

Counter-Revolution and Cosmopolitan Spirituality: Anquetil Duperron's Translation of the Upanishads

Blake Smith

Long an obscure figure outside of French-language scholarship, the French Orientalist Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil Duperron (1731–1805) has been rediscovered in recent years by Anglophone historians who see him as an exemplar of liberal, cosmopolitan, and anti-colonial trends in eighteenth-century thought.¹ Jonathan Israel finds him to have been “the most learned of radically enlightened critics of the British Raj.”² Siep Stuurman and Jennifer Pitts likewise present him as an opponent both of imperialism in South Asia and Eurocentrism more generally.³ Even Edward Said, while describing Anquetil’s projects for translating Zoroastrian and Hindu texts as bordering on “follies... crazy enthusiasms,” nevertheless exempted Anquetil from the critiques to which he subjected other major figures of the history of Orientalism.⁴ Anquetil is indeed a compelling figure, author of the first published translations of the Avesta (an ancient collection of Zoroastrian scriptures) and of the Upanishads (an ancient collection of Sanskrit philosophical and

B. Smith (✉)

50 bis ave des piliers, 94210 La Varenne Saint Hilaire, France

e-mail: blakesmith2018@u.northwestern.edu

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theological texts), as well as polemics against the notion of Oriental despotism outlined by Montesquieu (1689–1755). Anquetil was one of the few Europeans of his day to insist that states such as the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires were no less legitimate than Western European ones.⁵

Given such commitments, it would perhaps be unsurprising to see him in the last years of his life become, in Israel's words, a "zealous supporter" of the French Revolution.⁶ Rather than supporting the Revolution, however, Anquetil opposed it with the peculiar weapons of his Orientalist arsenal. His path-breaking Latin translation of the Upanishads, published as *Oupnek'hat* (in two volumes 1801–1802) was offered to the public as a counter-revolutionary polemic, filled with notes, asides and appendices in which Anquetil allowed himself, at the slightest pretexts, to comment on political developments in France.⁷ Written over the course of at least a decade, the *Oupnek'hat* was crammed with many different sorts of remarks on the French Revolution, from analyses of the state of moral decay that supposedly had preceded it, to condemnations of the political implications of empiricist philosophy and advice for persecuted Catholics. Many of these passages were rather conventional pieces of counter-revolutionary rhetoric, and cited well-known works such as Augustin Barruel's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du jacobinisme* (1797). Anquetil's career as a scholar of Asian religions with liberal, cosmopolitan sympathies, however, did inform his attitude toward the Revolution, giving it a unique cast. Scholars like Suzanne Desan, Timothy Tackett, and Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall show the diversity of religious responses to the Revolution, from the multi-faceted spirituality of lay people to the revolutionary Christianity of Abbé Henri Grégoire (1750–1831).⁸ Moreover, in an irony Anquetil would surely have resented, his efforts to wield a reimagined, syncretic vision of Catholic orthodoxy against the French Revolution were not so far removed from the spirit of religious experiment among many revolutionaries that inspired such innovations as the Cult of the Supreme Being.

Inspired by a mystical interpretation of both the Upanishads and Christianity, Anquetil proposed that a synthesis between the two was Europe's best hope for salvation from immorality, atheism, and political turmoil. In this sense, he sympathized with and went far beyond the ideas of better-known counter-revolutionary thinkers, like Joseph de Maistre (1754–1840), Louis de Bonald (1753–1821), or François-René

de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), each of whom, in his own way, understood the Revolution as a consequence of French society's deviation from Christianity and saw the return of legitimate political order as intrinsically linked to a revival of the Catholic Church. Anquetil agreed that good government depended on religion, yet, insisting that true Christians eschewed politics in any form, placed his hopes in an esoteric, cosmopolitan spirituality that had little to do with Catholic orthodoxy. In a pioneering article on counter-revolutionary thought in the immediate aftermath of 1789, Paul Beik suggests that the importance of thinkers like Maistre and Bonald lay not in their immediate political impact but in the fact that “unable to turn back the Revolution, opposed it as creatively as they could and in doing so explored possibilities which conservatives have used ever since.”⁹ If this is true, then, in spite of the silence with which contemporaries received Anquetil's proposals for esoterism as the answer to Revolution, they must be seen as one of the most creative counter-revolutionary documents, foreshadowing trends in modern politics and spirituality. Unnoticed in its own time, the *Oupnek'hat* anticipated nineteenth and twentieth-century movements, such as Theosophy, “traditionalism,” and even post-Christian fascism.

Before the Revolution, Anquetil did not seem to have had any particular hostility towards “enlightened” ideas, interest in esoterism, or opinions on domestic politics. He wrote nothing that might have signaled his affinity with “Counter-Enlightenment” “anti-philosophes” in France.¹⁰ From the beginning of his intellectual career, he seemed to have assumed that whatever he would discover about ancient religions would not contradict the truths of the Bible (he even took a copy of the Hebrew Old Testament with him on his voyage to India), but his approach, as Stéphane van Damme observes, was marked by a tension between belief and skepticism.¹¹ He did not advance any claims about a universal esoteric wisdom in his pre-revolutionary publications.¹² Focusing his attention on polemics against British imperialism in India, he likewise avoided involvement in debates over domestic French politics. Moderation and sympathy for the Revolution marked his foray into the latter in the early years of the Revolution.

