



***Race, "Ethnos" and  
"The Fourth Political Theory"***

## Race, "Ethnos" and "The Fourth Political Theory"

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Part 1 of 3

Alexander Dugin has designated liberalism as the enemy of the "fourth political theory", or rather, since the enemy can only be an actually existing group of people and not an idea or ideology, he has designated as the enemy all those are in favour of the global hegemony of liberalism (that is, the hegemony of "the West"). "If you are in favour of global liberal hegemony, you are the enemy" is one of his slogans.

What does Dugin mean by "liberalism"? Not the ideology of those whom Americans refer to as "liberals." It is important for Americans to realise that calling someone a "liberal" in Europe means something quite different from calling someone a "liberal" in the United States. "Liberals" in the United States are on the left: they vote for the Democratic party and are in favour a welfare state and a regulated economy. In Europe, they would be considered social democrats. Ideologically, they are egalitarians and tend to be critical of laissez-faire capitalism. They oppose "racism", "sexism" and "homophobia" from an egalitarian point of view. They view prison sentences as therapeutic and socialising rather than as forms of punishment. They believe in "social justice" rather than justice through retribution. They believe that human beings are basically good and can be redeemed through "social work". They believe in social conditioning rather than personal responsibility. They believe that human beings can be redeemed in this world. They tend to be in favour of a strict separation of church and state, while at the same time advocating an egalitarian world-view that is essentially a form of secularised Christianity.

In Europe, "liberals" are on the right: they are generally opposed to the welfare state, in favour of free markets, the privatisation of the infrastructure and a largely unregulated economy. Traditionally, they also support various conservative social policies, placing an emphasis on individual responsibility as the correlative of the notion of individual rights. In other words, liberalism is a bourgeois ideology, favouring a capitalist economy, based on the enlightenment ideology of individual human rights. Today, however, the polarity between left and right is becoming much less sharp, and gradually being replaced by a general consensus. The social policies of European liberal parties often coincide with those associated with the post-1968, libertarian left. Liberal, pro-capitalist parties oppose "racism", "sexism" and "homophobia" from the point of view of individualist libertarianism. They oppose categorisations of human beings in collective terms. Everyone should be treated as an individual, in an unprejudiced way. Ideas of national, religious or sexual identity are passé. National borders and ethnic communities, insofar as they limit the freedom of the individual, should be abolished. The freedom of the individual must be defended as long as it does not interfere with the rights of other individuals. This is the liberalism that Dugin has designated as the enemy: globalist capitalism founded on the ideology of human rights.

Today, the common foundations and origins of the social democratic, egalitarian left and the bourgeois, liberal right in the enlightenment ideology of human rights has come more to the fore. Both left and right-wing mainstream parties today tend to favour multiculturalism, immigration, gay rights and the separation of church and state. They share fundamental views about gender equality and sometimes drug liberalisation. These policies are legitimised by the “right” from the point of view of individual rights, and by the “left” from the point of view of egalitarianism. Moreover, the middle-class leftist “revolutionaries” of the late 60s and early 70s have often made a transition from the communist left to the liberal right, realising that their adherence to the left was based on an ideological self-misunderstanding. They were essentially bourgeois libertarians who mistook themselves for communists.

The difference between the left and the right in Europe today is a difference of interpretation of a single fundamental anthropological and ideological legacy, that of the enlightenment. It would more correct to talk about “liberal-egalitarian hegemony” rather than simply “liberal hegemony”. Both liberalism and egalitarianism are based on the ideology of human rights, but emphasise different aspects. Right-wing liberals emphasise the individual aspect of human rights. Leftist egalitarians emphasise the universal aspect of human rights. Both conceptions of humanity - universal man and individual man - are abstractions: defined only in negative terms, embodying an abstract freedom. Both universal man and individual man are defined as NOT belonging to a particular group or category (ethnic or otherwise). Insofar as man is universal, “he” cannot be defined or limited as belonging to any particular ethnic group, gender or other category. The individual, on the other hand, cannot as such be subsumed under any category or defined as belonging to any collectivity (nationality ethnicity, gender, etc) since this would violate his or her (its?) individuality. The individual, then, is any and every human being and potentially corresponds to all of humanity. The individual is universal (as a representative of “humanity” as such) and all human beings are, as such, individuals. In other words, “universal man” can only be “individual man”. Egalitarianism and individualism ultimately boil down to the same thing.

It would more correct, then, to talk about a “liberal-egalitarian hegemony” than simply “liberal hegemony”. This hegemony is both political and metapolitical. All established, mainstream political parties in Europe today gravitate towards this liberal-egalitarian centre. This leaves certain groups marginalised. Since the centre is the rational, humane, bourgeois individual, monopolising the legacy of the enlightenment, with reason itself as the defining trait of humanity, those who deviate in some way from the centre are in varying degrees viewed as less-than-human, non-rational and unenlightened. The marginalised are dismissed as irrational, “crazy” and “extremist”. They are de-humanised, deprived of a voice and the right to participate in the political sphere: deprived of political subjectivity. These groups include the various losers of liberal modernity, such as religious conservatives (mainly Christian and Muslim), who oppose gay rights and the separation of church and state. Christian religious conservatives are not completely marginalised, however - they still have a presence within established political parties, albeit one that is growing ever weaker. Another marginalised group are communists, who oppose the idea of individual rights, free enterprise and private property. They, too, however, are not completely marginalised, especially within the universities and cultural institutions. When the need arises, they are allowed to form parts of coalition governments. They also share a common basis with the established political parties in the egalitarian, universalist aspects of their ideology, which has its roots in the enlightenment. Much more marginalised and demonised are nationalists, who oppose, in varying degrees,

universalism (to the extent that they oppose immigration), free trade (to the extent that they want to protect national economies) and individualism (to the extent that they view national and ethnic identity as in some cases having primacy over individual identity). Finally, the most marginalised and “untouchable” group of all are racialisists and racial nationalists, who oppose not only universalism, but also egalitarianism. However heterogenous these groups are, they are often reduced to the same by the liberal centre.

Alain de Benoist, Dugin and Alain Soral want to create an “alliance of the periphery against the centre”, that is, of more or less marginalised groups against the dominant political establishment. In practice, this has so meant not so much an alliance between the radical left and the radical right as an alliance between religious conservatives (mainly Muslim and Orthodox) and ex-communists. A good example of this in western Europe is Alain Soral’s “Egalité et réconciliation” (“Equality and Reconciliation”), which attempts to build an alliance between Muslim immigrants and French patriots. The name of Soral’s movement already makes it clear that a critique of egalitarianism is not part of the agenda. Neither is racialism or racially-based nationalism. Dugin, too, avoids any critique of egalitarianism, downplaying the real differences between left and right by focusing entirely on attacking “liberalism”. The concept of “liberalism” - intentionally left ambiguous, referring at times to capitalist economic individualism, at times to the moral individualism of gay rights activists and secularists - functions as a central pole of opposition that is supposed to artificially unify into a single (purely utopian) front groups that are otherwise profoundly heterogenous.

Dugin, who calls for a “crusade against the West” is not opposed to liberalism because it is causing the destruction of the white race. On the contrary, he frequently seems to identify the former with the latter. His primary stated goal is to destroy liberalism, even if this should mean rejecting the white race along with it. As he puts it in “The Fourth Political Theory”: “liberalism (and post-liberalism) may (and must – I believe this!) be repudiated. And if behind it, there stands the full might of the inertia of modernity, the spirit of Enlightenment and the logic of the political and economic history of European humanity of the last centuries, it must be repudiated together with modernity, the Enlightenment, and European humanity altogether. Moreover, only the acknowledgement of liberalism as fate, as a fundamental influence, comprising the march of Western European history, will allow us really to say ‘no’ to liberalism” [“The Fourth Political Theory”, p. 154]. He also defines the race of the subject of the “fourth political theory” as “non-White/European” [Ibid. p. 189]. He has predicted world-wide anti-white pogroms as retribution for the evil deeds of the white race, pogroms that Russians, however, will be exempt from, since they are not, he says [Russian language link], fully white.

In other words, Dugin is not a white nationalist. Dugin has stated that he views race as a social construct. This may seem to us like a ludicrous claim, but we may assume that he is not simply being disingenuous. It is consistent with his postmodern and relativist theoretical orientation, as well as with statements he has previously made to the effect that the idea of white racial solidarity is both unrealistic and potentially dangerous:

"When it comes to the myth of 'the solidarity of the white race', it is a complete utopia that leads not only to the Holocaust of the Jews, but also to a genocide of the Slavs. The remains of the Third Reich are a basis for this miserable, contradictory and completely false conception. The Anglo-Saxon world is one sociopolitical and cultural reality. The inhabitants of Central Europe are something different. The Eastern world of Orthodox Christianity and Slavs is a third reality. I am certain that many non-white peoples of Eurasia are a thousand fold closer to us in spirit and culture than Americans."

[Alexander Dugin, "The Magic Disillusion of a Nationalist Intellectual"].

In other words, Dugin holds the view - shared by many Jews - that any form of positive racial identity among whites will inevitably and fatally lead to "a new holocaust".

