THE INDO-EUROPEAN GENETIC AND CULTURAL LEGACY IN EUROPE

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This article is part of a larger book project on the origins of Europeans and their culture to be titled *Western Origins and Prospects*. The book as a whole will bring together my ideas on Western origins and how our evolutionary proclivities as Westerners interact with the reality that the West is now beset by hostile elites intent on destroying the ethnic basis of Western societies.

Understanding the West is perhaps the most difficult intellectual challenge in the social sciences. It has often been commented that China's culture did not change over the millennia of its history. Dynasties came and went, but that only meant a change of faces, not of political culture or the culture generally. In the West, however, there has been an incredibly complex dynamic involving fundamental institutional changes—the rise of centralized states and the decline of extended kinship, the rise and the decline of the Catholic Church, the decline of societies dominated by military, aristocratic elites beginning with the English Civil War and the French Revolution, the rise of democratic governments, and finally the rise of elites bent on importing millions of people not of European descent, to the point that the West is on the brink of racial/ethnic suicide.

Another reason for the difficulty of comprehending the West is that the entire subject is mired in political correctness. It was certainly understandable in the year 1900 or even much later to believe that there was something unique and superior about European peoples. At that time, with the exception of China, Japan, Thailand, Korea, Ethiopia, and Liberia, the entire rest of the planet was dominated and colonized by people of European extraction.

A century later, the West is self-destructing. The colonies are gone, and European societies as well as European conquests in North America, Australia, and New Zealand are admitting millions of non-Whites as citizens, dramatically altering the demographic profile of these societies. Combined with low fertility of Whites and assuming that present trends continue, this will result in no society being dominated by people of Western European extraction by the end of the twenty-first century.

This is an ongoing evolutionary disaster for the European peoples. Not only are Europeans losing out genetically, they risk becoming a vulnerable minority in societies made up of non-Whites, many of whom have historical grudges against Europeans. One need only remember the disaster experienced by the Russian people after the Bolshevik Revolution. The Soviet Union in its early decades was dominated by non-Russians, including an especially powerful Jewish contingent with historical grudges against the traditional Russian people and culture.[1] This dynamic fueled the greatest slaughter in European history, as approximately 20 million Russians were murdered over the next 25 years at the hands of the Soviet government. This is an object lesson on the dangers of losing political control to others.

The basic thesis of the book project is that Western cultural uniqueness originates from two powerful currents—aristocratic individualism resulting from the Indo-European settlement beginning around 2500 BC, and egalitarian individualism originating from the primordial Northern hunter-gatherers that populated Europe since before the Ice Ages. This article describes the origins and culture of the Indo-Europeans.

I. Recent Population Genetic Evidence on Indo-Europeans in Europe

There is an emerging consensus for distinct population movements into Europe during prehistoric times: Western hunter-gatherers (WHGs) which differentiated further into another group, the Scandinavian hunter-gatherers (SHGs), farmers from the Levant (termed Early Farmers [EFs]), and an Indo-European wave originating with the Yamnaya culture from the Pontic steppe region in present-day Ukraine thought to be the origins of the Indo-Europeans (IEs) in Europe.[2]

The IEs arrived in Central Europe from the Pontic steppe region in the Early Bronze Age ca. 4500 years before present (BP). They are related to a northern hunter-gatherer group from the Caucasus Mountains (CHG) as well as to another hunter-gatherer group, Ancient North Eurasians (ANE), located in northern Eurasia, including Siberia (with some relatedness to North American Indians).[3] Thus

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[1] Kevin MacDonald, "Stalin's Willing Executioners: Jews as a Hostile Elite in the USSR," *The Occidental Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 65–100.

[2] Iosif Lazaridis et al., "Ancient Human Genomes Suggest Three Ancestral Populations for Present-day Europeans," *Nature* 513 (2014): 409–13.

[3] *Ibid.*; see also Wolfgang Haak et al., "Massive Migration from the Steppe Was a Source for Indo-European Languages in Europe," *Nature* 522 (June 11, 2015): 207–11.

[Jones et al.] find that CHG, or a population close to them, contributed to the genetic makeup of individuals from the Yamnaya culture, which have been implicated as vectors for the profound influx of Pontic steppe ancestry that spread westwards into Europe and east into central Asia with metallurgy, horse riding and probably Indo-European languages in the third millennium BC.[4]

In addition to these hunter-gatherer roots, there was substantial admixture with "Armenian-like" Near Eastern peoples (48–58%).[5]

In summary, prior to developing a pastoral economy as described below, the IEs derive from hunter-gatherer groups that originally settled in the east of Europe (CHGs and ANEs), with substantial Near Eastern admixture, whereas the WHGs and the SHGs are indigenous to the west of Europe and represent primordial Western European groups.[6] The general picture is that populations, including the Yamnaya-derived IEs, were relatively highly genetically structured in the Early Bronze Age but became increasingly intermixed, resulting in relatively less differentiation (but still significant) in contemporary Europe. Whereas the genetic legacy of the EFs is more prevalent in the south of Europe, the IE genetic contribution is more prevalent in northern and central Europe.

Regarding the physical appearance of the IEs, Allentoft et al. found that the gene for blue eyes was already present in Mesolithic European hunter-gatherer populations (i.e., SHG and WHG), but is absent in the Yamnaya populations, suggesting a high percentage of brown eyes among the IE invaders.[7] Further, Wilde et al. show that genes for light

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[4] Eppie R. Jones et al., "Upper Palaeolithic Genomes Reveal Deep Roots of Modern Eurasians," *Nature Communications* 6 (November 17, 2015): 1–8, 4.

[5] Iain Mathieson et al., "Genome-Wide Patterns of Selection in 230 Ancient Europeans," *Nature* 528 (December 24–31, 2015): 499–515; see also Morton E. Allentoft et al., "Population Genomics of Bronze Age Eurasia," *Nature* 522 (June 11, 2015): 167–74.

[6] Jones et al., "Upper Palaeolithic Genomes Reveal Deep Roots of Modern Eurasians."

[7] Morton E. Allentoft et al., "Population Genomics of Bronze Age Eurasia," *Nature* 522 (June 11, 2015): 167–74. Cassidy et al. found that a Bronze Age sample of three individuals from Ireland had an infusion of Yamnaya-linked genes (ca. 32%), whereas this genetic influence was not found in a Neolithic farmer from Ireland (i.e., prior to the Indo-European invasion). These individuals were at least heterozygous for blue eyes, although one had brown eyes. Presumably the gene for blue eyes was derived from the hunter-gatherer influence which remained substantial (ca. 26%). The EF individual had dark hair and brown eyes.

pigmentation were relatively infrequent in an ancient DNA sample from the Pontic steppe region compared to modern population from Ukraine, indicating selection for light pigmentation as the IEs spread north. They attribute these results to "a combination of selective pressures associated with living in northern latitudes, the adoption of an agriculturalist diet [i.e., low in vitamin D which increases selection pressure in favor of lighter pigmentation], and assortative mating [i.e., preference for light pigmentation in mates] may sufficiently explain the observed change from a darker phenotype during the Eneolithic [i.e., Copper age]/Early Bronze age to a generally lighter one in modern Eastern Europeans, although other selective factors cannot be discounted."[8]

Given the pastoral economy of the IEs, there is considerable interest in the gene for lactose tolerance. Allentoft et al. show that the gene for lactose tolerance may have originated among the Yamnaya. This gene would have been highly adaptive in a pastoral/dairy culture such as that of the Yamnaya. However, they found this gene in only 5% of Bronze Age Europeans, although the highest levels were in the Corded Ware culture (ca. 20%) which is proposed as resulting from the Yamnaya invasion (Yamnaya ca. 28%). Mathieson et al. find that the lactose tolerance gene appeared around ca. 4300 BP, and did not reach appreciable levels until after that time.

