

THE PHILOSOPHY OF IDENTITY: ETHNICITY, CULTURE, AND RACE IN IDENTITARIAN THOUGHT

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Before discussing the philosophy of identity in Identitarianism, it is necessary to first understand what the term “Identitarianism” refers to, for, like numerous other terms referring to movements or ideologies, it is the subject of confusions. Identitarianism is the world view and ideology of what is known in Europe as the Identitarian movement, which originated in France, but which has extended across the European continent and even has influence in other parts of the world. As will be shown, it is different from past right-wing movements such as nationalism, fascism, and traditionalism.¹ Its ideas are closely linked with and largely founded upon the ideas of the intellectuals of the European New Right (the *Nouvelle Droite*, *Neue Rechte*, *Nueva Derecha*, etc.), the latter being often designated as “Identitarian” themselves. Thus, it can be said that Identitarianism and the New Right world view essentially describe the same thing, or at least two very similar and interdependent move-

¹ In this regard, we can say that all attempts to equate Identitarianism and the New Right to “fascism,” or to argue that they can be called “fascist” or “neo-fascist” by linking them to fascist ideology or the fascist movements of the early twentieth century, is entirely invalid. What we call Identitarianism and the New Right is a movement which—despite its occasional (partial) reference to certain ideas from “Old Right” nationalist intellectuals—is clearly distinct and separate from fascism. The application of labels such as “fascist” to numerous disparate right-wing movements such as Identitarianism is a dishonest manipulation of terminology. This point has been summarized well by Tomislav Sunic in his essay “Liberal Double-Talk and Its Lexical and Legal Consequences,” collected in *Postmortem Report: Cultural Examinations from Postmodernity—Collected Essays* (Shamley Green, UK: The Palingenesis Project, 2010). On the misuse of terms such as “fascist,” “neo-fascist,” and “Nazi,” among others, see also the more mainstream academic discussion in A. James Gregor, *The Search for Neofascism: The Use and Abuse of Social Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). We should also add here that the use the Identitarians make of “Old Right” intellectuals is one of the few justifications for labeling the former as “fascist,” yet the truth is that they reference these older thinkers because they had formulated certain ideas which are still relevant today (which liberals do not acknowledge), but this does not mean that Identitarians are in total agreement with these old thinkers or that their thought and goals can be equated.

ments. Identitarian activists rely on the intellectual foundations laid down by “New Right” thinkers such as Alain de Benoist, Dominique Venner, Pierre Krebs, Guillaume Faye, Tomislav Sunic, Pierre Vial, and more recently Alexander Dugin, among others.²

These intellectual resources hold great importance, for Identitarian philosophy can be successfully elucidated and supported only by solid intellectual and metapolitical foundations, through which philosophical problems and complications can be adequately addressed. Identitarian activists typically express the philosophy of identity in simple forms and basic points which can be aimed at the common person, but it is ultimately only with solid intellectual foundations providing them depth that they can truly succeed in being convincing. Thus, our discussion of the philosophy of identity references these very intellectual resources, which are increasingly beneficial to the advancement of right-wing movements worldwide.

CONCEPTION OF IDENTITY

The definition and subject of identity, in the general sense, is a complicated philosophical and sociological issue. It includes aspects of the personal identity of an individual human being, as well as a variety of levels of collective or group identities, including identity as part of a family or families, belonging to a place or locality (a town, city, region, etc.), membership in political or ideological groups, religious groups, belonging to a gender, ancestral communities, circles of social groups, and so on.

Identities also often have varying dimensions: they can be voluntary or involuntary, inherited or chosen, conscious or unconscious, or even combining elements of each of these opposing elements. Furthermore, group identities often overlap or even conflict with each other, although it should be noted that contradictions and conflicts do not necessarily eliminate their validity. Identitarians focus primarily on ethnic, cultural, and racial identities. Naturally, a person’s identity as being a member of such collective groups has a subjective dimension and involves conscious identification, just as it also has certain aspects which are inherit-

² The statements of some Identitarian activists can be found in the brief manifesto *We Are Generation Identity* (London: Arktos, 2013), and also in Markus Willinger, *Generation Identity: A Declaration of War Against the '68ers* (London: Arktos, 2013). The link between Identitarianism and the New Right has been made by many writers, for example, Michael O’Meara, *New Culture, New Right: Anti-Liberalism in Postmodern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Arktos, 2013).

ed and inescapable. These forms of collective identity, furthermore, all have an undeniable relationship with each other.³

The essential Identitarian (or New Rightist) view in this regard is that, contrary to the claims of egalitarian and universalist ideology, particularities and particular identities define human beings; one cannot be truly human without a belonging to particular groups. This, of course, does not mean that universal characteristics do not at all exist, it means that particular belonging is primary. Whereas egalitarian and universalist thought in the West has posed the idea of a humanity as an undifferentiated mass, either as a biological category or a philosophical category, the truth is that a universal humanity is a denial of the reality of authentic human existence. As Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier wrote, "from the sociohistorical viewpoint, man as such does not exist, because his membership within humanity is always mediated by a particular cultural belonging. This observation does not stem from relativism. All men have in common their human nature, without which they would not be able to understand each other, but their common membership in the species always expresses itself in a single *context*."⁴

ETHNOCULTURAL IDENTITY

The term "ethnicity" or "ethnos" sometimes has different meanings, referring to both larger and smaller groups which are defined by the possession of certain common elementary characteristics, especially in the field of culture. Ethnicity designates a people or folk (*Volk*) which constitutes and is defined as an organic cultural unity, possessing its own unique spirit and historical background, and existing in the world with its own, particular form of being. In many cases, the term "nation" or "nationality" is used in a sense that is synonymous with ethnicity or ethnos, but it is important to remember that this is not always the case. The term "nation" can be defined as an ethnocultural entity, but it is often also used in the sense of "civic nation," where membership is defined simply by political citizenship, stripped of all ethnic or cultural aspects.

The error of "civic nationalism" (i.e., a nationalism based solely on the idea of a "civic nation," rejecting ethnic nationality) thus lies, as Benoist pointed out, in the fact that in reality "most national societies mix

³ For an in-depth discussion of the sociological and philosophical investigation of identity, see Alain de Benoist, "On Identity," *Telos*, no. 128 (Summer 2004): 9–64.

⁴ Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance* (London: Arktos, 2012), 18.

both principles, changing the proportions," and also in the fact that human societies can never escape the cultural aspect. This is why "contemporary 'nationism' might well be founded on a political ideal of State and citizenship, it would nevertheless be a mistake to believe that abstract political values are sufficient to create a common identity."⁵ Furthermore, concerning the concept of nationality in general, it must be pointed out that a nationality in the cultural sense is not always equivalent with ethnicity, which can exist as a separate entity.

"Culture" is defined, in the sociological or anthropological sense, as the totality of customs, traditions, institutions, beliefs, mores, values, and mentalities of a society; all the externalized creations of a people. It needs to be remembered here that culture exists and operates on multiple levels, not solely on the plane of ethnicity in the basic sense of a single people or nationality. For this reason, it is valid to speak of cultural groups encompassing several ethnic groups—for example, a general Celtic culture or a Slavic culture, a larger Western culture, or, greater still, a general Indo-European or European culture.⁶ Likewise, there also exist sub-ethnic cultural groups. To give an example, if one can say that there is a French or German ethnicity, then it must be acknowledged that within these there are multiple sub-ethnic groups; the former encompasses Bretons, Alsatians, Occitans, etc., and the latter encompasses Bavarians, Swabians, Austrians, etc. Numerous other examples can be given, and sub-ethnic cultural groups are not always identified very simply. Thus, we can say that there are multiple levels of ethnocultural groupings, both great and small.

Due to the reality of the multi-level nature of cultures and also to the fact that each level plays an important role in identity, Identitarians advocate the idea of respecting the identities of each ethnic or cultural community; that is, recognizing the identities of smaller, local, and regional ethnic or sub-ethnic groups as well as recognizing the importance of larger ethnic and cultural relations and unities at the same time. For example, to be a Breton, a Frenchman, and a White European all have

⁵ Benoist, "On Identity," 22.