Presumably, Dugin follows Alain de Benoist in viewing the concept of race - and the phenomenon of racism - as a product of the Enlightenment, a modern phenomenon, and for Dugin, "modern" always means "bad". Alain de Benoist is correct that the concept of race was first formulated in the context of the Enlightenment. This does not in itself constitute sufficient grounds for rejecting the concept of race. Even before the concept of race was formed, race was a biological fact, just as DNA existed before being discovered by scientists. It may be that as a social and linguistic constructivist, Dugin would contest the idea that race can exist in the absence of a concept of race. Philosophically, Dugin takes the view that nothing has being outside of language and social relations. Relativism, which is characteristic of postmodernism, is according to Dugin, philosophically compatible with traditionalism, since, he claims that "[f]rom the point of view of the 'integral tradition', the difference between 'artificial' and 'natural' is generally rather relative, as Tradition never knew anything similar to cartesian or kantian dualism, strictly separating the 'subjective' from the 'objective' ["From Sacred Geography to Geopolitics"]. Dugin tries to interpret postmodernity - with its relativist critique the universalism of the enlightenment Reason, in other words of the basis of the project of modernity - as opening the way to a resurgence of traditional, pre-modern, pre-rationalistic modes of thought. Dugin's relativist approach is integral to the entire project of the "fourth political theory", since it is the philosophical basis for the idea of an ethno-pluralistic, multipolar world.

It may be that Dugin subscribes to the idea that in order for the biological concept of race to be meaningful, that is, in order for it to be possible to categorise individuals as belonging to a certain race, there must exist a racially pure individual who could embody a standard of comparison, an ideal norm. Since on a genetic level, there are arguably no such individuals, the concept of race is supposedly deprived of its scientific foundation and revealed to have only a social meaning.

Since Dugin views race as a construct, he can freely manipulate and extend the concept of "racism" to include various forms of discrimination that are not normally included under this term: cultural, civilisational,

technological, social, economic, and even glamour and fashion racism. The concept of "racism" is stretched and expanded (simply becoming synonymous with discrimination on the basis of norms that are subjective or relative) to the point that almost anyone can claim to be the victim of it. Defining racism as "any attempt to raise a subjective assessment to the status of a theory", he can claim that not only nazism and fascism, but also communism and liberalism are racist, since they posit a certain political subject as normative (the proletariat or the enlightened, bourgeois individual). There are indubitably racist elements in the writings of Marx. He viewed colonialism favourably, as a means of modernising and industrialising non-European nations, which was a necessary pre-condition for the final transition to communism. He was also convinced that some races were doomed to perish, since they were inherently incapable of surviving the inevitable historical progression to communism.

Dugin also turns anti-racism against modernity and progressivism. It is "racist", for example, to judge black African or middle eastern immigrants negatively for their inability to adapt to a modern, technologically advanced Western societies. In fact, the traditional views of Arabs and Africans with regard to women, homosexuality, the raising of children - as well as their rejection of evolution and religious views - is viewed by Dugin as, if anything, a sign of their spiritual superiority. Moreover, he sees the idea of progress itself as inherently racist, since it implies that modern society (which means Western society) is normative and superior to non-Western, traditional societies. The latter, he says, should not be regarded as stuck in archaic social forms because they lack creativity or the ability to build civilisations. On the contrary, it is because they are more spiritual and have conserved tradition better than the white race.

From the perspective of the modern West, all societies are inherently striving towards the normative type of Western modern society, but have simply not yet succeeded in achieving it. Rightists explain this failure as the proof of the racial inferiority of non-Western populations, while leftists explain it as the consequence of colonial exploitation and western imperialism. Both share the implicit premise that Western modernity represents the most advanced and desirable form of society. It is certainly true that in Western societies, "modern" tends to be a positively charged term. It is more or less synonymous with dynamic, youthful, enlightened and "open-minded". It is the anthropological norm, in the sense that those who either reject it or fail in some way to live up to it are judged negatively as being backwards, stupid, socially unpresentable, etc. This is undoubtedly a social - and consequently also political - disadvantage for conservatives of all types, one that they share with non-Western immigrants in Western societies. Dugin concludes from this that conservatives should ally themselves with immigrants, especially Muslim immigrants, against the liberal, white establishment (NOT the Jewish establishment - Dugin doesn't believe that Jews are responsible for Western decadence, he believes that Western "decadence" is simply the full manifestation of the essence of the West and the wicked nature of the white race).

However much even the most "progressive" Westerners may try to rid themselves of racism and racist exclusion, in a mechanism that psychoanalysts call "the return of the repressed", it keeps sneaking back in through the back door, taking on new, unconscious forms, so that, as Dugin correctly observes, even political correctness itself is "transformed into a totalitarian discipline of political, purely racist exclusions." Not only

white “racists” but religious conservatives and nationalists are subjected - with complete impunity - to forms of social exclusion, aggression, openly exhibited contempt, bullying, physical and psychological violence that are clearly an acting out of precisely those patterns of behaviour that in all other contexts are denounced as “racist”. These groups, which are often made up of the “underdogs” of white society, the socially and economically most vulnerable groups, including the working class, the unemployed, inhabitants of rural areas and pensioners, are routinely spat upon by the establishment, its journalists and its “intellectuals” as culturally, morally, intellectually, and even biologically deficient (“white trash”, “inbred”, and so on).

Dugin’s mania with denouncing racism looks suspiciously like an intentional parody of contemporary political correctness, which sees discriminating norms everywhere, and it is possible that while accepting the postmodern deconstruction of the concept of race, he intends to turn it into a deconstruction of the term “racism” itself, extending the term ad absurdum, to the point of emptying it of meaning and turning it against itself. Rather than attempting, the way most conservatives do, to resist postmodern relativism by upholding certain absolute moral norms, the authority of the western tradition and universal, objective standards of rationality, his strategy appears to be to overcome the last residues of modern ideological presuppositions by pushing them to their extreme, postmodern conclusions.

However, in “The Fourth Political Theory, Dugin condemns racism, and above all, German national socialism, not only on epistemological grounds, but also on moral grounds. Dugin's condemnation of the moral consequences racism is simply taken as axiomatic and not subjected to any philosophical criticism. It is not clear on what moral basis this condemnation of Western racism is compatible with absolute cultural relativism, the denial that there is any universal point of view from which normative judgments about other cultures could be made (including moral judgments). Are slavery and genocide only morally reprehensible when committed by modern Westerners, but not when committed by other groups? Dugin apparently thinks so, as is shown by the following statement he has made on Facebook about the enslavement and exploitation (as food!) of black Africans by other black Africans:

“There are African tribes in West-Atlantic shore who breed human slaves to eat them. I find it perfectly reasonable and fully responsible. If we kill animals by our hands, contemplate them suffering and dying, cut off their skin and separate bones, touching their inner organs -- or at least if we vividly imagine that act each time when we eat our meal, we are completely sane and we could proceed eventually applying - in wars -- the same attitude toward human. In the war it is essential to take responsibility of act of killing. The very similar responsibility is connected with the act of eating animal food. But animal signifies sentient, that presupposes suffering. Let us do it with full responsibility -- eating as well as fighting, in one word -- the responsibility of killing. Or abstain. It is free choice.”

We may assume that this is a sincere statement and not simply a banal attempt at “shocking the bourgeois”. It is completely consistent with Dugin's position of cultural relativism (the claim that all normative statements

about other cultures must be suspended, since there are no universal norms on the basis of which such statements could be made), although we may ask ourselves how this kind of moral relativism is philosophically consistent with his claim to be a Christian. Dugin is apparently criticising bourgeois moral hypocrisy, that is, the failure to take responsibility for the killing and exploitation that are the conditions that make bourgeois society possible. Dugin continues like this:

"To kill or not kill (to eat or not to eat): 'do what thou wilt' but never lie. (Continuing vegetarian/cannibal topic). What is good or bad depends on the set of the values accepted in the society. We live in one society the other people live in other. Every society kills, murders and commits the acts of violence - on the human beings or animals. But some societies recognize that and embed the death, killing and violence in their sacred concepts. The other societies, making just the same or worse hypocritically, deny that, appealing to non-violence, tolerance and promoting peace via murder and war. So I don't judge the violence in itself that depends on the culture - some cultures sacralize it some not - but each human group commits the same acts - kill, torture and eat. So I have only pointed out that it is the fact. The peoples who do it consciously are more civilized and cultivated, more honest and spiritually developed, less infantile and more grown up than those who commit the same act without noticing it or denying its cannibal nature. The world is build on the act of killing (and eating) - God - Man - beast. That is the sense of priesthood. The priest is primordial killer. So existence is painful. We must accept it as it is. We cause pain, we feel pain. It is quite normal situation. The cannibalism is not 'disgusting exception' and 'horrible sign of moral depravity'. In some way it is natural. Indian tradition affirms that 'kshatriya eat vaishyas'. Vedic hymns are full of the eating (killing, devouring) metaphors. I only try to stress that we are responsible of what we eat, of whom we kill and destroy. The African and Oceanian tribes give us example that I find beautiful and pure."

Given that he accepts moral relativism, it is not clear how Dugin can consistently condemn the national socialist extermination and enslavement of Slavs or Jews, or, for that matter, the enslavement and genocide of other populations by European colonists - none of which is by any means historically unique to Western Europeans (cf., for example, the Old Testament). What moral universal standard is he referring to? The ideology of universal human rights? Probably not. Christian morality, which he refuses to apply to West African cannibals and slave traders? It is also not clear how he can accuse racists of inconsistency, since not all aggressive racial supremacists are inconsistent or hypocritical about their intentions. Finally, it is not clear at all how Dugin can without hypocrisy condemn national socialism from a moral standpoint while at the same time rehabilitating figures like Stalin and Pol Pot as "national communists".