There is a gradient in height among ancient skeletons, which are taller in the north and shorter in the south. Mathieson et al. find these differences in Neolithic Europe, suggesting greater height stemming from the IE influence which is stronger in the north and is associated with a diet high in dairy products; they also find selection for shorter stature in the south of Europe as an accommodation to a relatively low quality farming diet.[9] This gradient in height continues into modern times and reflects a much-commented on cultural/genetic gradient that still exists in France.[10]

Regarding percentages of admixture, Lazaridis et al. find that the Ancient Northern Eurasians (ANE—another proxy for IE genetic influence;

Lara Cassidy et al., "Neolithic and Bronze Age Migration to Ireland and Establishment of the Insular Atlantic Genome," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* 113, no. 2 (January 12, 2016): 368–73.

[8] Sandra Wilde et al., "Direct Evidence for Positive Selection of Skin, Hair, and Eye Pigmentation in Europeans during the Last 5,000 Y," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* 111, no. 13 (April 1, 2014): 4832–37, 4835.

[9] Mathieson et al., "Genome-Wide Patterns of Selection in 230 Ancient Europeans."

[10] See, e.g., Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The French Peasantry, 1450–1660*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986; originally published in 1977).

see above) are represented in modern Europeans at a maximum of 20%, while the Early Farmer ancestry in Europe today shows a strong north-south gradient, ranging from ca. 30% in the Baltic region to ca. 90% in the Mediterranean. They also note that in general Europeans have a larger proportion of Western Hunter-Gatherer than ANE ancestry. ANE ancestry was absent prior to the Neolithic transition to agriculture in both WHG and EFs, a finding consistent with the ANE ancestry being the result of the IE invasion beginning in the early Bronze Age (ca. 4500 BP). (Interestingly, however, the Scandinavian Hunter-Gatherers share 19% ANE ancestry, suggesting some admixture among northern hunter-gatherer groups in Scandinavia and hunter-gatherer groups to the east prior to the IE expansion.

In summary, current evidence is compatible with a primordial Western Hunter-Gatherer population present from ca. 45000 BP. In Northern Europe, this population separated into a Scandinavian Hunter-Gatherer population that evolved white skin and blue eyes and present at least by 8000 BP (the date for the Motala SHG samples and prior to the EF and IE invasions), and in Southern Europe into a population of dark-skinned, light-eyed WHGs. Early Farmers from the Levant with light skin and brown eyes entered ca. 8000 BP, eliminating the dark-skinned WHGs in the south of Europe (with some admixture) and intermingling to a lesser extent with the SHGs in the north. Finally, white-skinned, brown-eyed peoples of the Yamnaya culture originating from the Pontic steppe region and speaking Indo-European languages migrated into Europe ca. 4500 BP, militarily dominating other previously resident groups (see next section), but eventually intermingling with them.

II. Aristocratic Egalitarianism: The Cultural Legacy of the Indo-Europeans

The Indo-Europeans were highly militarized conquering groups that spread out from the Pontic steppe region north of the Black Sea to dominate Europe for at least 3,500 years, ending only at the end of the Middle Ages in Western Europe and reverberating even beyond that. What I mean by this is that the social systems that the IEs put in place had significant commonalities and were fundamentally unchanged over this very long time span. This section will describe the fundamentals of that social system, termed here aristocratic individualism for reasons that will become clear.

As Ricardo Duchesne notes, the Indo-European legacy is key to understanding the restless, aggressive, questing, innovative, "Faustian" soul of Europe. Indo-Europeans were a "uniquely aristocratic people dominated by emerging chieftains for whom fighting to gain prestige was the all-pervading ethos. This culture [is] interpreted as 'the Western state of nature' and as the primordial source of Western restlessness."[11]

As noted in the previous section, current scholarly opinion is that the IEs originated in the Pontic steppe region of south Russia and Ukraine. In the Near East, Iran, and India, this conquering group was absorbed by the local population. In Europe, they displaced the native languages but not the natives: Originally, at least, as in the other areas they conquered, they were alien elites ruling over the older Europeans.

The novelty of Indo-European culture was that it was not based on a single king or a typical clan-type organization based on extended kinship groups but on an aristocratic elite that was egalitarian within the group. Critically, this elite was not tied together by kinship bonds as would occur in a clan-based society, but by individual pursuit of fame and fortune, particularly the former. The men who became leaders were not despots, but peers with other warriors—an egalitarianism among aristocrats. Successful warriors individuated themselves in dress, sporting beads, belts, etc., with a flair for ostentation. This resulted in a "vital, action-oriented, and linear picture of the world"[12]—i.e., as moving forward in pursuit of the goal of increasing prestige. Leaders commanded by voluntary consent, not servitude, and being a successful leader meant having many clients who pledged their loyalty; often the clients were young unmarried men looking to make their way in the world. The leader was therefore a "first among equals."

> These "groups of comrades" . . . were singularly dedicated to predatory behavior and to "wolf-like" living by hunting and raiding, and to the performance of superior, even super-human deeds. The members were generally young, unmarried men, thirsting for adventure. The followers were sworn not to survive a war leader who was slain in battle, just as the leader was expected to show in all circumstances a personal example of courage and war-skills. . . . Only in reference to Indo-European aristocratic [warriors] . . . can

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[11] Ricardo Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 51.
[12] *Ibid.*, 374.

we speak in Hegelian terms of a fight to the death for the sake of *pure* prestige."[13]

INDO-EUROPEAN CULTURAL ORIGINS

The original IEs, termed Proto-Indo-Europeans (PIEs), underwent a profound cultural shift from a hunter-gatherer economy to a herding economy by 7800–7200 BP.[14] Hunter-gatherer groups tend to be egalitarian, but the shift to a pastoral culture resulted in more social inequality. Herding also "required a flexible, opportunistic social organization"[15] as well as the ability to defer gratification and plan ahead: it could only be done "by people who were committed morally and ethically to watching their families go hungry rather than eat their breeding stock."[16]

However, in addition to the shift to a pastoral economy, a critical aspect of PIE success stemmed from the development of a militarized culture that proved to be highly effective in dominating other groups. This is turn was based on several important cultural attributes:

A. TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

1. Domestication of horses, occurring by 6800 BP,[17] was of critical importance. This was followed by horse riding before 5700 BP and spreading outside the steppes between 5700 and 5000 BP.[18] These cultural practices allowed much larger herds of sheep and cattle, but they were also an aspect of militarization, with the invention of bows that could be used while riding horses.[19] Steppe horses were larger and stronger than onagers (derived from Asian wild asses) typical of the Middle East; they were thus much more effective for military uses. The result was that after 5300 BP there was a decline in agriculture as land was given over to pasture, and there was an increase in warfare throughout Europe.

2. Along with horseback riding, the development of sophisticated wagons facilitated the expansion into the deep steppes—"living on their

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[13] *Ibid.*, 376, 387.

[14] David Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007; paperback edition, 2010), 161.

[15] *Ibid.*, 137.

[16] *Ibid.*, 155.

[17] *Ibid.*, 201.

[18] *Ibid.*, 221.

[19] *Ibid.*, 221–24.

wheels."[20] It required wealth to produce wagons (wheels required highly skilled carpentry) and to maintain them (they required two specially trained horses). PIE society therefore became more socially stratified, with the possession of wagons being linked to elites.[21]

3. The PIEs also benefited from a "secondary products revolution" in which domesticated animals were used not only for meat (a primary product), but also dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt—a very nutritious diet compared to farming; this diet helped produce tall, muscular warriors), skins (leather), as well as riding, transport, and labor (pulling wagons).