⁶ We should note here that when referring to the broader, more encompassing cultural identity of Europeans, it is better to refer to a general "European" culture rather than to "Indo-European" culture because not all White European peoples are entirely Indo-European, and there clearly are and have been non-Indo-European peoples in Europe who are of the same racial and general cultural type as Indo-European peoples (well-known modern examples including the Finns, Hungarians, Estonians, Livonians, and Basques, although there were also numerous White pre-Indo-European peoples in ancient times who had disappeared through mixture with Indo-Europeans).

importance, and each level of identity and belonging has value in a hierarchical relationship. In this respect, Guillaume Faye has asserted that one can and should identify with both a smaller and greater fatherland: "To each European his own fatherland, national or regional (chosen on the basis of intimate, emotive affinities) – and to all Europeans the Great Fatherland, this land of intimately related peoples. The consciousness of belonging to both a 'small native land' and a 'great fatherland' is very difficult for contemporaries to grasp."⁷

INTERCULTURAL INTERACTION

History and observation show that ethnic, cultural, and racial identities come into being and are awakened by awareness of and interaction with other ethnic and racial groups. As Alain de Benoist wrote: "The group and the individual both need to be confronted by 'significant others.' Therefore, it is nonsense to believe that identity would be better preserved without this confrontation; actually, it is the opposite: confrontation makes identity possible. Other subjects make a subject become subject."⁸ Thus, interaction with other types of human beings is an essential part of human existence, since they draw their very awareness of being who they are by this interaction.

Concerning the relations between different cultures, under normal circumstances each cultural entity is in contact with and sometimes connected with other cultural entities. It is true that cultures exist separately from each other, but it is an error to regard them as forming different universes, for in reality cultures engage in contact and dialogue with each other, which contributes to their development and improvement. For this reason many authors such as Pierre Krebs have rightly argued, from an Identitarian perspective, that "the originality and the richness of the human heritages of this world are nourished by their differences and their deviations."⁹

In cultural dialogue, each exchange results in the appropriation or re-appropriation by one culture of the cultural creations or ideas of another culture in a new way based on its own unique particular spirit, thus implying the assimilation of foreign cultural products to its own. The various ethnic groups of Europe have engaged in cultural dialogue with

⁷ Guillaume Faye, *Why We Fight: Manifesto of the European Resistance* (London: Arktos, 2011), 143. See also Benoist, "On Identity," 46–51.

⁸ Benoist, "On Identity," 39.

⁹ Pierre Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence: Western Ethnocide or European Renaissance?* (London: Arktos, 2012), 89.

each other frequently throughout their history, drawing ideas, cultural products, and practices from other contemporary groups or even from past cultures. It is also important to recognize that Europeans have also exchanged cultural creations with non-European peoples in a large-scale cultural dialogue from which both sides benefitted. This has established a “world-history of Europe,” although until late modern times Europeans have always maintained their uniqueness and particularity.¹⁰

Thus, cultures retain their own essential inner character while transforming over time due to internal creativity and development as well as through communication with other cultures. As Benoist emphasized, identity “combines factors of permanence and factors of change, endogenous mutations and external contributions.”¹¹ For this reason, ethnocultural groups, while still maintaining their own autonomous culture and “traditionality,” do not and should not form completely unchanging organisms. To quote Benoist once more, “Identity is not what never changes, but, on the contrary, it is what allows one to constantly change without giving up who one is.”¹²

It is important to directly address the question of openness to other cultures from an ideological perspective. Certain of those on the right (nationalists) have advocated the idea of the complete closure of their own culture to other cultures, while liberals and globalists have advocated a complete openness. As we have mentioned before, total closure is abnormal because intercultural dialogue is the normal condition. However, total openness and mixing of cultures is also abnormal, and is not at all justified by the existence of historical examples of cultural exchanges (as liberal-globalist propaganda claims), because normal cultural dialogue and interaction has never involved complete openness, but always a limited form of interaction.

Without barriers, without a certain level of separation from other peoples, and without a specific territory on which to live as a distinct people, an ethnic or a racial group would disappear through mixture or assimilation into other groups. When total openness and mixing occur,

¹⁰ The phrase “world-history of Europe” is derived from the title of Hans Freyer’s book *Weltgeschichte Europas* (Wiesbaden: Dieterich, 1948), an overview of which can be found in Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 330ff.

¹¹ Alain de Benoist, “Identidad y Diferencia,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea*, no. 47 (May 2013): 3–10, 8.

http://issuu.com/sebastianjllorenz/docs/elementos_n__47._diferencialismo.

¹² Benoist, “On Identity,” 41.

peoples do not merely change in the normal sense, but lose who they are or merge with another people entirely, thus resulting in the elimination of their identity. To quote Benoist, "it is the diversity of the human race which creates its richness, just as it is diversity which makes communication possible and gives it value. Diversity of peoples and cultures exists, however, only because, in the past, these various peoples and cultures were *relatively isolated* from one another." For this reason, communication with other cultures must always be selective, otherwise the very integrity of a culture is undermined: "communication can only be *imperfect*. Without this imperfection, it would lose its *raison d'être* and its very possibility of existing."¹³ Therefore, it is neither total openness nor total closure which Identitarianism supports, but a more balanced approach where cultural dialogue is reconciled with the value of particularity.

THE ROLE OF RACE

Race is defined as a biological descent group, characterized by certain physical-anthropological traits and certain dispositional tendencies which are inherited. It must be remembered, of course, that it is not enough to simply point out the reality of race; since opponents can argue that its reality is insignificant, it is necessary to assert its importance and function. There is also the problem of disagreements on racial classification, which is why we must be prepared to defend our own view of racial typology.

Concerning Europeans, Identitarians advocate the idea that European peoples as a whole, due to their close biological relatedness, form primarily a general "White" or European race, thus rejecting the notions of certain past racial scientists who asserted the primacy of sub-racial groups among Europeans. The existence of this common racial type among all European ethnic groups forms a bond among them and allows them to better relate to each other (in ways that they cannot relate to non-White peoples). This fact certainly does not eliminate differences among European groups, but to deny the racial relatedness of European peoples is akin to and just as incorrect as denying the existence of a gen-

¹³ Alain de Benoist, "What is Racism?," *Telos*, no. 114 (Winter 1999): 46–47. For a further critique of globalist policies, see Alain de Benoist, "Confronting Globalization," *Telos*, no. 108 (Summer 1996): 117–37, and Leonid Savin, "The Dark Side of Globalization," *Journal of Eurasian Affairs* 1, no. 1 (September 2013): 64–67.

eral European culture and type.¹⁴

Race is linked with ethnic identity in two essential ways: (1) race possesses a sociological and psychological dimension whereby ethnic belonging is associated with racial type and appearance; (2) race has a spiritual dimension—that is, a dimension permeating society and culture—due to the fact that racial type is also defined by its style of expression. The first point refers to the fact that membership in an ethnic or cultural group is socially and often instinctually associated with racial background or at least with racial phenotype. It is for these reasons that “hostility to miscegenation may very well be inspired by cultural or religious considerations . . . Moreover, it is well known that in societies where there are many interracial marriages, the social status of these married couples depends, to a large extent, on their closeness to the dominant racial phenotype—all of which impacts on the marriage and on genetic selection.”¹⁵

The second point refers to the fact that race impacts culture: race is a force “which has deposited itself in man’s bodily and psychic existence, and which confers an intrinsic norm upon all the expressions of a culture, even the highest, most individual creations.”¹⁶ Thus, to quote Nicolas Lahovary, “the first explanation [of history] is generally found in the nature of a human being . . ., in all the cases where he acts as a collective being, from the nature of his people. The latter, in turn, depends on the race that imprints its seal upon it.”¹⁷ Culture and ethnicity can thus never exist entirely independently of race, and, since any significant level of racial miscegenation transforms the basic structure of a racial type, it also transforms ethnic type; a concrete change in racial background causes a fundamental change in identity.¹⁸

¹⁴ See for example the comments in O’Meara, *New Culture, New Right*, 236ff. One could also cite here numerous works by Benoist, Faye, Venner, Krebs, et al. (all referenced by O’Meara) which assert the same position on the racial and cultural unity and relatedness of all Europeans. For Dominique Venner’s views on European peoples in particular, see his works, *Histoire et Tradition des Européens: 30,000 ans d’identité* (Paris: Éditions du Rocher, 2002), and *Europa y su destino: de ayer a mañana* (Barcelona: Áltera, 2010).

