kills no fleas, nor bugs, nor lice. For surely a politically active Jews (or pro-Jewish Aryan, by the way) is liable to create more mischief than any of these insects that cannot but live on blood (but so little of it!).

Now that I know the story is a lie, I say so. It is good propaganda with the man-loving, stupid majority!

Write to me whenever you feel like it.

With the ritual greeting,
Savitri Dêvi Mukherji³

[P.S.] I know de Mahieu⁴ only through his writings. Saint-Loup I know well and admire. His children, on their way to Nepal, paid a visit to me here in Delhi two years ago.

Notes

1. Miguel Serrano, *El Cordón Dorado: Hitlerismo Esotérico* [*The Golden Thread: Esoteric Hitlerism*] (1978).

2. In *And Time Rolls On*, Savitri claims that she believed the standard Holocaust story until 1977, when she read Arthur Butz's *The Hoax of the Twentieth-Century* (Torrance, Cal.: Institute for Historical Review, 1976). See *And Time Rolls On: The Savitri Devi Interviews*, ed. R.G. Fowler (Atlanta: Black Sun Publications, 2005), 162.

3. When signing her name, Savitri often put a circumflex over the "e" in *Dêvi*. She did not, however, do so when her name appeared in print.

4. Probably Jacques de Mahieu (b. 1915), the author of a number of books arguing that, beginning in the 10th century, the Vikings extensively explored the Americas and influenced the indigenous cultures.

* * *

New Delhi
31 March 1980

Dear comrade and friend,

I took the liberty of showing your letter to the best friend I have here in India: a Frenchwoman, half my age, but with much more experience and especially intelligence in the strong sense of the word, than me (I speak not of the capacity to construct irreproachable arguments, but to know people). She was filled with enthusiasm at your judgment ... and your self-control (in your reply to the virulent letter of Mr. R. [Roeder]) and wrote to you immediately. My letter, in response to yours, had to leave at the same time as hers; you will receive them at the same time.

Your letter encouraged me to reread *La Division Azul*, of Saint-Loup, which I have. What men these *Légionnaires* were! It is undoubtedly in their ranks that you took part in the fight against the eternal enemy in his current form: Communism. I am all the

more proud to have had a letter from you—with your reflections on the state of Russia, today at the doors of India, in Afghanistan.

I saw the Khyber Pass in October-November 1936. Went as far as Landiskotal—not to Kabul: in this time it was very difficult. I spoke about this extraordinary way of the conquerors in the chapter entitled “The Land without Masters” in the first book which I wrote after my doctoral theses: *The Lotus Pond*—written in 1937, published at the expense of Mr. Mukherji in 1940 (my first impressions—or the impressions of my first years—in India). I have no more than one sole copy (besides, I would have to make a good many corrections and additions!).

I am taking the liberty of sending—by air mail, registered—two copies of my book *Souvenirs et réflexions d’une Aryenne* also in French. I hope that certain passages do not displease you, even (perhaps) shock you. You will find there, nevertheless, I hope, some reflections that you will judge valid.

I have only one copy of *The Lightning and the Sun* (written 1948 to ’56). I loaned it out, and it has not yet been returned to me. If it is not returned to me soon, I will ask Samisdat Publishers [address omitted], which published a second edition, to send you a copy (unfortunately the images were not put in the original order).

With the ritual greeting of faithful, H.H.!

Savitri Dêvi Mukherji

* * *

Alix par Lozanne
20 April 1982

Very dear comrade!

Today I particularly think of you and of Mrs. RAU. Whether she still suffers in the grip of this awful illness, or now lives on with the ancestors, in the light of Valhalla? If she is there, then I would like to join her soon as well!

I see almost nothing. My right eye is already kaputt, and now the left is going the same way. By it I see as through thick fog, can scarcely differentiate between faces. Nevertheless I am still able to read and write (with a thick magnifying glass), and I could live alone, in an independent room, and prepare my simple meals. I want to be away from here as fast as possible.

Not only am I bored here, visitors very seldom come, and reading is difficult and becoming ever more so. What is more, all the room doors are glass, and the sharp neon light of the corridor (starting from 6 a.m.!) makes my eyes hurt. I cannot have it despite dark eyeglasses—it hurts so much!

I miss good Mrs. Ettmayer [address omitted], with whom I was almost happy despite my condition.

Today HE is 93 years old, if he is really still alive. WHEN will His Power finally appear, and put an end to this deplorable decadence?! I will probably not see that great day. Every day I call for death, the liberator!

Greet all the like-minded ones for me (Frau B— [address omitted] husband: Wulf-Dieter) and our “Viviane” from New Delhi.

With the most holy greeting,
Your devoted,
SAVITRI DEVI

Lotuses on the Surface

Europe is merely powerful; India is beautiful.

It is beautiful because mediocrity is rare there, because quality is preserved over quantity, birth over fortune, the highest human values over those one can buy.

It is not that Indians are, by nature, better than other men; they only have, alongside intellectual aptitudes equal to those of the most gifted peoples, a long spiritual heritage that enables them to know a whole world of essences, more subtle and vast than that of logical relations, a world that other "intellectual" peoples no longer know. They know how to keep the richness of intuition while acquiring the advantages of reason as much as the others. And this is thanks to that permanent culture of the heart, which is, for them, the Hindu religious atmosphere.

Something of it always remains in the personality, if not in the ideas: something imponderable, a hidden generosity, an elegant attitude, even in evil. It is possible that a Hindu, exiled as a youth and raised, far from India, in a totally different place, becomes worse than a European—worse from all points of view, because his nature leads him to extremes—but he will never become vulgar. And, without a doubt, there are in India even Hindus who, taken individually, are frankly bad; there are, in any case, in history and Hindu legend, more real than history. But there are none who are good out of cowardice. And that is one of glories of India.

India is the aristocratic land par excellence.

It has a pious horror of the artificial equality of men and races, cheap sentimentalism, the vulgarization of precious knowledge,

international fashion, and proselytizing religions, in a word, all that contributes, near and far, to creating a standardized human type.

It despises the careerists, the pretentious, the "simplistic," the devotees of "progress," the idolaters of science applied to material success, the idolaters of thought applied to leveling, the weak, people in a hurry. It has the strength of those for whom neither material losses, nor the opinion of the crowd, nor time matter. Somebody said that it takes a thousand years to form a true English "Gentleman." One needs ten thousand to form a Hindu of noble race, representing the most perfect of a humanity that he has surpassed.

Below this elite, there are the increasingly deep levels of the ignorant and miserable masses, apathetic through the force of overwhelming pressure, submissive, silent, unknowable; levels that are stacked, one upon another, until gradually, imperceptibly joining the most primitive of the aborigines of the land of India, bound for a hundred thousand years to their immutable, barely human existence. It is an enormous reservoir of unorganized forces, burning and vague aspirations, oppressive vital concerns, remote cosmic intuitions. It is a burgeoning of increasingly vegetative life, comparable with that of the humid and shady soil of the tropical forest, with the mysterious valleys of the ocean festooned with tangled algae and animated flowers—with the greenish, teeming bottom of a pond.

The incomparable elite plunges its long roots there.

The elite, which realizes the most stable human equilibrium, not through the tyrannical crushing of fertile animality, the matrix of the world, but through its symbolic stylization, its internal organization—its sublimation—resembles the beautiful immaculate lotuses which, their flexible stems intertwined in the nutritive mud, touch the very heart of Mother Earth, while on the quiet surface of the dark water, they open their blue petals to the sun... its uninterrupted creation seems to be the *raison d'être* of India.

The Hindu elite is not a minority of skilful people; what it is remains always more important than what it does. It is an aristocracy of character, culture, and spirituality. Divine incarnations form a part of it. Hindus whose lives are quite unobtrusive in the world form a part of it too. The most famous are not necessarily the most perfect. Sri Vivékananda said that the greatest yogis are silent. And before the Gautama Buddha, whom five hundred million men revere, there were other Buddhas whose names are not even mentioned in legend.

However, moral beauty and, in a general manner, the value of the person on planes other than intelligence and action, insufficient though they may be to make a man a leader, are in India, along with the other qualities required everywhere, essential conditions of success and popularity. All the great men of modern India form part, like those of ancient India, of the highest human elite, whether they demonstrate it on the political scene or elsewhere.

Another consequence of the same spirit, essentially Hindu, that shines in ordinary life is the esteem everyone accords to Brahmins, rich or poor—and sometimes, alas, regardless of a recognized lack of value. It is not that one venerates there the man, personally, but the Brahmin, i.e. the elite that this man is seen to represent. It is that, in principle, the Brahmin is a spiritual king. He is, in fact, always treated as if he were one. He feels that nobility carries obligations, and he deserves the honors he is given. It should be recognized, and on the whole the Brahmins feel it, that there is in India an aristocracy other than one solely of birth. One need only compare them to some educated and highly refined castes, such as, for example, the Vaidyas or the Kayasthas of Bengal, from which so many eminent personalities come every day.

It should be noted, as well, that India treats with the same esteem all men, Brahmins or not, whose sanctity or whose genius clearly raises them above their contemporaries. Mahatma Gandhi was from the Bania caste; the immortal Tukaram was a humble Sudra; and the

virtuous Nandanar, who, in South India—so very orthodox—is remembered today nonetheless, was of even humbler extraction.

* * *

It is often said: "India has no history," meaning that the material facts that mark its development are badly dated or are not dated at all and, consequently, difficult to classify chronologically.

It is almost made into a reproach. No one hesitates to blame it on the lack of organization inherent in Oriental civilizations, and to see there, moreover, a proof that India has a great need to submit to European methods and swallow Europe's sense of order.

But historical intuition, however little one has, must try to get closer to the bottom of things. This is why history has some interest, because the aspects of life are not of equal importance to all peoples. It is necessary to ask why India is "without history."

It is because, for it, material facts count little. It is the experience, for which they could be the occasion, that counts. The experience alone is preserved. What good is it to preserve the memory of contingent facts? What good to put what is secondary in the foreground? What good to make enduring what is by nature transitory? The Earth itself changes form. But experience leads to supreme knowledge, to the knowledge of the permanent. In a hundred ways, with various expressions and symbols, India has consigned this knowledge to its sacred texts. It is not interested in the rest. The history of India is, above all, the history, on the human plane, of a set of spiritual forces for which before and after have little importance.

For those who sense the soul of a country behind the adventures of its destiny in time, the imposing vision of Indian epics indeed retains, in this respect, priority over the muddled chronologies of princes, Chalukyas or Yadavas—or Rajputs—even accounts of the immortal defeats that gave only the land to the Afghans, Turks, or Mongols, and only the gold to successive overseas Empires.

Ancient India left, of its historical life, still less light than medieval India. In books reporting the history of the Gods, impersonal and symbolic accounts of the system of human experience; in books of yogic asceticism, containing the anonymous acquisitions of the sages, the experience of those who knew how to control their consciousness, to realize in it the harmony of the World, and who heard in their ears the music of the celestial spheres: here, for India, is the essential; here is what was worth the trouble of preserving from a past of several millennia, as rich in warlike glories and peaceful flowerings as that of any other great people.

Other peoples have preserved lists of their kings and ruins of their temples: they have a history. But they lost the tradition of the essential that India has preserved.

India has the cult of the impersonal, of the universal.

To its history even, it does not attach any other importance than that of an individual experience. Land of burgeoning civilization, of complex religion, with innumerable contradictory aspects, society subdivided to infinity, in which there is place for all, it sees, in any "special case" that is affirmed in the name of its own value, the unjustified exaggeration of a small part that fails in its role by leaving its place.

It is unaware of national fanaticism, considering itself from the point of view of Man.

It is unaware, by the same token, of the idolatry of Man and all the stupidities and atrocities that accompany it in civilizations flowering under the sign of "science." It inserts Man in the world of the Living. For it, only that which is universal, of a cosmic universality, is really worthy of being exalted. And the Individual, the Nation, Man, the Earth, are only points of view on this reality and this supreme value which is expressed in each one of them and exceeds them all: Being..

India has the cult of Being.

Its scholars—its sages—are those who see what is universal, further and more deeply than discursive intelligence helped by a somewhat unsure intuition can go. "Darshana": vision; it is the Indian name for any philosophy—science of Being.

Its artists always designed and still design art—whatever it be—not as an imitation of the visible, nor as an exaltation of the self, but as the expression of one beauty and one truth, invisible and intangible, impersonal—essential; of one "universal," grasped directly in what passes.

Its heroes are those who conquered or defended whole kingdoms while remaining detached from their own action.

India has a sense of the relative. It knows that all individuality, however unique and irreplaceable, is secondary. Its great individualities are those who, having known themselves on the inside, and disciplined the forces of the unconscious, the blind energies that stir all matter, have managed to reflect the universe in its harmony.

They reflect it, while retaining irreducible differences of nuance, attitude, power, in a word, expression—as the pale lotuses are reflected on the surface of the water. India loves them because they are beautiful; because they have the disinterestedness and calm of complete beings; because they never speak about themselves; because they render tangible the identity of man, of the earth, of all that is destined to perish one day with the boundless and bottomless Cosmos in which Life eternal continues its rounds in time without end.

India is "classical" in culture and temperament, to the roots of the soul.

"Classicism" is for Europe, before anything, a literary ideal, but, on the contrary, is for India the internal standard of life.

But worship of the universal does not mean exaltation of uniformity. Uniformity—which, unless it be mere mediocrity, is always artificial—is obtained from the outside; the universal is grasped from the inside; its pursuit does not crush individuality but disciplines it, harmonizes it, "stylizes it," makes it entirely oneself while being more than oneself.

Whence this truth, which could seem paradoxical to a "romantic": the most universal individualities are the most original. The same observation is valid for works: compare, indeed, the great anonymous epics of the world to the spirited, bitter, indiscrete creation of the politician-poet, drowned, in fact, through his passion in the wake of an epoch. Nothing is more irritating than the talkative patriot who badgers the foreigner with the praises of his country, than the singer who delivers to the public the story his love affairs, than all other insatiable lovers of fast and fleeting publicity.

Individuality, personal or national, is very precious; thus India draws itself up against all that tends to diminish it, to dissolve it. But it needs, at first, to be decent, not to throw itself in people's faces, to have a sense of the hierarchy of values and remain in its place—to be modest. It is, then, the source of life and principle of creation. If not, it is nothing but the source of anarchy.