B. Social/Cultural Practices

1. The PIEs developed a completely militarized culture. Boys were socialized for warfare and cattle raiding. Young boys "*had* to go out and become like a band of dogs or wolves—to raid their enemies."[22] All young men went out on raids as part of their initiation into the group. The aggressiveness of these groups increased with increased wealth and social inequality, both of which resulted in increased bride-price—i.e., males were forced to raise ever larger amounts of resources in order to be able to afford to pay the family of a prospective wife.

At the center of PIE society was the institution of the *Männerbund* or *korios*, "the warrior brotherhood bound by oath to one another and to their ancestors during a ritually mandated raid."[23] Thus *Beowulf*, even though set in the Germanic/Scandinavian sixth century AD, depicts an "aristocratic ethos of companionship and equality."[24] "The formation of voluntary war-bands held together by oaths, camaraderie, and a common self-interest was a fundamental characteristic of these chiefdoms. This was a time when social status and rank were still openly determined by one's heroic deeds and by the number of followers or clients one could afford."[25]

IE religion had a military focus. Among Germanic groups, Odin is the god of the *Männerbünde*, the "god of battle rage (berserker)."[26] Warriors

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[20] *Ibid.*, 302.

[21] *Ibid.*, 405.

[22] *Ibid.*, 239; emphasis in text.

[23] *Ibid.*, 364.

[24] Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization*, 398.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Hans-Peter Hasenfratz, *Barbarian Rites*, trans. Michael Moynihan (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2011; original German edition, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany: Verlag Herder, 1992), 49.

engaged in battle rage are "berserkers." The chronicler Snorri Sturluson described them as follows: "Woden's men went without hauberks [armor] and raged like dogs or wolves. They bit their shields and were strong like bears or bulls. They killed men but neither fire nor iron hurt them. This is called *berserkgangr*."[27] Young men were initiated into the *Männerbünde* by mock hanging and were taught berserker techniques.[28] Being a berserker is connected to belief in shape-shifting where the soul is disengaged from body and can roam outside the body (as a wolf or a bear), at which time it can engage in superhuman heroic deeds.

2. Military success became critical for sexual competition among males. Successful males would be able to afford bride-price which became increasingly competitive. This was rationalized by the myth of Trito, the god of cattle raiding, which rationalized cattle raiding by the belief that others' cattle was really intended for them—i.e., for people who made appropriate sacrifices.[29]

Indo-European culture was what one might term "hyper-masculine." Lotte Hedeager's *Iron Age Myth and Materiality: An Archaeology of Scandinavia, AD 400–1000* paints a picture of a hyper-masculine, completely militarized society in which male sexual penetration was a marker of power, while being penetrated was, for a male, the ultimate insult.[30] Accusing a man of having been sodomized was a grievous accusation, with the same penalty as for murder. Older males lacking the power or ability to penetrate took on the status of women and were even ridiculed by slaves. Women were seen as legitimate spoils of war and raiding, and such women were typically enslaved.

The following quotation gets at this hyper-masculine, completely militarized culture that appears to have been characteristic of IE culture in Northwestern Europe at least from 2500 BC until the Middle Ages:

> In the extremely competitive and aggressive Scandinavian society in which blood feuds were taking place everywhere, often lasting for many years and several generations . . ., the concept of honour evolved around reputation, respect and prestige. Social life and

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[27] Michael Speidel, "'Berserks': A History of Indo-European 'Mad Warriors,'" *Journal of World History* 13, no. 2 (1992): 253–90, 253–54.

[28] Hasenfratz, *Barbarian Rites*, 64–65.

[29] Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language*.

[30] Lotte Hedeager, *Iron Age Myth and Materiality: An Archaeology of Scandinavia, AD 400–1000* (London: Routledge, 2011).

reputation were hierarchically organised and arranged according to dominance and submission, powerful and powerless. At the bottom of the social scale, female thralls [slaves] were routinely subjected to rape and traded as sexual subjects. In the account of a Viking market at Volga in 922, the Arab diplomat Ibn Fadlan describes how the Vikings (the Scandinavian Rus) regularly had sex with their slaves, often in public, and in groups of both sexes. This activity took place both in front of potential buyers and their own formal partners, whether wives or girlfriends, who seemed unaffected. . . . Rape of a free woman, however, was a serious matter. . . .

Within this social hierarchy, power was explicitly connected with metaphors for penetration—by the sword, penis, or tongue. Those who penetrated—with words, with weapons, or with the phallus—were the powerful ("males"); those who became penetrated were the powerless ("females"). In a social setting, sexuality provided a symbolic code for dominance and submission, throwing light on power and thus status differences. . . . The most severe accusations in the Old Norse society evolved around "effeminacy" and penetration, implying that sexuality and hostility were two sides of the same coin.[31]

Similarly, the Latin word "vagina," from which the English word is derived, means sheath or scabbard—that which is penetrated by a sword.

3. The aristocratic individualism of the PIEs was based on reciprocity, not despotism or kinship ties. For example, at the heart of PIE culture was the practice of gift giving as a reward for military accomplishment. Successful leaders were expected to handsomely reward their followers.[32] Oath-bound contracts of reciprocal relationships were characteristic of PIEs and this practice continued with the various IE groups that invaded Europe. These contracts formed the basis of patron-client relationships based on reputation—leaders could expect loyal service from their followers and followers could expect equitable rewards for their service to the leader. This is critical because these relationships are based on talent and accomplishment, not ethnicity (i.e., rewarding people on the basis of closeness of kinship) or despotic subservience (where fol-

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[31] *Ibid.*, 115–18.
[32] Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language*, 238.

lowers are essentially unfree).

Oath-bound contracts were not only typical of the aristocratic egalitarianism of the *Männerbünde*, they extended to relationships of domination and subordination between military elites and conquered peoples, providing protection in return for service. In conjunction with the previous points, this is a prescription for feudal-type societies dominated by military elites with mutual obligations to the people they dominate but where kinship ties between elites and the people they dominate are relatively unimportant.

4. PIE society developed institutions that tended to break down strong kinship bonds. For example, the PIEs had well-developed practices surrounding guest-host relationships which, like gift-giving, were based on reciprocity.[33] Thus, for the Yamnaya culture at the center of PIE, David Anthony claims that practices related to guest-host relationships led in a direction away from kinship toward reciprocity. These reciprocal guest-host relationships "functioned as a bridge between social units (tribes, clans) that had ordinarily restricted these relationships to their kin or co-residents."[34] There were thus mechanisms to provide guest-host relationships beyond kinship where everyone had mutual obligations of hospitality; in a comment illustrating the pervasiveness and longevity of these practices, Anthony notes that this was a "way to incorporate outsiders as people with clearly defined rights and protections, as it was used in the *Odyssey* to medieval Europe"[35]—another indication of the persistence of IE culture over very long periods of historical time.

5. Besides the tangible rewards for success, successful warriors were honored in poetry. Successful leaders not only gave feasts and gifts to their followers, they were celebrated in poetry—their memory lived on long after their death. Odes proclaiming the generosity of patrons were very characteristic of widely dispersed IE cultures (Vedic, Celtic, Greek, and Germanic), indicating an origin in late Proto-Indo-European.[36] As Duchesne emphasizes, IE warfare was conducted principally to gain fame and glory.[37] Nevertheless, to the victors remained the very tangible spoils resulting from successful military campaigns.

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[33] *Ibid.*, 303.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.*, 343.

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization*, 438.