¹⁵ Benoist, “What is Racism?,” 34.

¹⁶ Hans Freyer, “Tradition und Revolution im Weltbild,” *Europäische Revue* 10 (January–June 1934): 74–75. Quoted in Muller, *The Other God That Failed*, 263.

¹⁷ Nicolas Lahovary, *Les peuples européens: leur passé ethnologique et leurs parentés réciproques, d’après les dernières recherches sanguines et anthropologiques* (Neuchâtel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1946), 35. Quoted in Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence*, 21, n. 13.

¹⁸ See also Michael O’Meara, “Race, Culture, and Anarchy,” *The Occidental Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 35–64.

It is important to stress here that recognizing the reality and role of race in culture and ethnic identity does not imply culture and society can be reduced to race. It is true that the egalitarian assertion that "race is a social construct" is simply false, but it does not follow from this that "society is a racial construct." In fact, both of these positions are equally false: the former denies the reality and function of race which we have previously discussed, while the latter is the expression of a biological reductionism. Identitarian and New Right philosophy rejects all forms of reductionism as fallacious, and therefore recognizes the complexity of factors influencing the nature of culture and society. Race is only one factor that influences culture and society (which may themselves convey a reciprocal influence on race), but it is important to note that numerous cultural and social changes occur independently of race, because of multiple factors, and that identity cannot be reduced to simply racial identity, even if the latter has some importance.¹⁹

THE PROBLEM OF MIXING

It needs to be recognized that mixing, both the social form—where people of different ethnic and racial groups are mixed into the same society—as well as the biological form (miscegenation), is a complicated human problem. Mixing has occurred throughout history in a variety of forms and circumstances, as a result of different forms of close interaction between different ethnic and racial groups. The questions of why mixtures occur and whether this is a normal and acceptable phenomenon therefore naturally present themselves.

First, it needs to be recognized that mixture between two different peoples belonging to the same race is a distinct matter from mixture between two different races, and involves different principles and circumstances. Ethnicities belonging to the same racial type share the same biological and spiritual background, which serves as a larger foundation for identity which connects them. In cases where two or more ethnic groups of the same racial type no longer live separately and choose to mix socially (from which intermarriage inevitably follows), it is often because these groups—within a particular time and conditions—have become closely connected culturally and spiritually or because they no longer feel their distinctions to be significant.

This phenomenon cannot be regarded as abnormal and wrong any

¹⁹ See for example the remarks by Benoist in "On Identity," 53–54, "What is Racism?," 25–26, and "European Son: An Interview with Alain de Benoist," *The Occidental Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 7–21, 21.

more than when two racially related ethnic groups choose to separate instead of mix, because both occurrences are rather frequent in history and do not normally have negative effects on identity (even if identity undergoes some change as a result). For example, many European ethnic groups (the English, the French, the Balkan peoples, etc.) are the result of an inter-European mixture that occurred centuries ago, although they also have a right to separate. Thus, *within a race*, separation and mixing can both be regarded as normal phenomena, depending on the circumstances and the nature of the ethnic groups in question.

On the other hand, between different races, mixing can be argued to be an *abnormal* phenomenon because the relationships and effects are different; the normal state is to desire racial separation. Egalitarian multiculturalists ("multiculturalism" here signifying the belief and practice of unrestricted ethnic and racial mixing) assert that the idea of race and even racial feelings themselves are the creations of later European societies during the Colonial Era. However, contrary to such claims, racial identity and the concept of race is not a modern phenomenon, for, as Benoist pointed out, "the idea of race is almost as old as humanity itself," which has been further confirmed by a number of scholarly investigations showing that racial concepts and racial feelings have been present in ancient and medieval civilizations.²⁰ So it is clear that recognizing the importance of race and practicing racial separatism does in fact have a historical and even a universal basis; human beings were never in a condition where they completely lacked racial feelings and mixed freely.

The reasons for racial mixing (social and, following that, biological) throughout history are complex and differ based on the circumstances in question. In some cases, it was due to a powerful, militant people conquering another people and forcefully reproducing with the women of the conquered in order to secure their conquest through breeding. In other cases, as some authors have argued, it is due to the decadence of a

²⁰ Alain de Benoist, "What is Racism?," 36. Scholarly investigations to which we can refer are Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler, eds., *The Origins of Racism in the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). These are the works of mainstream historians who have admitted and studied the history of racial feelings since ancient times, in Western and Middle Eastern civilizations, specifically, although there is no doubt that these studies could be extended to other Asian civilizations as well. These texts are marked by an egalitarian bias and hostility to racialism in the authors, but they still have research value for us because of the historical facts they provide.

people who have lost certain spiritual qualities, their sense of differentiation, and their racial identity, and have as a result chosen to mix with other peoples, even those racially different (these other peoples may be immigrants or conquered peoples who formerly lived separately). Of course, where mixing occurs willingly, both sides have surrendered their unique identity.²¹ There may be other causes, and we can also admit here that racial miscegenation is, in a sense, inevitable because it is always bound to occur at certain times and places where different races come into contact (even if only to a small extent).

However, it is always important to recognize and reassert that despite its occurrence throughout history, for whatever reasons or causes, race mixing is not a rule. It is actually rather abnormal, and that it occurs all throughout history does not invalidate this fact. Because the identity, basic anthropological and psychological features, and character of ethnic groups and cultures are influenced by racial type, and because of the spiritual and sociological dimension of race, race mixing means a deep and profound change completely transforming a family or, when it occurs on a larger scale, a people. This idea cannot be associated with biological reductionism, which we must reject as fallacious; even though culture, society, and cultural identity cannot be reduced to race, and race is only one factor among many which affects them, racial background is still undoubtedly an important factor.

Thus, since preserving their racial type means maintaining who they are—their identity as a folk, peoples are thus historically compelled to resist race mixing and to separate from other races. It is not only for the sake of their survival that they are so compelled, but also because of the primal impulse to live with their own people in their communities. As Pierre Krebs pointed out, "modern ethology clearly established the innate tendency of man to identify with individuals who resemble him."²² There is, furthermore, also the fact that, as Julius Evola pointed out, "blood and ethnic purity are factors that are valued in traditional civilizations too," which means that, although mixing occurred in many civilizations, it was regarded in most traditional states as a deviation from the cultural norm, and that therefore maintaining the physical racial

²¹ See for example the chapters "Life and Death of Civilizations" and "The Decline of Superior Races" in Julius Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 1995), and Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence*, 23ff. and 79ff.

²² Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence*, 25.

type is a practice which holds a meta-historical value.²³

We should note that, of course, a people that goes through minor amounts of race mixing does not lose its identity or its belonging to its original racial type. For example, the Eastern Slavic peoples and Southern European peoples who have endured some level of miscegenation historically, often as a result of military incursions, still belong to the White-European race, both in terms of their general anthropological-physical type as well as their racial and ethnic identity. Race is defined not by a strict purity, but by the possession of a general physical form (the general anthropological features associated with a race), the general spiritual form associated with it, and the cultural style and identity which is sociologically linked with race.²⁴

DIFFERENTIALISM VERSUS RACISM

One of the most essential positions in the Identitarian world view is the simultaneous rejection of egalitarianism and racism, the latter defined as asserting the natural inequality of races and judging them as “inferior” or “superior” based on this inequality. Racism is also often characterized by hostility to different races or peoples. Universalist and egalitarian “anti-racism” opposes classical racism by rejecting the reality of racial differences and racial identity entirely, considers human differences (even cultural and ethnic differences) as unimportant, illusory, or secondary, and advocates cosmopolitan mixing between peoples. Benoist pointed out that egalitarianism, due to its hostility to the idea of differences (which it links it with classical racism, where there is a hostility to different races because they are different), can be seen as a “more perverse racism which absolutizes the Same and, in the name of Same, challenges the very idea of difference.”²⁵

Racism in the classical sense, on the other hand, is defined as an ideology that claims that human races are unequal in the sense that they can be distinguished as either “superior” or “inferior” to other races, and that human races and people belonging to them can thus be judged

²³ Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World*, 57. On this matter, see also the chapter “The Beauty and the Beast: Race and Racism in Europe” in Sunic, *Postmortem Report*.