Although Dugin views "racism" as a typically Western "disease", it is not particularly difficult to find examples of it among non-Western and traditional or archaic societies, especially if we define "racism" as "viewing one's own ethnic group as normative". This is particularly true of tribal societies, where the name of the tribe will often simply be the word for "humanity", and members of other tribes are viewed as more or less non-human or sub-human. For example:



"An instructive case is that of the Yanoama of the Amazon basin, who not only call themselves 'humanity' (the meaning of their name) and all others 'lesser subhuman beings' (nabä) but carry the process still further: members of of one Yanoama village habitually accentuate the minor differences of dialect (or the like) that separates them from residents of other villages; then they deride the others for being less than fully Yanoama, which is to say, somewhat subhuman."

[Bruce Lincoln, "Death, War and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice", p. 142]

Moreover, he makes no distinction between the the recognition of race as a reality and racism in the sense of racial supremacism. An example of imperialist racism (white supremacism) would be the following statement by Winston Churchill from 1937:

"I do not agree that the dog in a manger has the final right to the manger even though he may have lain there for a very long time. I do not admit that right. I do not admit for instance, that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race, a more worldly wise race to put it that way, has come in and taken their place."

The vast majority of American "white nationalists" or European ethno-nationalists today are, however, far less "racist" or "white supremacist" than Winston Churchill. Even those who do believe that the white race is innately superior to other races, as opposed to merely recognising the reality of racial specificity, do not usually see this as being a moral justification of the enslavement or genocide of other races. For the most part, contemporary racials merely assert the right to racial separatism and the right of each race to build a society adequate to itself and to cultivate its unique characteristics and potentialities.

As for the historical validity of Dugin's interpretation of national socialism as a project of world domination (the creation of a "planetary Reich" analogous to world communism or global liberalism), it is debatable to say the least. Certainly the pursuit of world domination was not a universally accepted idea among national socialists, as this statement by Léon Degrelle demonstrates:

"German racialism has been deliberately distorted. It never was anti-"other -race" racialism. It was a pro-German racialism. It was concerned with making the German race strong and healthy in every way. Hitler was not interested in having millions of degenerates, if it was his power not to have them. Today one finds rampant alcohol and drug addiction everywhere. Hitler cared that the German families be healthy, cared that they raise healthy children for the renewal of a healthy nation. German racialism meant re-discovering the creative values of their own race, re-discovering their culture. It was a search for excellence, a noble ideal. National Socialist

racialism was not against the other races, it was for its own race. It aimed at defending and improving its race, and wished that all other races did the same for themselves.”

The claim that there is no biological basis for the concept of race, or that it is not useful in explaining contemporary reality, is of course patently false. But Dugin follows postmodern thinkers like Foucault and Althusser in arguing that not only race, but all political subjects are constructs. Race is a product of society, rather than society a product of race. Man, he argues, exists as a subject only within the political realm. “What man is, is not derived from himself as an individual, but from politics. It is politics that defines the man. It is the political system that gives us our shape. Moreover, the political system has an intellectual and conceptual power, as well as transformative potential without limitations [169].” In other words, the subject does not create itself, nor is it a natural given like race or the individual. The subject is a construct, existing only within a political system.

It follows that ultimately, there is no master subject who creates or exercises conspiratorial control over the system. On the contrary: subjects exist only as functions, produced by subjectless political structures. As the political system changes, shifting from one historical paradigm to another - from traditional society to modern society, for example - it constructs the normative type of subjectivity it requires to function. “[T]he political concept of man is the concept of man as such, which is installed in us by the state or the political system. The political man is a particular means of correlating man with this state and political system. [...] We believe we are *causa sui*, generated within ourselves, and only then do we find ourselves within the sphere of politics. In fact, it is politics that constitutes us. [...] Man’s anthropological structure shifts when one political system changes to another.” [169]. In other words, the subject cannot bring about a political paradigm shift on its own - it is the new paradigm that will call a new subject into being through a process of “interpellation”. The study of the anthropological shift from the type of man belonging to traditional society to the type of man belonging to modern society leads to the relativisation not only of modern man, but of modern rationality as such. This relativisation of modernity is “postmodernity”. The modern idea of progress towards a humanity unified on the basis of universal Reason is shown to be an illusion, and this implies that traditional societies are placed on the same level as modern society.

In a nutshell, the argument is as follows: the subject cannot radically break through the system (carry out a revolution or “paradigm shift”) and go beyond it if it is itself a product of the system, only existing within the limits of that system. This was why class, race, and the individual, all of which are subjects constituted and defined within the horizon of modernity, failed to overcome the crisis and impasses of modernity. In other words, the subject would have to be grounded in a kind of Archimedean point outside of the political system, in order to have the leverage needed for any radical political agency. There would have to be a “radical subject”, and for Dugin the “radical subject” can only be chaos. Chaos is freedom beyond its capture within the limits of the bourgeois, humanist conception of the individual. The shattering of the liberal individual is not the negation of freedom, but the revelation of the essence of freedom as anarchic, sovereign chaos.

The political subject acts within the realm of politics. Ideologically, however, it must be founded in a realm prior to and beyond the political. In other words, the subject of politics must transcend the sphere of politics in order to be able to master, define, and found it. For example, liberal ideology posits the existence of the individual prior to the existence of the social order, in order to found the political order on the individual and its universal, natural rights. Analogously, national socialists view race as a biological given existing prior to and beyond the political, and the state as possessing meaning only insofar as it is an instrument through which a race is protected, preserved and its potentialities are actualised and enhanced. This means that for national socialists, race transcends the political realm, subordinating it to itself. The political consciousness they strive to awaken others to is racial self-consciousness, much as Marxists attempt to awaken the proletariat to class consciousness. For Marxists, the means of production transcend the political realm, forming its material basis and driving force. A class constitutes itself as a political subject by taking control of the means of production.

"The definition of a historical subject is the fundamental basis for political ideology in general, and defines its structure" (4PT, p. 38).

For example: for nationalism, the real subjects of history are nations, viewed as a sort of supra-individuals with a will and a destiny of their own. History is the history of nations. Identity is primarily national, and the friend/enemy distinction (which is constitutive for the political, as Carl Schmitt has shown) goes along national lines. For racism, on the other hand, the true subjects of history are the various races, locked in a Darwinian struggle for life. This view of history is determined by the modern concepts of biological evolution and progress. Identity is primarily racial, and the friend/enemy distinction goes along racial lines. For Marxism, the subjects of history are classes, again viewed as forms of collective subjectivity, and consequently, the whole of history was interpreted as the history of class struggle. Identity is class identity, and the friend/enemy distinction goes along class lines.

The political subject is also an historical subject. This means that each modern political ideology corresponds to a "grand narrative" - an over-arching interpretation - of history. History as a whole is viewed as created through the agency of a certain historical subject. It then becomes obvious that political ideologies are secular substitutes for a theological interpretation of history, and that the historical subjects posited by them are substitutes for divine Providence as the transcendent subject of history. As Carl Schmitt demonstrated, all the fundamental concepts of politics are secularised theological concepts.

The place of the political subject - the vacuum left when God withdraws from the world and history - is a site of contestation between the various modern political ideologies. Each of them fought to occupy that vacant place with their own concept of the political subject. Each of them claimed to master the destructive and creative forces liberated by modernity, bringing modernity to its full actualisation. Communism saw itself as the final, inevitable and culminating stage of modernity, for which industrial capitalism had only paved the way. Liberalism views the progressive liberation of the individual, along with the processes of secularisation, modernisation and globalisation, as an historical necessity. Fascism saw itself as an avant-garde, revolutionary movement, dismissed liberal, bourgeois democracy as an outdated residue of the nineteenth century, and

claimed that the organic state was the only adequate form through which the masses could be mobilised in modern societies. Both Italian fascism and German national socialism modernised and revolutionised their respective nations, and this contributed to their political success. Early fascism was influenced by the avant-garde modernism of futurism, which called for the nihilistic destruction of the past and unconditionally worshipped modern technology and "progress".

(This lead Evola to reject futurism as a form of "Americanism". Marinetti retorted that he had as little in common with Evola as with "an Eskimo". Bizarrely - for someone who claims to be a traditionalist - Dugin views futurism as one of the admirable elements of early fascism that he wishes to recuperate.)

Each of these political systems, then, claimed that it was the most appropriate form for modern, technologically advanced society. This form corresponded to a certain figure or human type, an embodiment of a certain political project, the normative "man of the future": whether homo sovieticus, the new fascist man, the racially purified Aryan superman, or the enlightened, bourgeois individual. In other words, each of these ideologies or "political theories" posited a normative subject as the basis of its political vision and its interpretation of history. The transition into fully realised modernity was not only a political revolution, but also an anthropological revolution, the creation of a "new man".