India is the born enemy of anarchy because in it the obscure forces of being disperse and lose themselves, because anarchy is opposed to slow and powerful stylizations of complex life. Both Aristocratic character and Hindu classicism seem to proceed from the most intelligent love of Life; from this love which, in the cauldron of passive and chaotic existence, can already distinguish the natural lines of forces, the anticipated plan of the most advanced creations.

* * *

One of the most popular demonstrations of Indian classicism is the reserve, the discretion so universal from one end of Hindu society to the other. One can notice without difficulty, in all India, a moral "behavior" that is a sign of strength.

Perhaps, for example, a young Indian left for England six years ago in order to continue his studies there. He left at home his parents, wife, and two babies. All are present at the Howrah station to welcome him back after so long a time. His parents have aged; his wife also, perhaps; the children are seven and eight years old. He sees them waiting for him on the platform. It is quite certain that an inexpressible emotion follows, but he is its master. He does not call out. He does not rush forward. He gets out of the train calmly, like a man. From respect, he wipes the dust from the feet of his mother and old father, throws a simple glance to his wife, who lowers her eyes; strokes the black curls of the young girls who raise towards him their large eyes shining with happiness, and returns with them, by taxi, to the house that welcomes him as before.

Meanwhile, no public embraces, no tears, no effusions, no indiscreet display of sentiment. The whole scene remains dignified, as it should be. The deepest emotions are holy things: it would have been equally out of place to make a ridiculous or a touching spectacle for the travelers and porters in the station. Indians have an innate sense of decency in all that touches the heart.

It is very rare, likewise, to find an Indian who speaks a lot about himself, and impossible to encounter an Indian woman who is not modest in her purest joys as well as her sorrows. One can quite easily imagine discussions, confessional free-for-alls, more or less sincere, between European ladies at tea. There is no equivalent in India, even in the company of Hindu ladies with whom I traveled the most. The Indian woman hides her intimate sufferings, her disillusionings, her heart-rending pains, not under the coarse mask of a gaiety too loud to be true, but under calm of a soul that endeavors to be released from individual contingencies, who instead of

suffering her experience, forces herself to use it to open a broader and more disinterested view on the world—a more beautiful view.

One has the general impression that there is much hidden suffering in India, but that there is also, alongside it, a deep serenity. The individual does not revolt. There is, in his place, a primitive sense of his own insignificance (admitted elsewhere, but not experienced). This experience, if it does not throw him into apathy, helps him to find, in silence, the strength to surpass himself.

Yet such a national elite seems to flower on a background of immense misery; and likewise, on the background of repressed aspirations, disappointed hopes, daily renunciations, hard duties, seems to be sketched, little by little, during the course of years that resemble each other, a higher and wholly interior life—the true life—of the individuals that in Europe one would call "average"; the anonymous Indian life: a "classical" work of art if there ever was one.

* * *

The Hindu religion is indeed the most aristocratic there is.

It is even one of the reasons, it seems, for why it never took up residence beyond the limits of the Indian world. The religions that are or can appear egalitarian have the widest success. The crowd loves equality.

Hinduism recognizes and sanctions the inequality of men in their birth, as in their indefinite diversity.

It by no means seeks to reduce one or the other; it insists on the contrary. It inserts each man in his place in a complex social network, in principle according to what they are by nature; according to their aptitudes, their degree of evolution; and it exhorts each one, in this place, to give his best. The contents of the "duty," the mode of worship, are not conceived as uniform. The

religion seeks to follow the secret intention of Nature, to assist evolution. What counts, for each one, as it is written, is his "svadharma," i.e., in the broad meaning of the word, his own standard—which does not necessarily mean the standard that is liked by each, but that which is appropriate to him.

The ancient and persistent caste system, so much decried and badly understood in Europe, rests, in theory, on the natural inequality and diversity of men and races. Like the most excellent things, it gave rise over time, and still gives rise today, to sad misunderstandings and regrettable abuses. Hereditary untouchability is, certainly, the worst social state that has been defended or tolerated on its behalf. Cleverly exploited, it has become nowadays, abroad, a too-convenient excuse to disparage India and, in India itself even, a danger to Hinduism. In addition to that, it is, in South India especially, the pretext of a moral attitude, if not action, in absolute contradiction with the respect for beings on which, however, no religion has insisted as much as Hinduism.

But the abuses prove only the stupidity of men. The principles, drawn from nature itself and formulated by ancient rishis who lived in supreme wisdom, are no less perfect. Historically, the caste system contributed a lot to preserving the integrity of Hindu society in the midst of all the storms of the past. Philosophically, it expresses in an admirable way, on the social plane, the subtle and manifold genius of the Indian heart. It is not to be rejected, but to be applied, according to its original principle, which is natural and eternal, not according to outdated requirements of ages that are no more. It is to be rehabilitated in the India of today in a spirit of intelligence, not to be preserved in a spirit of routine. Because it is not a dead thing.

The spectacle that Hinduism offers, on the outside, is also a consequence of its genius.

The first impression that one who knows nothing of it in advance must have is, it seems, of a vast ensemble, inextricable like a jungle,

without defined directives, without unity, without general ideas; that of a luxuriant bouquet of beliefs and practices where one finds the oddest, most shocking, and most sublime things—pell-mell. Those who abstain from any flesh, and even eggs, in the name of the religion: Hindus. Those who offer goats in sacrifice to the Divinity—in the middle of the Twentieth century!—Hindus too. Those who, with offerings of flowers and sweets, prostrate themselves before primitive statues, strange symbols of wood or stone, naive images on printed paper: Hindus as well. Those who, without the assistance of any visible symbol, are engulfed—directly—in interior contemplation of the Heart of the World: Hindus still!

Nine times out of ten the foreigner, who understands nothing there, does not even try to understand. He criticizes. Criticism is easy and advantageous: it helps the European to feel conscious of his "superiority." (Despite everything, he ought only to converse just once for an hour with a cultivated Hindu, religious in the true sense of the word!)

But not all men have—fortunately—the ideas about the superiority of civilizations of the Europeans installed in India. With the eyes of those who can see, the inextricable cluster of beliefs, practices, and religious symbols that form Hinduism is penetrated by a deep unity. And it owes its cohesion to a concept of religion, as simple as it is admirable, common at least to all Hindus: the highest spirituality being only the crown of the whole of life, one should not, at any price, be detached from life, however multiple and unequally evolved. The man who has only little experience and a relatively poor spiritual heritage cannot conceive of God in the manner of one refined by thousands and thousands of existences. Allow him the rites that speak a known language to him, ideas that are adapted to him! Evolution will do the rest, all alone. To force before the hour gives only artificial results.

All the manifestations of Hindu piety, including the most crude, are the natural, sincere, and adequate demonstrations of human piety relative to a certain level of awakening of the soul. No one, in

principle, has the right to dismiss any; the soul wakes up gradually. True religion cannot be uniform any more than true culture. Only the external organization of worship, rites, material obligations, etc., could be. But why would they be? Why enforce them? True religion would not have anything to gain there, on the contrary.

India has understood for millennia that organization must first be interior, that uniformity is not unity, that generalized intellectual habit is not culture.

It is perhaps because of this that India never made systematic and constant efforts to organize itself on the levels upon which other countries are organized. Historically, this is, perhaps, one of the causes of its weakness. But the historical point of view is not its own.

Moreover, who knows? Nothing proves a priori that modern India is incapable of organization and creation, simultaneously, on several planes. The future will tell.

* * *

Land of fertile contrasts, India contains extremes—all kinds of extremes. It does not apologize for any. It recognizes without sorrow the symmetrical manifestations of the same energy that it adores, which is itself, and which is God.

It contains life: crude, heavy, overflowing, soft, with all its torpor and all its manifold richness; life unorganized, formless, and free, which, with the irresistible slowness of cosmogonic transformations, exalts itself, purifies itself unceasingly—stylizes itself—in the unconscious play of its own forces. It contains its religious thought and its culture, the most rich and the most beautiful at the same time, which have been, in the course of the centuries, colored successively by all fulgurations the tropical imagination slowly disciplined; made true by the experience of the

sages; made alive by the uninterrupted creation of the artists; made immortal by the unshakeable fidelity of a whole people.

It contains the science and the poetry of the world.

But it is difficult to embrace in an overall view. He who comes into contact, at the same time, with those few who are the best on earth and the very humble ones barely nourished by its inexhaustible soil, has the impression of primitive Chaos on which, and in which, Perfection is sought unceasingly.

India is the magnified microcosm of humanity.

All countries are microcosms of humanity, but in more or less striking ways. Here, one is struck by the richness and the relief of the tableau, by the value of contrasts. All that the world contains—the disparate, the tragic, the calm, the inextricable and the plastic, the shadowy and the luminous, spread out over all the continents and the centuries—India contains today, collected, concentrated, stylized, completely enhanced with its universal meaning, at one moment of time—currently—and in an area smaller than little Europe.

There is nothing to add to the truths that it has discovered. Nothing to add, either, to the human value of its most perfect representatives. If beings of flesh and spirit from another planet could desire to know humanity in its most favorable light, it is among the best Hindus that the Earth should choose its ambassador. And there is, likewise, down to the most primitive aspects of Indian popular life, nothing to remove that will not, by itself, slowly evolve in beauty.

Hindu India is also, on more than one side, the sister of a particular Europe.

Despite everything that separates them, it is incontestably more like contemporary Europe than it is like either yellow Asia, on the one

hand, or, on the other hand, the world of Islam. But it is not like the West of today that it acts.

The Western pilgrim who vainly seeks in other climes a living vision of his dream stops, often with a shiver of admiration—and of emotion—before the rites and pageantry of Hindu temples.

It is as if the whole soul of old, forgotten Europe, pagan and classical Europe, long since suppressed, were there, immortal, transposed into the civilization of a hot country. Something here is close to what came to resemble the processions of ancient Greece and its festivals! Undoubtedly, the processions of women and girls, draped with same elegance as them, advancing, one behind another, like them, in the half light of a hall of carved pillars, in which floats the perfume of incense; carrying offerings, like them, and almost the same offerings; beautiful, undoubtedly—like them! Here is the abolished cult that was to be, more or less, the one that the Emperor Julian, come too late, made vain efforts to restore!

The Hindu religion in its popular expression, as we have seen, is, all things considered, the Greek religion of before Byzantium; it is also all the old Aryan religions of old Europe: religions of the spirit of tribe or city, at the very least, and, in general, of kindness and respect to all beings besides.

One could almost say that ancient Europe—Greece, especially—and India, are counterparts. One can find, in the religious legends and symbols of one and the other, exciting parallels and differences that are balanced. Resemblances and divergences are based, in the wisdom of the best, on a unity of views.

Some accuse India of idolatry. The Christians of the first centuries made the same accusation against the ancient world on the point of collapse. A French poet, in "Hypatia and Cyril," put in the mouth of a woman, the wise and virtuous Hypatia, daughter of Theon, the response of the Greek world. To the Patriarch of Alexandria, come to try to convert her, who says that her gods "are dead," she replies:

*Do not believe it, Cyril! They live in my heart!
Not such as you see them, clothed in vain forms,
Undergoing human passions in the sky,
Adored by the vulgar and despised by the worthy;
But such as seen by sublime spirits;
In starry space they do not reside,
Forces of the Universe, interior Virtues,
Earth and Sky meeting harmoniously...
Such are my Gods!**

It could be, as well, the response of modern India.

The most extraordinarily rich and varied popular religion leading to the most humane and rational philosophy: this is what the Hindu society of today, like yesterday, contains.

Europe, outside more unified, is actually less. It does not know how to keep internal unity within the diversity of names and forms.

Europe is organized, marvelously organized.

But India is cultivated.

*Leconte de Lisle, " Hypatie et Cyrille," *Poèmes Antiques* (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre), 286-287.

Notes

The preceding text is Chapter 12 of Savitri Devi's L'Etang aux lotus (Calcutta, 1940).

Man-Centered Creeds

According to the religious creeds which we have characterized as "man-centered," man, alone created "in the likeness of God," is God's most beloved child, perhaps even his only child on this earth. The heavenly Father of the Christian Gospels no doubt loves the sparrows. But he loves man infinitely more. He loves the lilies too; he has clothed them more beautifully "than Solomon in all his glory"; yet, man is the main object of his solicitude, not they. Among all the living beings that are born in the visible world man alone is supposed to be endowed with an immortal soul. He alone was created for eternity. The transient world was made for him to enjoy and exploit during his short earthly life, and creatures of several species were appointed—both quadrupeds and birds—as meat for him to eat.

And that is not all. A whole scheme of salvation was worked out for him by God himself, so that man might still reach everlasting bliss in spite of his sins. God raised prophets to urge rebellious humanity to repentance and to point out the way of righteousness. And according to the Christian belief, he even sent his only Son to suffer and die, so that his blood might become the ransom of all sinners who put their faith in him. All the splendor of the material world; all the grace, strength and loveliness of millions of beasts, birds, fishes, trees and creepers; the majesty of the snow-clad mountains, the beauty of the unfurling waves—all that and much more—is not worth, in God's eyes, the immortal soul of a human imbecile—so they say, at least. That is why the hunting of tigers and deer, the butchering of innocent woolly lambs, so glad to live, the dissecting of pretty white guinea pigs or of intelligent dogs, are not "sins" according to the man-centered faiths—not even if they imply the most appalling suffering. But the painless chloroforming of worthless human idiots is a "crime." How could it be otherwise?

They have two legs, no tail, and an immortal soul. However degenerate they be, they are men.

I cannot help here recalling the answer of a French medical student, a member of the "Christian Federation of Students," whom I had asked, twenty-five years ago, how he could reconcile his religious aspirations with his support of vivisection. "What conflict can there be between the two?" said he. "Christ did not die for guinea pigs and dogs." I do not know what Christ would actually have said to that. The fact remains that, from the point of view of historical Christianity, the boy was right. And his answer is enough to disgust one forever with all man-centered creeds.

Man-centered creeds do not even enjoy that minimum of inner consistency which forces one sometimes to recognize a certain strength in a bad system of thought. Those who believe in them and who happen not to be by nature too irredeemably irrational, try to justify their point of view by saying that man, as a whole, is superior to the dumb beasts. He can speak, and they cannot. That is certain. He can speak, and subsequently he can define and deduce, and pass from one deduction to another. He can transfer to other people the conclusions of his reasoning and the results of his experience. He becomes more aware of his own thoughts by expressing them. In a word, he can do all that is only possible by means of a conventional system of symbolical sounds, which we call language and which beasts and birds do not possess. His very being is raised above the immediate needs of everyday life, and his mind rendered capable of evolution, by the use of such a system.