In summary, while there were doubtless important changes in technology over the span from the earliest Indo-European societies to the European Middle Ages, many of the most basic social/cultural features of IE-derived societies remained remarkably the same. The following sections detail how the fundamental cultural forms apparent in early PIE culture persisted into the European Middle Ages.

INDO-EUROPEANISM AS A FREE MARKET MILITARIZED CULTURE

For my purposes, it is especially important to note that the military cultures created by the IEs were permeable—that they were based on individual accomplishment rather than kinship ties. Indeed, it was well-recognized that kinship biased people's perceptions and judgments. For example, in the Visigothic Code (AD 642–643) near relatives or other kinsmen could not testify in a legal case against a stranger. In Europe, where genetic differences between conquerors and their subjects were not great, barriers between groups broke down fairly rapidly. When the Visigoths conquered Spain, marriage between Goths and Romans was at first prohibited. However, the Visigothic Code provided for marriage between the two groups, breaking down ethnic barriers so that individuals could pursue marriage strategies based on perceived self-interest (e.g., family strategizing or personal attraction) rather than require that marriage be within the kinship group.

On the other hand, intermixture between the IEs and those they conquered had different consequences in the Near East, Iran, and India, presumably because the genetic distance between the IEs and the natives in these areas was much greater than with Europeans and because the people they conquered were genetically prone to kinship-based collectivism. As a result, societies originally dominated by IE elites in the East eventually became typical Oriental despotisms. As in Europe, when these marauding bands descended down to the Near East and India, there was significant interbreeding with the native populations. Thus the Hittites fused with the native Hattic population, in India the Indo-Europeans fused with the pre-existing Harappan culture, and similarly in Iran. In all areas they gave up the pastoral lifestyle for agriculture and developed despotic rule centered around a king who was "the only character with any individuality and heroic achievement."[38] All subjects and foreigners were required to prostrate themselves—common in vir-

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[38] *Ibid.*, 379.

tually all the "state-centered hydraulic civilizations" (i.e., civilizations centered on irrigation agriculture—China, India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Incans, Aztecs) and quite foreign to the Indo-European cultures of Europe.[39]

As noted, military leaders maintained their position by military success and by bestowing gifts upon their followers, with the most talented followers obtaining the greatest gifts. A corollary of this is that followers chose successful leaders and abandoned unsuccessful leaders. The system functioned more or less as a free market system based on merit rather than nepotism. As in all free market systems, the fundamental principle is reciprocity, whether it is giving gifts commensurate with contribution to the exploits of the *Männerbund*, or, in the modern world, paying employees a wage commensurate with the value they add to the company on pain of defection to another company if it provides a better offer. And just as different companies strive to obtain talented employees who can add value to the enterprise in the modern world, IE military leaders competed to attract a following of talented warriors.

Reciprocity thus lies at the heart of societies based on individualism. Another important example is mating. Whereas kinship-based societies typically feature arranged marriage, often to relatives (e.g., first cousin marriage, which is common in the Middle East), individualist societies tend toward free choice of marriage partner based on personal attraction (e.g., traits such as physical beauty or intelligence) and other interests (e.g., economic), which in turn are based on the personal qualities of the marriage partner.

Congruent with a free market model, Anthony likens the spread of IE languages to a "franchising operation" rather than an invasion as usually understood:

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[39] Interestingly, Duchesne describes Stalin as a classic despot. Stalin, from Georgia, is said to have had a despotic Oriental personality, surrounding himself with "slavish characters" and continuing to need "choruses of public approval to reinforce his ego." Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization*, 424.

I am reminded of the "guru thesis" of Jewish intellectual movements discussed in *The Culture of Critique* whereby a leading figure like Freud was surrounded by slavishly devoted followers who eagerly give up their own personalities to be able to bask in the light of reflected glory. Kevin MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2002; orig. pub.: Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), chap. 6 and *passim*.

The initial spread of Proto-Indo-European dialects probably was more like a franchising operation than an invasion. At least a few of the steppe chiefs must have moved into each new region, and their arrival might well have been accompanied by cattle raiding and violence. But equally important to their ultimate success were the advantages they enjoyed in institutions (patron-client and guest-host arrangements that incorporated outsiders as individuals with rights and protections) and perhaps in public performances associated with Indo-European rituals.[40]

While this has more than a tinge of political correctness because it needlessly minimizes the role of violence in IE conquests, it fits well with the fact that the peoples conquered by IE groups were not exterminated but rather became dominated by new military elites that remained permeable; relationships were based on reciprocity, even though the relationships were unbalanced in favor of the conquerors. Nevertheless, young men with military talent could rise; physically and personally attractive young women could engage in the age-old phenomenon of female hypergamy (marrying higher status males).

Nevertheless, there were limits on social mobility. In a 1973 paper, Roger Pearson argues that social mobility was for the most part intergenerational rather than intra-generational. "In many cases, such as among the Celts, Teutons, Indo-Aryans and Iranians, and also in Homeric Greece and Republican Rome, it can be demonstrated that marriage was predominantly endogamous within these classes [i.e., nobles, freemen, and slaves], thus effectively restricting intra-generational social mobility in favor of a caste-like structure."[41] "Caste-like" patterns of endogamy are attested for all these groups, with illicit offspring taking the status of the lower-status parent.

Despite the "caste-like" patterns, there was inter-generational social mobility whereby slaves could become freedmen, freedmen could become freemen, and freemen could even become nobles. This allowed "talented members of the lower castes" to rise without creating major disruptions in the social system.[42] Kinship remained of some importance, and as a result it would take several generations for newly risen men to develop a strong kinship group. Indeed, Pearson provides ev-

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[40] Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language*, 343.

[41] Roger Pearson, "Some Aspects of Social Mobility in Early Historic Indo-European Societies," *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1 (1973): 155–61.

[42] *Ibid.*, 157.

idence from a variety of IE cultures that individuals' reputation required at least three generations within a given status (e.g., freeman) to really be a member of that status. Pearson notes that this is consistent with an Omaha-type kinship that emphasizes vertical (ego, father, grandfather) rather than horizontal relationships more typical of clan-societies.[43] Congruent with this, according to the Visigothic Code mentioned above, only in second generation could a descendant of a freedman testify in court.

Nevertheless, as discussed below, IE groups were certainly not impermeable by being limited to members of the kinship group; they were not based on rigid kinship hierarchies. Rather, they were based much more on individual accomplishment, particularly in the role of being a member of a *Männerbund*. In this sense, IE groups must be considered fundamentally individualist. As Hans-Peter Hasenfratz notes, the boundaries between the three social classes in ancient Germanic societies were not rigid. Warriors had the most prestige in society and were recruited from the peasants and the sons of warriors. Moreover, "a slave could become free by acts of bravery; a peasant could become a noble, and a noble could become a king."[44]

It cannot be overemphasized that at the heart of Germanic society were the *Männerbünde*, the all-male war groups, where social ties among males were more important than social class and transcended the kinship group. Rewards for membership depended on competence in battle, and an important reward was sex obtained from captured females. Being a warrior was to be a man in the full sense of the word. Ruling and priestly functions were very closely related, as in early Republican Rome.[45] Kings could be killed if there was a bad year or bad harvest,

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[43] Western societies have Eskimo kinship, with which emphasizes the nuclear family, identifying directly only the mother, father, brother, and sister. All other relatives are grouped together into categories. It uses both classificatory and descriptive terms, differentiating between gender, generation, lineal relatives (relatives in the direct line of descent), and collateral relatives (blood relatives not in the direct line of descent). The Eskimo system is defined by its "cognatic" or "bilateral" emphasis—no distinction is made between patrilineal and matrilineal relatives. This is compatible with the "northern hunter-gatherer" contribution to European origins (Kevin MacDonald, "What Makes Western Culture Unique?," *The Occidental Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 9–38. A full-fledged clan-type kinship system is the Sudanese, as seen, e.g., in Chinese kinship.

