

# Evola's Anti-Semitism

By Michael O'Meara

When Julius Evola, one of the leading twentieth-century critics of Judeo-liberal civilization, worked out his racial theory during the 1930s, the principal inspiration for anti-Semitic thought was *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Purportedly stolen from an occult Lodge, the *Protocols* were a report of twenty-four secret meetings held by the leaders of international Jewry, as they attempted to devise a plan for world domination.

Jewish organizations quite naturally went to considerable lengths to discredit the *Protocols*. Their most famous effort resulted in a judicial action taken by a Berne court in 1933 against a Swiss nationalist who had distributed the document.

The court's decision that the *Protocols* were a libelous forgery, Evola thought, was besides the point. For in his eyes the issue of the *Protocols*' authenticity was "secondary to the far more serious and essential problem of their veracity"—for even if not actually written by the "Elders" or based on an existing plan, the document in his view was of unparalleled significance in drawing attention, first, to the Jewish Question, and, more importantly, to the subversive forces at work in recent history.

In this spirit, he claimed the *Protocols* shed new light on the Jews' campaign against Europe's traditions, aristocracies, symbols, and transcendent values, especially as this campaign promoted ideologies subverting the white man's sense of order—ideologies such as capitalism, cosmopolitanism, egalitarianism, materialism, feminism, etc.

Inspired by the subversive import of these ideologies, the Jews allegedly "stress the negative aspects, abuses, and injustices" of traditional Europe. To this end, they "spread the germs of a critical and rationalistic mentality meant to corrupt the innermost ethical cement" of organically established hierarchies; they endeavor to dominate the principal centers of official teaching, to control public opinion through their monopoly of the media, to undermine family life, to provoke both social and moral defeatism by "stirring up mistrust and discreditable rumors regarding the clergy" and other representatives of white society. And, not least, they reduce all interests to economic-financial ones, replacing former authorities with mathematical calculations and materialist imperatives.

The course of modern European history, Evola claimed, seemed "to meet the objectives set out in the *Protocols*." For once the "Elders'" campaign succeeded in reducing whites to "a mush of beings without tradition and inner strength," "the ancient promise of the *regnum* of the Chosen People" became realizable.

But if Jews for Evola were one of the principal forces for subversion in the modern world, he parted company with those "vulgar anti-Semites" who saw the Jews everywhere, a sort of *deus ex machina*, responsible for all the world's ills. This type of reductionism, he thought, was self-discrediting. One can acknowledge "the pernicious role the Jew has played in the history of civilization," he writes, but this "must not

prejudice a deeper investigation which can make us become aware of forces for which Judaism may have been . . . only the instrument.”

Thus, while the European encounter with Judah goes back more than two millennia, it was, he stressed, only in recent times, with the advent of liberal-capitalist societies and particularly with the rise of America to world power, that Jews actually began to dominate the white homelands.

Though Evola affirmed both the legitimacy and necessity of anti-Semitism, at the same time he rejected its “parochialism,” its often arbitrary principles, and its lack of “a truly general standpoint.”

The vulgar anti-Semitism that makes the Jews responsible for every form of subversion was, from his perspective, a humiliating admission of inferiority. The Jews were stronger and more capable, he argued, only when the white man degenerated. That is, only he was no longer himself and thus weakened did he become vulnerable to them, for their power came from their exploitation of the degenerate forces already assaulting white life.

For this reason, Evola thought the subversive forces empowered by liberal capitalism and exploited by the Jews were “only the last links in a chain of causes which are unthinkable without antecedents such as, for instance, [Renaissance] humanism, the [Protestant] Reformation, and the French Revolution, all of which are phenomena that no one would seriously think of ascribing to a Jewish conspiracy.”

Jewish power, in a word, followed a larger historical process of “decomposition and involution,” which had de-Aryanized the white man and prepared the way for the Jews’ *regnum*.

Anti-Semitism, as a consequence, not only tends to make the Jews a scapegoat for the failings of modern civilization, it also conceals a more general struggle against its de-Aryanizing forces—against its “mechanizing rationalism, secular illuminism, and world-outlook based on numbers and quantity.”

Though emphasizing that the Jews were not the sole cause for modernity’s anti-white impetus, Evola nevertheless accepted that it was easier to fight personal forces (Jews) than abstractions (modernity) and that the figure of the omnipotent Jew was an effective symbol in mobilizing resistance to the anti-Aryanizing forces.