Anyone will agree that this is true to a great extent, though all may not necessarily see what relation there is between this human advantage of speech and the exploitation of dumb animals by man. It is more difficult to understand the privileged place which religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam give to man, when one remembers that the sacred books of those three famous creeds admit the existence of heavenly creatures far more beautiful and more intelligent than he, mainly of angels—creatures who need not

wait for the day of resurrection to acquire a "glorious" body, but who are, here and now, in their raiment of light, free from disease, decay and death. They, and not the clumsy sons of Adam, should have been the ones for whom nature and man were made, for it would seem, from whatever one can gather about them in the holy Scripture, that angels are as much above men as the most brilliant men can claim to be above animals, and even more so.

Still, apparently God loves man the best. All human sinners can expect to be saved by his grace; while those poor angels who once, at the dawn of time, rebelled against their Maker under the leadership of Lucifer, have no other alternative but to remain damned forever. No Redeemer was ever sent to pay the ransom of their sin. No hope of salvation was ever given to them. No repentance of theirs, it seems, would be of any avail. Why? Goodness knows. They are not men, not God's spoilt darlings. That is the only explanation one can give, if any can be given of old Father Jehovah's strange justice and queer tastes. They are not men. Intelligent and beautiful as they may be, and full of endless possibilities for good no less than for evil if only they were given a chance, they are apparently not worth, in God's eyes, the repentant drunkard who weeps aloud at the end of a Salvation Army meeting. God's ways cannot be discussed. But then, don't tell us that his love for man is "justified" by man's superiority, and that the right he gave the chosen species to exploit the rest of his weaker creatures is founded on a reasonable basis. It is not. For, if it were, there would have been, in Paradise, a place for the repentant fallen angels, and at least as much joy for one of them as for the souls of ten thousand drunkards from the East End of London.

The real reason for this continual stress upon the welfare of man alone, in this world and in the next, seems to lie in God's incapacity to transcend a certain puerile partiality—we speak, of course, of the personal God of the man-centered faiths rooted in Judaism, and not of that impersonal Power behind all existence, in which we are inclined to believe. The God of the Christians, the God of Islam, and the God of most of those later Free Thinkers who are not out and

out atheists, never succeeded in shaking off completely the habits he once had when he was but the patron deity of a few tribes of desert wanderers, slaves in the land of the Pharaohs. He was able to raise himself from the rank of a national god to that of a God of all humanity. But that is all. His love seems to have been spent out in its extension from the "chosen People" of Israel to the Chosen Species of mankind. He had not in him the urge to broaden his fatherly feelings still beyond those narrow limits. It never occurred to him how narrow they were in fact and how irrational, how mean, how all-too-human that childish preference for man was, in a God that is supposed to have made the Milky Way.

The bloodthirsty national gods of West-Asian Antiquity—once his rivals; now all dead—were more consistent in their narrowness. They limited their sphere to a town, or at the most to a country, and in cases of emergency accepted—some say: asked for—human victims as well as burnt offerings of animal flesh. Grim gods they were, most of them. But there was something outspoken and reassuring in their very limitations. One knew, with them, where one stood. One was not carried away in their name by prophets and saints who took one right along the path leading to universal love, only to leave one in the middle of it. The prophets of Jehovah might call them "abominations," but they were consistent. So was Jehovah, as long as he remained merely the tribal god of the Jews.

But when later Jews proclaimed him to be the God of all mankind; when he crept into Christianity as the Heavenly Father of Christ and the First Person of the Holy Trinity; and into Islam as the One God revealed to man through his last and definitive mouthpiece, the Prophet Mohammed; and finally, when he colored the ideology of the humanitarian theists—and even atheists—as the unavoidable remnant of a tradition hard to die, then the conception of him became more and more irrational. There was less and less any reason for his solicitude to stop at mankind. Yet it did stop there. There was, more and more, every reason for him to evolve into a truly universal God of all life. Yet he did not evolve that way. He could not drop the long-cherished propensity of picking out a

fraction of his creation and blessing it with a special blessing, to the exclusion of the rest. That fraction of the great Universe had once been the Jewish people. It was now the human race—a trifling improvement, if one ponders over it from an astronomical (that is to say, from what we can imagine to be the only truly divine) angle of vision.

The great creeds of the world west of India remained man-centered, it would seem, because they never could free themselves entirely from the marks of their particular tribal origin among the sons of Abraham. The Jews never were a race that one could accuse of giving animals too great a place in its everyday life and thoughts. Christ, who came "to fulfil" the Jewish law and prophecies (not to introduce into the world a different, more rational, and truly kindlier trend of thought) appears never to have bothered his head about the dumb creatures. We speak, of course, of Christ as the Christian Gospels present him to us. That Christ—we have no means whatsoever of finding out whether a "truer" one ever lived—never performed a miracle, never even intervened in a natural manner, in favor of any beast, as his contemporary, Apollonius of Tyana, not to speak of any more ancient and illustrious Master such as the blessed Buddha, is supposed to have done. He never spoke of God's love for animals save to assert that He loved human beings a fortiori, much more. He never mentioned nor implied man's duties towards them, though he did not omit to mention, and to stress, other duties.

If the Gospels are to be taken as they are written, then his dealings with nonhuman sentient creatures consisted, on one occasion, of sending some evil spirits into a herd of swine, that they might no longer torment a man, and, another time, of making his disciples, who were mostly fishermen by profession, as every one knows, catch an incredible quantity of fish in their nets. In both cases his intention was obviously to benefit human beings at the expense of the creatures, swine or fish. As for plants, it is true that he admired the lilies of the fields; but it is no less true that he cursed a fig tree for not producing figs out of season and caused it to wither, so that

his disciples might understand the power of faith and prayer. Fervent English or German Christians, who love animals and trees, may retort that nobody knows exactly all that Jesus actually said, and that the gospels contain the story of only a few of his numberless miracles. That may be. But as there are no records of his life save the Gospels, we have to be content with what is revealed therein. Moreover, Christianity as an historical growth is centered around the person of Christ as the Gospels describe him. And, as Norman Douglas has timely remarked, it remains a fact that the little progress accomplished in recent years in the countries of North western Europe and in America, as regards kindness to dumb beasts, was realized in spite of Christianity, and not because of it.

To say, as some do, that every word of the Christian Gospels has an esoteric meaning, and that "swine" and "fishes" and the "barren fig tree" are intended there to designate anything but real live creatures, would hardly make things better. It would still be true that kindness to animals is not spoken of in the teaching of Jesus as it has come down to us, while other virtues, in particular kindness to people, are highly recommended. And the development of historical Christianity would remain, in all its details, what we know it to be.

* * *

That people whose outlook is conditioned by biblical tradition should put a great stress upon the special place of man in the scheme of life; that they should insist on man's sufferings, and on the necessity of man's happiness, without apparently giving as much as a thought to the other living creatures, one can understand. They follow the Book to which they may or may not add some secondary scriptures based upon it. They cannot be expected to go beyond what is prescribed in it or in those later scriptures.

But there are, in the West, ever since the Middle Ages, increasing numbers of people who dare to do without the Book altogether;

who openly reject all divine revelation as unprovable, and who see in their conscience the only source of their moral judgements and their only guide in moral matters. It is remarkable that these people, free from the fetters of any established faith, still retain the outlook of their fathers as regards man's relation to animals and to living nature in general. Free Thought, while rightly brushing aside all man-centered metaphysics; while replacing the man-centered conceptions of the Universe by a magnificent vision of order and beauty on a cosmic scale—a scientific vision, more inspiring than anything that religious imagination had ever invented, and in which man is but a negligible detail—Free Thought, we say, omitted entirely to do away with the equally outdated man-centered scale of values, inherited from those religions that sprang from Judaism. Sons of Greek rationalism, as regards their intellectual outlook, the Westerners who boast of no longer being Christians—and the few advanced young men of Turkey and Persia, and of the rest of the Near and Middle East, who boast of no longer being orthodox Musulmans—remain, as regards their scale of moral values, the sons of a deep-rooted religious tradition which goes back as far as some of the oldest fragments of the Jewish Scriptures: the tradition according to which man, created in God's own image, is the only living being born for eternity, and has a value altogether out of proportion with that of any other animal species.

There has been, it is true, in the West, in recent years—nay, there is, for nothing which is in harmony with the Laws of Life can ever be completely suppressed—a non-Christian (one should even say an anti-Christian) and definitely more than political school of thought which courageously denounced this age-old yet erroneous tradition, and set up a different scale of values and different standards of behaviour. It accepted the principle of the rights of animals, and set a beautiful dog above a degenerate man. It replaced the false ideal of "human brotherhood," by the true one of a naturally hierarchised mankind harmoniously integrated into the naturally hierarchised Realm of life, and, as a logical corollary of this, it boldly preached the return to the mystic of genuine

nationalism rooted in healthy race-consciousness, and the resurrection of the old national gods of fertility and of battle (or the exaltation of their philosophical equivalents) which many a Greek "thinker" and some of the Jewish prophets themselves had already discarded—politely speaking: "transcended"—in decadent Antiquity. And its racist values, solidly founded upon the rock of divine reality, and intelligently defended as they were, in comparison with the traditional man-centered ones inherited, in Europe, from Christianity, are, and cannot but remain, whatever may be the material fate of their great Exponent and of the regime he created, the only unassailable values of the contemporary and future world. But it is, for the time being, a "crime" to mention them, let alone to uphold them—and their whole recent setting—in broad daylight.

The opposite ideologies, more in keeping with the general tendencies of modern Free Thought from the Renaissance onwards, have only broken off apparently with the man-centered faiths. In fact, our international Socialists and our Communists, while pushing God and the supernatural out of their field of vision, are more Christian-like than the Christian Churches ever were. He who said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" has to-day no sincerer and more thorough disciples than those zealots whose foremost concern is to give every human being a comfortable life and all possibilities of development, through the intensive and systematic exploitation by all of the resources of the material world, animate and inanimate, for man's betterment. Communism, that new religion—for it is a sort of religion—exalting the common man; that philosophy of the rights of humanity as the privileged species, is the natural logical outcome of real Christianity. It is the Christian doctrine of the labor of love for one's neighbors, freed from the overburdening weight of Christian theology. It is real Christianity, minus priesthood—which Christ thoroughly disliked—and minus all the beliefs of the Church concerning the human soul and all the mythology of the Bible—which he surely valued far less than a single spontaneous movement of the heart towards suffering mankind. Christ, if he came back, would probably feel nowhere so

much "at home" as in the countries which have made love for the average man as such the very soul of their political system.

And that is not all. Even Christian theology will perhaps not always remain as totally worthless to them as our Communist friends often think. It may be, one day, that they will bring themselves to use it. And, if ever they do, who will blame them but those nominal Christians who have forgotten the out and out "proletarian" character of their Master and of his first disciples? The myth of the God of mankind taking flesh in the son of the carpenter of Nazareth may well be interpreted as a symbol foreshadowing the deification of the working majority of men—of the "masses"; of man in general—in our times.

In other words, the rejection of the belief in the supernatural, and the advent of a scientific outlook upon the material world, has not in the least broadened the Westerners' moral outlook. And, unless they be consistent Racialists, worshippers of hierarchised Life, those who today openly proclaim that civilization can well stand without its traditional Christian (or Muslim) background, stick to a scale of values that proceeds, either from a yet narrower love than that preached in the name of Christ or of Islam, (from the love of one's mere individual self and family) or, at most, from the same love—not from a broader one; not from a true universal love.

The generous "morality" derived from modern Free Thought is no better than that based upon the time-honored man-centered creeds that have their origin in Jewish tradition. It is a morality centered—like the old Chinese morality, wherever true Buddhism and Taoism have not modified it—around "the dignity of all men" and human society as the supreme fact, the one reality that the individual has to respect and to live for; a morality which ignores everything of man's affiliation with the rest of living nature, and looks upon sentient creatures as having no value except inasmuch as they are exploitable by man for the "higher" purpose of his health, comfort, clothing, amusement, etc. The moral creed of the Free Thinker today is a man-centered creed—no less than that of Descartes and

Malebranche and, later on, of the idealists of the French Revolution, and finally of Auguste Comte.

We believe that there is a different way of looking at things—a different way, in comparison with which this man-centered outlook appears as childish, mean and barbaric as the philosophy of any man-eating tribe might seem, when compared with that of the Christian saints, or even of the sincerest ideologists of modern international Socialism or Communism.

Notes

The preceding text is excerpted from the opening chapter of Devi's Impeachment of Man (Calcutta, 1959). The book was written in 1945-46.

Paul of Tarsus, or Christianity and Jewry¹

If there is a fact that cannot fail to impress all persons who seriously study the history of Christianity, it is the almost complete absence of documents regarding the man whose name the great international religion bears, namely Jesus Christ. We only know of him from what is told to us in the gospels, i.e., practically nothing, for these miscellanies, if prolix in their descriptions of the miraculous facts they concern, give no information at all about his person, and, in particular, about his origins. Oh, we have in the four canonical gospels a long genealogy going back from Joseph, the husband of the mother of Jesus, as far as Adam! But I always ask myself what interest this can have for us, given that elsewhere we are expressly told that Joseph has nothing to do with the birth of the child. One of the numerous “apocryphal” gospels—rejected by the church—attributes the paternity of Jesus to a Roman soldier distinguished for his bravery and thus nicknamed “The Panther.” This gospel is cited by Heckel in one of his studies of early Christianity.² The acceptance of this point of view, however, does not entirely resolve the very important question of the origins of Christ, for it does not tell us who was Mary his mother. One of the four canonical gospels tells us that she was the daughter of Joachim and Anne when Anne was past the age of maternity; in other words, she was herself born miraculously—or she was quite simply a child adopted by Anne and Joachim in their old age—which does not clarify matters.