[44] Hasenfratz, *Barbarian Rites*, 35.

[45] Gary Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 135.

and at times kings would offer themselves up in atonement, accepting responsibility for the fate of the group.[46]

Similar social class divisions have been noted by other scholars. Bente Magnus points to three different classes in traditional Scandinavian society, the thrall (slave, serf), the free farmer, and the earl.[47] Property was administered by individuals on behalf of the lineage, although by the Viking age (beginning ca. AD 800) "the power of the lineage over the land had diminished."[48] Corroborating the upward mobility possible in these societies, there were slaves who could become free if they worked the land. In settlements, there was usually one farm that was superior to the surrounding farms, "suggesting some sort of dominance."[49]

Another individualistic aspect of the *Männerbünde* that doubtless increased their dynamism was that inherited status counted for little. Around two-thirds of the wealth of the chief was buried or burned when he died, with the rest going to the living, so that even the sons of chiefs had to prove themselves by accumulating wealth and power. According to an Icelandic saga discussed by Hasenfratz, the sons of kings and earls could inherit land but not money. Money was buried with the father. Each had to prove himself in battle and raiding. "And even if sons inherited the lands, they were unable to sustain their status, if honour counted for anything, unless they put themselves and their men at risk and went into battle, thereby winning for himself, each in his turn, wealth and renown, and so following in the footsteps of his kinsmen."[50] Again, we see the importance of fame and honor obtained by military accomplishment.

SIPPE AND MÄNNERBÜNDE

The Germanic *Sippe* refers to a group of freeborn people with blood ties; the concept does not apply to slaves. Marriages occurred within the *Sippe*, and endogamous marriage was common. Even brother-sister marriages are described in the sagas, and one set of gods, the Vanir, were allowed to marry siblings.

This suggests a strongly kinship-based society. However, there were

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[46] Hasenfratz, *Barbarian Rites*, 40.

[47] Bente Magnus, "Dwellings and Settlements: Structure and Characteristics," in *The Scandinavians from the Vendel Period to the Tenth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. Judith Jesch (Woodbridge, UK: Boydel Press, 2002), 5–32.

[48] *Ibid.*, 11.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] Hasenfratz, *Barbarian Rites*, 28–29.

ways in which the importance of kinship was de-emphasized. Children were often fostered out to families of higher rank, creating ties that were not based on kinship. Taking guests for up to three nights was an accepted custom, sometimes providing a wife or other female to the visitor. Gift-giving also cemented social ties and obligated receivers to give more than they were given. At times, a non-biological sense of kinship can be seen: In one saga, a man kills another and is then forced to marry the decedent's sister and name the child after the slain man![51]

The most important of these forces de-emphasizing kinship was the *Männerbund* itself because it cut across the *Sippe* and was based, not on kinship ties, but on territorial ties among men of the same age. The *Männerbund* was superior to the *Sippe* in the sense that it was the upholder of "censorious justice" if the familism of the *Sippe* got out of control.[52] (The *Männerbund* was taken up by National Socialism as the ideal social form, superseding the family and based on honor and duty.[53])

There were also *Sippe*-transcending institutions that originated as religious convocations that evolved into the *Althing* as a holy site where disputes between *Sippe* were ironed out, *wergild* paid, etc. And despite the common practice of marrying within the *Sippe*, marriage outside the *Sippe* also occurred, leading to conflict with wife's *Sippe* given that wife's brothers felt an obligation to protect her. The conflicts engendered by this system may have been responsible for Christianity seeming to be superior because it de-emphasized kinship obligations.[54]

Public punishment was meted out by a "sib[i.e., *Sippe*]-transcending legal community" (in Iceland, the *Thing*)—for outlawry, execution,[55] and for settling wergild claims. The *Männerbünde* would also exact *Sippe*-transcending punishment which could at times degenerate into terrorism.

While of undoubted importance, therefore, the kinship-based *Sippe* was subordinated to higher level institutions that were not based on kinship. Also suggesting a relative unimportance for the *Sippe*, David

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[51] *Ibid.*, 63.

[52] *Ibid.*, 51.

[53] *Ibid.*, 50. Hasenfratz notes in this passage that "markedly degenerated" *Männerbünde* would sometimes attack isolated farmhouses, raping and pillaging.

[54] *Ibid.*, 55.

[55] *Ibid.*, 56. Hanging was the typical penalty for treason. As a revival of the old practice, hanging was used in the Third Reich for traitors.

Herlihy notes that among the Germanic tribes, *Sippe* is "rarely encountered in the early sources."[56] The most explicit early references occur in laws and charters of the Lombards, Bavarians, and Alamanni, but these are in the Christian era. The *Sippe* had a territory, but within it there was individual ownership, indicating that the kinship group was typically not a corporate structure with ownership over the land.[57] Herlihy suggests that a *Sippe* included about 50 families and they were far from permanent entities, constantly reforming and splitting.[58] Herlihy also suggests that the *Sippe* lost its functions earlier on the Continent than in Ireland, but claims that the *Sippe* never was all that important:

> In fact, the larger kin group and households of some type had existed side by side since time immemorial. Moreover, the *Sippe* always played a secondary role in production and reproduction, the two functions which households have classically assumed. And these basic functions, often mentioned in the documentation, lend to households a special visibility. It was not the small household that replaced the *Sippe*; rather, larger social groupings, based on territory, edged it into the shadows. And the households continued to be centers of production and reproduction, even as the larger society was changing."[59]

In short, "the Germanic *Sippe* . . . was weakening and losing functions and visibility on the Continent very early in the Middle Ages" while Ireland "long clung to its archaic institutions."[60]

ARISTOCRATIC EGALITARIANISM AS A CENTRAL INDO-EUROPEAN CULTURAL INSTITUTION

The free market character of IE society does not fit well with the idea of despotism. If indeed individuals are free to choose their leaders and defect from those who are inept or fail to reciprocate with generous gifts, then despotic rulers cannot arise. Despotism implies that others do not have freedom to pursue their interests. There is a vast difference between being first among equals and being a despot.

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[56] David Herlihy, *Medieval Households* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 44.

[57] *Ibid.*, 46.

[58] *Ibid.*, 47.

[59] *Ibid.*, 48.

[60] *Ibid.*, 55.

Duchesne's description of Greek culture of the Mycenaean period (1600–1100 BC) and described by Homer is in line with the aristocratic egalitarian hypothesis. Aristocrats are warriors who are renowned for heroic deeds and for seeking personal immortality.[61] Government is not despotic but instead involves extensive discussion and argument about what to do. Kings acted after consultation with other aristocrats. For Achilles and other Greek heroes, fate was self-chosen and sometimes personally tragic. "There is also a spirit of overweening confidence in man's capacity to strive, in the midst of moments of fear and doubt, against the most difficult obstacles."[62] "The gods speak as if they were speaking to peers, 'with chivalrous courtesy,' offering their advice, telling them it is better to follow the gods, if they wish, while the heroes communicate and react to the gods without losing their freedom and honor."[63]

Amazingly, Hippocrates (460 BC–370 BC), the founder of medicine, saw Greeks as fundamentally different from the Persians in ways strikingly congruent with Duchesne's thesis: "Europeans . . . were independent, willing to take risks, aggressive and warlike, while Asians were peaceful to the point of lacking initiative, 'not their own masters . . . but ruled by despots'"[64]—another way of saying that their participation in the military was coerced, not voluntary.