According to Dugin, in the crisis of the end of modernity, not only race and class, but also the nation-state ceases to be an authentic political subject, even though he recognises that the will to preserve national sovereignty is, in the current situation, a natural locus of resistance to globalism. The de-sovereignisation of the nation is, philosophically speaking, its de-subjectivisation. However, Dugin sees this de-sovereignisation/de-subjectivisation as inevitable, even inherent in the nature of the nation itself. He fully accepts the postmodern idea that the nation is an artificial, ideological and political construct, an "imagined community" created as a means of unifying fragmented, modern societies. The nation is, in his view, merely a simulacrum, an artificial substitute for the lost totality of traditional society (presumably, he views race similarly, as being a modern simulacrum of the "ethnos"). Historically, its emergence corresponds to the precise moment when traditional society enters into crisis. It is a compromise, a transitional form, a ruse. Moreover, he views the function of the nation as a device for facilitating the transition from pre-modern, traditional society to fully modern, liberal, civil society. As a result, it cannot constitute an enduring force of resistance to liberal globalisation. He views the nation as a dispositive of power geared to producing a certain standardised, normative type of political subject: the bourgeois individual (citizen). In doing so, it destroys regional, organic, ethnic communities (for example, through the suppression of regional dialects in Italy and France, and the imposition of a standardised national language) as well as liquidating the last residues of traditional elites (the aristocracy). Thus, the concept of "ethno-nationalism" is, in his view, ultimately an absolute contradiction in terms: the nation is inherently "ethnocidal". It destroys the ethnos and replaces it with a "demos". Nationalism, according to Dugin, must be condemned not just because it has been the cause of so many wars, but because the nation itself is inherently violent - violent in the sense that it is an arbitrary construct without any sacred, transcendent basis. Its violence is the violence of modernity itself. (Certainly, this is true of many nations, perhaps most notably of the nation of Israel, which is an entirely modern, artificial construction, as is perhaps the idea that Jews are a

unified, homogenous race or ethnic group.) Nothing, however, so far indicates that the idea of Eurasian empire dominated by Russia would be less artificial, violent or “ethnocidal”.

(The new European post-war order projected by the dominant faction of the Waffen SS was not based on the nation-state, but on a pan-European federation of culturally autonomous regions. Dugin fails to mention this fact, but his characterisation of National Socialism is tendentious.)

As for the fascist concept of the organic state, based on Hegel's philosophy of the state, Dugin does not discuss his reasons for rejecting it as a credible candidate for the political subject. In general, Dugin simply takes the defeat of both the second and third political theories as axiomatic, without providing much in the way of substantial argument for this. In his view, modernity has been fully actualised in liberal society, and consequently, the ideological contest of modernity is over. This view is more credible with regard to communism than with regard to fascism. The death of communism was, as Dominique Venner has written, an “inglorious demise”. Its collapse was due to its own bureaucratic inertia and failure to manage economic development. Fascism and national socialism, on the other hand, were spectacularly successful as political experiments, and, perhaps for this very reason, had to be militarily destroyed by their international rivals. Dugin clearly views the defeat of national socialist Germany as a consequence of its anti-Russian and anti-communist policies. Since Dugin views both of these policies as connected with the infection of national socialism by Atlanticism and Anglo-Saxon, biological racism, he views the defeat of the third position as a consequence of ideological errors, and not simply as an historical contingency. Not only was Nazi Nordicism a vulgar, materialist misinterpretation of the traditional doctrine of the north as the pole of tradition, national socialism was anti-communist and anti-Slavic because it was anti-Eastern, that is, pro-Western (modern). Today, according to Eurasianists (who in this respect are inheritors of national bolshevism), European nationalists are repeating the disastrous errors of the German national socialists when they again oppose “the East” in the form of Islamisation. Generally, Eurasianists try to downplay the idea of a “clash of civilisations” or any claim that there is a sharp opposition between Islam and European civilisation. They accuse nationalists who view Islam as incompatible with European values of confusing “Europe” with “the West”. Any interpretation of European history that sees enlightenment values as rooted in the European tradition itself - in classical Greece, for example - is accused of trying to legitimate “the West” by inventing historical precedents and falsifying the true European tradition, which is rooted in Eurasia and not at all opposed to Islam.

Liberalism has triumphed because it can legitimately lay claim to being the most successful actualisation of the potentialities of modernity. Liberalism did indeed succeed in modernising the West to a much greater degree than communism succeeded in modernising the countries of the Eastern bloc, so much so that “the West”, and particularly the United States, is today more or less synonymous with modernity. In the decades after the second world war, capitalism, using economic means, modernised Western European societies to a degree undreamed of by fascism, making the third position ideologies seem archaic and obsolete by comparison.

It is possible that Dugin follows Heidegger in viewing nationalism as an "anthropologism" (cf. "Letter on Humanism"). What Heidegger means by this is that nationalism, like Marxism, places man, rather than Being, at the centre of history. Nationalism is a "subjectivism", in the sense that it views man as the subject of history. In this sense, nationalism is indeed a modern phenomenon, since modernity, for Heidegger, is essentially an epoch in the history of metaphysics dominated by the philosophy of the subject. It begins with Descartes' cogito: with the rational subject as the secure foundation of philosophy and science. Descartes identifies the subject with reason (ratio). This became the metaphysical foundation for the Enlightenment and its anthropology.

Why does Dugin give Heidegger's concept of "Dasein" the pivotal role in the "fourth political theory"? Heidegger elaborated his analysis of Dasein as an attempt to overcome the abstractions of the metaphysical concept of the subject. Hence, his "analytic of Dasein" offers the possibility of going beyond the modern political ideologies based on various interpretations of the subject. Dasein is beyond, or prior to, the subject-object split. Dasein is not the rational subject as the abstract basis of the concept of universal man. Dasein is the historical, spatio-temporal structure of concrete existence. The subject is outside of the world, relating to the world as a system of objects. Dasein is always already IN the world, involved in it, struggling within it. The world, as Heidegger uses the term, is a totality of relations of meaning. Each thing refers to other things in an endless, circular web of relations. Dasein's relation to things is one of understanding and interpretation, not (primarily) one of objectification.

The subject is reason, that is, it is defined by its relation to an ultimate cause and foundation (Grund). Dasein is defined by its relation to finitude, death and the abyss (Ab-grund). However, all this means that it is not clear how Dasein, which according to Heidegger is precisely NOT the subject, can be called "the subject" of the fourth political theory. Dasein is not a subject that arbitrarily imposes its will, creates itself from nothing or freely makes history. Instead, it is part of a cosmic process that transcends man and his agency. Man does not decide the history of Being. Heidegger is not interested in re-elaborating or modifying the concept of the subject, nor is he interested in returning man to "god and tradition" in the sense of metaphysical foundations, but is trying to overcome metaphysics itself, that is, all thinking in terms of the Being of beings as a "foundation" (Grund). This also means that Heidegger is far from the conceptions of "traditionalism".

If Dugin invokes Heidegger and the analytic of Dasein, we must assume that behind the critique of liberalism and the West, he is attempting a critique of modernity as such (identified with the West). Heidegger's critique of modernity is linked to an attempt to overcome the philosophy of the subject. In Heidegger's view, modernity, when the humanitarian masks of the Enlightenment fall off, is technological nihilism, and this nihilism is the fatal consequence of Western metaphysics. Western metaphysics, however, is the basis of Western civilisation as a whole.

Heidegger's critique is not simply political. He is criticising Bolshevism, liberalism (which paved the way for Bolshevism) and other modern ideologies for failing to grasp not only their own essence, but the essence of modernity itself: technological nihilism. The emancipation of the subject is not the purpose of technological development. It is the other way around - the emancipation of the the subject is a means through which technology emancipates itself. The last glimmers of transcendence are extinguished from the world so that technology can pursue, unobstructed and on a planetary scale, the endless, circular self-enhancement of its productive power, drawing everything into its vortex, with no ultimate goal other than power for its own sake. The West becomes "das Abendland", the evening-land, the realm of the darkening of the divine, the withdrawal of the gods. Technology as "Ge-stell" is not mastered by man (the subject), but reveals itself to be an impersonal destiny of Being itself. Man as a subject can never master technology, but as a subject is "subjected" by technology, to the extent that the essence of technology as Gestell constitutes man as a subject. Technological development has no intrinsic, immanent limit, and no boundary can be arbitrarily set to it as long as thinking remains blocked within the horizon of the philosophy of the subject (humanism) and of technological calculation (the final deviation of the Western logos). But as modern technology reaches the full actualisation of its dominion, the subject that it once called into being enters into crisis, begins to "vanish". It is liquidated in a system of purely functional relations without centre, fixed norms or foundations. The essence of the subject reveals itself to be a kind of limit, which initially functioned as a necessary ground or condition, but now becomes only an obstacle to be overcome. For Heidegger, this crisis, this ultimate threshold of nihilism - brought about by technology itself - opens up the possibility of thinking the essence of man and Being in a much deeper dimension, beyond the subject. Instead of man as subject, Heidegger tries to think the historicity of Dasein. This is why the "inner truth" of national socialism for him meant the confrontation between modern technology and "historical man" (that is, not man as subject).

For Heidegger, Western modernity and materialism are not, as traditionalists claim, the consequence of a mysterious fall from the normal, traditional society of medieval Europe. On the contrary, he views the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern age more as a development than as a radical break with the traditional past. For Heidegger, medieval scholasticism, with its misinterpretation of the Greek logos as "ratio" and its onto-theological synthesis of Greek philosophy with Christianity, prepared the way for Descartes' rationalism. In a sense, Heidegger develops Nietzsche's idea that nihilism is not so much a break with Christianity, but a revelation of the nihilistic essence of Christianity. As a Christian and a traditionalist, however, Dugin consistently elides the anti-Christian aspect of Heidegger's thought, without, however, being able to articulate a critique of it. For Heidegger, as for the majority of the conservative revolutionaries, the origin of modernity is Christian, or rather, it lies in the "onto-theological" synthesis of Christianity and Greek metaphysics. It is the Christian conception of the "sovereignty" of God with regard to the world as creation that is at the origin of the modern concept of the subject, just as the Christian notion of the free individual with a personal relation to God and the Christian concern with the salvation of the immortal soul of all individuals is the origin of modern mass individualism. It is God as the "highest being" - both *causa sui* and *causa prima*, the first cause, sovereign over all other beings and the "maker" of the world - that is at the origin of the sovereign subject whose relation to things is one of instrumental manipulation and objectification. Modern secular humanism is onto-theological: it has its origin not in Greek thought, but in Christianity and the Christian interpretation of Greek thought.