But there is something much more troubling. They have recently discovered the records of an important monastery of the Essene sect, situated scarcely thirty kilometers from Jerusalem. These records deal with a period extending from the beginning of the first century before Jesus Christ to the second half of the first century after him. There is already talk, seventy years before him, of a great

Initiate, or a Spiritual Master—the “Master of Justice”—whose return one day is awaited. Of the extraordinary career of Jesus, of his innumerable miraculous healings, of his teaching during three whole years in the midst of the people of Palestine, of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, so brilliantly described in the canonical gospels, of his trial and crucifixion (accompanied according to the canonical gospels by events as impressive as an earthquake, the darkening of the sky for three hours in the afternoon, and the veil of the temple rending itself in two), not one word is said in the scrolls of these ascetics—eminently religious men, whom such events would have to interest. It seems, according to these “Dead Sea Scrolls”—I recommend to those who take interest in this matter to read the study which has been published by John Allegro in the English language³—or else Jesus did not produce any impression on the religious minds of his time, as avid for wisdom and also as well informed as the ascetics of the monastery in question appear to have been, or else... he simply did not exist at all! As troubling as it may be, these findings should be placed before the world public, and in particular the Christian public, after these recent discoveries.

In that which concerns the Christian church, however, and Christianity as an historical phenomenon, and the role that it plays in the West and in the world, the question has much less importance than it would seem at first. For even if Jesus had lived and preached, it is not he who is the true founder of Christianity as he is presented to the world. If he truly lived, Jesus was a man “above Time” whose kingdom—as he himself said to Pilate, according to the gospels—is “not of this world,” whose entire activity, entire teaching, tended to show, to those whom the world did not satisfy, a spiritual path by which they can escape, and find, in their interior paradise, in this “Kingdom of God” which is in us, the God “in spirit and in truth” whom they seek without knowing.⁴ If he had lived, Jesus would never have dreamed of founding a temporal organization—and, above all, not a political and financial organization—such as the Christian Church so quickly became. Politics did not interest him. And, detesting riches, he was a

determined enemy of any mixture of money in spiritual affairs, which certain Christians have, rightly or wrongly, seen as an argument that proves that, contrary to the teaching of all Christian Churches (except those which absolutely negate his human nature [For example, the sect of the Monophysites]), he did not have Jewish blood. The true founder of historical Christianity, of Christianity that we know in practice, which has played and will play a role in the history of the West and the world, is neither Jesus, whom we know not at all, nor his disciple Peter, whom we know was Galilean and a simple fisherman in station, but Paul of Tarsus, whom we know was 100% Jewish in blood, in disposition, and in his heart, and, what is more, Jewish in education and a “Roman citizen,” as so many Jewish intellectuals today are French, German, Russian, or American citizens.

Historical Christianity—which is not at all a work “above Time,” but altogether a work “in Time”—is the work of Saul, called Paul, that is to say, the work of a Jew, as Marxism came to be more than two thousand years later. Let us examine the career of Paul of Tarsus.

Saul, called Paul, was a Jew and, what is more, an orthodox Jew at the same time as he was educated, a Jew imbued with the consciousness of his race and the role the “chosen people”—which they became according to the covenant of Jaweh—play in the world. He was a student of Gamaliel, one of the most reputed Jewish theologians of his time—theologian of the school of Pharisees, precisely the one which, according to the gospels, the prophet Jesus, whom the Christian church later on elevated to the rank of God, had quite violently combated for its arrogance, its hypocrisy, its habit of splitting hairs and putting the letter of the Jewish law before its spirit—before, at least, what he believed to be its spirit; it is not said whether Saul had not had, on this subject, a different idea than him. Moreover—and this is very important—Saul was an educated and self-conscious Jew born and raised outside of Palestine, in one of those cities of Roman Asia Minor that had succeeded Hellenistic Asia Minor and had retained all its

characteristics: Tarsus, where Greek was the “lingua franca” of everyone and where Latin became, likewise, more and more familiar, and where one recognized representatives of all the peoples of the Near East. In other words, he was already a “ghetto” Jew, possessing, beyond a profound knowledge of the Israelite tradition, an understanding of the world of the “Goyim”—the non-Jews—which later on became of great value for him. He thought, without any doubt, like every good Jew, that the “Goy” is only to be dominated and exploited by the “chosen people.” But he knew their world infinitely better than the Jews of Palestine, in the midst of whom had emerged all the first believers of the new religious sect from which he was destined to form Christianity such as we see it.

It is said in the “Acts of the Apostles” that there was at first a ferocious persecution of the new sect. Did the adherents of the latter not scorn the Jewish Law in the strict sense of the word? Did the man who is recognized as the founder, and who is said to have returned from the dead, this Jew whom Saul himself had never seen, not give the example of his non-observance of the Sabbath, of his neglect of the days of fasting, and other strongly blameworthy transgressions of the rules of life from which a Jew should not depart at all? One may say the same of a mystery that bodes nothing good, hovering over the story of his birth, that he was perhaps not at all of Jewish origin—who knows? Why not persecute any such sect, when one is an orthodox Jew, student of the great Gamaliel? He had to preserve from scandal the observers of the Law. Saul, who had already given proof of zeal in being present at the stoning of Saint Stephen—one of the first preachers of the dangerous sect—continued to defend the Jewish Law and the tradition against those he considered to be heretics, until it finally dawned on him that there was a better—a much better—way of operating, precisely from the Jewish point of view. This he recognized on the road to Damascus.

The story, as the Christian church wishes it to be told, is that he suddenly had a vision of Jesus—whom he had not, I repeat, ever seen “in the flesh”—whose voice he finally heard say to him: “Saul,

Saul, why do you persecute me?," which voice he could not resist. He had, moreover, been blinded by a dazzling light, and he felt himself thrown to the ground. Transported to Damascus—at least according to the same account in "Acts of the Apostles"—he was recognized by one of the faithful of the sect which he had come to combat, the man who, after restoring Saul's eyesight, baptized him and received him into the Christian community.

It is superfluous to say that this miraculous account cannot be accepted as it is told except by those who share the Christian faith. It does not have, like all accounts of its type, any historical value. Those who, without preconceived ideas, seek a plausible explanation—probable, natural—of the manner in which these things have happened, cannot be content. And the explanation, to be plausible, must give an account not only of the transformation of Saul into Paul—of the implacable defender of Judaism into the founder of the Christian church as we know it—but also of the nature, the content, and the direction of his activity after his conversion, of the internal logic of his career; otherwise put, the psychological connection, more or less conscious, between his past anti-Christianity and his great Christian work. Every conversion implies a connection between the past of the convert and the rest of his life, a deep reason, that is to say, a permanent aspiration of the convert that the act of conversion satisfies, a will, a permanent direction of life and action, of which the act of conversion is the expression and the instrument.

Now, given all we know of him and above all of the course of his career, there is only one profoundly fundamental will, inseparable from the personality of Paul of Tarsus in all the stages of his life, which can furnish the explanation for his "road to Damascus," and this will is the one that serves the old Jewish ideal of spiritual domination, complementing and crowning that of economic domination. Saul, orthodox Jew, self-conscious Jew, who had combated the new sect insofar as it constituted a danger to orthodox Jewry, could only renounce his orthodoxy and become the soul and the arm precisely of this dangerous sect, after having

understood that, recast by him, transformed, adapted to the exigencies of the vast world of the "Goyim"—the "Gentiles" of the gospels—interpreted, as he did, in the manner of giving, as said later on by Nietzsche, "a new meaning to the ancient mysteries," it could become for centuries, if not forever, the most powerful instrument of the spiritual domination of Israel, the way by which it realizes, the most certainly and in the most definitive manner, the "mission" of the Jewish people, which was, according to him, as according to every good Israelite, that of ruling over the other peoples, subjecting them to a complete moral enslavement while exploiting them economically. And the more moral enslavement is complete, the more economic exploitation—it goes without saying—flourishes. It is only this prize that merits the pain of repudiating the rigidity of the ancient and venerable Law. Or, to speak a more trivial language, the sudden conversion of Saul along the road to Damascus is explicable in a completely natural manner solely if one allows that he suddenly appreciated the possibilities which nascent Christianity offered him for profit in the moral domination of his people, and which he had thought—in a stroke of genius, it might be said—"How I have taken the short view in persecuting this sect instead of serving mine come what may! How foolish I have been to attach myself to the forms—the details—instead of seeing the essential: the interest of the people of Israel, of the chosen people, of our people, of us Jews!"

The whole subsequent career of Paul is an illustration—a proof, to the extent that one may propose to "prove" facts of this nature—of this ingenious change of course, of this victory of an intelligent Jew, a practical man, a diplomat (and when "diplomat" is said in connection with religious questions, deception is meant) over the orthodoxly educated Jew preoccupied above all with the problems of ritual purity. From the day of his conversion, Paul, in effect, abandoned himself to the "Spirit," and went where the "Spirit" suggested, or rather ordered, him to go, and spoke, in every circumstance, the words that the "Spirit" inspired in him. But where did the "Spirit" "order" him to go? To Palestine, among the Jews who still took part in the "errors" which he had publicly

abjured, and who seemed to be the first to have title to the new revelation? Not on your life! He was quite careful! It was in Macedonia, as it was in Greece and among the Greeks of Asia Minor, among the Galatians, and later among the Romans—in Aryan lands: on the whole, in non-Jewish lands—that the neophyte went forth to preach the theological dogmas of original sin and eternal salvation through Jesus crucified, and the moral dogma of the equality of all men and of all peoples: it was in Athens where he proclaimed that God had created “all the nations, all the peoples, of one and the same blood” (“Acts of the Apostles,” chapter 17, verse 26). With this negation of the natural hierarchy of races, the Jews, had nothing to do—they who have, at all times, in their conception of the world, overturned this hierarchy to their profit. But it was (from the Jewish point of view) very useful to preach, to impose on the “Goyim,” to destroy their national values that had, up to that point, made them strong (or, rather, to simply hasten their destruction; for since the fourth century before Jesus Christ, they were already crumbling under the influence of the “hellenized” Jews of Alexandria). Without a doubt, Paul also preached it “in the Synagogues,” that is to say, to Jews, to whom he presented the new doctrine as the fulfillment of the prophecies and the messianic expectation; without a doubt, he said to these sons of his people, as to the “God fearers”—to semi-Jews, like Timothy, and to the Jewish quarters which were abundant in the Aegean seaports (the same as in Rome)—that Christ crucified and resurrected, whom he announced, was none other than the promised messiah. He gave a new meaning to the Jewish prophets, just as he gave a new meaning to the immemorial mysteries of Greece, Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor: a meaning that attributes a unique role, a unique place, a unique importance to the Jewish people in the religion of non-Jews. It was for him nothing but a means to the end of assuring for his people the spiritual domination of future ages. His genius—not religious, but political—consists in having understood this.

But it is not solely in the plan of the doctrine where he can show a disconcerting suppleness—“Greek with the Greeks, and Jew with the Jews,” as he himself said. He has a sense of practical necessities

—and impossibilities. He who was at first so orthodox, is the first to oppose completely the imposition of the Jewish Law on Christian converts of non-Jewish races. He insists—against Peter and the least conciliatory group of the first Christians of Jerusalem—on the fact that a Christian of non-Jewish origin does not at all require circumcision or the Jewish laws concerning diet. He wrote for these new converts—half-Jews, half-Greeks, Romans of dubious origin, Levantines from all the parts of the Mediterranean: for all of this world without race, with which he served as the intermediary with his Jewish people, immutable in their tradition, and the vast world to conquer—where there does not exist, for them, the distinction between that which is “pure” and that which is “impure,” where they are permitted to eat anything (“all that which can be found in the market-place”). He knew that, without these concessions, Christianity could not expect to conquer the West—nor the Jews expect to conquer the world by means of the conversion of the West.

Peter, who was not at all a Jew of the “ghetto,” still did not understand at all the conditions of a non-Jewish world and did not see things from the same point of view—not yet anyway. It is because of this that it is necessary to see in Paul the true founder of historical Christianity: the man who made the purely spiritual teaching of the prophet Jesus the basis of a militant organization in Time, the goal of which is nothing but the domination of the Jews over a morally emasculated and physically debased world, a world where the mistaken love of “man” leads straight to the indiscriminate mixing of races, to the suppression of every national pride, and, in a word, to the degeneration of man.

It is time that all the non-Jewish nations finally open their eyes to this reality of two thousand years. May they understand the striking present day situation and react accordingly.

Written in Méadi (near Cairo), 18 June 1957⁵

Notes

1. Originally published as *Paul de Tarse, ou Christianisme et juiverie* (Calcutta: Savitri Dêvi Mukherji, 1958).

2. Savitri may be referring to Ernst Haeckel, who mentions Pandera in his chapter on "Science and Christianity" in his *The Riddle of the Universe at the Close of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Joseph McCabe (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1900), 328-9.

3. Savitri may be referring to any one of the following volumes by John Allegro: *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1956), *The Mystery of the Dead Sea Scrolls Revealed* (New York: Gramercy, 1956), or, if it was published by the time of the essay's composition, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of Christianity* (New York: Criterion, 1957). In *Pilgrimage*, Savitri refers to another book on early Christianity by Gerald Massey, *The Historical Jesus and the Mythical Christ* (Springfield: Star Publishing Company, n.d.). See Savitri Devi, *Pilgrimage* (Calcutta: Savitri Devi Mukherji, 1958), 332.

4. In *The Lightning and the Sun* (Calcutta: Savitri Devi Mukherji, 1958), Savitri makes a threefold distinction between men "above Time," "in Time," and "against Time." Men above Time are visionaries and prophets who orient themselves by truths that transcend the present world. They are, therefore, impractical when it comes to changing the present world. Men in Time are entirely creatures of the present world. Therefore, they are more capable of attaining worldly success. Men against Time orient themselves by truths that transcend the present, yet they are capable of operating within the world to advance the cause of truth. Savitri offers the Pharaoh Akhnaton as the paradigm of the man above Time, Genghis Khan as the paradigm of the man in Time, and Hitler as the paradigm of the man against Time.

5. In May of 1957, Savitri sailed to Egypt en route to India. She stayed in the Cairo suburb of El-Maâdi in the home of Mahmoud Saleh, a Palestinian Arab and Nazi sympathizer. Saleh was a friend and neighbor of Nazi exile Johannes von Leers (1902-1963), a former German university

professor and member of the SS who had been employed by Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda and was later employed by the Nasser government as a specialist in Zionist affairs. Savitri spent a good deal of her time in Egypt in Leers' company. See Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, The Hindu-Aryan Myth, and Neo-Nazism (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 176-9. Savitri relates some of the events of her stay in Egypt in Long-Whiskers and the Two-Legged Goddess: or the true story of a "most objectionable Nazi" and... half-a-dozen cats (Calcutta: Savitri Devi Mukherji, n.d. [actually published in England circa 1965]), 97-99.

Rocks of the Sun

The Externsteine,
23rd of October 1953, in the evening.