In early 1789, Anquetil published *The Dignity of Commerce and of the Merchant's Condition*, a response to arguments over the Estates General then raging in the French public sphere, and a revival of mid-century debates over the “commercial nobility” (*noblesse commerçante*).¹³ Nobles were legally forbidden to carry out certain kinds of retail commerce,

an interdiction which critics saw as prejudicial to the French economy and insulting to merchants, whose livelihood, the law implied, was in some way ignoble. As the title of his work suggests, Anquetil called for the abolition of this law, arguing for that commerce was in every way respectable. Nevertheless, he also insisted that the nobility as an order had a place in French society. Unlike radical writers like Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès (1748–1836), whose “What is the Third Estate?” appeared at the same time as *Dignity of Commerce*, Anquetil did not see the monarchy’s fiscal crisis as an opportunity to transform the social organization of the Old Regime, built around a tripartite division of Estates (clergy, nobility, and everyone else).¹⁴ He took the more moderate position that many members of the nobility had outmoded views concerning their own superiority; they needed to embrace commerce, and abandon their “feudal rights” and privileges.¹⁵

While he was not the most radical critic of the Old Regime, Anquetil was, as of 1789, clearly in the reform camp, and apparently, as the optimistic and moderate tone of *Dignity of Commerce* suggests, hopeful that reforms could be undertaken in a spirit of peace and consensus. It is unclear when his hopes soured. He did not publish another work until the 1798 *India in Relationship to Europe*, which contained fleeting, negative remarks about the Revolution. The earliest dated portions of the *Oupnek’hat* come from 1794, by which time the optimism of 1789 had faded for many thinkers besides Anquetil. In the absence of journals and letters from this period, it seems impossible to reconstruct his shift in opinion with any precision. In the retrospective analyses made in the *Oupnek’hat*, however, Anquetil stressed his horror over the persecution of the Catholic Church, the appropriation of private property, the violence of civil war, the injustice of courts, and the installation of a republic. By this time, his language and tone resembled that of many other counter-revolutionary thinkers, with little trace of his earlier reformism.

Indeed, there were few vestiges of his earlier identity as a member of the Republic of Letters who rubbed shoulders with leading *philosophes*. His 1771 translation of Zoroastrian scripture (until then known in Europe only by hearsay), the *Zend-Avesta*, earned him a public attention and generated considerable controversy, as scholars such as William Jones (1746–1794) questioned both the authenticity of Anquetil’s translation and the spiritual worth of the Zoroastrian religion.¹⁶ Anquetil’s subsequent work garnered less public attention, but throughout the following two decades he maintained correspondences with Orientalists

and intellectuals across Europe, participating in debates over the nature of land tenure in Bengal (an important subject for the British colonial administration) and the relationship between Sanskrit and classical Latin and Greek. Although even in this period Anquetil often presented himself as a misunderstood hermit and ascetic, an Orientalist version of Rousseau, he was in the pre-revolutionary era, as Lucette Valensi observes, very much an insider, angling, at times successfully, for state sponsorship, and abreast of the latest intellectual controversies.¹⁷ Throughout this period, Anquetil rarely mentioned either his Catholic belief in published works or made any criticism of the dominant trends in Enlightenment thought.

At some point in the early 1790s, Anquetil's stance changed decisively. In the face of the Revolution's displacement of the Catholic Church from its central political and social role in the Old Regime, he began to insist that belief in God and an organized church were critical to the maintenance of order, and that without them anarchy prevailed. Moreover, he now identified the main currents of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century thought, from political theory to epistemology, as Trojan horses of atheism. Either unintentionally, by opening up intellectual space in which disbelief in God could be considered a respectable position, or deliberately, by organizing themselves into a diabolical network of anti-social conspirators, philosophers had caused the French Revolution. Besides condemning philosophy as a vehicle for atheism, Anquetil also railed against a range of social practices, from theater-going to gambling, that seemed to him to have distracted the French from spirituality. Yet, although he condemned atheism, empiricism, materialism, and what he saw as the decay of European morality, it would be difficult to label Anquetil a conservative thinker.

The religion that Anquetil believed could save France from philosophy and Revolution was not quite Catholic orthodoxy. As he argued in many sections of the *Oupnek'hat*, the true meaning of Christianity, long obscured from most Christians, was that the material world and the immaterial human soul alike are emanations of the divine essence, a pure, uncreated being with whom one is reunited after death and whom one can know (to a limited extent) in this lifetime through ascetic practices and meditation. This hidden teaching, he claimed, was also the esoteric doctrine of Judaism, Platonism, and Hinduism.¹⁸ Hindus, therefore, could be "saved" just as much as pious Christians, although salvation here meant the acquisition of mystical knowledge: "the wise Indian who

looks only to God will surely come to know Him: therefore, if God permits, he will never choose or consent to be separated in the depths of Hell from the original, self-created light, and will obey the will of the Creator.”¹⁹ Before analyzing the content of Anquetil’s interpretation of Christianity and Hinduism as expressions a common mystical teaching, and of his attempt to deploy that teaching as a political weapon, however, it will be necessary to survey the analyses of the Revolution that he developed throughout the *Oupnek’hat*, and particularly his identification of the Revolution with atheism.

RESPONSES TO THE REVOLUTION

The writing of Anquetil’s text, nearly 2000 pages long, spanned at least a decade. The first volume was published in 1801, the second in 1802, and within each volume, various sections seem to date from as early as the mid-1790s, with each period apparently furnishing its own particular variety of recriminations against the Revolution and the French. A preface directed “To the Reader” at the beginning of the first volume is dated to September 1794, and the note of dread on which it concludes suggests that Anquetil was not sure the fall of Robespierre in July of that year had done anything to liberate France from “the mason’s trowel”, i.e., from the sinister influence of Freemasons.²⁰ Many other passages condemn the persecution of the Church, the appropriation of ecclesiastical and private property, the perfunctory trials against supposed enemies of the Revolution, and the civil wars that characterized the Terror (1793–1794). As terrible, perhaps, as the injustice perpetrated in this period was the chaos that seemed to characterize the first five years of the Revolution, as one political group after another briefly exercised power only to be violently displaced by its enemies. The French people, “oppressed by a long and hard anarchy, were gripped with a fatal lethargy, and even whatever leader or tyrant was heated by audacity and madness soon dropped the reins [of government].”²¹ In this phase, Anquetil suggested, the Revolution was at once despotic and anarchic, reconciling contradictory elements to make the worst of all possible governments.

If Anquetil abhorred the Terror, he nevertheless had no kind words for what followed, even as the Directory (1795–1799) achieved a precarious order, built upon by the Consulate (1799–1804) after it.