²⁴ On this issue, see for example the entries “Miscegenation” and “Race, Racism, Anti-Racism” in Faye, *Why We Fight*, 194ff. and 227ff.; Benoist’s commentaries in his “What is Racism?”; Tomislav Sunic, “Ethnic Identity versus White Identity: Differences between the U.S. and Europe,” *The Occidental Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (Winter 2012–13), 51–64; Sebastian J. Lorenz, “Hacia un concepto convencional de raza,” *Elementos*, no. 47 (May 2013): 44–47.

²⁵ Benoist, “What is Racism?,” 47.

by an objectively defined racial hierarchy. This is rejected as erroneous because history shows that there are no valid criteria by which to create a racial hierarchy, and because even by typically chosen criteria (such as intelligence or creativity) that many races cannot truly be judged as "inferior" or "superior" to another. In the case of intelligence, it is certainly true that there are differences between the average intelligence levels of different populations, which can have important effects under certain conditions or environments. However, it is important to remember that intelligence levels can vary based on conditions (e.g., nutrition), and even in cases where intelligence differences are clearly genetically fixed, high intelligence (like any other trait) may not be adaptive in certain social contexts (e.g., in the modern world there is often a negative correlation between intelligence and fertility). From an evolutionary scientific perspective, one could say that each race is evolutionarily developed in particular environments, which means that their traits are adapted to those environments, which is why one cannot use the predominance of certain traits in a race to argue for its superiority.

It is also important to remember that racism is not necessarily supportive of one's own racial identity, for there have been forms of racist theory which advocated miscegenation as a method to achieve superiority (from the Identitarian perspective, this is not only erroneous because miscegenation does not necessarily produce positive effects, but also because it rejects the value of racial identity).²⁶

Against egalitarian "anti-racism" and classical racism, Identitarianism poses the idea of differentialism and the right to difference; that is, the recognition of differences between peoples and the value and importance of these differences without any judgment of superiority and inferiority. "The right to difference supposes the mutual respect of the groups and of the communities, and the exaltation of the values of each one. . . . To say 'long live the difference' does not imply any idea of superiority, of domination and of contempt: the affirmation of oneself is not the lowering of the other. The recognition of the identity of an ethnicity can only subtract from others what they have unduly monopolized."²⁷ This further implies the "rights of the peoples": the idea that peoples (ethnic groups and races) have the right to maintain their own identity and collective existence in their own territory, thus ensuring

²⁶ See the discussions in *Ibid.*

²⁷ Roland Breton, *Les Ethnies*, 2nd ed. (Paris: PUF, 1992), 115. Quoted in Benoist, "Identidad y Diferencia," 5.

their survival.²⁸

Therefore, to value racial identity, to recognize the reality and social function of race, and to resist race mixing are clearly not necessarily “racist” phenomena, since it is clear that valuing racial differences and practicing racial separatism can and has taken on non-racist forms. The propagandistic claim of egalitarian “anti-racism” that all forms of racial separatism are necessarily morally repugnant is thus evidently not only erroneous, but also naive or dishonest. As Guillaume Faye once wrote:

In effect, just as it is normal and legitimate for the Arab, the Black African, the Japanese to desire to remain themselves, to recognize that an African is necessarily a Black man or an Asian a Yellow man, it is legitimate, natural, and necessary to recognize the right of the European to reject multiracialism and to affirm himself as a White man. To link this position with racism is an inadmissible bluster. The real racists are, on the contrary, those who organize the establishment of a multiracial society in Europe.²⁹

Of course, advocating the right to difference, recognizing the value of diversity and differences, and appreciating these differences in other peoples and learning from them does not lead to the conclusion that all peoples of the world can or should be appreciated equally. It is, of course, perfectly natural that one people will find certain foreign peoples to be unattractive in some cases, and will distance themselves from them. This is why, although diversity is valuable, the present egalitarian and multiculturalist propaganda that all cultures and ethnic groups *must* be appreciated and accepted *equally* is simply wrong and absurd. No healthy people show equal liking for all others, although it is possible to respect all foreign peoples even if one does not treasure them all. It is, for example, completely natural that a European may be repulsed by the culture of an African tribe but simultaneously feel admiration for East Asian culture, while still according to each people a certain level of respect.

THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY IN IDENTITY

²⁸ On the concept of collective rights, see also the chapter “Human Rights and Cultural Diversity” in Alain de Benoist, *Beyond Human Rights: Defending Freedoms* (London: Arktos, 2011).

²⁹ Guillaume Faye, “La Sociedad Multirracial,” *Guillaume Faye Archive*, July 13, 2007, <http://guilleumefayearchive.wordpress.com/2007/07/13/la-sociedad-multirracial>.

Before discussing the importance of the sense of community in maintaining ethnic, cultural, and racial identities, the concept of community itself and the basic principles of communitarian and holist philosophy need to be clarified. Conceptually, one must distinguish between the idea of "community" (*Gemeinschaft*) from that of "society" (*Gesellschaft*), to reference the terminology of Ferdinand Tönnies.³⁰ A true community (*Gemeinschaft*), which may also be called an "organic society," exists where a group of people feel an organic sense of belonging and solidarity, with the existence of psychological bonds between each other. Here, as Othmar Spann wrote, "individuals may no longer be looked upon as self-sufficing and independent entities; the energy of their being inheres in their spiritual interconnexion, in the whole."³¹

Society in the sense of *Gesellschaft*, on the other hand, designates a collectivity which can be described as a mere mass or collection of essentially disconnected individuals. According to Tönnies, a *Gesellschaft* is an "artificial construction of an aggregate of human beings" which is only superficially comparable to an organic community, since "in *Gemeinschaft* they [individuals] remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors, whereas in *Gesellschaft* they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors."³²

The key enemy of organic community is liberal individualism, which, in theory or ideology, means regarding society as nothing more than a sum of its parts, and, in social life, means the fundamental feeling of separation between individuals. Because liberal individualist thought advocates economic reductionism and the notion that human beings are primarily or essentially self-interested individuals, its ideological and psychological predominance in a society results in the atomization of social life, in the disintegration of the feeling of community and the

³⁰ See Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society* (London and New York: Courier Dover Publications, 2002). For a good overview of Tönnies's ideas, see Alain de Benoist and Tomislav Sunic, "Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft: A Sociobiological View of the Decay of Modern Society," *The Mankind Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (Spring 1994): 263–70.

³¹ Othmar Spann, *Types of Economic Theory* (London: Routledge, 2012), 61. For an overview of Spann's theories and their connection with various movements, see Lucian Tudor, "Othmar Spann: A Catholic Radical Traditionalist," *Counter-Currents Publishing*, March 19, 2013.

