

those differences, and the autonomy is granted on the basis of that.

RJ *What is the relation between nationalism and democracy? Can they coexist, or are they doomed to be in conflict with one another?*

Once you have democracy as an aspiration, then you have both particular dangers and a general program, a way of doing things. **If you have democracy, you can have a confederal/federal kind of democracy in which different national groups have a degree of autonomy** within that state. I think it's more likely to occur nowadays than the imperial method of integration by force.

But a particular danger comes when you have two, or, perhaps three groups who all have realistic claims to their own state, because then the notion of rule by the people, which is democracy, can take an ethnic turn, and the people can be defined as Serbs rather than Croats, or Hutus rather than Tutsis, and so the ambiguity of 'the people' is associated with the two root words in the Western languages, which derive from the Greek terms, *ethnos*, meaning a kind of ethnicity or national grouping, and *demos*, as in 'democracy.' So that's the danger, and countries that have those two identities have problems. Take Canada, for instance, whose French-speaking population cannot fully integrate into an English-speaking country. As a result, there is some form of federation that gives certain rights to Francophones. And that's the correct model to follow, it is the genuine democratic route. The other one is the perverse democratic route.

RJ *What do you think about a common practice in political science to distinguish between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism?*

It can be, but the distinction is nowhere near as simple, and actual relations between groups are usually to some degree a mixture of the two, but yes, the models to follow are clearly more civic today. There's no reason why people shouldn't have a sensible ethnic identity. In most of the world this is accomplished in a completely harmless way: nationalism exists for football matches and big games, and there's a feeling that one nationality has some intrinsic value over others, but this ethnic nationalism rarely leads to violence in most countries. Given the institutions of democracy, if you have them, ethnic nationalism shouldn't be much of a problem. The trick is in how you get to that democracy if you have different ethnic conceptions. If there are several legitimate and forcible claims then this can lead to a dangerous situation. ■

Michael Mann was speaking with Yulia Netesova

MISSIONARY NATION



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Russians, like the English, are a 'missionary nation,' that is, **they dissolved their national identity in a universal mission**, that of holding together a great multi-ethnic empire, and of spreading Orthodox Christianity — or Communism in the 20th century — to the rest of the world. Moreover, since Russia is a territorial state, it has maintained a legitimate interest in stability on its borders, which it is sometimes tempted to enforce in an overbearing, neo-imperialist manner.

All nation-states have ethnic minorities. And in this context there always needs to be a *Leitkultur*, or dominant culture and language, otherwise social and economic interaction becomes difficult. Yet each nationality should have a right to its own cultural and religious life. Of course, reconciling these opposing priorities is difficult, and each nation-state must devise its own way of doing so, without discriminating against minorities. In this respect, Russia's record is quite good, historically speaking, though with some exceptions — such as the anti-Jewish pogroms of the early twentieth century

or Stalin's deportation of nationalities. In fact, in the Tsarist Empire and in the late Soviet Union, Russians sometimes had the feeling that they were the ones being discriminated against.

Serious discrimination against minorities naturally generates among them the desire to secede. One of the main reasons for the collapse of the USSR was Stalin's earlier mistreatment of the Baltic peoples, West Ukrainians, and north Caucasian peoples. His mass deportation of elites (and, in some cases, of entire nationalities) left a legacy of bitter hatred towards Russians, towards Communists, and towards the Soviet Union. The Baltic peoples were the first to secede; the West Ukrainians delivered the final blow to the USSR with their referendum on December 1st, 1991; and the Chechens have cost the Russian Federation its most serious war since the end of the USSR. In general, it would be wrong for the Russians to have a higher civic status than other ethnic groups, even if their language and culture are generally regarded as the *Leitkultur* of the nation. ■