

Julius Evola on Race

By Tomislav Sunic

Growing interest in English speaking countries for the Italian philosopher Julius Evola may be a sign of the revival of the awesome cultural legacy of the Western civilization (see [here](#) and [here](#)). This legacy is awkwardly termed the “traditional –revolutionary – elitist – anti-egalitarian – postmodern thought.” But why not simply call it classical thought?

The advantage of Evola, in contrast to many modern scholars of the same calibre, may be his staggering erudition that goes well beyond the narrow study of race. Evola was just as much at ease writing thick volumes about religion, language and sexuality as writing about legal issues related to international politics, or depicting decadence of the liberal system. His shortcomings are, viewed from the American academic perspective, that his prose is often not focused enough and his narrative often embraces too many topics at once. Evola was not a self-proclaimed “expert” on race — yet his erudition made him compose several impressive books on race from angles that are sorely missing among modern sociobiologists and race experts. Therefore, Evola’s works on race must be always put in a larger perspective.

In this short survey of Evola’s position on race I am using the hard cover of the French translation of *Indirizzi per una educazione razziale* (1941) (*Eléments pour une éducation raciale*, 1984) and the more expanded *Sintesi di dottrina della razza* (1941), (“Synthesis of the racial doctrine”), translated into German by the author himself and by Annemarie Rasch and published in Germany in 1943. To my knowledge these two books are not available in English translation. His and Rasch’s excellent German translation of *Sintesi* had received (in my view an awkward and unnecessary) ‘political’ title; *Grundrisse der faschistischen Rassenlehre* (“Outlines of the fascist racial doctrine”) and is [available on line](#).

Race of the Body vs. Race of the Spirit

Evola writes that race represents a crucial element in the life of all humans. However, while acknowledging the clear-cut physical and biological markers of each race, he stresses over and over again the paramount importance of the spiritual and internal aspects of race — two points that are decisive for genuine racial awareness of the White man. Without full comprehension of these constituent racial parts — i.e., the “race of the soul” and the “race of the spirit” — no racial awareness is possible. Evola is adamantly opposed to conceptualizing race from a purely biological, mechanistic and Darwinian perspective. He sees that approach as dangerously reductionist, leading to unnecessary political and intellectual infighting.

Diverse causes have contributed until now to the fact that racism has become the object of propaganda entrusted to incompetent people, to individuals who are waking up any day now as racists and anti-Semites and whose simple sloganeering has replaced serious principles and information. (*Eléments pour une éducation raciale*, p. 15)

Evola freely uses the term ‘racism’ (*razzismo*) and ‘racist’ (*razzista*). This was quite understandable in his epoch given that these words in Europe in the early thirties of the 20th century had a very neutral meaning with no dreaded symbols of the absolute evil ascribed to

them today. The same can be said of the word ‘fascism’ and even ‘totalitarianism’ — words which Evola uses in a normative manner when depicting an organic and holistic society designed for the future of the Western civilization. For Evola, the sense of racial awareness is more a spiritual endeavor and less a form of biological typology.

And in this respect, we need to repeat it; we are dealing here *with a formation of a mentality, a sensibility, and not with intellectual schemes or classifications for natural science manuals.* (*Eléments* p. 16)

For Evola, being White is not just a matter of good looks and high IQ, or for that matter something that needs to be sported in public. Racial awareness implies a sense of mysticism combined with the knowledge of one’s family lineage as well as a spiritual effort to delve into the White man’s primordial and mythical times. This is a task, which in the age of liberal chaos, must be entrusted only to élites completely detached from any material or pecuniary temptation.

Thus, racism invigorates and renders tangible the concept of tradition; it makes the individual get used to observing in our ancestors not just a series of the more or less illustrious “dead,” but rather the expression of something still alive in ourselves and to which we are tied in our interior. We are the carriers of a heritage that has been transmitted to us and that we need to transmit – and in this spirit it is something going beyond time, something indicating, what we called elsewhere, ‘the eternal race.’ (*Eléments*, p.31)

In other words race is at a same time a heritage and a collective substrate. Irrespective of the fact that it expresses itself among all people, it is only among few that it attains its perfect realization and it is precisely there that the action and the significance of the individual and the personality can assert themselves. (*Eléments*, p.34)

Evola offers the same views in his more expanded *Sintesi (Grundrisse)*, albeit by using a somewhat different wording. Racial awareness for Evola requires moral courage and impeccable character and not just physical prowess. It is questionable to what extent many White racists today, in a self-proclaimed “movement” of theirs, with their silly paraphernalia on public display, are capable of such a mental exercise.

Race means superiority, wholeness, decisiveness in life. There are common people and there are people “of race”. Regardless of which social status they belong to, these people form an aristocracy(*Grundrisse*, p.17).