<http://www.counter-currents.com/2013/03/othmar-spann-a-catholic-radical-traditionalist/>

³² Tönnies, *Community and Society*, 64–65.

sense of spiritual bonds.³³ All sense of community is of course never fully lost, since it is inherent in all human societies to some extent, but it can be weakened or harmed, with the consequences being that an active sense of the common good and interdependence between all the members of the community deteriorates or disappears entirely.³⁴ It signifies, in short, departing from the organic community into the modern society. To quote Edgar Julius Jung, in a description that is even more valid today than it was in his time, "the sum of men with equal rights forms the modern [Western] society. Without the spirit of true community, without inner binding, they live in dumb spitefulness beside one another. Formal courtesy and badly warmed up humanity conceal strenuous envy, dislike, and joylessness."³⁵

The consequences of the derangement of society by individualism in liberal countries leads, to quote Tomislav Sunic, "to social alienation, the obsession with privacy and individualism, and most important, to ethnic and national uprootedness or *Entwurzelung*."³⁶ In this way, collective identities—including ethnic, cultural, and racial identities—are destabilized or dissolved in an atomized individualistic society due to people's lack of community feeling and solidarity. Without the organic sense of community and spiritual bonds, peoples are disintegrated and transformed into a mass of individuals. Under such circumstances, racial and ethnocultural identities can no longer have the meaning they once had

³³ See also Alain de Benoist, "Critique of Liberal Ideology," *The Occidental Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Winter 2007–2008): 9–30, and "Hayek: A Critique," *Telos*, no. 110 (December 1998): 71–104. Another notable critique of liberalism and individualism similar to Benoist's, although with a strong reference to Martin Heidegger's philosophy, can be found in Alexander Dugin, *The Fourth Political Theory* (London: Arktos, 2012).

³⁴ It must be clarified that this does not mean that every individual person who is individualist is necessarily an immoral person, or a person of bad quality. As Edgar Julius Jung pointed out, "he [the individualist] can be, personally, also a man striving for the good; he may even pay attention to and maintain the existing morals (*mores*)."³⁵ Yet this does not mean that individualism can ever be good, for, as Jung proceeds to point out, the individualist "does not have any more the living connection with the significance of these morals" (*The Rule of the Inferiour* [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995], 1:53). Thus one can still maintain that individualism essentially means the "splitting-up" of the community, the weakening of bonds and solidarity which are essential to the existence of the true community. As Jung wrote, "community-spirit without a feeling-oriented connectedness with the community, without a supraindividualistic [above the individual] value-standard, is an illusion" (*Ibid.*, 1:134).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:271.

³⁶ Tomislav Sunic, *Against Democracy and Equality: The European New Right*, 3rd ed. (London: Arktos, 2010), 128.

in past social forms. Collective identities can only find their full meaning and validity in the presence of a sense of organic spiritual community. Of course, it needs to be noted here that racial and ethnic bonds and similarity among a group of people can contribute to the feeling of community, but community has its own autonomous existence above and beyond ethnic and racial bonds.

The Identitarian world view is thus unequivocally opposed to individualism and advocates instead the traditional holistic view of society, which holds that the normal state of human social order is the spiritual community and not the individualistic society, that the community is higher than the individual. Against an individualism which results in "the war of all against all" and which strips from individuals any sense of higher meaning, Identitarianism advocates the holist goal of restoring conviviality along with the sense of collective meaning in society. Of course, holism does not lead to totalitarianism nor does it deny the importance of the individual personality, which is given value within the context of community life. "Emphasis on the social constituents of individualism by no means implies a hostility to personalism or a penchant for a faceless collectivism," but rather means the rejection of individualism as a perversion of social life and a negative deviation, as opposed to being a normal condition.³⁷

PRACTICES OF SEPARATISM

1. THE CLASS AND CASTE SYSTEM

Evidently, racial and ethnic separatism has taken on a variety of forms throughout history. The first and commonly recognized form of separatism is the creation of a class or caste system, where a social order composed of multiple races or ethnic groups separates the population into different classes or castes. Belonging to a class or caste is determined in such societies by racial, ethnic, or cultural background. Class systems based only on ethnocultural background can be seen frequently in history wherever one people conquers others, although of course it should not be assumed here that conquest necessarily results in a hierarchical class system.

A class or caste structure of racial separation, likewise being typically the result of conquest, can be seen in Greco-Roman civilization, in certain ancient Near Eastern civilizations (such as Egypt or Persia), and in

³⁷ O'Meara, *New Culture, New Right*, 113–14, n. 31.

many parts of Central and South America after European colonization. Similar systems have also been developed in apartheid states during and after the Colonial Era.³⁸ Such class or caste systems are often seen as being essentially negative because they involve domination and the subjugation of one or more races by another. However, they also had the positive effect of preserving the racial types which have formed, even after miscegenation (the new, mixed racial types; mulattos and mestizos), due to the fact that they discouraged race mixing by class separation.

It should also be mentioned here that another very well-known example of a caste system which included racial separation into its principles is the one established in ancient India. However, in the case of India, it is interesting to note that Alain Daniélou has argued that its caste system cannot be seen as “racist” (involving unfair subjugation), but rather that it is a natural and just racial ordering; thus the racial aspect of the Indian caste system is not racist because, unlike racist systems, it is not based on subjugation and supremacism but on a harmonious and organized coexistence which involves separation.³⁹

2. NATIONALISM

Another form of separatism is what is commonly recognized as ethnic “nationalism,” which has its primary basis in ethnocultural identity, although it is often accompanied by racial identity where interracial contact exists. Nationalism is defined, in the most simple terms, as the belief that ethnic groups or nationalities (in the cultural sense) are the key category of human beings and that they should live under their own independent states. It implies complete and total separation of ethnic groups into separate nations. Nationalism is often associated with ethnic chauvinism, inter-ethnic hostility, imperialism, and irredentism, although it is important to remember that there have been certain select forms of nationalism throughout history that were not at all chauvinistic and imperialistic, so it is erroneous to assume that it always takes on these neg-

³⁸ On the matter of historical examples, see Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* and Elav-Feldon, Isaac, and Ziegler, *The Origins of Racism in the West*. On the race-based caste and class systems in Central and South America, one classic mainstream resource is Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967).

³⁹ See Alain Daniélou, *India: A Civilization of Differences. The Ancient Tradition of Universal Tolerance* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2003). On race in the Indian caste system, see also the preface to Arvind Sharma, *Classical Hindu Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

ative features.

Concerning the issue of "ethno-nationalism," one must be careful to distinguish between "racial nationalism," on the one hand, and actual ethnic nationalism, in which race plays a role but in which it is not the primary element. For some theories of racial nationalism, the biological race is seen as the foundation of the nation, and any ethnocultural factors are regarded as being mere emanations of the race or as being secondary and unimportant when compared with the racial factor (thus it commits the biological reductionist or determinist error; more specifically, it can be said to be racial reductionist).⁴⁰ Ethnic nationalism in the proper sense, on the other hand, regards the ethnocultural factor as primary, but still acknowledges that the ethnic group's identity is linked to race to some extent, and that thus the racial type must be maintained if the ethnos is to survive.⁴¹

However, we should note that "nationalism" is a problematic term because it has been defined in different and sometimes contradictory ways. In one, very generic sense, nationalism means simply the desire of a people to live separately from others, under its own state and by rule of leaders of its own ethnic background—in essence, a basic ethnic separatism and desire for independence. In this sense, nationalism is a very ancient idea and practice, since all across history one can find many cases where a people of one particular ethnic background desired to be independent from the rule of another different people and fought for this independence.

This is not, however, the way nationalism is always defined, and aside from the fact that it is sometimes defined as being necessarily chauvinistic, it is also often defined in a certain manner that makes it particularly an early modern phenomenon.

In particular, many Identitarian (or New Right) as well as Traditionalist authors have defined nationalism as a form of state in which the "nation" is politically or culturally absolutized, at the expense of smaller local or regional cultural differences, and regarding other nations as completely foreign and of lesser value. This form of "nationalism" is exemplified by the Jacobin nation-state and form of sovereignty (since the

⁴⁰ See, for example, the commentaries on race and biological breed in William Gayley Simpson, *Which Way Western Man?* (Costa Mesa, CA: Noontide Press, 1986).

⁴¹ For a commentary on this matter, see for example Tomislav Sunic, "Culture: The Missing Link in Euro-American Nationalism," *The Occidental Observer*, July 20, 2009.