We rolled through and past Horn, without stopping, turned to our right as we reached the outskirts of the town and then, after another five hundred yards, to our left, and followed a beautiful asphalted road bordered with trees and meadows beyond which more trees—that same, unending Teutoburg Forest in autumn garb, that I was never tired of admiring—could be seen. I looked right and left, and ahead, and did not speak. I was watching the approach of evening upon the fiery red and yellow and brown of the leaves ready to fall, and thinking of the captive eagles and of enslaved Germany, and longing for the Day of Revenge—"der Tag der Rache"—as steadily as I had been, as a matter of fact, for the last eight and half years.

Then, suddenly barring the road, a row of vertical rocks about a hundred feet high—but looking much higher, specially from a short distance—appeared, evenly grey against the bright background of the sunset sky. I recognised them at once for having seen pictures of them, and exclaimed in a low voice, with ravishment: "Die Externsteine!"

We stepped out of the car. I stood, automatically, apart from the other travellers, as though I were aware of the fact that we belonged to two different worlds; that they, even though they were Germans, were, here, but tourists, while I, even though a foreigner, was already a pilgrim.

I looked up to the irregular stone shapes that stood between me and the further forest, into which the motorable road leads. The familiar outlines fascinated me. Not that I was, for the first time in my life,

visiting a place stamped with the prestige of immemorial Sun-worship: it was anything but the first time! I had seen Delphi and Delos, and the ruins of Upper and Lower Egypt: Karnak and the Pyramids. And I had, in India, visited the celebrated "Black Pagoda" built in the shape of a Sun-chariot resting upon twelve enormous wheels, each of which corresponds to a sign of the Zodiac, and presenting in sculpture the most splendid illustration of Life at all its stages—in all its fullness—from the wildest erotic scenes that adorn most of the surface of the lower walls, to the serene stillness of lonely medication—: the meditation of the Sun-god Himself, whose seated statue dominates the whole structure. And I had visited the extraordinary temple of Sringeri, every one of the twelve columns of which is struck in turn by the first Sun-rays, on the day the Sun enters a new constellation.

But I had never yet (save once, in Sweden) found myself upon a spot sanctified by the Worship of our Parent Star—the old worship of Light and Life—in a Germanic country. And these Rocks, I knew, had been the centre of Germanic solar rites in time without beginning. I felt like a person who has walked a long way and a long time—who has come from a very, very distant country—with a definite purpose, and who, at last, reaches the goal. I had now attained, if not the end (for there is no end), at least the culminating point of my pilgrimage through Germany and through life. And I was happy. I had reached the Source where I could replenish my spiritual forces for the eternal Struggle in its modern form: the Struggle of the Powers of Light against the Powers of Gloom, experienced by me as that of the National Socialist values against those both of Christianity and of Marxism—of the oldest and of the latest Jewish doctrine for Aryan consumption, which I had fought and would continue fighting untiringly.

I gazed at the irregular dark grey Rocks; and tears filled my eyes. And as the people with whom I had travelled bade me good-bye to follow the guide who had come to take them round, I was glad: I wished to see the Rocks without haste and, as far as possible, alone.

Right before me stood the highest rock; a long, rough cylinder—or rather, a prism—of stone, very slightly inclined to the left like the trunk of an enormous tree that time had worn and human beings mutilated, without being able to destroy it. I knew that, at the top of that rock is the sanctuary from which the wise ones of old used to greet the Earliest Sunrise, on the morning of the Summer Solstice Day. From below, I could see the bridge by which one accedes to it to-day—the bridge that now joins the highest rock, commonly called "the second," to the next one on the left, commonly called the "third" (called so, at least, in the one detailed archaeological study which I had, up till then, read, concerning the Externsteine).

Slowly I walked up the stairs hewn into the live rock on the side of the "third" cliff, halting now and then to admire the landscape over which, my eyes wandered, from a little higher at every new step I took: the small lake into the still waters of which the furthestmost cliff to the right—the "first"—plunges vertically; the thick woods beyond; the extension of the road by which I had come, past the slope on the left and past the lake, into further woods; and, on the other side—to the north-east, whence I had come—the wooded hills around and beyond Horn and Detmold. In the sunset glow, the reds in the autumn forest appeared brighter, and the browns, redder. And the lake was a smooth surface of shining darkness and bright orange-gold, on the opposite side of which I could see the up-side-down reflexion of the forest. I went up and up and, having crossed the bridge without daring to throw a glance into the void below, I found myself standing in the age-old sanctuary that I had come to behold. And I shuddered, overwhelmed at the feeling of being on holy ground.

It is difficult to tell what the sanctuary once looked like. To-day, nearly twelve hundred years after its systematic destruction through Christian fanaticism, one steps onto a stone pavement some six yards long and not quite four yards wide, without a roof. At one end of the room, to one's right as one now comes in, i.e., to the North-East, one sees a huge piece of rock—a part of the very cliff on which one is standing—carved out into a vaulted hollow,

the ground-level of which is a foot higher than the pavement. In the midst of it, hewn out of the same one block of stone, is a stand, with a flat, table-like top about a foot wide and two and a half feet deep; and above this, cut out in the solid, natural, north-eastern wall of the mysterious room, an opening, as perfectly circular as can be, something over a foot (37 centimetres, exactly) in diameter. At the other end of the pavement—to one's left as one enters, from the bridge, i.e. to the south-west—is a rectangular niche, higher than even a very tall man, some five feet broad or so and over a foot deep, with a pillar each side of it. And in the rock wall opposite the bridge—to the north-west—is a window looking over the neighbouring cliff and the lake beyond. The once existing walls between the vaulted room and the rest of the structure, on the south-east and the north-west, are now replaced by iron railings. The roof of the sanctuary was the eastern portion of the top of the cliff itself. It has been destroyed, leaving the whole place, with the exception of the vaulted hollow, as I have said, open to the sky.

My back to the south-western wall, behind which the Sun was now setting, I gazed at the ruins of the venerable high-place. Here, at the time the great Egyptian kings of the Twelfth Dynasty were building their mighty temples and ever-lasting tombs; at the time the mysterious sea-lords of "Middle Minoan II" ruled Crete and the Aegean Isles; before the earliest dated Aryan conquests in the East—four thousand years ago and more—the wise men, spiritual leaders of the Germanic tribes, and guardians of the natural Values that made their lives worth living, would gather, and greet the Earliest Sun-rise, on the sacred Day, in June.

In the midst of the stand in the vaulted chamber, one can still see a square socket. There used to be a rod stuck into it, the summit of which was on a straight line both with the lowest spot on the brim of the round opening in the north-eastern wall, and a spot in the middle of the niche against which I was standing—the Solstice-line, running North-east South-west. So that, when the rising Sun would appear exactly at the lowest brim of the round stone opening, and, at the same time, exactly behind the upper extremity of the rod, to

an observer standing in a rigorously determined place in the middle of the niche, then one could say, with certainty, that it was the Summer Solstice Day, on the correct detection of which the whole calendar—and, subsequently, the festivals, and the whole life of the community—was dependent.

For a few days before and a few days after the Summer Solstice, the rising Orb would appear within a certain radius, on the side brim of the round opening. The spot of its appearing would seem to travel, from a place on the side of the circle down to the lowest section of it, and up again. The wise men used to watch it day after day, in order to make out when, exactly, the earliest Sunrise—the Sunrise rigorously according to the unchanging Solstice-line—would be. And as they saw it—one spot of intensely bright gold on the rim of the circular opening; one ray of light into the dark chamber—they would shout from the top of this rock the spell of victory announcing the beginning of the great Summer festivity to the people assembled below: "Sieg, Licht"—"Triumph, Light."

I thought of this, which I had read, and which I had been told by modern Germans faithful to the old solar Wisdom; Germans who had gone back to it, in an unexpected way, through that modern Faith in Blood and Soil—that Aryan Faith: National Socialism—that binds me to them. I thought of this, and imagined, or tried to imagine, the solemn scenes that have taken place, year after year, upon this rock, for centuries, nay, millenniums; scenes of which the regularity had seemed eternal like that of the reappearing of the sacred Days. And I thought of the abrupt end of the Cult of Light; of the destruction of this most holy place of ancient Germany by Charlemagne and his fanatical Frankish Christians. I pictured myself half the top of the Rock—which had once been the root of this sanctuary—violently split from the rest of it and thrown down there, where its fragments can still be seen: the desecrated holy room; the persecuted holy Land, on whose people the foreign creed of false meekness, of which they are, even to-day, not yet free, was forced by fire and sword. I pictured myself the Frankish soldiery—men of Germanic blood, "crusaders to Germany" in the name of a

foreign prophet and of a foreign earthly power—storming these hallowed Rocks; killing whomever they found; setting fire to whatever would burn; through terror, preparing the way for the new teachers: the monks, true "re-educators of Germany" in the worst sense of that much-detested word, who would (if they could) stamp out every spark of the old solar Wisdom—of Aryan wisdom—in its main European Stronghold.

This had happened in the year 772 of the Christian era—one thousand one hundred and eighty-one years before. But how tragically modern it all looked! These very first "crusaders to Germany" appeared to me, more vividly than ever, as the forerunners of Eisenhower's sinister "crusaders to Europe." They had fought in the name of the self-same hated Christian values, ultimately for the triumph of the self-same international power, both temporal and spiritual—the Church—which was, and still is, the power of Jewry in disguise. They had fought against the self-same everlasting values of Germanic Heathendom—the natural, heroic religion of the noblest people of the West, in which, both then and now, the Aryan Soul has found its most accurate expression on this continent. And they had persecuted them with similar savagery, and still greater efficiency, perhaps; with similar, and even greater, Germanic thoroughness. And I remembered that Eisenhower (a curse upon him!) is also of German descent. And once more I hated the madness that has, so many times in the course of history, thrown people of the same good Nordic blood into fratricidal wars for the sake the childish superstitions which the Jews—and their willing or unwilling agents—have put into their heads without them even suspecting it.

And as the picture of the destruction of the old religion and of the christianization of Germany, not merely in all its cruelty, but in all its thoroughness imposed itself more tragically upon me, I realised—not for the first time, but yet, perhaps more intensely than ever before—that the main dates of Charlemagne's war against the Saxons, 772 and 787, are, from the German and, which is more, from the broader Aryan standpoint, even worse than 1945. For the stamp

of the foreign creed, and specially of the foreign, anti-natural, anti-racial scale of values, is visible to this day in all but a minority of Germans; in all but an even smaller minority of Europeans. The spirit of the healthy Aryan warrior and sage—the spirit of detached violence for the sake of duty alone; our spirit—took over a thousand years to re-assert itself through a proper doctrine of German inspiration, in a German élite, after the disaster inflicted, then, upon those who expressed it. While in spite of enormous losses and no end of suffering we—the National Socialist minority; the modern Aryan Heathen—have survived this disaster; survived it, with our burning faith and our will to begin again. And we shall not need a thousand years, nor even a hundred, nor even ten (if circumstances be favourable) to rise once more to power. It may be that the new world we were building lies—for the time being—in ruins, at our victors' feet. But our Weltanschauung is intact within our hearts. And there are younger ones ready to carry on our work, when we shall be dead; younger ones who shall, one day, defy Germany's "reeducators" and their programme, and their teaching and their spirit, even if an angry time denies them the pleasure of killing their persons.

At the thought of this, I felt elated. I looked round me, at the lonely, desecrated sanctuary; above me, at the overhanging, slanting rock, from which the massive monolithic root had been violently rent, nearly twelve hundred years before—the permanent scar left by the first "crusaders to Germany" upon this high altar of the national cult of Light. And in a flash I recalled my own life-long struggle against the Christian plague—in Greece, in the name of destroyed Hellenism; in India, in the name of unbroken Hindu Tradition; everywhere in the name of Aryan pride and Nature's truth. And I imagined the similar part I would like to play, here, among my Führer's people, after the re-installation of the National Socialist New Order, one day, never mind when. "Yes, we are alive," thought I, full of self-confidence and full of confidence in the German minority that thinks and feels as I do. "Defeat has not killed us; it has only made us a little bitterer and still a little more ruthless. One day we will avenge you, wounded Rocks that have been calling us

for so long, and you, our elder brothers, warriors who died defending the approaches of this high-place! Wherever I be when our Day dawns, may the heavenly Powers grant me to come back, and take an active part in the revenge!"

Notes

The preceding text is from the final chapter of Devi's Pilgrimage (Calcutta, 1958), an account of her clandestine visit to occupied Germany in 1953. A few obvious typographical errors have been corrected.

Shinto, the National Religion of Japan

Among the very old religions of the world, there are few which are still today living forces, and Shinto is one of them. I call “very old” religions those of which it is impossible to fix the foundation in the historical period.

It is still more difficult to find nowadays one of these religions without a beginning, so to say, to play a part in the life of a great modern industrialized nation. And Shinto plays such a part in Japan. It is, therefore, interesting to study Shinto not merely from a scholarly point of view, but from the simple angle of vision of an average man who reads his newspaper every day, but who thinks after reading.

Shinto, from two words that mean “the way of the gods”, has a few features in common with another religious system which has been since times immemorial, and which is still, a live force in Asia: Hinduism.

Like Hinduism, it has no founder. It has not grown around the personality of any particular incarnation or prophet, not under the impulse given by any particular inspired scripture, handed from Heaven to Earth at a certain time. Its marvelous genealogies take us back long, long before the date ascribed by scholars to Jimmu-tenno, the first historical emperor of Japan. Nobody has taught the Japanese its symbolism and its rites. Like Hinduism, it has no dogmas. One can have any religious philosophy he pleases and be a follower of Shinto. There is nothing in it which can justify the name of “religion” in the sense of European Christianity. It could be compared, at the most, with the ancient European national religions—Greek, Germanic, Celtic, etc.—which flourished before Christianity.

Like them, like Hinduism, and like every old religion, whether it has perished or survived, Shinto was primitively and is still a cult of nature under its most dutiful and beneficent manifestations.

Among the well-known deities of Shinto are the sun goddess, Amaterasu-Omikami, and her brother, the impetuous Susanowo, who incarnates the beauty and horror of the tempest as well as what one would call, in terms of European mythology, the "Dionysian impulse", both in nature and in them.

These gods and goddesses are the objects of marvelous stories related in the first part of the "Nihongi", the official annals of Japan published by imperial order in 720 A.D.,¹ and in the "Kojiki", published a few years before. The fantastic character of many of their adventures is by no means less than that of the Hindu Puranas. They transport us into a world where the most unexpected things are possible. But, just as in other very old religions, there is, under all these fancies, a poetical symbolization of the eternal natural laws, and there is also probably what is more a hidden science that those who understand the esoteric language can explain.