In this particular regard, the racial doctrine rejects the doctrine of the environment, known to be an accessory to liberalism, to the idea of humanity and to Marxism. These false doctrines have picked up on the theory of the environment in order to defend the dogma of fundamental equality of all people. (*Grundrisse*, p. 17)

And further Evola writes:

Our position, when we claim that race exists as much in the body as in the spirit, goes beyond these two points of view. Race is a profound force manifesting itself in the realm of the body (*race of the body*) as in the realm of the spirit (*race of the*

interior, race of the spirit). In its full meaning the purity of race occurs when these two manifestations coincide; in other words, when the race of the body matches the race of the spirit and when it is capable of serving the most adequate organ of expression. (p.48)

Racial-Spiritual Involution and the present Dark Ages

Evola is aware of the dangerous dichotomy between the race of the spirit and the race of the body that may occur within the same race — or, as we call it, within the same ingroup. This tragic phenomenon occurs as a result of selecting the wrong mates, miscegenation, and genetic flaws going back into the White man's primordial times. Modern social decadence also fosters racial chaos. Evola argues that very often the "race of the body" may be perfectly pure, with the "race of the spirit" being already tainted or destroyed. This results in a cognitive clash between a distorted perception of objective reality vs. subjective reality, and which sooner or later leads to strife or civil war.

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Evola harbors no illusions about master race; he advocates racial hygiene, always emphasizing the spiritual aspect of the race first. On a practical level, regarding modern White nationalists, Evola's words are important insofar as they represent a harsh indictment of the endless bickering, petty sectarianism and petty jealousy seen so often among Whites. A White nationalist may be endowed with a perfect race of the body, but his racial spirit may be dangerously mongrelized.

Studying racial psychology is a crucial task for all White racialists — an endeavor in which Evola was greatly influenced by the German racial scholar and his contemporary [Franz Ludwig Clauss](#).

Furthermore, a special circumstance must be singled out, confirming the already stated fact that races that have best biologically preserved the Nordic type are inwardly sometimes in a higher degree of regression than other races of the same family. Some Nordic nations — especially the Anglo-Saxons — are those in which the tradition-conditioned normal relationship between the sexes has been turned upside down. The so-called emancipation of woman — which in reality only means the mutilation and degradation of woman — has actually started out among these nations and has been most widespread among them, whereas this relationship still retains something of a tradition-based view among other nations, regardless of its bourgeois or its conventional echo.(*Grundrisse* p. 84).

Evola is well aware of the complexity of understanding race as well as our still meager knowledge of the topic. He is well aware that race cannot be just the subject of biologists, but also of paleontologists, psycho-anthropologists and mystics, such as the French mystic [René Guenon](#), whom he knew well and whom he often quotes.

Following in Evola's footsteps we may raise a haunting question. Why individuals of the same White race, i.e. of the same White in-group frequently do not understand each other? Why is it that the most murderous wars have occurred within the same race, i.e. within the same White ingroup, despite the fact that the European ingroup is more or less biologically bonded together

by mutual blood ties? One must always keep in mind that the bloodiest wars in the 20th century occurred not between two racially opposed out-groups, but often within the same White ingroup. The level of violence between Whites and Whites during the American civil war, the savagery of the intra-White civil war in Spain from 1936 to 1939, the degree of mutual hatred amidst White Europeans during WWII, and not least the recent intra-White barbarity of the Yugoslav conflict, are often incomprehensible for a member of the non-European outgroup. This remains an issue that needs to be urgently addressed by all sociobiologists. It must be pondered by all White nationalist activists all over the world.

There are actually too many cases of people who are somatically of the same race, of the same tribe, indeed who are fathers and sons of the same blood in the strict sense of the word and, yet who cannot “understand” each other. A demarcation line separates their souls; their way of feeling and judging is different and their common race of the body cannot do much about it, nor their common blood. The impossibility of mutual understanding lies therefore on the level of supra-biology (“überbiologische Ebene”). Mutual understanding and hence real togetherness, as well as deeper unity, are only possible where the common “race of the soul” and the “spirit” coexist. (*Grundrisse*, 89)

In order to understand his political and moral predicament, the White man must therefore delve into myths of his prehistory and look for his faults. For Evola, we are all victims of rationalism, Enlightenment and positivistic sciences that keep us imprisoned in a straitjacket of “either-or,” always in search for causal and rational explanations. Only by grasping the supraracial (*superraza*) meaning of ancient European myths and by using them as role models, can we come to terms with the contemporary racial chaos of the modern system.

It is absolutely crucial to grasp the living significance of such a change of perspectives inherent to racist conceptions; the *superior* does not derive from the *inferior*. In the mystery of our blood, in the depth of our most abysmal of our being, resides the ineffaceable heredity of our primordial times. This is not heredity of brutality of bestial and savage instincts gone astray, as argued by psychoanalysis, and which, as one may logically conclude, derive from “evolutionism” or Darwinism. This heredity of origins, this heredity which comes from the deepest depth of times is the *heredity of the light*. (*Éléments* 72–73)

Briefly, Evola rejects the widespread idea that we have evolved from exotic African monkeys, as the standard theory of evolution goes, and which is still widely accepted by modern scientists. He believes that we have now become the tainted progeny of the mythical [Hyperborean race](#), which has significantly racially deteriorated over the eons and which has been adrift both in time and space. Amidst the ruins of the modern world, gripped by perversion and decadence, Evola suggest for new political elites the two crucial criteria, “**the character and the form of the spirit, much more than intelligence.**” As a racial mystic, Evola warns:

Because the concept of the world can be much more precise with a man without instruction than with a writer; it can be more solid with a soldier, or a peasant loyal to his land, than with a bourgeois intellectual, professor, or a journalist. (quoted in Alain de Benoist’s, [Vude droite](#), 1977, p. 435)

We could only add that the best cultural weapons for our White “super-race” are our common Indo-Aryan myths, our sagas, our will to power — and our inexorable sense of the tragic.