<http://www.theoccidentalobserver.net/2009/07/sunic-euro-american-nationalism/>

French Revolution was a key force in initiating the rise of this state form), and is identified by the elimination of sub-ethnic differences within its borders and the regard for differences with other peoples or nationalities as absolute. Naturally, this form of nationalism has the consequence of creating hostility and conflict between nations because of these ideological and political features.⁴² Thus, Benoist, in a statement which summarizes the Identitarian position on this matter, rejects nationalism and proposes in its place a view which reconciles patriotism with the idea of a right to difference: "The identity of others is no longer in principle a threat to mine. I am ready to defend my identity because this defense is a general principle, whose legitimacy I also recognize for others. In other words, if I defend my 'tribe,' it is also because I am ready to defend those of others."⁴³

3. TRADITIONALIST IMPERIAL FEDERALISM

The Perennial Traditionalists propose a form of ethnic separatism based on the model of the traditional imperial state, which has manifested itself numerous times across history, including well-known examples such as the Roman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Russian Empire. In the imperial system, peoples and ethnic groups ("nationalities") are generally organized in a federation in which each people lives in its own region within the empire. The traditional empire is therefore incompatible with nationalism because it is organized as a supranational federalistic union with a central spiritual authority.

Furthermore, the empire in the traditional sense must not be assumed to be imperialistic, for the traditional empire unified peoples without destroying their particular cultures and ethnic characters.⁴⁴ According to Evola,

⁴² See Alain de Benoist, "Nationalism: Phenomenology and Critique," *Counter-Currents Publishing*, May 16, 2012 (<http://www.counter-currents.com/2012/05/nationalism-phenomenology-and-critique>); Michael O'Meara, *New Culture, New Right*, 228ff.; Edgar Julius Jung, "People, Race, Reich," in *Europa: German Conservative Foreign Policy 1870-1940*, ed. and trans. Alexander Jacob (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002). See also the overview of Evola's position in the chapter "Nations, Nationalism, Empire and Europe" in Paul Furlong, *Social and Political Thought of Julius Evola* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011).

⁴³ Benoist, "Nationalism."

⁴⁴ See Alain de Benoist, "The Idea of Empire," *Telos*, no. 98-99 (December 1993): 81-98.

The scheme of an empire in a true and organic sense (which must clearly be distinguished from every imperialism, a phenomenon that should be regarded as a deplorable extension of nationalism) . . . safeguarded the principles of both unity and multiplicity. In this world, individual States have the character of partial organic units, gravitating around . . . a principle of unity, authority, and sovereignty of a different nature from that which is proper to each particular State . . . due to its super-ordained nature, would be such as to leave wide room for nationalities according to their natural and historical individuality.⁴⁵

In the imperial state, which Evola asserts is the true traditional model of the state, ethnic or national groups are thus separated federally; different peoples live under the same state and serve the same ultimate monarchical authority, but they live in separate parts of the kingdom or empire. To quote one of his key works: "The Middle Ages [and also certain ancient civilizations] knew nationalities but not nationalisms. Nationality is a natural factor that encompasses a certain group of common elementary characteristics that are retained both in the hierarchical differentiation and in the hierarchical participation, which they do not oppose."⁴⁶

It is worth noting that many Perennial Traditionalist authors such as Julius Evola and Frithjof Schuon reject nationalism as an anomaly—a deviation from valid state forms—not only because they are proponents of the imperial model, but also because they regard ethnicity and race (in the biological sense) as secondary qualities in human beings.⁴⁷ That is to say, although they are still acknowledged as having some level of importance, they are insignificant when compared to the values of religious type, elitism, aristocracy, or caste (in its spiritual sense; the racial aspect is still acknowledged but regarded as secondary). Furthermore, Evola has argued that "the notions of nation, fatherland, and people, despite their romantic and idealistic halo, essentially belong to the naturalistic and biological plane and not the political one; they lead back to the 'maternal' and physical dimension of a given collectivity."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Julius Evola, *Men Among the Ruins: Post-War Reflections of a Radical Traditionalist* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2002), 277.

⁴⁶ Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World*, 338–39.

⁴⁷ See Frithjof Schuon, *Castes and Races* (Bedfont, Middlesex, UK: Perennial Books, 1982).

⁴⁸ Evola, *Men Among the Ruins*, 127.

However, it should be noted here that many ethnically and racially conscious authors have argued that some conservative scholars have pointed out that race, nationality, and people were regarded in many ancient and traditional societies as possessing a character which surpassed the material plane. According to the studies of conservative scholars of religion such as Mircea Eliade, the religious view of archaic and traditional societies often endowed ethnicity and culture with a spiritual (in the religious sense), mythical, and transcendent dimension.⁴⁹ Thus, the traditional view in general cannot be confined to that of well-known Traditionalists such as Evola, Guénon, or Schuon.

4. IDENTITARIAN SEPARATISM

The New Right and the Identitarian movement is influenced by Perennial Traditionalist thought, especially in regards to the idea of empire in the traditional sense; Identitarians, for the most part, also support the idea of a federalist empire as their primary model of the state and of ethnic separatism. However, there are a number of key differences between the two groups. First, Identitarians naturally regard the depreciation of ethnic identity by certain Traditionalists such as Evola to be an error. Identitarianism regards ethnic, racial, and cultural identity to be an important part of human existence, not only on the material plane (which is not as demeaned by them to the extent we see among Traditionalists), but also—in accord with Eliade and other conservative religious scholars—on the mythical and spiritual plane.⁵⁰

Of course, there are various other philosophical issues on which there are disagreements—particularly in regards to religious doctrine, the structure and form of polity, and the importance of feminine values—

⁴⁹ See for example Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 1987); *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); *Myth and Reality* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1998). Other scholars who could be mentioned in this regard are Georges Dumézil, Rudolf Otto, Gilbert Durand, and Alexander Dugin.

⁵⁰ See for example Alain de Benoist, *On Being a Pagan* (Atlanta: Ultra, 2004), and the entry “Paganism” in Faye, *Why We Fight*, 205ff. Of course, it should be noted here that not all Identitarians are pagans; there are, in fact, many Christians with similar views among the Identitarians. Furthermore, many Identitarians recognize that Christianity and paganism can in fact be reconciled; they are not necessarily in complete conflict. These facts have been pointed out, for example, in the discussion of the New Right’s position on religion in Rodrigo Agulló, *Disidencia Perfecta: La Nueva Derecha y la batalla de las ideas* (Barcelona and Madrid: Áltera, 2011). In this regard, we can also mention that there have been historical examples of pagan ideas and values being reconciled with Christianity, as has been shown in many scholars’ works, including Eliade’s.

but this is no place to discuss those in depth.⁵¹ The most important point of disagreement which we must recognize here is with the particular construction of the imperial federalist state, which becomes evident when we look at the details of the Identitarian ideal in this regard.

The concept of federalism in Identitarian thought proposes the idea of a federation or confederation which is based upon the principle of subsidiarity, whereby decision-making power is granted to the lowest level authorities as much as is practical. In this system, local and regional political structures hold the power that is due to them, while the central authority rules primarily when decisions affecting the whole state must be made. This form of state and sovereignty "implies plurality, autonomy, and the interlacing of levels of power and authority."⁵² Of course, the Traditionalist concept of the empire also involves the practices of subsidiarity and allowing decisions to be made at lower levels. However, for Traditionalists, subsidiarity is more limited in practice, and their concept of sovereignty leads them to assert the importance of the ultimate authority of the sovereign (the central ruler) far more.