In any case, following Heidegger, we may agree that race, insofar as it is conceived as a purely human, biological characteristic, is insufficient as a political subject, or rather, that it is too narrowly anthropological, and must be integrated into a deeper conception. This is not the same as liquidating the concept of race completely. It does mean the rejection of certain extreme forms of racism, where the biological concept of race plays an analogous reductive role to the Marxist concept of a material base that determines the ideological superstructure (culture, mentality etc.) of a society.

Man is not the unconditioned, self-creating subject of modern metaphysics. Human existence is conditioned and finite - men are, as Jünger wrote, "sons of the earth". Race is one of the many earthly conditions of man's existence. An historical world is not an unconditioned, arbitrary construct ex nihilo. There is, in Heidegger's terms, a struggle between world and earth - the world, an articulated, historical space of possibilities and decisions, and the conditions set by the un-objectified, elemental forces of the earth, among them blood. Blood is given the meaning of a destiny in an historical world (this is not at all the same as claiming that it is an arbitrary historical and social construct). For Heidegger, the limits set by the biological potentialities of human beings are not arbitrary historical creations - what is historical is the particular figure or constellation of relations that gives them meaning.

We can also note that the statistical concept of race referred to by race realists today is very different from national socialist racial theories, which were based on the idea of racial purity, and are, in the form in which they are available today, are not on their own sufficient to non-reductively account for the specificity of our or other civilisations or cultures. The differences between the mentality of Americans of European descent, on the one hand, and the mentality of Europeans, on the other, underscores this clearly. Intuitively, however, we understand that race plays a role in shaping the general character of civilisations, and that genetic research will confirm this intuition more and more in the future.

Dugin views the Marxist concept of class as useful and "very interesting" as a tool for the ideological critique of the mystifications of bourgeois-liberal society. However, he views the materialism of Marxism as reductive, and recognises that class today is no longer a credible candidate for political subjectivity (i. e., agency), since the class structure of society has been largely dissolved (presumably as the result of the atomisation and bourgeoisification of society as a whole, as well as technological developments). He also recognises that ethnic conflict often lies behind class conflict, instead of the other way around. One wonders why Dugin cannot, in the same spirit, acknowledge that the concept of race also is scientifically legitimate and heuristically useful, while rejecting an overly reductive application of the concept. In my view, this has to do with the fact that he is an ideologist rather than an authentic thinker. Eurasianism is an ideology tailor-made to suit contemporary Russia's geopolitical ambitions. Russia is a multi-cultural, multi-racial empire, and Russian identity is, since "the great patriotic war" against Germany, deeply anti-fascist.

Race, "Ethnos" and "The Fourth Political Theory" - Part 2

By Giuliano Adriano Malvicini



Since liberalism, as an ideology founded on the rights of the individual, calls for "the liberation from all forms of collective identity in general, (and is therefore) entirely incompatible with the ethnos and ethnocentrism, and is an expression of a systematic theoretical and technological ethnocide", "ethnocentrism" and the positive affirmation of "ethnic" identity are viewed by Dugin as a potential base for resistance to liberalism. This is why he argues that "ethnocentrism" can be viewed as a positive component of national socialism, if it is neutralised by purging it of any racial or national connotations. Dugin's notion of "ethnos" has nothing to do with race - he makes it very clear that it is a purely cultural, linguistic and sociological concept with no biological basis whatsoever. As we shall see, Dugin's concept of "ethnocentrism", which he says is derived from the German sociologist Wilhelm Mühlman (who, however, was a convinced racist and national socialist), differs from the commonly accepted meaning of this term. As for the concept of the "ethnos" itself, in "The Fourth Political Theory" he only touches upon it in passing, defining it as "a community of language, religious belief, daily life, and the sharing of resources and goals". However, he develops it much more fully in a lecture series on "ethno-sociology" (a term that means the same as cultural or social anthropology, ethnology or structural anthropology), which can be viewed on Youtube.

The first part of Dugin's course is a very summary overview of different national schools of social anthropology, which he sees as an important peripheral scientific discipline that has the potential to challenge and subvert Western cultural hegemony (i. e., Western "racism"). Those familiar with the work of Kevin McDonald and his book "The Culture of Critique" will be struck by Dugin's very positive evaluation of figures like the Jewish-American anthropologist Franz Boas, who is famous for having tried to debunk the concept of race.

Dugin is especially interested in the French school of structural anthropology, founded by the Jewish-French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who was a student of the Jewish-Russian linguist Roman Jakobson. This connection is important to Dugin, since Jakobson was not only one of the founders of the structuralist school in linguistics, but also a Eurasianist. Structuralist anthropology is also an important link between the study of pre-modern forms of rationality and poststructuralist thought, and between "holistic" conservative thought and postmodern relativism. The structuralist method - viewing a culture as a system of synchronic relations - is assimilated by Dugin to the holistic, organic view of society characteristic of conservative thinkers. Dugin also says that his concept of "ethnos" based on the work of the Russian ethnologist Sergey Shirokogorov, who studied archaic tribes living on the Siberian tundra.

Shirokogorov's work also functions as a link between the concept of "ethnos" and the political ideology of Eurasianism.

Dugin has proposed the "ethnos" and "civilisation" as possible subjects of the "fourth political theory". For Dugin, the "ethnos", and not the individual, is the social "atom" (the simplest, most basic form of social being). The "ethnos" is only fully embodied by primitive hunter-gatherer societies and neolithic agrarian societies. The

ethnos, again, is not a racial group. The essence of the "ethnos", as Dugin defines this term, is not a biological fact, but a social, symbolic and linguistic structure. He is always careful to emphasise that the ethnos is a cultural phenomenon, not defined by blood relations or race. It is similar to the phenomenological concept of a pre-logical "life world" (Lebenswelt). The "life world" is pre-logical in the sense that it is the shared horizon of understanding of a community. The notion of life world allows Dugin to link the concept of "ethnos" to Heidegger's concept of Dasein as being-in-the-world. This is important because Dasein is supposed to be the "subject" of the fourth political theory. The ethnos, then, is apparently a specific type of Dasein.

Although the notion of ethnos is only fully applicable to archaic societies, it continues to exist as a residual stratum in modern societies, in the form of the timeless symbols and archetypes of the collective unconscious. In modern society, the ethnic life-world has disintegrated and society is increasingly transformed into an economic system governed by instrumental, technological rationality. By taking the ethnos as a paradigm of interpretation, it is set up as the "normal" type of society, and modern society is viewed as a deviation from or distortion of this original standard. The methods of social anthropology, developed specifically for the study of primitive societies, can then be used as a critical tool in the interpretation of modern societies - something already attempted by semioticians like Roland Barthes and Jean Baudrillard. The non-individualist, non-utilitarian gift economies of primitive societies, based on symbolic exchange and honour, are presented as a possible basis for an economic system that could be an alternative to modern liberal-capitalist economies.

The ethnos itself cannot be properly understood using historical methods. One of the characteristics of archaic, primitive societies is that they are ahistorical, or prehistorical. They lack written records. They live in mythical time rather than historical time - mythical time in Mircea Eliade's sense, the time of the eternal return of the same. The ethnos (primitive society) is not an historical community but a social structure that reproduces itself indefinitely.

This means that it must be studied using the methods of structuralism, which were initially developed within the field of linguistics but later applied to the social sciences. Structuralists view primitive societies as systems of oppositions that must be studied holistically and synchronically, like a language. They cannot be adequately interpreted in causal terms, whether as the result of biological evolution (Dugin rejects evolutionary interpretations of culture as tainted by the "racist", modern doctrine of progress) or as arising from historical processes. The ethnos is simply a phenomenological given. Although it frequently seems to be a purely theoretical, artificial and utopian construct, Dugin insists that it is empirically validated by ethnological studies of archaic societies.

Instead of historical terms, the ethnos must be interpreted in spatial (synchronic) terms. The spatial structure of the ethnos, however, is first of all an expression of the specific landscape in which it dwells. The landscape should not be understood in simply material or naturalistic terms. The landscape of the ethnos is a sacred landscape. It is not just the natural environment of a tribal group, but the symbolic, mythical space into which

the natural environment is inscribed. The concept of "nature", even in its anti-modern, romantic form, already presupposes man's separation and alienation from the cosmos as a primordial whole. The world of naive, primitive man, of the ethnos, is a whole prior to conceptual oppositions like artificial and natural, subject and object, symbolic and the real, language and things, thought and experience, the individual and society (and in this sense, it shares characteristics with the postmodern world, in which the boundaries between the virtual and the real, the natural and the technological are erased).

What Heidegger calls "a world" is a space of possibilities rather than a collection of objects observed from the outside. There is no independently existing, transcendental subject that subsequently crosses over into the world, no objective world that confronts a detached, abstract subject. Being-in-the-world comes first, and the subject and its "sense-data" are only abstracted out of it by philosophers. The opposition of subject and object conceals the primordial unity of being-in-the-world, which is irreducible to the subject-object relation. Concrete being-in-the-world is studied phenomenologically, uncovering its temporal and spatial structure.