IE heroes were individuals first and foremost—men who distinguished themselves from others by their feats in pursuit of individual renown, as shown by these lines from *Beowulf*:

> As we must all expect to leave / our life on this earth, we must earn some renown, /If we can before death; daring is the thing /for a fighting man to be remembered by. /. . .A man must act so / when he means in a fight to frame himself / a long lasting glory; it is not life he thinks of.[65]

Moreover, like the free market military cultures based on voluntarily chosen leaders, the Western urban cultures of antiquity retained a free market approach to other areas of culture, in particular with regard to

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[61] Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization*, 399.
[62] *Ibid.*, 417.
[63] *Ibid.*, 418.
[64] *Ibid.*, 484.
[65] *Ibid.*, 438.

belief systems (ideologies) and science. Thus in classical Greece (i.e., after the Homeric period),

> the ultimate basis of Greek civic and cultural life was the aristocratic ethos of individualism and competitive conflict which pervaded [Indo-European] culture. Ionian literature was far from the world of berserkers but it was nonetheless just as intensively competitive. New works of drama, philosophy, and music were expounded in the first-person form as an adversarial or athletic contest in the pursuit of truth. . . . There were no Possessors of the Way in aristocratic Greece; no Chinese Sages decorously deferential to their superiors and expecting appropriate deference from their inferiors. The search for the truth was a free-for-all with each philosopher competing for intellectual prestige in a polemical tone that sought to discredit the theories of others while promoting one's own.[66]

This underlines the individualistic nature of scientific endeavor. Scientific movements are highly permeable groups whose members are prone to defection if they find a better theory or if new data are uncovered—a free market system of ideas. This is a theme of chapter 6 of *The Culture of Critique*: In contrast to the Western individualist tradition of science, the Jewish intellectual movements reviewed there were composed of slavish followers centered around charismatic leaders who expounded dogmas that were not open to empirical disconfirmation.[67] Individuals convinced by their own judgments to adopt different theories or reject fundamental dogmas (like the Freudian Oedipal complex, Boasian views on cultural determinism, or Frankfurt School views on White ethnocentrism as psychopathology) were simply expelled, typically in a hail of invective; dissent was not tolerated. The movements far more resembled despotic ingroups rather than individualist truth-seeking.

As the Western world of antiquity decayed, the West was infused with new lifeblood from the Germanic branch of the IEs.

> It was the vigor, boldness, and the acquisitiveness of Germanic war-bands that kept the West alive. These lads were uncouth and unlettered, much given to quarrelsome rages, but they injected energy, daring, and indeed an uncomplicated and sincere love of

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[66] *Ibid.*, 452.
[67] MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique*, chap. 6.

freedom, a keen sense of honor and a restless passion for battle, adventure, and life.[68]

However, even during the putative nadir of Western freedom and democracy, the medieval period, the reciprocity so fundamental to IE culture could be seen: "The *aristocratic* principle of sovereignty by consent was the hallmark of feudal government. The king was not above the aristocracy; he was first among equals."[69] Medieval society was a "society of estates"—"kingdoms, baronies, bishoprics, urban communes, guilds, universities, each with important duties and privileges."[70]

Thus, although unquestionably hierarchical, medieval European societies had a strong sense that cultures ought to build a sense of social cohesion on the basis of reciprocity, so that, with the exception of slaves, even humble members near the bottom of the social hierarchy had a stake in the system. One might conceptualize this as an extension of the *Männerbund* philosophy whereby everyone had a stake in the success of the group. The ideal (and the considerable reality) is what Spanish historian Américo Castro labeled "hierarchic harmony."[71]

The Visigothic Code in Spain illustrates the desire for a non-despotic government and for social cohesion that results from taking account of the interests of everyone (with the exception of slaves). Regarding despotism:

It should be required that [the king] make diligent inquiry as to the soundness of his opinions. Then, it should be evident that he has acted not for private gain but for the benefit of the people; so that it may conclusively appear that the law has not been made for any

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[68] Duchesne, *The Uniqueness of Western Civilization*, 465.

[69] *Ibid.*, 483; emphasis in original.

[70] *Ibid.*, 484; see also, on the rise of estates in medieval Europe as giving rise to representative government, Michael Mitterauer, *Why Europe? The Medieval Origins of Its Special Path*, trans. Gerald Chapple (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010; orig. German edition, 2003).

[71] Américo Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*, trans. Edmund L. King (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1954), 497; see also Américo Castro, *The Spaniards: An Introduction to Their History*, trans. Willard F. King and Selma Margaretten (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971). Castro maintained that the Enlightenment could not develop in a Spain fraught with competition between ethnic groups, referring to the conflict between Spaniards and Jews: "From such premises it was impossible that there should be derived any kind of modern state, the sequel, after all, of the Middle Ages' hierarchic harmony" (*The Structure of Spanish History*, 497).

private or personal advantage, but for the protection and profit of the whole body of citizens. (Title I, II)[72]

And just as the *Männerbünde* had a very high level of social cohesion as a result of gift-giving by leaders so that everyone had a stake in military victory, the ideal whereby social cohesion in Gothic society resulted from justice for all citizens was seen as desirable because it motivated people to "strive against the enemy." A source of motivation in individualistic groups is simply to create societies where citizens see their self-interest as a stakeholder coinciding with supporting the system as a whole. Again, the wise king creates cohesion not by coercion, but by providing that everyone has a stake in the system:

> Just laws are essential for social cohesion in the face of enemies. Without justice, people will not strive against the enemy. It's not a matter of an abstract moral ideal, but a practical necessity. . . .
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> For the administration of the law is regulated by the disposition and character of the king; from the administration of the law proceeds the institution of morals, from the institution of morals, the concord of the citizens; from the concord of the citizens, the triumph over the enemy. So a good prince ruling well his kingdom, and making foreign conquests, maintaining peace at home, and overwhelming his foreign adversaries, is famed both as the ruler of his state and a victor over his enemies, and shall have for the future eternal renown, after terrestrial wealth, a celestial kingdom after the diadem and the purple, a crown of glory, nor shall he then cease to be king; for when he relinquished his earthly kingdom, and conquered a celestial one, he did not diminish, but rather increased his glory. (Title II, VI)[73]

The prime exception to hierarchic harmony was that slaves were not granted the rights associated with freemen. For example, slaves were not allowed to serve in the military which was composed of freemen who had a stake in the system; concern about social cohesion did not apply to slaves.

The lack of despotism and fundamental reciprocity at the heart of IE

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[72] The Visigothic Code (Forum judicum), trans. S. P. Scott (Boston, MA: Boston Book Company, 1910; online version: The Library of Iberian Resources Online, unpaginated).
http://libro.uca.edu/vcode/visigoths.htm
[73] *Ibid.*

culture can be seen in the legal code described in *Njals Saga*, which was written in the late thirteenth century and with a story that takes place between 960 and 1020 in pre-Christian Iceland.[74] This Icelandic system was based upon the legal system of Nordic countries, since the Norse had settled Iceland. In this saga, Njal, a lawyer, attempts to mediate, arbitrate, and litigate controversies among Icelanders, and the reader is introduced to the legal system commonly existing throughout Northern Europe approximately one millennium ago:

- lowly peasants could file suit against even powerful feudal lords and would get their day in court;
- process servers were used to summon defendants to court by orally stating the claims made against them—and the defendants would accept service by repeating the claims verbatim;
- district courts would try cases and if any party disagreed with the verdict, they could appeal to the Althing—a higher court—for review;
- a court would only have personal jurisdiction over a defendant if that defendant engaged in conduct in that jurisdiction or paid homage to that jurisdiction's "godi"—the feudal lord;
- jurors would serve as factfinders and parties could exercise peremptory challenges to excuse a certain number of prospective jurors from the trial for any reason or for no reason whatsoever;
- lawyers could represent real parties in interest at hearings and could call witnesses to testify and question them; causes of action could be assigned to third parties, who could then litigate the cases on their own;
- a system of probate law existed whereby the estate of a decedent was distributed to their heirs in an equitable manner; a placeholder called "Jon" was used by Norse lawyers in a way similar to how lawyers today use "John Doe" for unknown parties;
- husbands and wives could sue one another for divorce;
- the elected "lawspeaker" would publish all laws by orally reciting them in public;
- individualism—both in the context of rights and obligations—was a significant theme of Norse law;

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[74] Kyle J. Bristow, "Our White Common Law," *The Occidental Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 63–68.

