

[Of Hindus, Pagans and The Return of The Gods](#)

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I read about the U.K. Pagan Federation in the February, 1991, issue of HINDUISM TODAY. I was looking forward to a movement like this for many years, and I was glad to find that it already existed in such an articulate manner. I congratulate Prudence Jones personally for a pioneering role in a movement so vitally important to mankind and its religious history.

To show that my interest in the movement is serious, I sent to Ms. Jones a copy of a few pages from my book, *The World as Revelation: Names of Gods*, written in 1970 and published in 1980. The book was reviewed (Times of India) by the late Prof. Sirisr Kumar Ghose, a well-known name in India on religious writings, under the significant title of *Return of Gods*. This sums up the task ahead of the World Pagan Movement.

In this book, I have tried to establish the great spirituality of "Polytheism" or "many Gods" which has been under great attack by monolatrous religions. The "many Gods" of old religions were supported by a great darshan, spiritual vision and praxis; that their devotees knew how to contact them, see them and live with them. These Gods are not lost but they have withdrawn and they can again be invoked and made dynamic. I have stressed the need of invoking them and spoken of a pilgrimage - pilgrimage in time - to these Gods.

Where are the minstrels and priests who could preside over the birth of these Gods? While many ancient countries, cultures and peoples have lost the philosophy and spirituality that sustained "many Gods," India still retains them, and that Hindus could help them to recover their Gods.

India is important not because it is populous or geographically large, but because it is Hindu, because it is the land of a great religion and an ancient tradition, and because it preserves in some ways even the religions and spiritual institutions of ancient Egypt, Greece, Persia and old Europe, which they lost when they were taken over by Christianity and Islam. In the awakening of Hindu India, these countries will also rediscover themselves.

While highly appreciating Ms. Jones' work and deeply interested in its success, I must say that the Pagan movement will have a lot to do. The opposing forces are very powerful, and they have a long tradition of using force and repression. But I believe that a new spirit is rising and once the Pagans begin to speak, they are going to be heard.

I, along with some of my friends here, will be very much interested in knowing more about the Pagan movement in England, Europe and the Americas. In our work here, we have been stressing how close is Hindu spirituality with the spirituality of many ancient countries and peoples. Our ecumenism, though of a very different and deeper kind, is trying to link up mankind to its past.

Not only is the Pagan movement significant, but there are similar movements among American Indians in the two Americas. They have begun to speak out and are going to celebrate Columbus' "discovery" of America next year in a different way. In my essay, "American Indians and Indian Indians," I stated, "There are signs that the American Indians may rise again, phoenix-like, from their ashes. Their 'medicine men' are beginning to speak. They are discovering that their old religion was deep, that it did not believe that man was conceived in sin but held there is only one Great Spirit and one Great Mystery which is seen all around. Is this the sarvam khalvidam brahma ('verily, the whole world is Brahma') of the Hindus?" Their religion believed in the great balance in nature and the great law of harmony (the rita of the Vedas). But they will have to do a lot before their contribution becomes positive. They will have to rediscover their religious tradition. I hope it is a living tradition in some parts and among some people.

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