The fundamental polarity of the ethnos is not that between the subject and object, but between the sacred and the profane. The polarity between the sacred and the profane corresponds to the polarity between the exceptional and the normal. The profane is the normal, and the sacred is a crisis in the normal course of events - an exception that suspends the oppositions that structure social reality, transcending them and tracing their limits. The sacred is both exceptional and foundational, both dangerous and salvific ("Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst/Das Rettende auch"). It is the outer limit of the world, but also the dark core of things. The sacred marks the uncrossable limits of communal life - uncrossable insofar as the one who crosses them, ceases to be part of the community, or becomes other (for example, by undergoing initiation). The sacred is a paradigm common to nature and society, designating the primordial totality that transcends them and includes them. The sacred is normative in the sense that it is a limit that unites and gathers all the separate regions of the world, determining their "measures". The dimension of the sacred belongs to the structure of Being itself, and can therefore never be entirely eliminated, even in the most secularised of modern societies: it can only be displaced and distorted.

The space of the ethnos is structured by the relation between a sacred centre (pole) and a profane margin. Here, Dugin draws on Mircea Eliade's work on the symbolism of the centre. According to Eliade, sacred space is founded and ordered from out of a central point marked by a "hierophany": a revelation of the sacred. The centre is symbolically designated by the erection of an axis mundi, an axis that connects the various dimensions or regions of the cosmos. Space, then, is not homogenous, but differentiated by a central, vertical sacred axis or core and a profane, horizontal periphery or margin. Traditional cosmogonies frequently describe the cosmos as growing out of a central point. As Eliade defines it, the centre is any point at which a vertical movement between different ontological planes or cosmic regions - between profane and sacred space, between heaven and earth, gods and mortals, the realm of the living and of the dead - can occur. It is the world-pillar, the sacred mountain - Yggdrasil, Olympus, Meru, Irminsul. Climbing a mountain, a cosmic tree or pillar is a passage from one ontological plane to another. Yggdrasil connects the nine worlds to each other and makes it possible to travel between them. The sacred centre is also the spinal column of the yogi, the Vedic sacrificial pole, a lingam,

or a sacred tree. It is the gathering symbol of the Christian cross. It is the altar upon which the redemptive sacrificial death of Christ is re-enacted, and churches and temples are oriented around the centrality of the altar. The axis is the totem pole, the "master signifier" that gathers the tribe around itself. A cornerstone or the central column of a building is another embodiment of the sacred centre. The axis unites within itself the symbolism of transcendence and of foundation. It is the column that supports the "house of Being". The centre makes it possible for man to dwell in the world (the English word "home" is a cognate of the Old Norse word heimr, "world"), it is the pole that gathers, unifies and orders a cosmos. According to Eliade, its "temporal" counterpart is the sun at its zenith - which for Nietzsche was a symbol of the revelation of the unity of Being and Becoming in eternal cosmic recurrence.

While modern society revolves around the pole of the "sacred" and inviolable individual, each ethnos is gathered around a sacred axis. The ethnos views itself as dwelling near the sacred centre of the world. It is the proximity to this point of origin, this source of power and pole of attraction that roots the ethnos in a landscape. It is not primarily defined by borders - by the exclusion of an "other", an enemy - but by the centripetal attraction of a pole of transcendence.

Each civilisation, while encompassing several ethne, is also organised around a pole, which presumably forms one of the poles of multipolarity. Dugin says that the symbol of Eurasianism, eight arrows radiating out from a central point, is a symbol of the ethno-centre. The radiating arrows are not only a symbol of Russian ambitions of imperialist expansion. They also symbolise the origin of Tradition in the centre of Eurasian heartland, and its subsequent diffusion throughout the rest of the world. Dugin claims that "excavations in Eastern Siberia and Mongolia prove that exactly here were the most ancient centres of civilization." Finally, in an added postmodern touch, the symbol of Eurasianism is also a symbol of chaos invented by the British science fiction and fantasy author Michael Moorcock in his 1970 novel "The Eternal Champion". This is presumably an allusion to Dugin's "chaotic logos", and perhaps also to "right-wing anarchism" and its conception of sovereignty.

Each ethnos is a "logos". As Heidegger famously noted, the Greek word logos (speech) is related to the verb legein, an agrarian term signifying "gathering", "harvesting" (the ethnos, remember, is a hunter-gatherer or archaic agrarian society). The logos gathers together everything that has been made distinct by being named, including the dead and the gods, into a single space or "place" (Ort). In this sense, language is the "house of Being". It is an ordering of space and time, inscribing the landscape and the cycle of the seasons into itself by means of a calendar, a map and a taxonomy. Space, time, man, and nature are gathered together in a single, permanent, identical figure: a world. Dugin identifies this figure with the ethnos, which strives to conserve and reproduce itself as a world, but not as a biological entity (although he does not make it clear why biological conservation of the race is not a necessary part of the conservation of the world of the ethnos). He also identifies the ethnos with a specific language.

Since each ethnos is a “logos” - in the sense of a structure of language, of thought, and of social relations - this becomes the basis for a kind of cultural and linguistic relativism. There is not just the one, universal Reason of the western Enlightenment. There are many different valid "rationalities" (although "reason", "rationality" and "logic" are already deviations from the original meaning of "logos"). The fourth political theory rejects the “epistemological hegemony” of the West. Dugin argues, for example, that sub-Saharan Africans must not be deemed inferior because they do not live up to the norms and standards of the modern West. The Western conceptions of Reason, enlightenment and “emancipation” are not the universal goal “humanity” is consciously or unconsciously striving towards, with ethnic and cultural differences viewed as mere particularistic obstacles to be overcome on the way. The dominance of the Western form of rationality tends to exclude all other forms of rationality and deny them legitimacy. Dugin, like other postmodernists, wants to relativise the Western logos as only one of many possible logoi, without any legitimate claim to a privileged status. The relationship between these logoi is non-hierarchical, anarchic and pluralistic. Insofar as a subject is a kind of rationality, there are many different types of subjects - not just the modern, Western, enlightened version of humanity, defined by Western rationality. In other words, Dugin reiterates the postmodern critiques of Western culture, all of which are familiar ad nauseam to anyone who has attended a Western university. The global political hegemony of the West is founded on the hegemony of Western reason. Western rationality (technological rationality) not only allowed western man to subjugate his natural environment, it allowed the West to subjugate the rest of the world. It forced other peoples to choose between adopting the Western model themselves, or remaining colonial subjects of the West.

According to the ideology of the Enlightenment, reason is universal, and is the defining characteristic of universal human nature, of man as animal rationale. Reason is what all human beings have in common, a common norm on the basis of which conflicts can be neutralised and mediated, and the world ultimately harmonised. This is the telos – the goal and end-point – of history, and the path towards it is progressive, universal enlightenment. When this goal and ideal end-point is reached, conflict, and hence politics in any real sense, will cease to exist. But some critics of the enlightenment have argued that reason cannot neutralise the struggle for power and the conflictual dimension of reality, and that reason is itself an instrument of power and domination. The only authentic freedom is an essentially political freedom that contains within itself the possibility of conflict - conflict that cannot be neutralised by any common norm or foundation in universal reason.

The focus, then, is not on universal reason gradually overcoming the dark demons and phantoms of myth and irrationality, and in the process, uniting humanity, but on the specific world of each ethnos, which is prior to the separation between reason and intuition, logos and myth. Each ethnos identifies itself with the world (the cosmos), or at least sees itself as the centre of the world, insofar as it believes itself to be dwelling in the proximity of the “sacred centre”. The ethnos is a society rooted in a mythical space-time, a sacred geography. The ethnos not only dwells within a space, it is itself a living space, but not in Haushofer’s sense of “Lebensraum”. It is “a space that lives”.

The sacred in itself is an abyss, a chaos. Outside of the cosmos of the ethnos, there is only a terrifying chaos, an abyss of nothingness, the residue of creation. It cannot be eliminated, only held at bay and circumscribed by a boundary. Chaos cannot manifest itself directly. It can only show itself by concealing itself, by taking on a paradoxical figure of form: by masking itself as a "nothingness that is". It seizes or takes possession of an individual, who then becomes its vessel and personification (as in the case of shamanic possession, or the totemic figure representing the tribe's founder). There, the nameless forces of the outside are socialised and can address the community, taking on the personae (the "masks") of demons, spirits or gods. Through this personification, the sacred becomes a "subject" that can engage in symbolic exchange with the community. The shaman or healer is the central figure of tribal or "ethnic" society, who communicates and mediates between the ethnos and the beyond - the sacred realm of the dead, demons or gods. The shaman is both a liminal and a "conservative" figure, a guardian who works to conserve the cosmic order, waging war on demons and malignant spirits of the chaotic outside. His or her work consists in dealing with the various crises that the ethnos and its members periodically go through. The shaman not only heals individuals in the tribe, but above all heals the tribe itself and the cosmos, making them whole, restoring the cosmic order founded on the sacred. He or she is able to pass from one ontological plane to another by climbing the axis mundi, the sacred pillar, mountain or world-tree.

Eliade believed that shamanism originated in Eurasia. It was a pre-historic vehicle through which elements of the primordial tradition were transmitted to pre-Columbian America and other areas. Eliade views the shaman as a kind of proto-sovereign, in the sense that he is able to magically bind and unbind. He occupies a "liminal" position - managing crises within the normal order of the tribe and cosmos, but doing so only insofar as he communicates with the dangerous, chaotic outside. He possesses traits similar to those that according to Carl Schmitt define sovereignty - the power to suspend the normative order, not in order to destroy it, but in order to save it from dissolution and chaos.

