

Race, Identity, Community

By Lucian Tudor

Modern Right-wingers who assert the importance of racial differences and advocate racial separatism, especially White Nationalists, face a number of philosophical challenges which they need to be aware of and ready to address. It is all too common to rely on presuppositions, assumptions, or implications without being prepared to respond to more in-depth issues or the complications involving the interpretation of facts and ideas. What is needed in the modern Right is a developed philosophy of race and culture, of identity and community, which clarifies the issues involved and which gives depth to their standpoint.

Without this philosophical or intellectual depth supporting their worldview in their minds, they are less and less likely to successfully challenge their opponents and convince others. The intellectual resources to establish this depth have already been provided by the thought of the German “Conservative Revolution” and the European “New Right,” but their contributions and ideas have not yet been fully recognized or utilized. We hope to bring to attention some basic philosophical problems and the necessity of being aware of them and being prepared to address them. Of course, we do not pretend to investigate or tackle all the issues involving these topics and in enough depth; rather, our purpose here is to fulfill the aim of simply spreading an awareness of the most typical complications involved.

Ethnic Identity and Culture

Human beings are defined by their particular identities; the notion of an abstract humanity before which all particularity is unimportant is completely groundless. Yet it always needs to be kept in mind that identity per se is a complicated subject, encompassing both the details of individual or personal identity as well as various types of group or collective identities – ideological, political, religious, social, etc. Group identities may also overlap or conflict with each other (which still does not eliminate their validity), they may be voluntary or involuntary, and they may be inherited or chosen. It cannot be denied that a person’s identity as part of a collective group, even a racial or ethnic group, has a subjective dimension and involves conscious identification, just as it cannot be denied that some types of identity or aspects of them are inherited and inescapable.[1]

However, what concerns us here in particular is the role and function of ethnic and racial identity, and the undeniable relationship between these two forms of collective identity. “Ethnicity” has become a word with many meanings, encompassing both larger and smaller groups which are defined by the possession of certain common elementary characteristics, especially in the field of culture. Properly defined, an ethnicity signifies a people or a folk which constitutes (and is thus defined) as an organic cultural unity with a particular spirit and a particular historical continuity. In many cases, the term “nation” or “nationality” is synonymous with ethnicity, although it is always important to distinguish a “nation” in the ethno-cultural sense from the idea of “civic nation.”

However, it always needs to be kept in mind that culture exists on multiple levels, which means

that an ethnicity or folk is not the only level at which culture operates; it is not the only valid form of cultural unity. This is why it is valid to speak of cultural groups encompassing multiple ethnicities (for example, a general Celtic culture), a larger Western culture, or, greater still, a general Indo-European or European culture. It is for this reason that Guillaume Faye is right to assert the position that one can identify both with local as well as with greater ethno-cultural groups: “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.”[2]

Each cultural entity is furthermore in contact with and sometimes connected with other cultural entities. Although cultures exist separately from other cultures, they cannot be regarded as forming different universes and they normally engage in contact and exchange ideas with each other. Each exchange results in the appropriation – or better, re-appropriation – of the cultural creations of another group in a new way based on the particular local spirit of a folk.

The different ethnic groups of Europe have generally engaged in a “cultural dialogue” with each other throughout their history, oftentimes drawing ideas, cultural objects and practices from other groups or from past cultures. Europeans have also exchanged certain cultural creations with non-European peoples, although this “dialogue” naturally occurred in a very selective and limited form because of the foreignness of these peoples. Thus one can, as Hans Freyer has done, justly speak of a “world-history of Europe,” while simultaneously upholding the fact that Europeans have always maintained their uniqueness and particularity.[3]

This fact of course, brings up the question of openness to other cultures, and whether or not it is valid for a cultural group to be either completely open or completely closed to others. On the one hand, liberals and globalists advocate complete opening, while on the other hand some (although not all) Right-wingers advocate total closure. In reality, neither complete closure nor complete openness are normal or healthy states, but rather a selective communication with partial (not absolute) barriers. It is a fact that, as Alain de Benoist pointed out, the “diversity of peoples and cultures exists . . . only because, in the past, these various peoples and cultures were relatively isolated from one another,” and thus in order to maintain their existence as different cultures, “communication can only be imperfect. Without this imperfection, it would lose its *raison d’être* and its very possibility of existing.”[4]

Racial Issues

The matter of race is closely bound up with that of ethnicity, which therefore also links racial identity with ethnic identity. It is not satisfactory to merely point out the reality of race, since opponents can argue that its reality is insignificant; one must assert its importance and function. Race is, of course, primarily a biological type, defined by certain physical-anthropological traits and certain subtle traits of character which are inherited.