- finally, the Icelandic people had a relatively well understood body of laws, rights, legal procedures, and specific penalties for criminal offenses.

HOW ETHNICALLY COHESIVE WERE IE GROUPS IN LATE CLASSICAL AND EARLY MEDIEVAL EUROPE?

Current scholarly opinion tends to de-emphasize the ethnic coherence of the various Germanic groups that succeeded the Roman Empire in Europe. Part of this is political correctness (an extreme version of which is Patrick J. Geary's *The Myth of Nations*, which is explicitly motivated to rationalize current displacement-level immigration to Europe[75]). Nevertheless, given the basic model of IE conquest and subjugation of native populations by male military groups, as described above, it would not be at all surprising to find that these groups were not ethnically cohesive, at least originally. However, given the assimilative tendencies of IEs and the prospects of upward mobility depending on personal accomplishment, as well as that the original conquests were completed by ca. 4500 BP, there would have been enough time to create significantly cohesive ethnic groups even in cultures dominated originally by alien ruling elites.

Peter Heather's *The Goths* is unusual in that it attempts to answer the fundamental issue of the ethnic cohesiveness of the various groups within and near the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era.[76] It is now more or less universal among scholars to reject the idea that groups like the Goths were cohesive ethnic groups as represented, for example, in the work of Tacitus. An ethnic group in the strong sense would be united by having common ancestors and originating in a particular place.

Heather rejects a purely instrumental theory of ethnicity, such as that of Frederick Barth,[77] in which people can easily change their ethnicity and are free to choose it; in this view, ethnic barriers are socially constructed rather than based on binding ties resulting from biological relatedness. This general view is typically combined with the idea that elites often foster ideologies of ethnicity "to create a sense of solidarity in

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[75] Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[76] Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

[77] Frederick Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1998).

subject peoples bound to them."[78]

On the opposite end of the theoretical spectrum, primordialists emphasize that ethnicity is not easily changeable, nor is it typically seen as changeable. Heather takes a middle view that different theories of ethnicity are needed to apply to particular situations and that only empirical research can resolve which perspective best fits a particular situation—a view that I find quite sensible but which, apart from Heather's work, is rarely applied.

The traditional view is that Goths originated in Scandinavia, spread south to Poland and the Baltic, and split into two separate groups, the Ostrogoths and Visigoths, that were led by two royal families, the Balthi and the Amals respectively. Heather suggests that the evidence is compatible with a few Gothic aristocratic clans migrating from Scandinavia to northern Poland.[79] But, since this remains doubtful, he begins Gothic history with a group settled by the Vistula in northern Poland in the first century AD. In a comment illustrating Indo-European migrations of *Männerbünde*, he notes that "a whole series of armed groups left northern Poland to carve new niches for themselves, east and south-east of the Carpathians. . . . At least some of the action was carried forward by warbands: groups of young men on the make. . . . Tacitus signals that the warband was a standard feature of first-century Germanic society and it was still common in the fifth."[80]

Nevertheless, despite a central role for *Männerbünde*, he proposes that women and children formed part of the migration based on archeological remains.[81] Further, these groups exemplified aristocratic egalitarianism as described above:

> Processes of social differentiation had created, by the fourth century, a powerful political elite among the Goths, composed of a freeman class among whom there were already substantial differentials in wealth. These may have been both wide and rigid enough for us to think of greater freemen as at least quasi nobility. Controlling these men was far from easy. The best sources portray fourth-century Gothic leaders "urging" and "persuading" their fol-

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[78] Heather, *The Goths*, 4.
[79] *Ibid.*, 26.
[80] *Ibid.*, 45.
[81] *Ibid.*, 49.

lowers rather than just issuing orders, and leaders' counsels could be overruled.[82]

By the fourth century, then, there was a "well-entrenched elite" in Germanic societies and among the Goths in particular.[83] We can see the typical IE pattern: writing in the first century AD, Tacitus notes that chiefs had "retinues of young men of military age"[84]—private armies; the main body for enforcement was, however, public—the comitatus composed of adult males and with military, judicial, and political functions. By the fourth century, Heather suggests a shift toward armies dominated by leaders with great social power rather than the comitatus.[85]

Critically, Heather argues that the politically significant class among Goths in the fifth century "amounted to at least one-fifth (and perhaps rather more) of the total male population of 25,000–30,000."[86] This group is probably the freeman group referred to in the Germanic law codes of the early medieval period. This is not a small inner circle but a fairly substantial group: "Power was not solely the preserve of a very restricted group of families."[87]

Consistent with much other data reviewed above, there were three broad classes across a wide range of Germanic groups, free, freed or half-free, and slaves.[88] "The groups were, notionally at least, closed off from one another by strict laws against intermarriage, and the unfree classes were considerably disadvantaged. Characteristically they received heavier punishments for the same offense, and lacked legal autonomy."[89]

In discussing an influential view that group identity was carried by a "very restricted group of dominant noble clans,"[90] Heather agrees that that is the case in the sixth and seventh centuries but doubts it for the fourth century which he characterizes as dominated by "an elite that "remained relatively numerous: a broad social caste of emergent nobles

[82] *Ibid.*, 57.

[83] *Ibid.*, 65.

[84] *Ibid.*, 66.

[85] *Ibid.*, 68.

[86] *Ibid.*, 73.

[87] *Ibid.*, 76. These groups were very warlike. He notes the trouble leaders had in controlling their followers' "martial enthusiasm."

[88] Heather, *The Goths*, 75.

[89] *Ibid.*, 75. This is apparent in the Visigothic Code, as mentioned above.

[90] *Ibid.*, 88.

and freemen, rather than a very restricted noble class,"[91] estimating the "fully enfranchised" Goths at between 5,000–10,000 in each generation.[92] This fully enfranchised class had a much greater stake in the system: in the war with Byzantium, the Goths got little help from the Romans, and non-elite Goths surrendered. Only when their women and children were captured, did the elites become less motivated.

This suggests that as we move toward the Middle Ages, groups become more dominated by narrow clan-like elites ruling over others who are not considered part of the clan—that is, family based strategies which would tend toward exploitation because elites do not see themselves as connected to the rest of the people. Thus, by the seventh century in Visigothic Spain, this broad-based elite was replaced by a "dominant nobility with deeply entrenched rights."[93] Parallel processes occurred throughout the successor states in the Western Roman Empire: "By the end of the seventh century, the 'Franks' of Nuestria were a cluster of a half-dozen or so interrelated clans."[94]

Thus in the emerging societies of the Middle Ages, dominant elites seem to have operated as clans in opposition to the rest of society, the latter having no separate identity. "It is even possible that the division of Gothic society into distinct castes was itself the result of the processes of migration and conquest. . . . The conquering migrants, for instance, could have transformed themselves into an elite freeman caste by turning conquered indigenous populations, or elements of them, into subordinates, whether slave or freed."[95]

This contrasts with the situation when the Huns, an Asian people, dominated the Goths. Non-Hunnic groups remained separate and subordinate while still maintaining their group identity, presumably because of the genetic and cultural difference between Huns and Germanic peoples, and the relatively lesser tendency for the Huns, as a non-European people, to assimilate.