The shaman enacts the primordial, permanent struggle or strife, the activity and dynamism that underlies the static structure of the ethnos.

The dynamic of the ethnos is opposed to the new. It views all change as a crisis, as entropy, eroding the stability of the cosmos. The ethnos is inherently conservative and anti-historical, in the sense that its sole purpose is to maintain homeostasis, to work to maintain its identity with itself. Its main concern is self-reproduction. Again, this is not in the sense of the biological preservation and self-reproduction of the race. In reproducing itself, the ethnos ritually restores and maintains the order and equilibrium of the cosmos and the flow of its circular economy. Its existence is centred in the cycle of the seasons, of seeding and harvesting, child-birth and death. The time of the ethnos, then, is not linear and irreversible (historical), but recurrent, circular and reversible. Using Armin Mohler's terminology, we could also call the time-space of the ethnos a "sphere" ("Kugel"). It is a wholeness that has not yet been split into the dualisms of time and eternity, matter and spirit, man and nature, individual and society, etc. The individual is not seen as separate from the ethnos, and the ethnos is identified with the world. This world transcends and outlives the individual. The primary care of the individual is not self-preservation, but the preservation of the ethnos/world.

Since the time of the ethnos is the eternal return of the same, death itself is not an irreversible event. The souls of the ancestors return in their descendants. The individual as an historically unique, mortal being does not exist. Children are potentially destabilising, alien elements that threaten the cohesiveness of the tribe, but are assimilated through initiation. When they are initiated into adulthood, they become reincarnations or personifications of their ancestors. (Prior to initiation, children are viewed as both dangerous and sacred by many primitive tribal groups.) Individuality has no positive meaning for the ethnos. In this sense, the ethnos is the reverse of modern society, in which the individual defines itself in opposition to the community. Instead of the individual, it is the ethnos as a whole that is the normative unit, "the man". In other words, it could be viewed as a kind of "subject".

At this point, however, it becomes unclear how this can have anything to do with Dasein, since Dasein is defined precisely by its historicity, finitude and mortality. For Heidegger, men are, in their deepest and most fundamental essence, mortals. Dasein's mortality is not the consequence of modern Western man's loss of faith or nihilism. In a sense, the essence of man - Dasein - is finitude, and finitude is not simply a human characteristic, but part of the essence of Being itself. Dasein, as finitude, belongs to the structure of Being itself, so that the question of Dasein is a necessary step in approaching the question of Being. Heidegger elaborates his concept of Dasein not as a philosophical anthropology, but as a part of his ontological project. Dugin talks about Dasein, but detaches the term from the question of Being. In doing this, Dugin effectively empties the term of meaning. Nowhere does he show that he actually understands what Heidegger means by "Dasein", or what is at stake in Being and Time.

The forgetting of Being is not a human error - and much less the error only of Western humanity - but part of the essence of Being itself. The essence of nihilism is not a human error or something created by human beings at all. Moreover, only the complete nihilism that coincides with the end of Western metaphysics and the planetary dominion of modern technology opens up the possibility of the question of Being in Heidegger's sense. Contrary to what traditionalists believe, nihilism cannot be overcome through a return to metaphysics, since nihilism is itself the final actualisation of metaphysics. The essence of metaphysics is the movement of transcendence (Übersteigen). The history of metaphysics is the event of transcendence, the transcendence of beings by Being. It is in this sense that Heidegger defines metaphysics as "the history of Being". All metaphysical concepts are structured by the fundamental ontological difference between Being and beings, i. e., the transcendence of beings by Being, through which beings are gathered, grounded and held in suspense by the withdrawal of Being.

The historicity (Geschichtlichkeit) of Dasein is founded on the irreversible and unrepeatable event (Geschehnis) that Dasein itself is. Dasein is not only mortal, but also "natal" (gebürtig). Natality is the essence of historicity (Geschichtlichkeit). Birth is an "event" (Geschehnis) in the sense that ontologically, it is an absolute beginning, an absolute interruption or break with the past (even though ontically, it is of course a natural event, part of a continuous chain of causes and effects). Man has a history because man as Dasein is himself history.

Death, for Heidegger, is not simply a natural event, a consequence of the fact that our bodies are part of the natural world and conditioned by its cycles of growth and decline. On the contrary, man's mortality separates him (as Dasein) from the natural realm. It has the power to violently tear Dasein out of the automatism of inauthentic social relations, the commerce of everyday life and the impostures of false subjectivity. Heidegger calls this sleep-walking, inauthentic existence "das Man". Das Man is not responsible for its existence. Instead, it observes existence from the outside, like a kind of spectacle. Mortality is never "addressed to" das Man, but always concerns someone else. In a sense, "the subject" - abstract humanity - is das Man - a free-floating ego detached from concrete, historical, finite existence. The traumatic truth of being-towards-death, the crisis of existential anxiety, isolates Dasein and liberates it at the same time, but not in the sense in which the "subject" is free because it floats in an unconditioned, transcendent realm somewhere outside or beyond the objective world.

Finitude is for Heidegger not just a naturally given limit to freedom, power and life. The limits that isolate and liberate Dasein are not simply negative or privative, but positive and active - active in the sense of a power of overcoming. The limit transcends or overcomes what it limits. Dasein's "transcendence" is being-towards-death, not the transcendence of a subject suspended above concrete existence. The individuality of authentic Dasein is not the basis of the arbitrary freedom of irresponsible, hedonistic egoism. The finitude of Dasein is given meaning only as an historical responsibility. The authentic freedom of Dasein is not an unconditioned freedom from time and history, but is the essence of historicity (Geschichtlichkeit) itself as an event (Geschehnis). Through historical existence, Dasein's finitude becomes the source of a potential renewal and re-founding of the historical community it is born into. Insofar as Dasein's limit is active, it is a decision, and Dasein is summoned to affirm, take responsibility for and ground that decision in its projected being-as-a-whole.

Heidegger would view the historicity of primitive, tribal Dasein as only existing as something undeveloped or pre-conscious. Only Western man has a deeper experience of the fundamentally historical essence of Dasein as an event (Geschehnis), which corresponds to Being as an event (Ereignis). However, this experience has remained unthought and philosophically unelaborated, because thinking has remained trapped by the categories of metaphysics, subjectivism and Christian humanism. Dugin, however, attempts to relativise Heidegger's notion of Dasein, claiming that it only applies to Western Europeans. In doing so, however, Dugin shows himself to be more a postmodern relativist than a Heideggerian. By giving complete ontological priority to language, he renders the concept of Dasein effectively meaningless. For Heidegger, man does not exist as Dasein because he has a language, but has a language because he exists as Dasein. In other words, Dasein as an event (Geschehnis) is ontologically prior to language and social life. It follows that the existential structure of Dasein cannot itself be determined by the structure of language and society. Heidegger's position is in a sense absolutely opposed to that of social constructivism, which is merely a form of subjectivism, making reality - including man himself - entirely a creation of man. It goes without saying that it is also opposed to Marxism, which interprets humanity's emancipation as humanity's self-production.



Since the ethnos, according to Dugin, does not know irreversible, historical time - only cyclical time, the eternal return of the same - it is inherently opposed not only to everything new, but to all forms of accumulation. The ethnos ritually destroys (sacrifices) accumulated resources that could endanger its homeostasis and symbolic equilibrium. Not only a deficit, but an excess of production is viewed as dangerous and problematic. In this sense, its economy is anti-capitalist. It constantly interrupts the linear time of accumulation. Accumulation is viewed as guilt, as a debt to the gods that must be repaid. To sacrifice something - to destroy an accumulated excess - means to give it to the gods. The ethnos strives to conserve a social and cosmic equilibrium, as well as an equilibrium between society and nature. Society is naturalised and nature is socialised. Together, they form a sacred whole, a circular economy.

The ethnos, then, is a form of primordial, pre-historic communism in which work is play and man lives in perfect accord with his natural environment. It is an ecologically sound, harmonious cosmic and social totality, a golden age before man's fall into history, a paradise in which the entropic, destructive force of time is defeated, or at least held in check. The ethnos does not know the tension of social stratification, and there is no division of labour, except between the genders. The relationship between the genders, however, is also balanced and non-patriarchal. The space-time of the ethnos, as we noted earlier, is reversible, and this goes for its social relations, too. There are no asymmetrical, hierarchical relationships within society, only a balance maintained through symbolic exchange. In other words, the ethnos is a democratic and egalitarian society (at least on a symbolic level). As an embodiment the golden age, it represents the primordial perfection of man. The man of the ethnos, in other words, is a sort of noble savage (a modern concept if there ever was one!) that can be opposed to the evils of Western society since the scientific revolution.

The restoration of this primordial unity, bringing linear history and capitalist accumulation to an end in a revolutionary holocaust, is according to Dugin the unconscious mythical and eschatological dimension of communism. The revolution abolishes linear time, which is identified with entropy and usury. Dugin apparently thinks that the violence of communist revolutions should be interpreted as a kind of sacrificial destruction of accumulated wealth. Capitalist accumulation is an excess that must be sacrificially destroyed through the liquidation of the bourgeoisie as a class.