There are also evidently many disagreements on racial classification, which is why one must always be prepared to defend one’s particular view of racial typology. We will only mention here that we believe that, contrary to certain scientists who insisted on asserting the primacy of sub-racial groups among Europeans, that European peoples as a whole, due to their close relatedness, form primarily a general “white” or European race. The existence of this common

racial type among all European ethnic groups forms a bond between them and allows them to better relate to each other (in ways that they surely cannot relate to non-white peoples). This fact certainly does not eliminate differences between European groups, but to deny the racial relatedness of European peoples is akin to and just as incorrect as denying the existence of a general European culture and type.[5]

However, it also needs to be mentioned that race should not be seen in a simplistic biological sense, since it has an important and undeniable sociological function. Race has a spiritual dimension, permeating society and culture, due to the fact that racial type is also defined by its style of expression. 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.”[6] This does not mean that culture and society can be reduced to race, which would be a fallacious biological reductionism, since many cultural and social changes occur independently of race and because of multiple factors. Nevertheless it is clear that racial type is an important influence on the nature of culture and society (which may themselves convey a reciprocal influence on race), even if it is one influence among a number of others.[7]

Thus, to quote Nicolas Lahovary, “the first explanation [of history] is generally found in the nature of a human being and his derives, 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.”[8] Therefore, it is evident from this that 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. The notion that culture and ethnicity can exist entirely independently of race can thus be seen as naïve and ill-founded; ethno-cultural type and identity is strongly influenced by race, even by racial phenotype alone, with which it has a psychological association.

The problem of miscegenation, however, is not readily solved. Anyone who believes in the importance of racial differences and in the separation of racial groups[9] must be prepared to challenge the “multiculturalist” argument that racial miscegenation is acceptable and normal due to its incidence all throughout history. Without touching upon the reasons for the occurrence of miscegenation, we must remind our readers that it is necessary to argue, on the basis of racial principles and values which hold a meta-historical value, that miscegenation, despite its presence throughout history, is a deviation from normality, not an expression of it. Maintaining stability in racial type was regarded as the norm in most traditional societies.[10]

Likewise, the notion that miscegenation is beneficial and brings about positive transformations (and is thus desirable) is of course entirely lacking in foundations, not only because race-mixing is usually associated with negative changes but also because it is completely unnecessary for positive transformation, as such transformations often occur within homogeneous populations.

It needs to be emphasized, in this regard, that evoking mere biological racial survival or preservation – as is commonly done by White Nationalists – is by itself never a sufficient argument against multiculturalism (or, more precisely, multiracialism). It always needs to be contended that even if, theoretically, the white or European race could survive in the presence of rampant multiculturalism and multiracialism, multiracial society would still be problematic.

The racial type can only live and thrive when it is able to express itself, to live in accordance with its own inner being and nature, in a homogeneous society without psychological and sociological interference from the immediate presence of other races. Just as a unique cultural type and spirit cannot survive when it is completely merged with other cultures, so a unique racial expressive style is unfulfilled and altered in a multiracial society; it denies a race complete fulfillment in its own way of being. This means that racial being only truly manifests itself in a homogeneous community, and is distorted or harmed by social mixing (the “integration” of different races). Furthermore, as Benoist pointed out, mixing can be opposed not only for biological but also for socio-cultural reasons:

In fact, 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.[11]

The Importance of Community

As previously implied, racial identity and ethnic identity only find their full meaning and validity in the presence of a sense of organic spiritual community. Of course, similarity in racial and ethnic type among the people contributes to their sense of organic community, but the latter also in turn influences the collective identities based on the former. This type of community mentioned here can be understood better by distinguishing the idea of community (Gemeinschaft) from that of society (Gesellschaft), as in the terminology of Ferdinand Tönnies.[12]