The Concordat of 1801, by which the French State recognized Catholicism as the faith of the majority of its citizens and restored certain of the Church's rights and freedoms, signaled the definitive end of dechristianization policies. But Anquetil characterized the rule of the Directory as a time of continued persecution against the Church, and particularly condemned the Napoleonic regime. He saw the latter as a break with the revolutionary order, but not an improvement on it. For him, this period was a time of "a soldier's rough leadership, ruling with a rod over a mild people scarcely torn from the mason's trowel" (a recurring metaphor).²² Napoleon Bonaparte's military victories and turn toward the Vatican were mere side-shows "like monkeys dancing to drums, distractions that keep the eyes busy." In fact the state was mismanaged and the "treasury was exhausted by poorly-conceived military expeditions," especially the failed invasion of Egypt, which Anquetil saw as a missed opportunity to push on to South Asia and liberate the region from the British East India Company.²³ The fact that the Consulate had brought a certain order to France only worsened one of the fundamental problems that had brought about the Revolution: the moral decay of the French people. By the early nineteenth century, the latter "had turned from religion, accustomed to a military life, scarcely aware of the crimes that they commit, as if they were intoxicated." They no longer had the slightest notions of virtue, and prized their freedom to sin more than political liberty.²⁴

Given that the French people enjoyed their new freedom to indulge in vice, and were duped by Napoleon Bonaparte's displays of military force, there seemed little reason to think that earthly causes might bring about a restoration of the Bourbon monarchy. The most that could be expected from this quarter, Anquetil reasoned, was that in their very wickedness and capriciousness the French might grow tired of Napoleon as they had grown tired of the monarchy, and wish for a restoration as a kind of throwback to yesterday's style. Nor was there anything to hope from the new regime's foreign enemies. The coalition of Austrians, Prussians, and others arrayed against France was motivated by jealousy and avarice, and at the time of Anquetil's writing seemed increasingly unlikely to succeed. It would take divine intervention to save France, although it was by no means certain that such intervention would come. Not quite giving up, Anquetil wrote "at least it is permissible to indulge the hope that legitimate order will be brought back to life" by supernatural means.²⁵

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

Anquetil's opposition to the Revolution was comprehensive enough to include critiques of despotism and anarchy, of dechristianization and the Concordat. His explanations for the origins of the Revolution were likewise multiple. He identified vectors of revolution as diverse as Masonic conspiracies, empiricist theories of cognition, and fireworks. Whether the various passages in which these explanations were developed were meant to provide a coherent, multi-faceted account of the intellectual and cultural roots of the Revolution is unclear. Taken individually, however, they reveal Anquetil's sense that the Revolution had little to do with the problems he had taken up in *Dignity of Commerce* such as the position of the Third Estate. By 1794, at least, he was no longer interested in the economic and political conjunctures that had led to the crisis of 1788–1789. Rather, he saw only the collapse of French society, attacked from within by decadence, impiety and the machinations of a network of radical *philosophes*.

In at least some of his comments on the Revolution, Anquetil seems to have considered its emergence as a problem to be solved through the methods of scholarship, by amassing and sifting through sources. While he did not undertake original research himself, he hailed Augustin Barruel's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du jacobinisme*, of which the first volume was published in 1797, as a fine piece of history, thoroughly grounded in the relevant sources. Barruel (1741–1820), a priest who had fled to Britain, argued that the Revolution had been organized by an enormous secret organization, which included the Freemasons (whom Anquetil particularly blamed), Bavarian Illuminati, the Rosacruzians, as well as French thinkers like Voltaire and Rousseau. Not all members of the organization were aware of its full scope or of its ultimate mission: destroying monarchy and Christianity.²⁶ Anquetil found Barruel's account entirely convincing, endorsing even the thesis that the history of this cabal reached back to the medieval Templars. For Anquetil, the question of the Revolution's origins was now settled: "Barruel is greatly worthy of being praised by his country, by Europe, by the human race, for these timely and thoughtfully-developed commentaries on the origin of Jacobinism. This excellent work of vast erudition replaces discussion."²⁷

Alongside this endorsement of Barruel, however, Anquetil also developed his own account of the Revolution's intellectual and cultural

genesis, identifying specific philosophies that had corrupted French thought and vices that had perverted French society. It is uncertain at what point Anquetil read Barruel's work, and likewise uncertain at what point he wrote the other passages in which he analyzed the Revolution in terms other than those of a conspiracy. Passages of the *Oupnek'hat* that treat the Revolution as the consequence of a generalized decay throughout French society and thought rather than as the work of a conspiracy might have been written first, representing a period in which Anquetil did not yet believe that the deliberate work of identifiable agents had brought about the fall of the Bourbon monarchy. Yet, the two theories were not necessarily mutually exclusive; a philosophical cabal might have been the ax that felled a tree already rotten from within. At any rate, whether or not they came before his discovery of Barruel, and whether or not the latter superseded them, they share with his endorsement of Barruel's theory a vision of the Revolution as rooted in the decline of religion.

For Anquetil, atheism was so sinister that even entertaining the subject in hypothetical terms presented a grave danger. It was thus that he blamed seventeenth-century thinkers, like Hugo Grotius (1584–1645) and Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), for attempting to understand the foundations of society without taking God into account as the cause and purpose of all that exists. Grotius and Bayle, he held, were the first to posit the “fantastical” possibility of a “society of atheists,” imagining a community of people whose ethical and political norms were founded only on the basis of reason and experience, rather than of divine revelation.²⁸ By positing such an absurd possibility, Anquetil argued, they had done the Devil's work, making atheism seem like a plausible, even attractive basis for social organization. Their eighteenth-century readers had taken this thought experiment all too seriously, using it as a blueprint for their attempts to transform France into such an atheistic society. Philosophical speculation had turned within a few generations into a program for revolution.

A less obvious but no less blameworthy admission of atheism into Western thought was the empiricist philosophy of knowledge pioneered by John Locke and elaborated by his eighteenth-century French successors, such as Etienne Bonnot de Condillac (1714–1780) and the Marquis de Condorcet (Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas de Caritat, 1743–1794). By locating the cause of cognition, perception, and other mental phenomena in stimuli received from matter, these thinkers had undermined

religion, Anquetil claimed. After all, if the operations of the mind could be understood as the product of interactions between the external, material world on the one hand, and the physical structures of our sensory organs and brain on the other, then what was the role of the immaterial soul? If the latter did not play a definite part in mental phenomena, it could just as well be said to not exist at all. For Anquetil thought was a spiritual faculty exercised by souls, which emerged from God and would return to Him. By explaining human psychology in terms that did not require belief in such a soul, he argued, empiricist philosophers had paved the way for atheism and Jacobinism. The work of a now rather obscure philosopher, Jean-Claude Delam  therie (1743–1817), at the time a rival of Condorcet, was singled out for particular condemnation. In his *Principes de la philosophie naturelle* (1787), published just before the Revolution, Delam  therie had pushed “foundations and principles into a common ruin in order to destroy them... the ominous French Revolution arose from nothing other than the assertions of this author concerning the origin of cognition.”²⁹ The stakes attached to philosophy were high indeed!