The Identitarian conception of the federal state is accompanied by the

⁵¹ For an in-depth critique from the Identitarian perspective of Radical Traditionalist thought, specifically that of Julius Evola, see especially Alain de Benoist, "Julius Evola, Reaccionario Radical y Metafísico Comprometido: Análisis crítico de su pensamiento político," *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea*, no. 16 (June 2011): 25ff. (http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_16). In this analytical work, Benoist establishes that he agrees with some of Evola's ideas, such as his critique of nationalism, the support of the imperial idea, the basic anti-egalitarian idea, and certain ethical principles. However, Benoist also criticizes and rejects a number of other ideas and attitudes in Evola's thought, including many (although not all) of his metaphysical and religious principles, his rigid elitism, his contempt for social and popular principles, his rejection of the value of collective identities (such as ethnicity), his lack of true organicism and rejection of the value of community solidarity (in the anti-individualist sense), and his hostility to feminine values. (Benoist, like other Identitarians, advocates a gender differentialism, as opposed to Evola's position, which can truly be described as sexist.) Benoist acknowledges Evola as an intellectual worthy of study, but emphasizes that his thought must be examined critically.

⁵² Alain de Benoist, "What is Sovereignty?," *Telos*, no. 116 (Summer 1999): 114. Benoist has also explicated his views on these matters in "The Idea of Empire" and "The First Federalist: Johannes Althusius," *Telos*, no. 118 (Winter 2000): 25–58. Other notable studies of sovereignty and federalism from the Identitarian perspective can be found in the following works: the entries "Empire" and "Sovereignty" in Faye, *Why We Fight*, 130–32 and 247; the chapter "Imperium" in O'Meara, *New Culture, New Right*; the articles in Sebastian J. Lorenz, ed., *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea*, no. 37, "Federalismo Poliárquico Neoalthusiano" (November 2012) (http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_37_federalismo).

juridical element of the “right of the peoples.” Hence the fact that, according to this conception, ethnocultural groups of all levels and types have the right to live with freedom and separately from others in different states and territories in the federation. Thus, while the traditional imperial state is used as a reference for the ideal political organization of peoples, in this scheme it is also accepted that “each nation or region, in conserving its freedom, has the right to leave the Federation at any moment.”⁵³ Furthermore, the Identitarian vision of the empire can also be said to be a “democratic empire” because it involves practicing what is known as organic democracy.

IDENTITY AND POLITICS: ORGANIC DEMOCRACY

Identitarians distinguish between different forms of democracy, some of which can be said to be more validly democratic than others. Alain de Benoist has distinguished between three forms of democracy corresponding to the French Revolutionary motto “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.”

The first, “liberal democracy,” is based on liberal, egalitarian, and individualist ideology; it is focused on the individual as a self-interested being, is inseparable from the individualist ideology of human rights, and is characterized by the principle of “one person, one vote.”

The second form is “egalitarian democracy” or “popular democracy,” based on the principle of equality and manifested itself in the totalitarian regimes of the nationalist or socialist (particularly Marxist) type.

The third form of democracy is based on the principle of fraternity and is known as “organic democracy,” which, as we shall see, is regarded by Identitarians as being the only true democracy.

Organic democracy is primarily defined not by fraternity as a “universal brotherhood” (which is impossible and is based on a false, egalitarian notion of humanity), but on fraternity in the sense of ethnic solidarity and a sense of collective meaning grounded in a shared heritage: “The only ‘families’ in which genuinely ‘fraternal’ relations may be entertained are cultures, peoples and nations. Fraternity, therefore, can serve as the basis for both solidarity and social justice, for both patriotism and democratic participation.”⁵⁴ Because true democracy is essentially non-totalitarian and is based on respecting the principle of liberty, it is also, in a sense, pluralistic, allowing the existence of groups representing differing opinions and ideas. However, as Benoist points out,

⁵³ Faye, *Why We Fight*, 131.

⁵⁴ Alain de Benoist, *The Problem of Democracy* (London: Arktos, 2011), 99.

this does not at all justify the notion of establishing a "pluralist" society in the ethnic sense (the liberal multiculturalists' conclusion):

The way in which the political rights assigned as a guarantee to the opposition are commonly assimilated to the rights from which social minorities wish to benefit is itself problematic: for political categories cannot always be transposed on a social level. This may lead to a serious failure to distinguish between *citizen minorities* and *non-citizen groups* installed—whether temporarily or not—in the same land as the former. "Pluralism" may here be used as a rather specious argument to justify the establishment of a "multicultural" society that severely threatens national and folk identity, while stripping the notion of the people of its essential meaning.⁵⁵

Alongside the foundation in ethnic community, organic democracy is also defined by participation: "Democracy is a people's [*Volkes*] participation in its own destiny," to reference Arthur Moeller van den Bruck's words.⁵⁶ For that reason, a purely representative democracy is regarded as an incomplete democracy: only a participatory democracy in which the entire citizenry can take part in decision-making is a true democracy. Finally, addressing the anti-democratic arguments made by most Traditionalists, Benoist has also pointed out that democracy does not necessarily reject hierarchy. Political equality among citizens of a state does not mean regarding each of them as equal in any other sense, and organic democracy, at its essence, is perfectly reconcilable with the values of hierarchy, aristocracy, and authority, although in a unique manner differing from absolute monarchies.⁵⁷

To support their advocacy of democracy and to counter the claim that democracy is a modern invention, a common theme in Identitarian and New Right works is the reference to ancient democracy, which has taken on participatory, representative, and various mixed forms. It is typical for Identitarians to reference examples of democracy specifically from Western European history, such as that of the ancient Germans or Greeks, although historical examples could also be found in many Eastern societies, even in entirely non-European societies (ancient Asiatic,

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁵⁶ See Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Germany's Third Empire* (London: Arktos, 2012), 15.

⁵⁷ See Benoist, *The Problem of Democracy*, 17. See also the chapter "A Defence of Democracy" in this same work.

Native American, etc.). Democracy clearly has a solid historical basis, for, to quote Benoist once more,

Democratic regimes or tendencies can be found throughout history. . . . Whether in Rome, in the *Iliad*, in Vedic India or among the Hittites, already at a very early date we find the existence of popular assemblies for both military and civil organisation. Moreover, in Indo-European society the King was generally elected.⁵⁸

Alexander Dugin has also cited the history of organic democracy in Russian and “Eurasian” history, including the examples of the ancient Slavic *Veche* (equivalent to the Germanic *Thing*) and Orthodox priestly democracy.⁵⁹ Whatever the example, ancient democracy has almost always taken on organic forms based on respect for ethnic differences. Thus, Benoist rightly denounces liberal and egalitarian democracies as being only pseudo-democratic or entirely undemocratic:

Democracy means the power of the people, which is to say the power of an organic community that has historically developed in the context of one or more given political structures—for instance a city, nation, or empire. . . . Every political system which requires the disintegration or levelling of peoples in order to operate—or the erosion of individuals’ awareness of belonging to an organic folk community—is to be regarded as undemocratic.⁶⁰

THE VISION OF A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

The theory of a multipolar world has been increasingly popularized in recent times by Alexander Dugin, to whom it is widely attributed.⁶¹

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 14–15.

⁵⁹ See the chapter “Органическая демократия” in Alexander Dugin, *Консервативная революция* (Moscow: Арктогея, 1994). We have especially relied on the online version for this research, published at *Арктогея*, December 1, 2002 (<http://www.arcto.ru/article/38>; accessed September 1, 2014). We could add to these examples the democratic practices of many of the ancient peoples of the Baltic, including the Scythians, the Sarmatians, and the Dacians (in modern-day Romania); see Ion Grumeza, *Dacia: Land of Transylvania, Cornerstone of Ancient Eastern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2009), 46, 129, 132.

⁶⁰ Benoist, *The Problem of Democracy*, 103.