Thus Heather proposes that being a Goth in the fourth century was open to anyone who accepted the rules. Goths were less like a people

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[91] *Ibid.*, 88.

[92] *Ibid.*, 273.

[93] *Ibid.*, 294.

[94] *Ibid.*, 285. Notice the quotation marks around "Franks," implying that the ethnic component had dissipated.

[95] *Ibid.*, 90. On the other hand, Roman policy was to break up conquered peoples and distribute them widely within the empire to dilute ethnic bonds.

and more like an army; a common view among historians is that these groups tended to be predominantly (but not exclusively) male, but "were composed of a wide mixture of ethnic elements, not just Goths."[96] Citing evidence that women and children were in these groups, Heather notes that "this evidence makes it very difficult not to see [Gothic king] Theoderic's following as a broadly based social group engaged in a large-scale migration of more or less the traditionally envisaged kind."[97]

Thus fourth-century Gothic kingdoms

> were already multi-ethnic. . . . They probably consisted of a defining migrant elite of quasi-nobles and freemen, the basic carriers of "Gothicness." These migrants coexisted, however, with a whole series of subordinates, and boundaries between the groups were liable to fluctuation. . . . The fact that survival and profit in the face of Roman power provided a huge impetus to the creation of the new supergroups in part argues against the importance of pre-existing Gothic ethnicity. Belonging to a large group was what really mattered, not its composition. We might also expect the shared experiences of the Migration Period to have generated a degree of homogenization, i.e., the absorption of subordinates into the elite. Groups needed to stick together to survive.[98]
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> I think it likely . . . that there was a layer of common Gothic identity within Gothic individuals of the fourth century who enjoyed the crucial status of freemen. It was submerged, however, beneath other layers of identity of a more particular and separate kind (Tervingi, Greuthungi, etc.). Only when Huns and Romans had, between them, destroyed these outer layers, could a more general sense of Gothicness, given added point by circumstances of danger and opportunity, be utilized to help create the new supergroups. Even so, Gothicness was not such an exclusive concept that other would-be recruits were refused. The "Gothicness" of the new supergroups was thus a complicated mixture of claimed and recognized social status, pre-existing similarity, and the overriding press of circumstance.[99]

Given the openness of Gothic societies to absorbing different groups, it is not surprising that the Goths assimilated with the original Roman

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[96] *Ibid.*, 169.

[97] *Ibid.*, 171–72.

[98] *Ibid.*, 175.

[99] *Ibid.*, 178.

landed gentry. At first the Romans turned to church occupations, retreated to libraries, or served in the Goth army, the latter "en masse." Intermarriage with the Goths began, and there was general assimilation.

For example, in Italy, assimilation was widespread. Ostrogothic Italy was very Roman—King Theoderic (454–526) was enthralled by Roman culture and saw his kingdom as a continuation of the Roman Empire.[100] His family pursued marriage alliances with other elites (Vandals, Visigoths, Burgundians) by marrying off female relatives. In Visigothic Spain, Heather argues that by AD 700 "the landowning class of the peninsula—a mixture of migrant Goths and indigenous Romans—had fought and married its way to unity and synthesis under a Gothic flag of convenience."[101]

As noted throughout this article, the principle of individual accomplishment rather than kinship ties prevailed: When Theoderic died, the Goths replaced his successor with a non-relative because Theoderic's grandson Theodahad was a poor leader. "The new king, Wittigus, stressed that he belonged to Theoderic's dynasty not by blood, but because his deeds were of similar stature."[102]

This is important. Ability as a military leader, not blood, counted. As typical of IE societies, the bottom line for followers was not kinship but whether they would be rewarded by the spoils of conquest—an indication of the continued importance of gift-giving rather than kinship for holding together coalitions: As Heather notes, "a lord distributing due reward to the brave is straight out of Germanic heroic poetry."[103]

But ethnicity remained important during the early period after conquest. Disputes between Goths and Romans were adjudicated before two judges, one from each group. But intermarriage eventually became common.[104] By the time of Theoderic's death (AD 526), "the populations were still distinguishable, but a process of cultural fusion was well underway."

In summary, at their origins the Goths were significantly ethnic—in the fourth century around 20–50% being a freeman class with at least a

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[100] *Ibid.*, 221.

[101] *Ibid.*, 297.

[102] *Ibid.*, 239.

[103] *Ibid.*, 243–44. Heather describes Wittigus and Theudis as "senior members of the two clans that dominated the throne after the Amal dynasty had been ousted" (*ibid.*, 247). Medieval historians have found that succession tends to be an issue if there is no adult son ready to take over (*ibid.*, 253).

[104] *Ibid.*, 257.

sense of Gothic identity if not a sense of biological kinship. (The latter is not clearly addressed by Heather.) However, group identity was most important under conditions of threat or expansion. After attaining dominance in Spain, this groupness tended to dissipate, to be replaced by a more class-structured society where elites were composed of both Romans and Goths, with a great deal of intermarriage. Family strategizing related to social class became more important than group identity. This is an illustrative example showing the weakness of extended kinship bonds among Western peoples and the tendency to splinter in the absence of threat.

One might view this as a paradigm of what happened with the IE groups generally. They typically achieved military dominance centered around elite warrior-leaders with a militarily significant group of followers. The elite classes were permeable, so after victory previous elites were allowed to persist and intermarriage occurred (e.g., Hispano-Romans with Goths in seventh-century Spain). Talented people from lower orders could rise into elite status if, e.g., they were militarily talented.

Moreover, the original IE group became less of an identity over time as society evolved to be more class-based. Under more settled circumstances, elites gradually shed their wider kinship connections, and kinship itself became more focused on close relatives. These later elites pursued family strategies where known kinship relations among close relatives were important, but the social structure of the society as a whole did not at all resemble a clan. Ultimately, by the time of the High Middle Ages, elite family strategies become ossified by enshrining the principle of familial succession rather than succession based on talent and accomplishment.

CONCLUSION

The Indo-Europeans were an extraordinarily successful group that had by far the most influence on European culture over approximately 4,000 years, into the European Middle Ages and beyond. Armed with cutting edge military and food technology, as well as with a culture that prized military accomplishment above all else and allowed for the upward mobility of the most adept warriors, the Indo-Europeans were an unstoppable force in the ancient world. In Europe, they encountered peoples who shared their individualism, if not other aspects of their culture. However, given that barriers against intermarriage rather quickly broke down, males from the older European peoples who were able to

become upwardly mobile within the IE cultural environment were able to rise—hence the image of the blond, blue-eyed Viking raiders who embodied the hyper-masculine, aggressive IE culture deriving originally from the relatively dark-haired, dark-eyed steppe people who originally developed IE culture.[105]

The IE contribution to the European genetic and cultural heritage is thus very large. And yet, as we survey IE culture, it seems utterly foreign to the present culture of the West. And it is foreign. Where IE culture was intensively hierarchical, the present-day West is determinedly egalitarian, and not simply within an elite aristocratic class. Where IE culture was completely militarized and prized only the warrior virtues, contemporary culture values a completely different set of personal qualities—empathy, financial success, and a relatively high position for women. The burden of other chapters of *Western Origins and Prospects* will be to chart the origins and development of the egalitarian strand of Western origins, its strengths, and its vulnerabilities.

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[105] Wilde et al., "Direct Evidence for Positive Selection of Skin, Hair, and Eye Pigmentation in Europeans during the Last 5,000 Y."