Just as important as the influence of philosophy or the plots of Freemasons in Anquetil’s account of the origins of the French Revolution was the moral decay caused by or expressed in the extravagant living of eighteenth-century Europeans. Surrounded by material comforts and sensuous pleasures, Europeans were unable to comprehend, let alone practice, the acts of “meditation, study and penitence” that would allow them to set their minds on God. Anquetil offered a catalogue of vices by which Europeans distracted themselves from spirituality: “mixed company, banquets, dice, concerts, comedies, dances, fireworks, light-shows, these, repeated ad nauseam, these are the happiness of Western man... What an unhappy man!”³⁰ In his earlier writings, Anquetil had vigorously promoted French trade with South Asia, and had celebrated the entrepreneurial qualities of the Third Estate. Commerce had seemed to him to be a positive force both domestically and internationally. In the aftermath of the Terror, however, eighteenth-century society seemed far too materially comfortable, offering a wide range of distractions from spiritual life. Members of a poorer society might have more opportunities to focus on the things that were truly essential.

FIGHTING THE REVOLUTION

In his analysis of the Revolution's causes and consequences, Anquetil painted a dark portrait of a society that had been corrupted culturally and intellectually even before 1789, and had become totally perverse after. With such a pessimistic reading of the situation, Anquetil called for opposition to the Revolution that would focus on the spiritual realm, either through retreat from the world or through the dissemination of new religious ideas. The former option was the theme of his address "To the Reader," in which Anquetil portrayed this imagined subject as "an unfortunate one... learned in philosophy, mindful of your dignity," a faithful Christian fearing persecution. Anquetil urged his readers to remember that death was of little importance in comparison to the glory of the pure immaterial soul: "hold fast to these two things, deeply driven into your spirit: first, that men are scarcely worth the trouble of being executed by their rulers; and that sustenance is hardly necessary because when the body has been subdued and the senses conquered, the mind, conscious of its own majesty, dares to take up its own governance."³¹ Here a withdrawal into mysticism and a resignation unto death appear as the most appropriate responses to political turmoil. Indeed they are presented in terms of political metaphor. The wise person, who abandons the material world, including the body, becomes a kind of king, independent of the material world.

This advice is in accord with Anquetil's retrospective criticism of the political role of the Church during the Old Regime. While comments throughout the *Oupnek'hat* insist on the importance of religion to the maintenance of social and political order, Anquetil was equally clear that the role of Christians, and particularly of the clergy, was not a political one. He condemned the Jesuit order (abolished in France in 1763) for its involvement in worldly affairs. They were "a too-human family" akin to the Pharisees of ancient Israel, whose supposedly legalistic piety had been criticized by Jesus in the Gospels. Both groups had fought "against idolatry, sustaining outward things, even as inward things were already abolished." The end of their order was in fact a good thing for Christianity in France, because it reminded believers that "the true, inward Christians, serving God in spirit and in silence, are small in number, hidden, with few great gestures, and with no knowledge about worldly things; they know absolutely nothing about the political art that can bring the leaders of the state back to an outward form of worship."³²

By implication, the restoration of Christianity in revolutionary France was something Christians should pray for but not work for through conventional political means. Even if temporarily successful, Anquetil suggested, would only end in the same hypocritical, superficial devotion that had characterized France before the Revolution, or Israel before the coming of Jesus.

While he offered such counsel to readers, Anquetil presented his own scholarly and spiritual activities during the Revolution not as a retreat from the world, but as a kind of combat. Writing about the year 1793, when things may have seemed bleakest to him, he reported that “I fought ignorance, the true cause of France’s ills, through the study of Greek and Eastern literature, a suitable and manly portion.”³³ Ancient texts were weapons against the Revolution, and the Orientalist was a fighter on the front lines. His tactics for using knowledge of ‘Eastern’ religions were principally to compare the Revolution and non-European phenomena, in order to present the former as a time of barbarism and intolerance, and to offer Indian spiritual traditions as a path back to faith and social harmony. Both these approaches had continuities with Anquetil’s pre-revolutionary work, revealing that cosmopolitan and anti-Eurocentric sympathies such as those Anquetil displayed before and after 1789 did not necessarily correlate with zealous support for the Revolution.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND ESOTERIC SYNCRETISM

Anquetil had a highly global vision of human affairs. Throughout his writings, he stressed the unity of the human race, and the common rights and aspirations that human beings shared across the diversity of their rich and varied cultures. His pre-revolutionary works have been understood as testimony to a liberal humanism, particularly insofar as they condemn British imperialism in South Asia. Such themes continued to inform his notes on the Upanishads, which are sprinkled with observations asserting the equality (or indeed superiority, at least in moral terms) of Europeans and South Asians, in phrases like: “Indians have no need to beg any European for lessons in ethics.”³⁴ But Anquetil’s wide range of vision and familiarity with non-European societies could serve other ends as well. In the *Oupnek’hat*, Anquetil sought on a number of occasions to use his knowledge of foreign cultures as a means of attacking the

Revolution, which could either be cited as a unique instance of depravity far worse than that societies Europeans might consider to be savage or backward, or else as a case of bloodthirsty fanaticism similar to some of the worst episodes in world history.

The first strategy appears in Anquetil's comments on a passage in the Upanishads that briefly discuss ritual preparations for burials. Anquetil noted that this text enjoined the "greatest reverence" for the dead in a true religious spirit. In revolutionary France, by contrast, he found that the dead were "interred outside the city walls... like animals... this was how the tireless zeal of the atheists cared for them." But indeed, Anquetil went on, how could an atheist see any point to providing a decent burial for the deceased, since for those who did not believe in God dead bodies would never be resurrected, and had never been the residences of eternal souls? By attacking religion, the leaders of the Revolution, motivated by a "vast and idiotic presumption... uprooted the comfort and hope" that subjects of the Old Regime had felt in the prospect of eternal life, and replaced it with a "political dogma."³⁵ The Revolution was thus not only anti-religious, but a kind of pseudo-religion, a comfortless substitute for Christianity.