Another character of this religion, which it shares with the other old ones to which we referred, and with Hinduism, is its suppleness, its capacity of assimilating new elements without losing anything of its proper features. When Buddhism was most powerful in Japan, and when Shinto had to compromise with it by taking the form of Ryobu Shinto, then the priests associated the Hindu god Varuna and the local deities of the Sumiyoshi,² near Osaka. They thus revealed a new sea god, now known as Suiten.³

Instances could be multiplied, and not only local gods and gods of a foreign origin, but also men and women remarkable for their great deeds or for their marvelous or pathetic destiny have from time to time found a place among the eighty millions of Japanese Kami. Such is the case of the celebrated Empress Jingu, who led the first expedition against Korea, about 200 A.D., and who is regarded as

one of the Kami of the sea. There is no reason for this process of deification to come to an end.

Shinto is not a religious system which is still complete once for ever. It is a flowing current of living inspiration, and therefore is susceptible of addition as well as of evolution; and it has, in fact, been undergoing many changes since the bygone days. But the very sketch of its own evolution will show that from the beginning it has always followed the same main lines, and will throw light upon its main distinctive feature which is to be, before anything else and more than anything else, a purely national religion.

This feature separates definitely Shinto from the widespread world religions such as Christianity and Islam, as well as from Hinduism. The world religions would be better called "democratic" religions, in the sense that they are founded upon the belief in the "equal right of all mankind to share the salvation they offer through faith in a certain revealed truth". Anybody can become a true Christian or a true Muslim, and, taken in their essence, both Christianity and Islam are forces destructive of nationality, like most of the democratic world forces.

No doubt, Shinto is a religion of nature. The prominent place occupied in it by Amaterasu-Omikami, the sun goddess, would be sufficient to prove this point. But, like all very old religions, the "cult of nature" in Shinto means the cult of the motherland in all her beauty, namely here, the cult of Japan.

In Japan, nature is really loved and venerated and is given, in national as well as in individual life, a greater place than art. Art itself is understood as something to be entirely in harmony with the natural surroundings and not to attract attention at their expense. This conception is due to a great extent to the influence of Shinto.

A Shinto temple is not a showy building; it is simple and discreet. The beauty of it lies in the thick trees that hide it from a distance, in the landscape one discovers suddenly from the top of its steps, the

marvelous background of dark-green mountains that one can admire from its monumental portico before reaching it.

Everybody knows the devotion of the Japanese for Mount Fujiyama, the residence of the deity Sengen-Sama, and the highest mountain in Japan. Numerous are the pilgrims who every year ascend the Fuji and, with the greatest respect, salute from the top of it the rising sun. But the Fuji, though the most celebrated, is not the only sacred mountain: the Mount Otake, in the province of Shinano, the Mount Nantai, near the Lake of Chuzenji, the volcano Aso, in the province of Higo, name also their deities and their pilgrims. Nearly every place, well-known for the beauty of the rising or the setting sun, is a sacred place. Such instances, however, are common, and one could find any amount of them outside Japan.

In Shinto, there is still more than the cult of Japan's natural beauty: there is the belief, illustrated by well-known stories, that Japan is actually divine, both by its very soil, by its ruling dynasty, and by its people, that it is not a country like any other.

Nothing is more sacred to a Japanese than his Emperor. For many centuries Shikkens (regents) and Shoguns (ministers) have practically governed Japan in the place of the Emperors themselves. But the person of an Emperor, son of Amaterasu, possessor of the three symbols of power, the jewel, the sword, and the mirror, handed by her to Ninigi when he was installed Lord of Japan and living incarnation of Japan itself, with all its past and all its traditions which begins in Heaven, was always inviolable and regarded with religious devotion.

In the days when the Hojo Shikkens (Governors-General) were almighty, one of the Emperors, Go-Toba, manifested his will not only to exist as a symbol, but to use his power and govern from the Court of Kyoto, and therefore came into a clash with Yoshitoki,⁴ the regent of Kamakura at that time. An army commanded by Yasutoki, son of the regent, was sent against Kyoto. Before his departure, Yasutoki asked his father what he would have to do in the case the

Emperor would be himself at the head of his army. The answer of Yoshitoki⁵ is full of significance: "If it is not the Emperor who commands, then fight until you die. But if it is His Majesty, then throw off your armor and cut the string of your bow. One should not resist an Emperor."

The result of this spirit, pure expression of the traditions of Shinto, upon the Japanese soul is that the long series of the Japanese Emperors, from Jimmu-tenno up to nowadays, present the sole instance in the world of an unbroken dynasty as old as the country which it is ruling. The first article of the Japanese constitution of 1889 says: "The Empire of Japan will be ruled by Emperors of that dynasty which has reigned without interruption throughout all the past centuries."⁶

The history of the development of Shinto is the history of a long evolution parallel to that of Japan itself. For the sake of convenience it can be divided into four periods:

Ancient Shinto as it was before the 6th century A.D., when Buddhism was introduced in Japan;

The Ryobu Shinto, a sort of compromise between the two religions, which begins during the 8th century and lasts a long time;

The revival of pure Shinto during the 18th century;

Modern official Shinto.

It is more than probable that Shinto has not remained static during these long centuries. Ancient Shinto, as it is known to us, is the result of innumerable local traditions slowly put together and molded into a consistent whole. As we have said, it is something essentially simple, containing as much beauty as it could get from the daily contact of an artistic race with natural manifestations alternately charming or terrible, with trees full of flowers on the one hand, and with frequent typhoons and earthquakes on the other; it contains also as many truths as the fresh intuitive power of that race could grasp during those far-gone days. It is, then, a national religion in the sense that every primitive religion is.

Cult and government are expressed by the word *matsurigoto*, meaning "a solemn thing", and the Emperors from the beginning are considered as the highest priests, though several classes of priests existed already in those days. At the great sanctuary of Ise, where the three symbols were kept,⁷ the divine ancestor of the Emperors was worshipped, and seven times a year the imperial envoys would go there. When some great danger threatened the nation, petitions were sent there to the deity.

Buddhism, already much altered since the missionaries of Ashoka had preached it as far as they could, reached Japan through Korea during the reign of Emperor Kimmei in the middle of the 6th century A. D. But it only became popular a few years later, under the government of the saintly Shotoku Taishi, Prince imperial and regent during the reign of Empress Suiko. Shotoku Taishi died in 621 A. D., and the success of Buddhism was greatly due to him.

It is not here the place to retrace the history of Buddhism in Japan. One thing is important: that it never got into conflicts with Shinto; but Shinto had to compromise with it and actually did so.

From the 8th to the 18th century flourished in Japan what is known as Ryobu Shinto, or Shinto under a double aspect; this doctrine, which has itself undergone an evolution throughout that long period, is the result of the compromise.

Ryobu Shinto could easily last a long time, for there could be no philosophical conflict between the two religions that it combined. Ryobu Shinto is pure Shinto, plus Hindu metaphysics imported through Buddhism. No doctrinal problem could arise in the midst of it, for there is no contradiction between Hindu metaphysics (or any kind of metaphysics) and no metaphysics at all.

Ryobu Shinto flourished until a reaction of another type came during the 18th century. This reaction is not an isolated phenomenon. It is closely connected with the entirely new atmosphere which penetrates Japan during the rule of the last

Tokugawa Shoguns. Many have put stress upon the interest in modern sciences that arises in Japan at that time, preparing the future industrialization of the country and its expansion during the Meiji era. But, along with this curiosity for foreign technique, there was, however strange it may seem, a hankering after the oldest traditions of the Japanese government, of Japanese literature, of Japanese religion and life.

The renaissance of pure Shinto goes side by side with the movement in favor of the restoration of the Emperor's effective power and with the literary movement Wagakusha in favor of a style of writing devoid of Chinese influence. No doubt, also, that these two movements were strongly influenced by the renaissance of pure Shinto.

This reaction, aiming to get rid of Chinese influence in religion as well as in life, brings the people back to the simplicity and virtues of ancient days and had several great supporters among whom the most celebrated one is Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801).

Revived Shinto, and modern Shinto which is the present stage of its evolution, is based upon a conscious ideology, upon what one can call a theory, and that theory was well expressed during the 19th century by Hirata Atsutane (1776– 1843), a supporter of the Wagakusha movement and a disciple of Motoori Norinaga, who, just as his master, used to assert not only the divine right of the Emperors to actually govern but also the divine origin of the Japanese people and their superiority in courage and intelligence over all the peoples of the world.

Just as before, men of great deeds are venerated as gods. But there is no deed greater to the eyes of a Japanese than to die for one's Emperor and country on the battlefield. In the midst of busy, noisy, Europeanised modern Tokyo, there is a park where a little temple can be seen. It is consecrated to those who have died for Japan during the last wars, and who have become Kami.⁸ Once in a year,

with great solemnity, the Emperor himself, the living god of Japan, son of the rising sun, comes and worships them.

Loyalty to the throne, a great virtue of Shinto, has by no means diminished since the “modernization” of the country. It is the national virtue of Japan, and it expresses itself as it does nowhere else. In 1912, when His Majesty Matsuhito (Meiji-tenno) died, General Maresuke Nogi, famous in the Russo-Japanese War, and his wife quietly put an end to their lives by the traditional rite of Seppuku. And in 1926, after the death of Emperor Yoshihito (Taisho), Baron Ikeda⁹ acted in the same way. They kept up, in their own way and of their own free will, the old tradition of Junshi, according to which, when a master died, his faithful servants had to die too, to continue serving him beyond death.

One can say that modern Shinto, essentially with a political and moral attitude, is centered around nationalism and a national ritual. It never was anything else. However, its evolution is a fact. Its evolution lies in a greater consciousness of its value as a national force, in more and more stress put upon its national significance. As a simple primitive religion, it had no metaphysical background. Nor has it any now. But a national philosophy, a sort of racism, based upon the belief in the superiority of the Japanese people and the sacredness of the Japanese Emperor, has, with more force as centuries passed by, become its philosophy.

Many have said that it has no moral teaching. It is not strictly correct. In old Shinto, like in all very old religions, a “sin” was a ritual mistake, before anything else; but with time, a national code of morals, with loyalty, self-sacrifice to the country, courage, etc. as its main virtues, took its place next to the racist philosophy of Shinto. That moral ideal one has already been put down in a few words: It consists of being a true Japanese.

It is a beautiful thing to see that, in spite of its intense mechanization during the last seventy years, Japan has kept its rites and customs. One cannot but be impressed while reading the

description of the funeral of the late Emperor Yoshihito (Taisho), hardly more than ten years ago, with all the archaic ceremonial of Shinto, with the funeral chariot dragged by five oxen chosen for their special colors and built in such a way that its wheels in turning around would give out seven different melancholic sounds.

One cannot but admire the survival of the Shinto rites of old, in honor of the very same gods, and in the very simple wooden temples, hidden amongst thick shady Cryptomeria trees and white flowers.¹⁰

But something is more remarkable still: It is the official consecration of the old rites, and the living presence of the old spirit, not merely among the masses, but among the "intelligentsia" of Japan in touch with the modern world.

Shinto managed to survive, in spite of the enormous prestige of Buddhism, by mingling itself for a time with the Indian creed, by accepting and transforming its pantheon and slowly altering its spirit; for who can say that a Japanese Buddhist of today, even if he does not frequent the Buddhist and Shintoist temples, is not as penetrated as anybody can be with the Shintoist outlook?

It has behind it a long tradition of priesthood, of popular beliefs, of immemorial rites. And that is necessary to make a religion. Its racist philosophy, however purely political it may seem, is entangled with all these things. It has slowly and unconsciously grown out of them. It has then become conscious as a force of reaction, as an impetus of national self-defense, and has recognized them as visible and living symbols of its existence, nay, as the material objects "in which it resided", similar to a divine entity. They were neither created nor recreated by it.

That seems to be the strength of Shinto on the basis of a certain narrow definition of the word; one may deny it the name of "religion", considering especially modern Shinto, and call it a mere political philosophy. It is anyhow a very simple philosophy, having

all the advantages of a popular religion, and perhaps some others too.

For, after all, love is the great force amongst human beings, not metaphysics, and ritualistic nationalism, as a cult of a country's ruler and as a cult of nature worshipped through the beauty of a particular country, is far from ignoring love. Otherwise, accomplishing an archaic rite of superhuman loyalty, how could nowadays men have wilfully died just because their contemporary Emperor of the unbroken solar dynasty had passed away?

Notes

This essay was published in Anath Bandhu Mitra (ed.), New Asia. An Organ of Oriental Culture and Thought (52–53 Bowbazar Street, Calcutta), vol. 1, no. 3, July 1939, pages 18–25.

1. *In the original, Savitri Devi erroneously writes “729 A.D.”.*
2. *In the original, Savitri Devi erroneously writes “the local deity of Sumiyoshi”, but the Sumiyoshi are a group of three local deities.*
3. *In the original, Savitri Devi erroneously writes Suiten-gu, in English “Suiten Shrine”, instead of Suiten.*
4. *In the original, Savitri Devi erroneously writes Yasutoki, not Yoshitoki.*
5. *In the original, Savitri Devi erroneously writes Yasutoki, not Yoshitoki.*
6. *“The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal.” Chapter 1, Article 1 of the Constitution of the Empire of Japan, 11 February 1889. English Translation by Miyoji Itō; in: Hirobumi Itō (ed.): “Commentaries On The*

Constitution Of The Empire Of Japan.” Igrisu Hōritsu Gakkō (English Law School), Tokyo 1889, page 2.

7. Only one of the three symbols, the sacred mirror, is kept in the Ito Shrine; the sacred sword is in the Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya, and the sacred jewel in the Kashiko-dokoro Shrine on the grounds of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

8. The Yasukuni Shrine, established in 1869.

9. Savitri Devi writes erroneously “Takeda”. Baron Masasuke Ikeda (1883–1926).

10. In the original: “hidden amongst thick shady trees and white *Cryptomeria* flowers”. *Cryptomeria japonica* is the Japanese cedar, commonly planted around shrines. So the word “*Cryptomeria*” must have been printed in the wrong place. The “white flowers” must refer to the Sakaki tree (*Cleyera japonica*).