Because Evola believed it was the destruction of “our former imperial, aristocratic, and spiritual Europe” that made Jewish domination possible, it was only in returning to the principles of this Europe that he saw any prospect of effectively resisting the demonic order born of their domination.

The struggle against the de-Aryanizing forces entails, then, not merely a racial struggle against alien domination, but also a spiritual struggle to reclaim the white man’s original identity—a spiritual struggle having nothing to do with woolly abstractions or mystic escapes, but one engaged as a heroic action faithful to the white man’s Aryan essence.

What is this essence?

Virtually every historical stage in the white man's encounter with Judah has unleashed the forces of anti-Semitism. For the Jew this is sign of the inherently pathological character of gentile society; for Evola it suggested that everything "connected with Semitism, and, above all, with Jews, appears as peculiarly repulsive to the peoples of the white race." This is the case not simply because Jewish interests clash with white ones, but because they, as a people defined by Talmudic Law, offend the animating spirit of that "common primordial civilization" from which all the various historical and more recent white civilizations arose.

It was this primal spiritual opposition between Jew and Aryan, Evola argued, that was at the root of anti-Semitism.

Borrowing terms taken from J. J. Bachofen, Evola characterized the Aryan spirit as solar and virile, the Jewish spirit as lunar and feminine.

"*Arya*," the root of "Aryan," Evola noted, comes from a Sanskrit word designating "noblemen," for "out of the mass of common and mediocre beings rise men 'of race' in the sense of higher, 'noble' beings."

The highest expression of the Aryan's aristocratic racial spirit took the form of the warrior's "affirmative attitude to the divine"—spirit being that "which in better times was called 'race' by well-born persons: that is, straightforwardness, inner unity, character, dignity, manliness, immediate sensitivity for all values that are at the core of all human greatness and which, since they are situated far above fortuitous reality, govern this same reality."

Behind the numerous mythological and symbolic references to the bright sky found in the various Indo-European cultures, all of which upheld value systems oriented to the transcendent heavens, there prevailed a sense of the "incorporeal virility of light."

The solar is indeed light itself, unlike the lunar which brightens only when it reflects and absorbs light outside it.

Relatedly, the Europeans' ancient pagan cults all believed in a race of divine heroes. In this spirit, they saw themselves as the "eminent bearers" of the universal forces associated with these heroes' "solar glory"—as expressed in principles of freedom and personality, loyalty and honor.

Similarly, the Aryan spirit was realized not in the works of monks and rabbis—but in action, preeminently in the struggles the warrior waged against the enemies he had to fight, in himself and in his world.

From this, Evola claimed the Aryan's "characteristic ideal was more royal than sacerdotal, more the ideal of a transfiguring affirmation than the priestly idea of religious abandon."

Unlike the "devout and imploring servility" characteristic of the Abrahamic religions, the Aryan relation to the divine was active and affirmative.

“It was the heroes, more than the saints” that the Aryan saw as reaching “the highest and the most privileged places of immortality.” His quest for knowledge and understanding, it followed, was engaged as a virile, heroic conquest—not something “sinful” like the biblical Adam’s attempt to eat from the divine tree.

In contrast to Aryan solarly, Evola claimed the Jews’ lunar spirit negates the synthesis of spirituality and virility, emphasizing both that which is coarsely materialist and sensualist on the one side, and escapist and contemplative on the other. Mammonism and rationalism accordingly dominate their relationship to the world, just as the body for them is not an instrument of the spirit, but simply flesh and matter, something to be stimulated and pleased.

The dualistic conception of body and soul born of the Jewish spirit, whose abstract and fatalistic contemplativeness is “devoid of any interest in the heroic and supranatural affirmation of the personality,” cannot, as a result, but level the higher values associated with the Aryan’s Olympian spirituality.

In the cultural realm this leads the Jews “to falsify, make ridiculous, render illusory and unjust” that which is distinct to peoples of Aryan origin and which resists the “animal, low, or dirty aspects of things.” “To degrade, to soil, and to debase all that [which the white man considers] great and noble, and to unleash at the same time obscure, instinctive, sexual, pre-personal tendencies” that undermine his values are all, in fact, second nature to them.

The Jews’ critical assault on white values is also the key to their dominion, for through the opportunistic infiltrations that enable them to control the governing institutions, they seek (usually in the name of democracy, humanity, and science) to tear down all the historically established principles and orders obstructing their designs.