A true community exists where a group of people feel an organic sense of belonging and solidarity, with the existence of psychological bonds between each other, whereas a society is a mere mass or collection of essentially disconnected individuals. In society, bonds between individuals are superficial and mechanical (hence also their transitory nature). On the other hand, in organic community, in Othmar Spann’s words, “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 . . .”[13]

This stands in contrast to liberal individualism – which, in theory, means regarding society as nothing more than a sum of its parts, and, in social life, means the fundamental feeling of separation between individuals. The traditional holistic view of society holds that the normal state of human social order is thus the spiritual community and not the individualistic society, that the community is higher than the individual. This, of course, does not lead to totalitarianism or deny the importance of the individual personality, which is given value within the context of community life.[14] Rather, holism rejects individualism as a perversion of social life and a negative deviation, as opposed to being a normal condition.

Individualism results in the atomization of social life, in the disintegration of the feeling of community and the sense of spiritual bonds. All sense of community is of course never fully lost, since it is inherent in all human societies, 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.[15] 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 . . .”[16]

Consequently, as Tomislav Sunić wrote, the individualistic society of “liberal countries gradually leads to social alienation, the obsession with privacy and individualism, and most important, to ethnic and national uprootedness or *Entwurzelung*.”[17] In other words, collective identities – such as ethnic 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. Racial and ethnic identity can no longer have the meaning it once had in past social forms.

However, a return to community is always possible; social formlessness is not a permanent condition. It is therefore clear that one of the key tasks of the modern Right is the battle for the restoration of the living community, to validate collective identities. It is likewise an intellectual necessity to constantly reassert the holistic vision which values the organic spiritual community and which rejects individualism as an error. A failure to do so can only mean a failure to carry out one’s ideas to the fullest extent, to fully defend one’s worldview. With the fundamental values of race, ethnos, and tradition must always be included the community, which binds them all into a higher unity. As Freyer once wrote:

Man is free when he is free in his Volk, and when it is free in its realm. Man is free when he is part of a concrete collective will, which takes responsibility for its history. Only reality can decide whether such a collective will exist, a will that binds men and endows their private existence with historical meaning.[18]

Concluding Remarks

To conclude this discussion, we wish to reemphasize certain essential points argued for above for the purpose of clarity:

- (1) Ethnicities exist as distinct cultural entities, although cultural and ethnic groups exist on both smaller and larger levels, which is why one can speak of both European peoples and a single European people.
- (2) Cultures generally communicate with each other and exchange creations; they are normally not fully closed from other cultures. Under normal conditions this communication does not eliminate their uniqueness and existence as separate cultures due to the naturally selective and limited nature of cultural dialogue; only complete openness, which is abnormal, eliminates particularity.
- (3) Racial type has an important sociological function, making its mark on both culture and ethnicity. Race is a factor in ethnic identity; to change the racial background of an ethnicity also changes its character and identity. The survival of a particular ethno-cultural identity thus depends on resisting race-mixing, which negatively transforms racial type.

(4) Racial miscegenation, however, cannot be opposed merely by evoking the notion of preservation, but must be opposed on principle. The mixing of races must be rejected as a deviation from normal social order; racial homogeneity is required for ethno-cultural stability.

(5) Finally, racial and ethnic identity finds meaning only when there exists a sense of belonging to a spiritual community, which is itself augmented by ethnic and racial homogeneity. In individualistic liberal societies where the original sense of organic community is weakened, ethnic bonds and identity are weakened as well.

What we have provided here thus far is merely an introduction to some essential concepts of the European New Right. By writing this essay, we hope to see these concepts be more frequently utilized so that not only do the arguments of White Nationalists improve, but so that they are also better understood. The way forward – towards changing the social reality and overcoming liberalism, egalitarianism, and multiculturalism – exists first in the realm of thought, in the ability to successfully challenge the dominant ideology on the intellectual plane. Then, and only then, will the hegemony of liberalism begin to collapse.