Shinto—The Way of the Gods

According to the multi-millennial Japanese tradition, in very ancient times there was once an immense ocean (ironically destined to be called the "Pacific" Ocean), which seemed endless: from one end to the other of the horizon, one could only see water and sky!

Above this immense body of water there was only a light and narrow "bridge." The gods used to go to this bridge to observe and admire the beauty and breadth of this ocean. One of these gods, Izana-Gi, tired of observing the ocean from high above, lowered his spear towards the water and slightly stirred it. After raising the spear he noticed that some mud, attached to the tip of the spear, fell back into the water. This was how the first "island" appeared on earth.

After this, Izana-Gi built a ladder and lowered himself from the "heavenly bridge" onto the ground. He then proceeded to build a small round house for himself and his wife, Izana-Mi, in which they began to meet.

Soon Izana-Mi had some children, who unfortunately turned out to be a disappointment. They were all different from each other and appeared to be weak, unworthy of a divine couple. A general assembly of the gods was gathered to look into the problem and to find the cause of such a failure. The gods asked the couple: "When you get together, who gets to talk first?"

Izana-Mi immediately replied: "Me, obviously"

One of the gods remarked: "This is a serious violation of the rule regulating Rites! A woman should never speak first, since this is one of man's duties and privileges. No wonder your children are not what they ought to be."

The couple followed the advice of the gods to the letter, and soon their children changed for the better, becoming beautiful and strong, worthy heirs of their divine legacy. Izana-Mi did not just give birth to children, but also became the mother of four thousand islands, big and small, which eventually made up Japan. The other countries of the world slowly emerged from the waters through a geological and natural process, which took centuries to unfold. This is why, unlike other countries, Japan is a "divine" land: it originated from a goddess!

* * *

Everything went smoothly till the day when Izana-Mi gave birth to the god of fire. Due to the very nature of this god, the goddess died a fiery death when he was born. Her body was taken to the netherworld, the dwelling of the dead. Her husband, Izana-Gi, descended into these lower regions to reclaim his wife's body from the Lords of these regions. As soon as he arrived, he was ordered to wait before the door beyond which laid the body of the goddess.

After waiting for a long time for the door to open, he committed a forbidden act and opened the fatal door himself. Immediately he smelled the smell of death! This experience had a negative effect on Izana-Gi, and right away he decided to rise up to the "world of the living." Nevertheless, he felt impure for having been in contact with the powers of decay and death. Having reached the river Kamo, he decided to take a bath and took off the fourteen layers of his clothes. While he was washing himself, suddenly some divine beings emerged from the water. At the same time, those fourteen layers became themselves gods. The water that he used to wash his left eye became the Lunar God, while the water he used to wash his right eye became the Solar Goddess, Amaterasu.¹ The water he used to wash his nostrils became the God of Wind and Storms, Susa-no-wo.

Susa-no-wo was an evil god. He loved to torment the Solar Goddess with all kinds of tricks. One day, after causing the carcass of a dead animal to fall on the head of Amaterasu from the top of the ceiling

in a room she was working in, Amaterasu decided she had had enough of Susa-no-wo's pranks. She withdrew, feeling very angry, inside a cave and blocked the entrance with a huge stone. Despite the prayers and supplications to be forgiven, Susa-no-wo did not succeed in changing Amaterasu's mind. She remained in the cave, refusing to come out.

Because of this, there was no longer light on earth. Everywhere darkness reigned, and the earth no longer produced good fruits: crops were lost and life itself was in danger for lack of solar light.

The gods were desperate and did not know how to solve this serious problem. At last, one of them, a goddess, had an inspiration. Knowing that Amaterasu was naturally curious, she approached the entrance of the cave and improvised a rather funny and indecent dance, arousing laughter among the gods. Amaterasu wanted to know the reason for this general hilarity and came close to the entrance of the cave to understand what was going on outside. She peeked through an opening between the cave and the huge stone blocking the entrance, but she could hardly see anything. Then she tried to use her mirror to get a better look. The other goddess, outside, slowly began to walk away from the entrance, forcing Amaterasu to stick her head out. Suddenly the gods jumped on her and pulled her out of the cave by her head, forcing her to leave her hiding place. At that point the light returned on earth.

On his part, Susa-no-wo decided to leave the residence of the gods and just like many other divine heroes who lived on earth, he became a monster-slayer. One day he saw a huge dragon about to devour a young maid. He came to her rescue right away and killed the dragon. He eventually married her and became the forefather of several large Japanese noble families. Knowing that the dragon had a sword inside his stomach, Susa-no-wo cut it open and claimed it for himself.²

Amaterasu wanted to give Japan (the land of the rising sun) a leader who could take control of the islands. She begat a child and told

him to go to the land of the rising sun to take charge of the destiny of the people who lived there, but her son did not want to accept such responsibility. He openly told his mother that he did not intend to go to such a land, since its inhabitants spent most of their time quarrelling among themselves. He said: "Send another in my place, my son Ninizi." And so it was. Ninizi had three children, one of whom, A-Ho-Demi, had married the Sea God's daughter. She had brought him as a present the magical jewel of the high and low tides through which he could rule over and control the water.

His son, Jimmu-Tenno, was the first "historical" Emperor of Japan. His dynasty has ruled without interruption from then on. Jimmu-Tenno enjoyed a long reign; however his rule is measured in "years" rather than in "centuries," as in the case of his predecessors. According to Japanese tradition he came to power on February 11th, 660 BC.

At the same time a Greek traveller named Eudoros landed on the southern coast of Gaul, married the daughter of a local Gallic chieftain and founded the city known today as Marseilles. Today, February 11th is still a national Japanese holiday.

* * *

We have already mentioned the Jewel, the Sword and the Mirror. With these objects endowed with a magical and divine power, the Empress Jingo conquered Korea in 200 AD. According to Japanese tradition, the gods had told her husband (who in the meantime had died), that the lands west of Japan "awaited to be conquered." Today, the three most sacred symbols (the Mirror of the goddess Amaterasu; the Sword that Susa-no-wo found in the belly of the Dragon which he slew; the magical Jewel of the high and low tides given to Ho-Demi by his wife's father, the Sea God) are kept in the Temple of Ise, which is the sanctuary most venerated by the Japanese.

In 1941, the imperial government sent an official delegation to this temple, in order to ask the national gods: "Should we declare war on the US?" The gods, through the priests officiating the national cult, answered in the positive. On December 7th, 1941, Japanese planes attacked the naval base of Pearl Harbor, located in Hawaii. In 1945, after the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as a result of nuclear bombs, the gods were again consulted by the Japanese government in the Ise Temple. The question was phrased in these terms: "Should we die fighting to the last man or should we capitulate and prepare to fight again in the future?" The gods' reply was: "Surrender, because we love your people." The rest is history.

The American occupation, which lasted several years, never completely broke the spirit of Japan, namely, the spirit of Shinto. Shinto is the national Japanese religion. Its essence may be summarily contained in these terms: the cult of the Sun, which is the main god of Japan, and the cult of national heroes and of the ancestors. In Japan all religions are tolerated. Many even classify it as a Buddhist nation. This is true in a certain sense. Buddhism was introduced in Japan in 550 AD, from neighboring Korea, thanks to prince Shotoku, who died in 601 AD. However, in order to thrive, Buddhism had to incorporate several Shinto beliefs and practices. Several Japanese rulers, such as those of the well-known dynasty of Shoguns which lasted until 1866, embraced Zen Buddhism. However, the heroic-warrior spirit of Shinto, which worships nature, the Sun and the Japanese race's ancestors, was always present in them.

There are several unforgettable texts and poems that express this Shinto spirit embodied in the life of Japanese people. These texts talk about the supreme detachment exhibited in every action of the lives of the members of the national Japanese cult. Hideyoshi Toyotomi, the great warrior and administrator who built the famous fortress of Osaka, apparently wrote shortly before dying: "Like a drop of water I will disappear and turn into air, but the Osaka fortress will stand like a wonderful dream." To this day this fortress is still standing, strong and proud, as a national monument.

On August 14th, 1281, Kublai Khan, Genghis Khan's nephew, sent his war fleet, comprising several hundred vessels, to conquer Japan. The Japanese could not have deflected this threat for a long time. Nevertheless they were ready and determined to fight and die to the last man in order to defend their land against the Mongol invader. Suddenly a strong wind, forerunner of a horrible storm, totally destroyed the powerful enemy fleet. Six centuries later the Emperor Meiji wrote in a poem: "Do as much as you are able through your natural powers; but then kneel down, and thank and worship the divine wind of Ise, which destroyed the Tartars' fleet."

There are several popular sayings that illustrate the Shinto spirit, such as this: "Be like the sakura (the cherry's blossom) when its time to fall and die comes. When the storm will shake the tree, you will surely fall and die. But you will fall and die gracefully."

The Japanese people knew how to "fall gracefully" in the course of their history. Nevertheless, they always knew how to save face and to live by their values. We cannot remember without admiration the famous kamikaze pilots, young men who volunteered to die aboard their planes which became "flying bombs." These young people immolated themselves on American war ships and especially on aircraft-carriers. We ought to remember their attacks on the aircraft carriers "Repulse" and "Prince of Wales." I was told that these pilots were anxious to reach the "great day" of their sacrifice; as their final day drew closer they became increasingly happy to donate their lives for their Country and their Emperor. In their last thoughts they remembered their brief lives and their loyalty to the Rising Sun, which was embodied in the solar dynasty of the Emperors. Before crashing they cried for the last time their war cry which aptly expressed their state of mind: "Heike Tenno Banzai!"³ Then, calmly and firmly, they guided their airplanes loaded with high explosives onto the enemy targets that had been chosen to be hit and destroyed.

Shinto scriptures, particularly the Kojiki (The Book of the Gods) and the text known as the Nihongi (The Book of the Emperors), written

around 720 A.D., eight years after the compilation of the Kojiki), dedicated to various leaders and Emperors (who, according to national tradition, were children of the sun), were written during the reign of the Emperor Jimmu, in the eighth century. Shinto took its shape as a religion of nature and of heroes thanks to two great Japanese scholars, Maturi and Hirata. When Japan surrendered in 1945, the landing of American troops on Japanese soil represented a unique event in Japan's national history, since they were the first ever to occupy the land of the Rising Sun. The American army was the only one in Japan's history to have set foot on its territory. Moreover, this Army came to impose on the Japanese people an ideology radically foreign to their mind-set, spirituality, and national identity.

One of the first policies of the American occupational government was to prohibit the teaching, in all the schools of Japan, of the above mentioned Shinto texts, namely of The Book of the Gods and The Book of the Emperors. The Japanese posed no resistance to these hostile actions. (But then again, why should they have resisted? The gods had clearly said that it was necessary to accept the terms of surrender and to go on "living"). Japan bowed its head with a smile: "Democracy? Sure! The Emperor is a man like everyone else? Very well! You call our political and military leaders 'War criminals.' We assume that you are right, since you have won the war, and as history teaches, the winners are always right." The Japanese smiled until a peace treaty, relatively and comparatively not too harsh, was signed. They smiled until the day when the last soldier of the American occupation forces left the land of the Rising Sun. The following day, the sacred texts of Shintoism were re-introduced in the classrooms. Moreover, school children were taken to visit (a practice still followed nowadays) the remains of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which had been destroyed by nuclear bombs, to admire the genial work of the "defenders of mankind." As if that was not enough, students were taken to visit the Temple of Gamagori, which holds the remains of general Hideki Tojo and other "war criminals" killed by the Americans. Every Japanese student has the honor of lighting a small incense stick to venerate

the memory of these men who sacrificed themselves for Japan and for its people. These "war criminals" are still regarded today as national heroes and their persons are and will be venerated as such in the centuries to come.⁴

Oh, poor Japan, faithful to your sons, our ally during WW II! I admire and envy you! When will we Europeans build a Temple or at least a monument to honor the memory of our heroes, of our dead, of our leaders, which our enemies still call today "war criminals"? When will we publicly and freely pay homage to our dead as you do to yours?

We too would have been able to faithfully honor our fallen comrades if our Princes and Kings, a long time ago, beginning with the fifth all the way to the fifteenth century in Prussia, would not have imposed Christianity, through sheer force, on our Aryan populations. Do not forget, dear Japanese friends, that Aryans, before being converted, were "*worshippers of the Sun*," faithful followers of the cult of heroes, blood and soil, just like you! One of your fellow countrymen, who worked at the Japanese Embassy in Calcutta in 1940, was right when he told me, "Your National Socialism is, according to us, just a Western form of Shinto!"

Notes

Originally published as "Shinto—La via degli dei," in Arya, no. 4 (July 1980), translated by Guido Stucco.

Savitri Devi's essay "Shinto—The Way of the Gods" was written in English in New Delhi in 1979. It was then translated into Italian by Vittorio De Cecco for the Italian-language NS periodical Arya, published in Montreal. The English original of the essay is lost; the text above is Guido Stucco's translation of a translation. Portions of Savitri's "Shinto" may have first appeared in Asit Krishna Mukherji's Eastern Economist, which was published in collaboration with the Japanese from 1938-1941.

1. *The solar character of the religious tradition of Japanese Shinto is embodied in the divine figure of the emperor, believed to be of heavenly origins. He is regarded as a direct descendant of the goddess Amaterasu, whose solar character is found throughout the entire religious tradition of Japan.*
2. *The sword, together with a mirror and a jewel are sacred symbols still employed in Shinto rituals.*
3. *The meaning of this expression is: "May the Emperor live ten thousand years!"*
4. *For a complete description of how these so-called Japanese "war criminals" died, see the French translation of *La voie de l'Eternité* (1973), by Pierre Pascal, of Shinsho Hanayama's book *The Way of Eternity*. This author spent time with these heroes of the Rising Sun during the last months of their lives.*

The Egyptian Conquest of Nubia

*This is the Southern Frontier... No Negro is permitted to pass
this boundary northwards, either by foot or by boat...*

Which awful racist wrote these words? Shocking they sound! The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith should look into the matter, surely.

It is too late, however, for the Jews to punish this author. These words were written—cut into hard stone—over 4,000 years ago.

The ADL, or any equivalent of it, was not yet invented, and any attempt to bring the spirit of such a body into action would have been met with universal contempt on the part of the people and with the severest penalties on the part of the authorities in power.

The quoted words are part of the inscription which can be seen to this day upon the boundary stone set up by the order of Pharaoh Senusret III (the fifth king of the Twelfth Egyptian dynasty) at Semneh, one of the two fortresses he had built upon the hills on each side of the Nile, some 30 miles above the second cataract.