Wherever, then, “the virile, heroic, triumphant assumption of the Divine vanishes, to give way to the exaltation of the pathos of a slavish, depersonalizing, turbidly and Messianic attitude toward spirit,” there Jewry inevitably triumphs over Aryanity.

To fight the forces denaturing the white man, it is not enough, therefore, to take half-measures infused with the alien Semitic spirit of the modern world.

A great many anti-Semites, though, do just this, seeing Aryanity as an inverse Semitism and not a true anti-Semitism. To be fully anti-Semitic, Evola argued, cannot be compromised by the ideas and principles against which whites struggle. They need to fight as Aryans.

[They] need to be radical. Values must be evoked once again which can be seriously called Aryan, and not merely on the basis of vague and one-sided concepts suffused with biological materialism. Values of a solar Olympian spirituality, of a classicism of clarity and controlled force, of a new love for difference and free personality, and, at the same time, for hierarchy and universality that a stock newly possessed of a virile ability to rise from “life” to “more-than-life” can create as against a world torn to shreds, without true principles and peace.

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Evola's anti-Semitism was largely an offshoot of his "Traditionalist" opposition to liberal modernity and its assault on the Aryan spirit, just as his support for racial nationalism in the Thirties and Forties was based less on his belief in its various ideological manifestations than in its resistance to the materialist and Judaifying impulses of the Third Estate.

Yet not long after 1945, once the forces of the Third Estate had crushed the last remnants of Traditional Europe, the Jews ceased to be a target of Evola's traditionalist critique. At the very point, then, when the lunar forces became triumphant, Evola seemed to abandon his anti-Semitism.

Why?

Part of the reason had to do with the impossibility of mounting an effective political resistance to the Judeo-liberal order of the postwar period. For once Europe fell under the yoke of the extra-European powers and every vestige of its historic past fell into ruin, all that could be done in this new dark age was to make certain that those few men left standing were able to keep the dimming embers of the Aryan spirit from being entirely extinguished.

As he wrote in 1948, "I see nothing but a world of ruins, where a kind of front line is possible only in the catacombs." To sustain this underground resistance, it was henceforth necessary to adopt a stoic—an indifferent—attitude to the frenzied antics of what had become a totally Hebraicized world.

But there was another reason for his waning interest in the Jewish Question.

In his "spiritual autobiography," *The Road of Cinnabar* (1972), Evola writes that following the Second World War he thought it "absurd" to continue stressing the white man's superiority over the Jew "because the negative behavior [traditionally] attributed to Jews had now become that of the majority of 'Aryans.'" That is, in an age where the Jewish spirit of liberal modernity prevailed and most whites had succumbed to it, it was futile to exalt Aryan values, for whites, the Aryans' alleged heirs, now behaved no differently than Jews.

For this reason, I think his postwar stance was less an abandonment of his earlier anti-Semitic critique than a recognition that the subversive forces (of which the Jews were the most conspicuous embodiment) had become hegemonic and that those few white men who had not succumbed had no choice but to "ride the tiger" until it dropped of exhaustion—the tiger being the perverted powers that had come to rule the world.

Insofar as the twenty-first century announces a new order of battle, Evola's apolitical stoicism can no longer be our position today.

But it is nevertheless one that points to what is at stake in the wars we'll have to fight if whites are to have a future—for the white man's blood will not survive if he defiles the spirit that makes him who he is.

**Bibliographical Note:** Ten of Evola's twenty-five books have now been translated into English, though not his racialist and fascist ones (with the exception of the pamphlet "Three Aspects of the Jewish Problem"). The interested reader should probably begin not with his *magnum opus*, *Revolt against the Modern World*, which demands a good deal of familiarity with his thought, but rather with *Men among the Ruins*, beautifully edited by Michael Moynihan and introduced with a long biographical essay by the Austrian scholar H. T. Hanson. There are also several English-language websites devoted to him. The one with the best collection of his articles is *Evola As He Is* (). For those who read Italian, an excellent introduction is Adriano Romualdi, *Julius Evola: L'uomo e l'opera* (Rome: Volpe, 1968). For those who read French, see Christophe Boutin, *Politique et tradition: Julius Evola dans le siècle* (Paris: Kimé, 1992). On Evola's "problematic" metaphysics, see my "The Primordial and the Perennial: Tradition in the Thought of Martin Heidegger and Julius Evola," *Tyr: Myth—Culture—Tradition* 3 (2007).

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