Notes

[1] For a more in-depth – if somewhat unsatisfactory with certain topics (particularly race and ethnicity) – discussion of the problem of identity, see Alain de Benoist, “On Identity,” *Telos*, Vol. 2004, No. 128 (Summer 2004), pp. 9–64.

http://www.alaindebenoist.com/pdf/on_identity.pdf.

[2] Guillaume Faye, *Why We Fight: Manifesto of the European Resistance* (London: Arktos, 2011), p. 143. See also Benoist, “On Identity,” pp. 46–51.

[3] See the overview of Hans Freyer’s *Weltgeschichte Europas* in Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 330 ff.

[4] Alain de Benoist, “What is Racism?” *Telos*, Vol. 1999, No. 114 (Winter 1999), pp. 46–47. http://www.alaindebenoist.com/pdf/what_is_racism.pdf. On the issue of cultural openness, see also Benoist, “Confronting Globalization,” *Telos*, Vol. 1996, No. 108, (Summer 1996), pp. 117–37. http://www.alaindebenoist.com/pdf/confronting_globalization.pdf.

[5] For a discussion of the racial and cultural unity and relatedness of all Europeans, see for example the comments in Michael O’Meara, *New Culture, New Right: Anti-Liberalism in Postmodern Europe*, 2nd edition (London: Arktos, 2013), pp. 236 ff. This position has also been argued for by many other New Right authors (including Alain de Benoist, Guillaume Faye, Pierre Krebs, Dominique Venner, Pierre Vial, etc.).

[6] Hans Freyer, “Tradition und Revolution im Weltbild,” *Europäische Revue* 10 (1934), pp. 74–75. Quoted in Muller, *The Other God That Failed*, p. 263.

[7] Another source which readers may reference on this matter is Michael O’Meara, “Race, Culture, and Anarchy,” *The Occidental Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer 2009), pp. 35–64. <http://toqonline.com/archives/v9n2/TOQv9n2OMeara.pdf>.

[8] 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), p. 35. Quoted in Pierre Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence* (London: Arktos, 2012), p. 21, n. 13.

[9] A position which is, needless to say, not equivalent to “racism” (whose distinguishing feature is the belief in racial superiority and hierarchy, not merely the belief that races are different and should live separately), as Alain de Benoist among other New Right authors have pointed out.

[10] See for example: the chapters “Life and Death of Civilizations” and “The Decline of Superior Races” in Julius Evola, *Revolt Against the Modern World*, trans. Guido Stucco (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1995); the commentaries in Guillaume Faye, *Archeofuturism: European Visions of the Post-Catastrophic Age* (London: Arktos Media, 2010); the chapter “The Beauty and the Beast: Race and Racism in Europe” in Tomislav Sunić, *Postmortem Report: Cultural Examinations from Postmodernity* (Shamley Green, UK: The Paligenesis Project, 2010).

[11] Benoist, “What is Racism?,” p. 34.

[12] 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 Sunić, “Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft: A Sociological View of the Decay of Modern Society,” *Mankind Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1994).

<http://home.alphalink.com.au/~radnat/debenoist/alain6.html>.

[13] Othmar Spann, *Types of Economic Theory* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 61.

[14] As O’Meara noted, “emphasis on the social constituents of individualism by no means implies a hostility to personalism or a penchant for a faceless collectivism” (*New Culture, New Right*, pp. 113–14, n. 31), meaning that the rejection of individualism and the valuing of the community over the individual does not imply absolute and unlimited collectivism. Many other writers associated with the Conservative Revolution as well as the New Right have made this point as well.

[15] 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). But he does not have any more the living connection with the significance of these morals” (*The Rule of the Inferiour*, vol. I [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995], p. 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.*, p. 134).

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 271.

[17] Tomislav Sunić, *Against Democracy and Equality: The European New Right*, 3rd edition (London: Arktos, 2010), p. 128.

[18] Hans Freyer, *Revolution von Rechts* (Jena: Eugen Diederich, 1931), p. 69. Quoted in Hajo Funke and Elliot Yale Neaman, *The Ideology of the Radical Right in Germany: Past and Present* (Minneapolis: Institute of International Studies, College of Liberal Arts, 1991), p. 5.

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<<http://www.counter-currents.com/2013/08/race-identity-community/>>.