Unflattering comparisons between the Revolution's supposed impiety and immorality on the one hand, and the pure religion of the ancient Hindus on the other represented one of Anquetil's techniques for using his scholarly knowledge in service of counter-revolution. Parallels between the Revolution and instances of religious violence in human history were another. A passing reference to human sacrifice in his source material gave Anquetil the opportunity for a digression into the anthropology of religion, the conclusion of which turned abruptly into a condemnation of the Revolution's attempts to develop a civic religion of its own. He argued that human sacrifice was widespread and well-attested in those parts of the world untouched by the influence of Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), dwelling on the cruelty of these practices. Stories of human sacrifice might seem difficult for contemporary Europeans to believe, he observed, if it were not for the fact that the French Revolution had offered a recent lesson on how quickly savagery could return in the absence of religion. For Anquetil, there was little difference between the human sacrifice of the Aztecs and the persecution suffered by the Church at the hands of "the French people of the eighteenth century, who, raging in a bestial frenzy against the ministers of the Catholic faith, sacrificed them to the Goddess of Reason."³⁶

Another case of religious violence, this time from early modern South Asia, must have been close to Anquetil's consciousness while he preparing his translation. The Mughal prince Dara Shikoh (1615–1659), who had sponsored the Persian-language translation of the Upanishads on which Anquetil's own *Oupnek'hat* was based, had been assassinated by his brother Aurengzeb (1618–1707) in the course of a struggle for succession to the imperial throne.³⁷ Over the course of their political competition, the two princes styled themselves in opposing ways, with Dara visiting Hindu and Muslim holy men and promoting a esoteric dialogue between the two religious traditions, while Aurengzeb seemed to incarnate Islamic orthodoxy. For Anquetil, as for many later historians, the conflict between Dara and Aurengzeb was a conflict between religious tolerance and fanaticism.³⁸ Only the latter, he felt, was a genuinely Islamic stance. Dara, Anquetil argued, had understood the basic statement of Islamic faith "there is no God but God" in an expansive, heterodox sense, as a proposition about the unity of faiths and indeed the unity of all individuals with God. His "doctrine of unification" with the divine "aroused Muslim zeal.... the rage of the impious and persecution" culminating in his murder. Such a reading of the struggle for the Mughal throne paints orthodox Islam in dark colors, and makes Dara out to be a martyr to tolerance. Within the context of the *Oupnek'hat*, however, Anquetil's recounting of this episode was more about attacking the French Revolution than commenting on Islam in South Asia. It served as the conclusion to a section on the destruction of religious monuments in France during the 1790s, and argued that in both South Asia and France, "fanaticism of this sort holds nothing sacred... even when it comes to the final step: the ruler."³⁹ By implication, Dara's death had prefigured that of Louis XVI.

Parallels or contrasts between France and other parts of the world, particularly South Asia, were important elements of Anquetil's critique of the Revolution. In them, he moved beyond a framework that saw the new regime as the consequence of moral decline, modern philosophy, or an atheist conspiracy, and considered the ways in which the Revolution was itself a kind of religion, full of persecuting zeal and hungry for human sacrifices. Thinking of the Revolution as a religion, rather than a consequence of the absence of religion, allowed Anquetil to retrace its origins in unexpected ways. At the end of another passage citing episodes of religious persecution in the Islamic world and comparing them to the Revolution's persecution of Christianity, Anquetil turned to discuss

the “German Illuminati” whom he believed to be at the “source of the revolution in France.” This secret society (in fact quite short-lived) had been founded by Adam Weishaupt (1748–1830), a Bavarian thinker who, Anquetil wrote, resembled nothing so much as a Jesuit. Indeed, he continued, Weishaupt had been a “zealous imitator” of Jesuit practices and aims, working in the shadows to acquire political power in order to impose his (lack of) religion on others.

Having decried the methods of the Jesuits as forerunners of an imagined atheistic conspiracy, Anquetil also used references to South Asia to criticize another tendency in Old Regime spirituality. He attacked the Quietism of Madame Guyon (Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la Motte, 1648–1717), whose doctrine of a “pure love of God” through which the soul could attain a state of passivity, calm, and sinlessness had fascinated the theologian Fénélon (François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénélon, 1651–1715). Anquetil did not single out any specific features of her teaching that might be problematic, but apparently agreed with the critique of Quietism offered by Jacques Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704), bishop of Meaux and pillar of Catholic orthodoxy at the court of Louis XIV. Anquetil even argued that if Bossuet’s writings against Quietism were to “fall into the hands of the Indians” they would recognize his Catholic orthodoxy to be the same as their own faith, rejecting the teachings of Guyon.⁴⁰

Across Anquetil’s comments on the Revolution and Old Regime, he pointed to the need for a form of religious life that would avoid the political methods of the Jesuits while at the same time maintaining orthodoxy. Such a faith, he suggested, would not only be truly Christian but also truly Hindu. Thus Anquetil’s knowledge of non-European religion could be not only a means of criticizing the Revolution, but also a kind of apology for Christianity, leading Europeans back to the faith and ending the political violence that had haunted France. Anquetil imagined that the *Oupnek’hat* would be a “comforting, mild cup” offered to the lips of the French “so that the thirst for blood will be eliminated.”⁴¹ It may seem paradoxical to use an ancient Sanskrit text as a tool of Christian apologetics, but for Anquetil there was no conflict between the essential teachings of Christianity and those contained in the Upanishads. He argued that both taught a doctrine of monism, by which the material world and the spiritual realm alike were instantiations of a common essence emanating from the pure, uncreated deity. Moreover, the scriptures of both faiths contained an esoteric wisdom by which individuals

could learn to experience unity with God in their own lifetimes by overcoming the distractions of the body and senses. It was this mystical doctrine, Anquetil argued, that would save Europe from revolution.