The fortresses were built after his first military expedition into Nubia (the Sudan of today) in the eighth year of his reign. The expeditions of Senusret III followed those of his predecessors. Already under Senusret the First—three generations before—the region of the third cataract was Egyptian and ruled by Hapzefa of Siut, who was buried at Kerma under a mound, with his slaves slain all around him.

The main motive of the Twelfth dynasty pharaohs in conquering Nubia was their desire to control the Nile more effectively and to be

able to foresee more accurately the probable height of the yearly inundation on which the prosperity of Egypt depended. The regulation of the great river was looked upon as the highest duty of the Egyptian ruler—which is true even today.

In addition to this, there was also the desire to acquire the gold with which the Wadi Alaki and other areas of the Nubian desert valley were full.

The military expeditions into this region brought the ancient Egyptians—a proud Aryan people—into close contact with the primitive Blacks who inhabited the area.

The remainder of Senusret III's inscription at Semneh is interesting: "No boat of the Negroes is to be allowed to pass northward forever..."

And a few years later:

Year 16, third month of Peret, His Majesty fixed the frontier of the South at Heh... I advanced up-river beyond my forefathers; I added much thereto. What lay in my heart was brought to pass by my hand.

I am vigorous in seizing, powerful in succeeding, never resting; one in whose heart there is a word which is unknown to the weak; one who arises against mercy; never showing clemency to the enemy who attacks him, but attacking he who attacks him. For to take no notice of a violent attack is to strengthen the heart of the enemy.

Cowardice is vile. He is a coward who is vanquished on his own frontier, since the Negro will fall prostrate at a word: answer him and he retreats! If one is vigorous with him, he turns his back, even when on the way to attack.

Behold! These people (the Negroes) have nothing frightening about them; they are feeble and insignificant; they have buttocks for hearts! I have seen it, even I, the majesty, it is no lie!

I have seized their women; I have carried off their folk; I have marched to their wells; I took their cattle; I destroyed their cornseed, I set fire to it. By my life and my father's, I speak the truth!

Every son of mine who shall have preserved this frontier which My Majesty has made, is indeed my son and born of My Majesty, verily a son who avenges his father and preserves the boundary of him who begat him. But he who shall have abandoned it, he who shall not have fought for it, behold, he is no son of mine he is none born of me.

Behold! My Majesty has set up an image of My Majesty upon this frontier, which My Majesty has made, not from the desire that ye should worship it, but from the desire that ye should fight for it!

In the days this was hewn out of the granite by the scribes of Senusret III, Egypt was a mighty Aryan nation, a military power to be reckoned with, a centre of learning and culture.

Today, Egypt is no longer a world power, nor is it an Aryan nation. It is impoverished, and populated by mongrels and half-castes. It was vanquished by the very people it had enslaved centuries earlier—a people which is not known for its heroism and warlike spirit: the Jews. How far the civilisation of our ancestors has fallen!

Without realising it, Senusret III himself tells us how this came to be: "... I have seized their women; I have carried off their folk..."

And thus the stage was set for race-mixing which inevitably leads to the destruction of the greatness which lies in the purity of Aryan blood.

“Cowardice is vile.” “(The Negro) is... insignificant.” “... for to take no notice of a violent attack is to strengthen the heart of the enemy.” “My Majesty has made (this boundary), not from the desire that ye should worship it, but from the desire that ye should fight for it!”

This inscription of Senusret III contains much wisdom for 20th century Americans—if they choose to heed it. Nothing, however, is more important than the unintentional lesson he teaches us concerning the pollution of the blood. Another great Aryan leader, who, unlike Senusret III, was conscious of this, has expressed it better than anyone:

“Blood sin and desecration of the race are the original sin in this world and the end of a humanity which surrenders to it.”

Notes

The preceding article first appeared in the January-February 1979 issue of White Power (page 11). It is a brief historical vignette, padded out with long quotations and offering scarcely any analysis. The assertions that ancient Egypt was an “Aryan” nation and that an Egyptian Pharaoh had “fine, Nordic features” were added by Martin Kerr, then editor of White Power.

In a letter to Kerr, Savitri makes it clear that she did not think much of her efforts and explains why, under the circumstances, that she could not do better:

“I hope I didn’t bore you with my ‘bit of ancient history.’

I was too crushed by the awful heat of Delhi’s summer (it is summer, here, since March) to go to the length of writing something of my own inspiration for White Power. I am not of those privileged ones who have air-conditioning in their lodgings. I have merely a fan above my bed, in my one room and kitchen tiny flat. And that fan—under which I am lying,

whenever I am not forced to get up, either to go and get food for my cats, or to go and teach my few private pupils: earn my living and that of my animals, home ones and strays who depend on me—that fan, I say, does nothing more than agitate burning air (45 degrees centigrade in my room, under the fan, a few days back: hardly less than outdoors in the shade). Now you can imagine the furnace in the sun! And when one goes out on foot, be it to walk to the station where one can hire some conveyance, you can imagine what it feels like. I am exhausted when I come home from my lessons or from shopping, and the only thing I am fit for is to call back into my mind the little I once learnt about ancient times.

[...]

Excuse me if for just now I do not write any more. I intend to write about my late husband—Sri A.K. Mukherji—for the National Socialist World. He deserved it. But I must wait till I can be myself again—after this heat. End of June, beginning of July, the “monsoon rains” are expected. Hurray! That means on the first day a sudden fall in temperature of 25 degrees (centigrade) and a downpour, amidst thunder and lightning. Lovely!”

Thoughts on Reincarnation

A Selection from her Correspondence and Interviews

Letter to Matt Koehl, New Delhi, 27 April 1977

[Mr. Mukherji] wished to die. “Better die than get born after 1945,” he used to say. And his one other wish was not to get born again, but merge into “cosmic consciousness.”

Personally, I wouldn’t mind being born again—again being sixteen, again being twenty, and thirty! But surely I dread being fifteen months old—and two years, and three—again.

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Interview, New Delhi, November 1978
(And Time Rolls On, pp. 121-23)

Now reincarnation is one of the only two beliefs that unite all Hindus of any caste, from the Brahmin to the untouchable, that is to say, the harijans.¹ They call them harijans, that is to say, “people of god.” But every creature is a person of god. It doesn’t mean anything. They’re outcasts, the lowest outcasts, generally the aborigines. What is a harijan? He’s either an aborigine, or else he’s a man of any caste who has done something awful or whose ancestors have done something awful, and was outcasted. And when you were outcasted in India, your descendants are outcasted also, for all times to come. From the topmost Brahmin to the lowest harijan, everybody believes in reincarnation.

That is to say, there is in every living creature, not in every man—reincarnation is for animals and plants also, not only for people—there is in every living creature a visible body and more than one subtle body, and these subtle bodies separate from the rest of the physical body at the time of death. And they constitute what they call the ego. That ego, if it is not already merged into the universal ego—that is to say, if a man is not what the Hindus say “liberated”—that ego takes a new birth, in some other body, animal or human or plant. Plants live. Even minerals have some kind of life. There is nothing in the world that’s not absolutely soaking in some kind of life, some kind of vibration. So the belief is not that when you are good you are reborn in a higher social status. That’s nonsense. You will not be born rich if you are poor. If you wish to be rich, if you are good, you don’t become rich in the next life, not necessarily. It might be the contrary, that the rich man is re-born as a beggar. He is reborn in that state which will be the best for his spiritual evolution. If it is better for his spiritual evolution for him to be born in a very low social status, he will. And the low social status does not mean in India a low race. There are Aryans and there are non-Aryans. There are Brahmin beggars. And there are untouchables who are millionaires. It has nothing to do with money. And that’s one of the things I like the best of it. An Aryan, or supposed Aryan, say, a Brahmin, if he is a beggar and he goes to marriage ceremony, they put him inside at the best place, the most honorable place, with the other Brahmins. If a multi-millionaire untouchable goes to a marriage ceremony, he’ll be put outside with his fellow untouchables. He will not be given a better place because he has money. Money or learning. Even learning. Brojendranath Seal² was a scientist, a very great scientist. He was a Seal.³ That’s a very low caste in Bengal. Seals are a very low caste. He was never given greater status.

Learning can be acquired. Money can be acquired. Only blood cannot be acquired for the Hindu religion. And that’s what I like in the Hindu religion. It’s the only real, living religion compatible with National Socialism. It gives priority to what cannot be acquired with any means. You are born with a race. You can’t change your

race whatever you do. You get reborn if you are not perfect. That is to say, if you have not gone through all the experiences resulting from the algebraic sum of your good and bad deeds.

Good and bad mean nothing. Good is what is according to the nature of your soul. And bad is what goes against nature. That's all. In Hinduism, you do not have to kill your instincts. Not at all. In fact, if you go to a yogi and ask him to be your master, he asks you some questions. Among the questions there is this, "How strong are your instincts?" If you tell him, "I have no instincts, very little." He says, "That's no good for you." The stronger the instincts you have, the better, because the stronger means the more and greater energy you have. You have to take that energy upwards. You have to transform it. Well, it's the theory of Nietzsche. It's exactly the idea of Nietzsche. The superman does not have to kill his passions. He has to canalize them for a higher purpose. Dominate them. Not let them dominate him but dominate them. That's a Hindu idea too.

Now you get reborn. Unless you are finished with the processes completely, you will get reborn. Some people are not reborn, but they wish to be reborn for the good of creatures. Again, not of man, but of all creatures. And they are reborn where they want to be. They choose their race. They choose their family in which they are getting reborn. They choose their own life beforehand. And they get reborn. These are what the Buddhists call the Bodhisattvas and the others who are not reborn at all, they are called Arhats in the Buddhist terminology.

Now, generally when you are reborn higher, you are reborn not higher in a social status, but higher in race. It will take centuries and millennia for a man of a lower race to become an Aryan. Generally an Aryan is reborn as an Aryan. Unless he has done awful things, then he might be reborn very low. I suppose the men who tortured Streicher, for instance, would be reborn as Negroes. It wouldn't astonish me at all. They would deserve it. Certainly they do. Especially if they were Aryans. If they were Jews, not so much. If

they were Jews they would be more excusable. If they were Aryans, less excusable.

I'm not a strong believer in anything that I cannot either see or prove with my own strength. I just take reincarnation as an hypothesis, a theory, if you like. But I do think that of the many, many theories that have been put forward to explain the unexplainable, reincarnation is the most plausible. It is at least the one that can be the best exploited for National Socialism. I told you of Khudiram, didn't I?⁴ Telling me that he was a Shudra, and even if he was still a Shudra under the New Order it wouldn't matter to him because he was born in the Shudra family because of his past sins in past lives. And he said, "Well, whatever I am in the New Order, I believe in the New Order because it's true."

True or not, I don't know.⁵ But I know that if we had this kind of belief in Europe, and if a European of more or less pure Aryan descent could think, "If I'm good in this life, and if I stay good in future lives for another five hundred years, I might become a German. What a lovely thing to be. Or I might become, say, a Swede." I wouldn't say a Swede like certain Swedes are today, because not all of them are perfectly Aryan in behavior. Some of them take drugs and do I don't know what. "But an ideal Swede, an ideal Nordic European, I'll become that one day. Before I get liberated completely." It would be a very good sort of propaganda. It's better propaganda than what we get in Christianity. Heaven and hell. And of course hell, if you don't believe in the church.

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Letter to Matt Koehl, New Delhi, 2 August 1979

A few days before he died, Mr. Mukherji told me he "regretted nothing." He often used to say that "after 1945 it is better to die than to be born." And that he "didn't want to be born again."

I would not mind being born again if I were to be one of an Aryan family, kind to animals, vegetarian (as I have always been from childhood) and not opposed to me ideologically. I'd like to be sixteen again—and twenty-five, and thirty. But I must say that I would not like to be four or three—a toddler—again, or an infant. And one has to dirty one's napkins [diapers] before one grows up and gets ideas. It is the way of all living creatures. And we are living creatures.

* * *

Letter to Matt Koehl, New Delhi, 1 October 1980

I don't know whether such a thing as reincarnation exists or not, and don't really care, conscious as I am of the part played by the body in the life of what they call "the soul"—whatever that be. A different body (even of the same race—for well-versed people in knowledge of traditional sciences say one is normally reborn within one's own race, and most of the time within one's own family).

All those spurious books (mostly American) according to which one can be a Negro or a Jew or anything else in one's "next" (or have been it in one's latest) birth, are just bunkum, a subtle and most pernicious propaganda in view of destroying the race consciousness of the Aryan.

With a different body I say (even of the same race or even family) one has a different conscious self, different personality. So that such "immortality" is not immortality at all—not one I can strive for at least.

No, as I wrote in the Preface of *Pilgrimage* twenty-seven years ago, the only immortality we National Socialists are sure of is that of the man who leaves sons behind him, sons of his own blood of course—and, I would add, of his own convictions. A NS man is not really immortal if he has one son, and that—a communist, as it can (and

unfortunately does) happen. (I heard of such a case in modern Germany, alas!)

Or else, if not in his children, a man lives in his works. The workmen who built the walls and ramparts of the city that occupied around 8,000 BC—a hundred centuries ago—the place of Jericho, live in their work (excavated in our century). The potter who made and decorated a pot lives in the shards of his pot for all time to come.

I have no children, and the things I wrote are not original: they are as old as Life itself. I only tried to give them an expression connected with the problems of our times. It is the pleasure of the struggle that kept me alive that long, in spite of many daily inconveniences; still today I would wish to live on a year or two more—with hardly any eyesight, stiff, aching legs, all sorts of physical troubles, if I knew I would [one word is illegible] surely see “the Day of Reckoning” (der Tag der Rache) in all its terrific grandeur. And hear the victorious Aryan—at last united in a common consciousness of racial superiority—tell the world that has lied to us so long: Now we are wide-awake. Now is your choice: “Hitler or Hell!” (My own words in *Gold in the Furnace*, written in 1948, 1949, in the midst of the ruins of Germany.)

But I have given up hope of seeing that day. And rather than pull on and on with my ailments, I should be glad—as glad as Mr. Mukherji, my co-fighter, was, three and a half years ago—to leave for good this world of decay ...

Notes

1. *The other common belief is, presumably, the caste system itself.*
2. *Transcription uncertain.*

3. *Transcription uncertain.*

4. *For more on Khudiram, see "Hitlerism and the Hindu World," 18-20 and Defiance, 498.*

5. *The truth of reincarnation, not of the New Order.*