⁶¹ Alexander Dugin’s most famous work in this regard is *Теория многополярного мира* (Moscow: Евразийское движение, 2012). We should note that this work is currently more accessible to a Western European audience through its French translation: *Pour une théorie du monde multipolaire* (Nantes: Éditions Ars Magna, 2013). Explanations

However, it should be remembered that this concept has a longer history, and can be found not only in the thought of other Russian thinkers, but also explicitly in the works of Carl Schmitt and Alain de Benoist, and more implicitly in the works of certain Identitarians such as Pierre Krebs.⁶²

The theory of a multipolar world is grounded, in great part, in Carl Schmitt's ideas in *The Nomos of the Earth*. In this work, the first *nomos* refers to the pre-colonial order which was marked by the isolation of nations from each other. The second *nomos* was the global order of sovereign nation-states established upon the Age of Discovery. The third *nomos* was the "bipolar" order established after World War II, where the world was divided into two poles (Communist or Soviet and Western or American). With the end of the Cold War, the "unipolar moment" occurred in history, where the United States became the only dominating superpower, and in which the "Western" liberal model spread its influence across the entire Earth. The fourth *nomos* has not yet developed: it is an open question where, increasingly, the options become either the hegemony of a single power and model (currently the Western one) or the creation of a multipolar world.⁶³

The theory of the multipolar world is marked by a rejection of the "West," which, it must be emphasized, is not a reference to Western European civilization as a whole, but a specific formulation of Western European civilization founded upon liberalism, egalitarianism, and individualism. Alexander Dugin and the present-day Eurasianists, in a manner almost identical to that of the Identitarians, distinguish the liberal "West" from true European culture, posing Europe and the West as

of the theory of the multipolar world can also be found in German in Dugin, *Konflikte der Zukunft: Die Rückkehr der Geopolitik* (Kiel: Arndt-Verlag, 2014), and in Spanish in *¿Qué es el eurasismo? Una conversación de Alain de Benoist con Alexander Dugin* (Tarragona: Ediciones Fides, 2014), which is the Spanish translation of *L'appel de l'Eurasie* (Paris: Avatar Éditions, 2013).

⁶² See for example Alain de Benoist, *Carl Schmitt Today: Terrorism, "Just" War, and the State of Emergency* (London: Arktos, 2013), 104, and Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence*, 20–30. Concerning other Russian thinkers, see Leonid Savin's comments on multipolar theory in the interview with Robert Steuckers's *Euro-Synergies*: "Establish a Multipolar World Order: Interview with Mr. Leonid Savin of the International Eurasian Movement," *Euro-Synergies*, March 25, 2013.

<http://euro-synergies.hautetfort.com/archive/2013/03/22/interview-with-mr-leonid-savin.html>

⁶³ See Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (New York: Telos, 2003).

two antagonistic entities.⁶⁴ Due to globalism and Western cultural imperialism, the system of the liberal “West,” in contrast to traditional European culture, has increasingly harmed not only the identities of European peoples, but also numerous non-European peoples: “The crisis of identity . . . has scrapped all previous identities—civilizational, historical, national, political, ethnic, religious, cultural, in favor of a universal planetary Western-style identity—with its concept of individualism, secularism, representative democracy, economic and political liberalism, cosmopolitanism and the ideology of human rights.”⁶⁵ Thus, both the Western European Identitarians and Eurasianists advocate the idea of a genuine Europe which allies with non-Europeans to combat the “Western” system:

Both the French New Right as well as the Russian one advocate a decentralized federal Europe (to a Europe of a hundred flags) and, beyond the Westernized idea of Europe, for a Eurasian Empire formed by ethnocultural regions, putting a view on countries of the Third World which supposedly embody the primitive and original communities, traditional and rooted, which are ultimately conceived as natural allies against the New World Order homogenizer of the universal, egalitarian, and totalitarian liberalism.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Concerning the views of the Identitarians, see: Alain de Benoist, “The ‘West’ Should Be Forgotten,” *The Occidental Observer*, April 21, 2011 (<http://www.theoccidentalobserver.net/2011/04/the-%e2%80%9cwest%e2%80%9d-should-be-forgotten/>); Guillaume Faye, “Cosmopolis: The West As Nowhere,” *Counter-Currents Publishing*, July 6, 2012 (<http://www.counter-currents.com/2010/07/cosmopolis/>); Tomislav Sunic, “The West against Europe,” *The Occidental Observer*, June 2, 2013 (<http://www.theoccidentalobserver.net/2013/06/the-west-against-europe/>); Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence*, 31ff. Concerning Dugin’s views in particular, see his approving reference to Benoist’s distinction between Europe and the West in “Counter-Hegemony in Theory of Multi-Polar World,” *The Fourth Political Theory*, n.d. (<http://www.4pt.su/en/content/counter-hegemony-theory-multi-polar-world>).

⁶⁵ Alexander Dugin, “Civilization as Political Concept: Interview with Alexander Dugin by Natella Speranskaya,” *Euro-Synergies*, June 13, 2012.

<http://euro-synergies.hautetfort.com/archive/2012/06/09/civilization-as-political-concept.html>.

⁶⁶ Jesús J. Sebastián, “Alexander Dugin: la Nueva Derecha Rusa, entre el Neo-Eurasianismo y la Cuarta Teoría Política,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea*, no. 70 (May 2014): 7.

http://issuu.com/sebastianjllorenz/docs/elementos_n__70._dugin.

The vision of the multipolar world means combating and putting an end to the ideological hegemony of liberalism (as well as its concomitants, individualism, egalitarianism, universalism, and globalism) and to the economic and political hegemony of the West. Multipolarity means that each country and civilization is given the right and freedom to choose its own destiny, to affirm its own unique cultural and ethnic identity, to choose its own form of politics and economics, and to possess its own sovereign existence, free from the hegemony of others. This means that in the multipolar world, each nation has the right to determine their own policies and to join or remain independent from a federalist or imperial state, just as it also means that larger and more powerful states (superpowers) do not have the right to interfere in the affairs of other countries and civilizations.

According to Dugin, "Multi-polarity should be based on the principle of equity among the different kinds of political, social and economic organisations of these nations and states. Technological progress and a growing openness of countries should promote dialogue amongst, and the prosperity of, all peoples and nations. But at the same time it shouldn't endanger their respective identities."⁶⁷ Part of multipolar theory is the importance of a process called "modernization without Westernization," whereby the various non-Western peoples of the world scientifically and technologically advance without combining progress with the adoption of the cosmopolitan liberal Western model and without losing their unique cultural identity. Thus, the values of traditional society can be reconciled with what is positive in modern progress to create a new social and cultural order where the basically negative "modernity" is overcome, thus achieving the envisioned "postmodernity." This model is, of course, also offered to Western European nations as well.⁶⁸

In the multipolar scheme, the true Europe (grounded in the heritage of Celtic, Germanic, Greek, Latin, Slavic, and other traditions) rises to take its place among the other cultures of the world. Each culture will overcome the individualist, cosmopolitan, and universalist West, reas-

⁶⁷ Alexander Dugin, "The Greater Europe Project," *Open Revolt*, December 24, 2011. <http://openrevolt.info/2011/12/24/the-greater-europe-project/>

⁶⁸ A good overview of the theory of the multipolar world can be found in English in Alexander Dugin, "The Multipolar World and the Postmodern," *Journal of Eurasian Affairs* 2, no. 1 (2014): 8-12, and "Multipolarism as an Open Project," *Journal of Eurasian Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2013): 5-14. This journal is issued online at <http://www.eurasianaffairs.net/>.

sert its own identity, and establish a secure world order where each respects the identity of the other; the *universum* will be vanquished to create a *pluriversum*. At its foundation, the theory of the multipolar world means the restoration and defense of ethnocultural identities in the world and defending the values of tradition, ethnos, spirituality, and community.

Therefore, it implies allowing different peoples (ethnic groups, cultures, races) to live autonomously in their own territories and to resist mixing. This further means encouraging the cooperation between all peoples to achieve this world order and to resolve the problems caused by the liberal-egalitarian and globalist system (such as the problems of immigration and “multiculturalism”) in the most practical and humane way. For that reason, the theory of the multipolar world is not only compatible with Identitarianism, it is an essential part of it; Multipolarism and Identitarianism are two sides of the same coin. The ultimate international mission of the Identitarian movement is the creation of a multipolar world order—a world in which, as Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier declared, we will see “the appearance of thousands of auroras, i.e., the birth of sovereign spaces liberated from the domination of the modern.”⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Benoist and Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, 14.