Demonstrating that his esoteric teaching was orthodox Christian theology, faithful to the meaning of the Upanishads and the spiritual answer to the French Revolution was a tall order. It is uncertain if any of Anquetil's readers were convinced by his counter-revolutionary religious synthesis; his Latin text was read only by a few thinkers interested more in having access to the Upanishads than in hearing what Anquetil had to say about politics.⁴² Yet his arguments, concentrated in a lengthy "Dissertation, in which the *summa* of Eastern Theology is investigated by means of the writings of the Jews, the Doctors of the Church, theologians both Catholic and non-Catholic" tucked into the first volume of the *Oupnek'hat*, were in many ways path-breaking, foreshadowing important developments in nineteenth- and twentieth-century thought.

Even as he condemned Madame Guyon and championed Bossuet, Anquetil was himself hardly a conservative theologian. He offered a bold reinterpretation of Christianity as but one expression of "a tradition established throughout the entire world," concealed in diverse religions and philosophies.⁴³ His arguments rested on readings of a number of early Christian theologians, including Origen (c. 184–253) and Synesius of Cyrene (c. 373–414), who were associated with philosophical and religious movements like Gnosticism and Neoplatonism, and whose status as orthodox thinkers is by no means uncontested even today. The idea that the world and human souls proceeded by emanation (*apokatastasis*) from God, which Anquetil inherited from Origen, has been generally considered by theologians to be heterodox, opposed to the story of creation outlined in Genesis.⁴⁴ To further buttress the historically controversial idea of emanation, Anquetil drew on a still less obviously orthodox source: medieval Jewish interpretations of the Kabbalah. He further argued that Origen might have learned the doctrine of emanation from an Indian source, since such ideas were "the very tenets of the Brahmans."⁴⁵

By seeing Christian, Platonic, Jewish, and Hindu traditions as vehicles for a common esoteric doctrine, Anquetil was participating not so much in the orthodoxy of Bossuet as a tradition arising out of the Renaissance known as "perennial philosophy" (*philosophia perennis*). This school of thought originated in the efforts of Italian humanists to reconcile Catholic theology with the works of Plato and other historical

or pseudo-historical texts. One of its earliest pioneers, Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), argued that concealed within various ancient philosophical and theological texts were teachings concerning a pure religion by which the initiated could perceive the primordial unity of humanity and the material world with God. This teaching, Ficino claimed, could be traced through the works of Moses, Plato, Zoroaster, Orpheus, and the priests of ancient Egypt. The thought of Ficino and his successors formed an important current of early modern philosophy, influencing thinkers such as Gottfried Wilhem Leibniz (1646–1716), who likewise believed that the world's faiths shared a common essence.⁴⁶

Anquetil made two major contributions to the tradition of perennial philosophy. First, he incorporated Hindu philosophy (which he usually termed “Eastern”, “Brahmanic” or “Indian theology”) into it, arguing that the God of the Bible, the One of Platonic thought, and the Brahma of the Upanishads were expressions for the same divine being. Second, he gave this school an unprecedented political purpose, tying it to a rejection not only of the Revolution, but also of the eighteenth-century intellectual and cultural milieu that had produced it. Earlier generations of perennialist thinkers searching for a common secret wisdom shared by diverse texts had no particular political agenda, or sense that perennial philosophy offered a way out of contemporary social problems. Anquetil, however, saw a kind of expanded perennialism as the solution to what might be called the problem of a post-religious Europe in which Christianity was no longer the self-evident center of culture and thought.

ESOTERISM AND ANTI-MODERNISM

The arguments in favor of a cosmopolitan, esoteric vision of religion developed in the *Oupnek'hat* were almost totally ignored by Anquetil's contemporaries. However, one aspect of his thought did attract the attention of readers in Germany, including a young Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860). In a “Digression on Kant,” Anquetil expanded on his claims about the common essence of Christianity, Judaism, Platonic thought, and Hinduism to include the philosophy of Immanuel Kant as well. According to Anquetil (who was familiar with Kant's work only through a French commentary on the *Critique of Pure Reason*, 1781), Kant's criticisms of empiricism, and particularly his insistence that our experience is organized by cognitive faculties whose operations precede sensation, shared much with the teachings of the

Upanishads, Plato and true Christianity. His arguments had an electrifying effect on Schopenhauer, whose first major work, *The World as Will and as Representation* (1818), purported to achieve a synthesis of Plato, Kant, and the Upanishads.

From Schopenhauer, Anquetil's comparison between Kant and the Upanishads would filter into the larger intellectual culture of nineteenth-century Germany and Britain, rearticulated by the era's major Orientalists, such as Paul Deussen (1845–1914) and Max Müller (1823–1900). As the notion spread, however, it became associated with the emerging consensus that ancient Indian philosophy was similar to that of Europe not so much because both were instances of a universal esoteric wisdom, but because both were products of what Müller called the "Aryan mind." Indeed, for Müller the development of Aryan Man could be traced through the Upanishads to Kant, in whose works the race achieved "perfect manhood."⁴⁷ Where Anquetil had insisted on the spiritual, intellectual and moral equality of human cultures (with perhaps an exception being made of the perverted age of eighteenth-century France), now analogies between Kant and the Upanishads appeared as proof of Aryan superiority over other peoples.

Much as Anquetil's comparison of Kant and the Upanishads would become a touchstone for nineteenth-century thinking about the Aryan race, so too would the integration of Hinduism into perennial philosophy become a subject of interest for the far-right of the twentieth century. In this case, the *Oupnek'hat* did not exercise any direct influence. Rather, Anquetil's attempt to bridge Catholic orthodoxy and Hinduism (however dubiously) in order to oppose what appeared to him as the decadence of eighteenth-century culture and philosophy would foreshadow the efforts of later thinkers, likely unaware of his own work, to interpret Hinduism through the lens of perennial philosophy. These efforts were spearheaded by the Theosophical Society, founded in the United States in 1875. The organization, represented by its charismatic front-woman Helena Blavatsky (Yelena Petrovna von Hahn, 1831–1891), preached Theosophy, a "combination of Perennialism with Hinduism," specifically with the traditions emerging out of certain mystical readings of the Upanishads.⁴⁸

The Theosophical Society soon fractured into a number of different movements, spreading theosophical ideas throughout Europe and India in the process. By the early twentieth century, some European thinkers came to see a version of perennial philosophy that included Hindu

traditions not only as a means of accessing esoteric wisdom, but also as a solution to what they perceived as the “crisis of the modern world,” as the mystic René Guénon (1886–1951) phrased it in his 1927 *Crise du monde moderne*. To such thinkers indebted to Blavatsky’s integration of Hindu and Western esoteric traditions, the West seemed to have become alienated from authentic spirituality. It was thus prey to decadence and malaise. Salvation appeared to lie in the spiritual resources of Eastern traditions, which were, after all, only different forms of the same doctrine that had long been transmitted in Western thought before being abandoned in the Enlightenment.