The modern age is the age of revolutions, but as Jünger observed, the violence of revolutions - including the Terror of the French revolution - could be interpreted as a return of repressed elemental forces under the mask of enlightened modernity. Just as gods, spirits and demons communicate with the tribe by personifying themselves in the shaman, elemental chaos shows itself under the mask, the "persona" of the modern, supposedly rational, revolutionary subject. This is why for Dugin, the only real problem with communism was that it failed to understand itself. Its self-interpretation, its "hermeneutic circle" must be shattered. Communism made a mistake regarding the political subject. It saw class, rather than the archaic ethnos, as its subject. It wore the mask of a modern, progressive, secular ideology. This is why Marxists could not understand why communist revolutions took place in undeveloped, agrarian societies, and not, as Marx had predicted, in industrially developed societies like Germany.

Authentic communism, Dugin argues, is "national communism" (represented by Stalin, for example) or agrarian communism (represented by Pol Pot). "National communism" (or "national gauchism", as Dugin also calls it) is interpreted as a revolt against the Western, modern world, a revolt rooted in local, ethnic traditions. National communism is a hybrid of the Western rationality of Marxism and the mobilising force of non-Western ethnic myths. Dugin points to the "National Communist character of successful Marxist revolutions, recognising nationalistic elements as a driving factor and virtue, providing these revolutions with success and stability via archaic national stories of the mobilisation of Marxism as nationally interpreted eschatological myth" ["The Fourth Political Theory", p. 128]. "National Communism", Dugin tells us, "ruled in the USSR, Communist China, North Korea, Vietnam, Albania, Cambodia, and also in many Communist movements of the Third World, from the Mexican Chiapas and Peruvian Sendero Luminoso to the Kurdish Workers' Party and Islamic socialism [128]. In national communism/gauchism, Marxism functions as a universal philosophical framework that allows national movements - local by their nature - to communicate with each other and "even claim universality and planetary breadth; transforming, thanks to socialist rationality warmed up by nationalism, into a messianic project [130]." In his opinion, "National Gauchism could certainly have a global future, insofar as among many segments of humanity archaic, ethnic and religious energies are far from being spent, whatever can be said of the citizens of the modern, enlightened and rational West" [131]. Dugin evidently follows the old leftist, anti-colonialist topos of the third world and non-whites as the only remaining revolutionary subjects (third world nationalism, unlike European nationalism, was glorified by the left as a revolt against Western imperialism). In reality, mass non-white immigration to the West, attracted by its earthly "paradise" or "golden age" of material wealth, religious tolerance, modernity and generous welfare systems, has long since made it obvious that non-white peoples are not the subjects of national communist revolutions, but simply one of the instruments of the globalist, ethnocidal anthropological revolution.

Dugin appears to equate the white West with the bourgeoisie, and non-white peoples (or Russians insofar as they are "not fully white") with the revolutionary subject. He believes that the first successful communist revolution took place in Russia because the "ethnos" had retained more of its primitive vitality there than in the modern West (remember, Dugin views Russians as non-white). His concept of the ethnos allows him to interpret Russia's backwardness as a positive trait, rather than as a source of shame, in the same way that the negative view of the West found in traditionalist writings allows Muslims to view their societies as spiritually superior to the decadent, anti-traditional, secular West, while at the same time apparently not feeling the least compunction over living as parasites on the productive labour of Western societies. It becomes embarrassingly obvious that one is dealing with an overcompensation for what is really a collective inferiority complex. Russia's backwardness is interpreted as the proof that it has successfully warded off infection by the "evils" of Western modernity. The communist revolution was in its essence a revolt of the Eurasian Russian ethnos against Western-oriented elites. Bolshevism was a re-Asianisation of Russia. Rather than taking the modern West as a norm, which can only lead to devaluing the history of Russia and other non-Western nations as marginal and backward, Dugin wants to reverse the relationship, restoring Eurasia to the dignity of the "sacred centre" and marginalising the West as its "profane periphery". Dugin assigns a central, Messianic role to Russia analogous to the Messianic role the German conservative revolutionaries assigned to Germany as the sacred centre or axis of Europe. Eurasia is not only a locus of the great geopolitical decisions of our time, it is a sacred centre also in the sense of a crossing, a crucial point, an intersection and mediator between East and West, Europe and Asia. A

similar role is assigned to Iran, Hungary and Turkey as Eurasian mediators between the East and Europe. Eurasianists declare themselves to be close to the leftist Turkish Workers' Party, and Turkey is viewed by Eurasianists as part of Europe for purely geopolitical reasons. The massive occupation of German territory by Turkish immigrants, they argue, will be a positive factor in favouring the integration of Turkey and Germany into a common Eurasian empire. Here, as always for the Eurasianists, geographical and geopolitical considerations take complete precedence over racial factors, to the point of completely denying the latter. We see the implications of Dugin's conception of the ethnos as constituted not by race or by history, but by a space. Here, for some reason, Dugin is suddenly no longer a social constructivist. Geopolitical determinism is substituted for racial or historical materialist determinism. Geopolitical factors are seen as being more decisive than both racial and economic factors. Racial nationalism is rejected as either "utopian" or "reactionary". The issue of race is not viewed as being of critical, decisive importance - what is decisive for the Eurasianists - what determines the distinction between friend and enemy - is the fight against the West.

This complete precedence given to soil at the expense of blood makes the relevance of Eurasianism for European nationalists today - for whom immigration is the existentially decisive question - very dubious. The massive occupation of European soil by African and Middle Eastern immigrants does not make them Europeans, and never will. This is not just because they lack a deep relationship to European soil and traditions, but also because they are racially alien. Blacks and Arabs in Europe may be "westernised", but that only means globalised, that is, Americanised. Homo Americanus is the normative "human" type of the post-modern age.

Dugin tries to interpret Marxism's profane, linear vision of history in terms of cyclical, mythic time, making the communist political revolution into a cyclical cosmic revolution, a return to a utopian golden age. Just as he tries to translate historical time into mythical time, he tries to translate geopolitical space into sacred geography. He wants us to see the West as the absolutely negative pole, and the East as the absolutely positive pole. In the Manichean and tiresomely propagandistic narrative of the Eurasianists, the East is paradise (Eden) and the West is hell. "Sacred geography on the basis of 'space symbolism' traditionally considers the East as 'the land of Spirit', the paradise land, the land of a completeness, abundance, the Sacred 'native land' in its fullest and most perfect kind. [...] The West has the opposite symbolical meaning. It is the 'country of death', the 'lifeless world' [...]. West is 'the empire of exile', 'the pit of the rejected', according to the expression of Islamic mystics. West is "anti-east", the country of [...] decay, degradation, transition from the manifest to the non-manifest, from life to death, from completeness to need, etc." Moreover, "[a]long the East-West axis were drawn peoples and civilizations, possessing hierarchical characters — closer to the East were those closer to Sacral, to Tradition, to spiritual wealth. Closer to West, those of a more decayed, degraded and dying Spirit".


"[S]acred geography univocally affirms the law of 'qualitative space', in which the East represents the symbolic 'ontological plus', and the West the 'ontological minus'. According to the Chinese tradition, the East is Yang, the male, bright, solar principle, and the West is Yin, the female, dark, lunar principle." "Geopolitical East represents in itself the straight opposition to geopolitical West. [...] Instead of 'democracy' and 'human right'

the East gravitates around totalitarianism, socialism and authoritarianism, i.e. around various types of social regimes, whose only common feature is that the centre of their systems there is not the 'individual', 'man' with his 'rights' and his peculiar 'individual values', but something supra-individual, supra-human — be it 'society', 'nation', 'people', 'idea', 'weltanschauung', 'religion', 'cult of the leader' etc. The East opposed to western liberal democracy the most various types of non-liberal, non-individualistic the societies — from authoritarian monarchy up to theocracy or socialism. Moreover, from a pure typological, geopolitical point of view, the political specificity of this or that regime was secondary in comparison with the qualitative dividing between 'western' (= 'individualist - mercantile') order and 'eastern' (= 'supra-individualist – based on force') order. Representative forms of such anti-western civilization were the USSR, communist China, Japan about 1945 or Khomeini's Iran" ["From Sacred Geography to Geopolitics"].

Here, Dugin deviates completely from traditionalism in confusing brute material force with true authority, and interpreting communist forms of totalitarianism and collectivism, as well as the unstratified, non-hierarchical collectivism of primitive societies, as "supra-individual" and transcendent. Evola, who never advocated totalitarianism, regarded them both as the opposite of supra-individual and transcendent - as sub-individual and undifferentiated.

Ernst Jünger, in his National Bolshevik period, not only rejected bourgeois individualism, but also its flip side, the collectivism of the masses. Instead, he believed that both bourgeois individualism and the formlessness of the masses would be overcome by the emergence of a new "type" of man, which he called "the Worker", that will be capable of mastering the forces mobilised by modern technology. But Dugin simply adopts, reversing it, Popper's liberal reduction of fascism and communism to the single term "totalitarianism", reducing radically heterogeneous movements to the same, simply because they reject liberalism. In this sense, he actually interprets fascism not so much from the point of view of the left, as from the point of view of liberalism.

The ethnos, then, is not what traditionalists like Evola call a traditional society. Moreover, given that the ethnos is in its essence ahistorical and lacks a relation to the other, Dugin has not sufficiently clarified how it can be a political and historical subject. It is also unclear how Dugin proposes to unite Heidegger's concept of Dasein as historicity with the anti-historical position of traditionalism. He has, however, proposed another possible political and historical subject: civilisation. This will be the topic of the next installment of this essay.



An important aspect of the Eurasian worldview is an absolute denial of Western civilization. In the opinion of the Eurasians, the West with its ideology of liberalism is an absolute evil.

**Jude**

**ALEXANDER  
DUGIN**