Like most thinkers inspired by Theosophy, Guénon himself was apolitical, but his anti-modernist ideas were quickly taken up in explicitly political ways, most notably by the far-right Italian philosopher Julius Evola (1898–1974).⁴⁹ In works such as his 1934 *Revolt Against the Modern World*, Evola built on the notion of an esoteric tradition common to Europe and India, employing a variety of concepts drawn from Hindu theology to attack liberalism, democracy and other supposedly pernicious manifestations of modernity.⁵⁰ Evola, broadly sympathetic to Italian fascism, embodied a strain of far-right esoteric perennialism that also manifested itself in the contemporaneous interest among Nazi circles in the supposed occult doctrines of the “Aryan” ancestors of the Indo-European peoples (an interest which was itself indebted to nineteenth-century notions of the Aryan race developed by Orientalist scholars such as Müller).⁵¹ After the Second World War, neo-Nazi and far-right groups throughout Europe retained a fascination with political, anti-modernist iterations of perennialism, usually framed as “traditionalism” or “neo-traditionalism.” One of the most prominent and influential thinkers seen to work within such a framework today is Alexander Dugin (b. 1962), who is closely linked to the current regime in Russia, championing war against what he sees as a spiritually dead American empire, and calling for a common front of “traditional” societies against neoliberal globalism.⁵²

From Anquetil to Vladimir Putin or the “Aryan mind” is of course a long road. In many ways, Anquetil resembles not so much these figures, separated from him by several generations, as he does other counter-revolutionary French thinkers of his own era, or counter-revolutionary thinkers outside of France, such as Edmund Burke (1729–1797). Like the latter, Anquetil combined a strong sense of the importance of rights with a conservative sensibility and what Uday Singh Mehta calls (in Burke’s case) a “cosmopolitanism of sentiments”: an appreciation

of traditional cultures and societies within and without Europe as particular, concrete manifestations of humanity.⁵³ Indeed, Burke and Anquetil opposed both British imperialism in India as well as the French Revolution precisely because both phenomena seemed to them to violate such a cosmopolitanism, imposing a harsh, arrogant, alien universalism in the place of authentic local traditions. But if Anquetil bears comparison to a familiar figure like Burke, he was nevertheless also a forerunner of movements much further afield from the standard narrative of counter-revolutionary thought or of religious responses to the French Revolution.

Anquetil's reorientation of perennialism philosophy towards Hinduism, and his appropriation of the Upanishads as a weapon of counter-revolutionary polemic, did not directly influence the far-right politics of later centuries. But, just as better-known counter-revolutionary authors like Bonald, de Maistre, and Chateaubriand explored the possibilities of nineteenth-century conservatism, so too did Anquetil prefigure some of the strategies by which radical religious and political thinkers would search for new directions in European intellectual life. By outlining the possibility of a comparison Western and Indian philosophy, Anquetil inspired a tradition in Germany of reading Kant alongside the Upanishads, a tradition that, for some thinkers, provided evidence for the existence of a distinct, "Aryan" race. By opposing the supposedly catastrophic materialism, atheism and republicanism of the eighteenth-century to a perennial "tradition" expressed in the esoteric doctrines of various world religions, he anticipated the anti-modernist views of the mystic Guénon, as well as of far-right political theorists such as Evola. Anquetil's work reveals the scope and power of counter-revolutionary religious thought in late-eighteenth century France, which, far from being merely conservative, anticipated the future as it condemned the present and reinterpreted the past.

NOTES

1. Raymond Schwab, *Vie d'Anquetil Duperron* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1934). Jean-Luc Kieffer, *Anquetil-Duperron: l'Inde en France au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1983). Lucette Valensi, "Eloge de l'orient, éloge de l'orientalisme. Le jeu d'échecs d'Anquetil-Duperron," *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, vol. 212, no. 4 (1995), 419–452; "Anquetil-Duperron" in *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française*, ed. François Pouillon (Paris: Karthala, 2008), 21–23.

2. Jonathan Israel, *Democratic Enlightenment: philosophy, revolution, and human rights, 1750–1790* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 603.
3. Siep Stuurman, “Cosmopolitan Egalitarianism in the Enlightenment: Anquetil-Duperron on America and India,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 68, no. 2 (Apr. 2007), 255–278. Jennifer Pitts, “Empire and Legal Universalisms in the Eighteenth Century,” *American Historical Review*, vol. 117, no. 1 (2012), 92–121.
4. Edward Said, “Raymond Schwab and the Romance of Ideas,” 248–266 in *The World, the Text and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 253.
5. Frederick Whelan, “Oriental Despotism: Anquetil Duperron’s Response to Montesquieu,” *History of Political Thought*, vol. 22, no. 4 (Apr. 2001), 619–647.
6. Israel, 603.
7. Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil Duperron, *Oupnek’hat: (id est, Secretumtegendum): opus ipsa in India rarissimum, continensanti-quam et arcanam, seutheologicam et philosophicam, doctrinam, è quat-uorsacrisIndorumlibris, Rakbeid, Djedjrbeid, Sam beid, Athrbanbeid, excerptam ad verbum, è Persicoidiomate, Samskreticisvocalibusintermixto, in Latinumconversum; dissertationibus et annotationibus, difficiliora-explanantibus, illustratum: studio et opera Anquetil Duperron*, 2 vols. (Strasbourg: Levraut, 1801–1802).
8. Suzanne Desan, *Reclaiming the Sacred: Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990). Timothy Tackett, “Religion and Revolution in France to 1794,” in *Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 7, ed. Stewart J. Brown and Timothy Tackett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 536–554. Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall, *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution: The Making of Modern Universalism* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2005).
9. Paul H. Beik, “The French Revolution Seen from the Right: Social Theories in Motion, 1789–1799,” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 46, no. 1 (1996), 1–122, 4. For studies of Bonald, de Maistre, and Chateaubriand see: Jean-Yves Planchère, “Totalité sociale et hiérarchie: la sociologie théologique de Louis de Bonald,” *European Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 49, no. 2 (2011), 145–167. Owen Bradley, *A Modern Maistre: The Social and Political Thought of Joseph de Maistre* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999). Eric Gans, “Maistre and Chateaubriand: Counter-Revolution and Anthropology,” *Studies in Romanticism*, vol. 28, no. 4 (1989), 559–575.
10. Darrin McMahon, “The Real Counter-Enlightenment: the Case of France,” 91–103 in *Isaiah Berlin’s Counter-Enlightenment*, ed. Joseph

- Mali and Robert Wokler, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 93, no. 5(2003), 96. See also Darrin M. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
11. Stéphane van Damme, "Capitalizing Manuscripts, Confronting Empires: Anquetil-Duperron and the Economy of Oriental Knowledge in the Context of the Seven Year's War," 109–127 in *Negotiating Knowledge in Early Modern Empires: A Decentered View*, eds. László Kontler, Antonella Romano, Silvia Sebastiani, Borbála Zsuzsanna Török (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 111.
 12. Although the same was not true of his personal manuscripts, which however present difficulties in dating. Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 363–448.
 13. Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron, *Dignité du commerce et de l'état du commerçant* (1789). On 'commercial nobility' debates see Jay Smith, *Nobility Reimagined: the Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).
 14. On Sieyès see William Sewall, *A Rhetoric of Bourgeois Revolution: the Abbé Sieyès and 'What is the Third Estate'?* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994).
 15. *Dignité*, 39.
 16. Israel, 603.
 17. Valensi, "Eloge de l'Orient."
 18. Whether Anquetil also considered that this message was also common to all other faiths throughout the world is unclear. For his perspective on Islam particularly, see my *Un cosmopolitisme sans islam: Dara Shikoh, Kant, et les limites de la philosophie comparative dans l'Oupnekhat d'Anquetil-Duperron.* *Cosmopolitismes en Asie du Sud: sources, itinéraires, langues (XVI–XVIIIe siècle)/ Cosmopolitanisms in South Asia: sources, itineraries and languages (XVI–XVIII c.)*, ed. Corinne Lefevre and Ines Zupanov, Éditions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Collection Purushartha, vol. 33, 121–140.
 19. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 1, 622.
 20. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 1, xx.
 21. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 1, 704.
 22. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 1, 704.
 23. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 2, 678.
 24. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 2, 678–679.
 25. *Oupnek'hat*, t. 1, 692.
 26. Amos Hofman, "Opinion, Illusion and the Illusion of Opinion: Barruel's Theory of Conspiracy," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 27, no. 1 (Autumn, 1993), 27–60. See also Amos Hofman, "The Origins of the Theory of the Philosophe Conspiracy," *French History*, vol. 2, no. 2

- (June 1988), 152–172. J. M. Roberts, “The Origins of a Mythology: Freemasons, Protestants and The French Revolution,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xlv, no. 109 (1971), 80–93.
27. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 693.
 28. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 469.
 29. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 865.
 30. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 670.
 31. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, xxi.
 32. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 707.
 33. *Oupnek’hat*, t.1, 431.
 34. *Oupnek’hat*, t.1, 704.
 35. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 547.
 36. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 450.
 37. Anquetil did not directly translate the Sanskrit text of the Upanishads, but relied on the seventeenth-century Persian translation and commentary developed by Dara’s literary *atelier*.
 38. This interpretation has been considerably modified in recent years. See Rajeev Kinra, “Infantilizing Baba Dara: the Cultural Memory of Dara Shekuh and the Mughal Public Sphere,” *Journal of Persianate Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2009), 165–193.
 39. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 430.
 40. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, 622.
 41. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, xv.
 42. Anquetil’s *Oupnek’hat* seems to have been read only by a small number of readers in the early nineteenth-century. This was certainly Anquetil’s own estimation, and he resented the leading French journals for ignoring or criticizing his work. He particularly blamed a supposed conspiracy of empiricist philosophers for having placed negative reviews of his work in the *Décade Philosophique*, *Moniteur Universel*, and *Magasin Encyclopédique*. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 2, 876–880. None of these reviews discussed Anquetil’s counter-revolutionary thought.
 43. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, xxvii.
 44. Frederick W. Norris, “Apokatastasis,” *Westminster Handbook of Origen*, ed. John McGuckin (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2004), 59–62.
 45. *Oupnek’hat*, t. 1, lxx.
 46. Charles B. Schmitt, “Perennial Philosophy: From Agostino Steucho to Leibniz,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 27, no. 4, (Oct–Dec. 1966), 505–532.
 47. Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), 115–116, 420.
 48. Mark Sedgwick, *Against the Modern World: Traditionalism and the Secret Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 41.

49. On the anti-modern and anti-political dimensions of Guénon's thought, see Xavier Accart, *Guénon, ou le renversement des clartés: l'influence d'un métaphysicien sur la vie intellectuelle et littéraire française, (1920–1970)* (Paris: Edidit, 2005).
50. Franco Ferraresi, "Julius Evola: Tradition, Reaction and the Radical Right," *European Journal of Sociology*, vol. 28, no. 1 (1987), 107–151.
51. On Orientalism and the idea of 'Aryans', see Thomas Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997). On the role of such ideas in Nazi esoterism see Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoterism and the Politics of Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).
52. Whether or not Dugin qualifies as a perennialist thinker has been a subject of debate. See Anton Shekhovstov and Andreas Umland, "Is Aleksandr Dugin a Traditionalist? 'Neo-Eurasianism' and Perennial Philosophy," vol. 68, no. 4 (Oct. 2009), 662–678.
53. Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: a Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 139. Jennifer Pitts observes the similarities of Anquetil and Burke's opposition to British imperialism in "Empire and Legal Universalisms."

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