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## Erik von Luehnelt-Leddihn: Liberty or Equality Study Guide

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#### **Recommended Citation**

Samson, Steven Alan, "Erik von Luehnelt-Leddihn: Liberty or Equality Study Guide" (2004). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. 172.

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# ERIK VON KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN: LIBERTY OR EQUALITY STUDY GUIDE, 2004 Steven Alan Samson

#### **Outline**

- A. FREEDOM AND EQUALITY (2-3)
  - 1. **Freedom**: The Greatest Amount of Self-Determination That Is Feasible, Reasonable, and Possible
    - a. As a Means to Safeguarding Man's Happiness and Protecting His Personality It Is an Intermediary End: Part of the Common Good
    - b. It Cannot Be Brutally Sacrificed to the Demands of Absolute Efficiency Nor to Efforts towards a Maximum of Material Welfare [Utilitarianism]
  - 2. **Equality** Presupposes the *Continuous Intervention of Force* Which, as a Principle, is Opposed to Freedom [cf. Minogue on Politics vs. Despotism]
    - a. Equality Should Not Be Confused with **Equity** (Justice)
    - b. "Christian Equality" is Merely Subjection under the *Same* Law—in Other Words *Isonomy*
    - c. The Artificial Establishment of Equality Is as Incompatible with Liberty as the Enforcement of *Unjust* Laws of Discrimination
      - (1) Root of **Unjust Discrimination**: Greed, Pride and Arrogance
      - (1) Driving Motor of the Egalitarian and **Identitarian** Trends: Envy, Jealousy, and Fear
  - 3. Liberty and Equality Are in Essence Contradictory
- B. THE LIBERAL (3-4)
  - 1. "Liberal" and "Democratic" Are the Most Frequently Misused Political Labels
  - 2. A Liberal Wishes People to Enjoy the Greatest Reasonable Amount of Liberty
    - a. Regardless of the Juridical Type of Government
    - b. The True Liberal Is Not Pledged to Any Specific Constitution, But Simply Wishes That He and His Fellow-Citizens Enjoy a Maximum of Liberty
    - c. A Liberal That Accepts **Plato**'s Evaluation of Democracy Would Reject This Form Because It Is Fatally Doomed to Develop into Tyranny
    - d. The Highest and Inalienable Liberty Is Ascetic Liberty (Self-Denial) [cf. Daniel 1: 3=17]
  - The Term "Liberal" in Its Political Sense Is of Spanish Origin, 1812 [Ortega Was a Spanish Liberal!
    - a. Later Adopted by Robert Southey and Sir Walter Scott (from the French)
    - b. In the United States It Has Come to Mean Someone Who Welcomes Change, Even Perhaps to Embrace or Foster a Totalitarian Ideology
    - c. Genuine Liberals Like Oswald Garrison Villard Called Themselves "Old-Fashioned Liberals" to Be Distinguished from Communist Sympathizers
    - d. In Europe Similar Mischief Is Associated with "Sectarian Liberals"
  - 4. Philosophical and Psychological Motives for the Liberal Position
    - a. Driving Force behind Christian Liberalism: Affection and Generosity
    - b. Liberalism Derived from **Nihilism** May Not Result in a Liberal Attitude
- C. DEMOCRACY (5-7)
  - 1. "Democracy" and "Democratic" are *Political* Terms
  - 2. **Democracy** Implies "Power (Rule) of the People
    - a. Mere Affection for the Lower Classes Is **Demophily**
  - 3. Some of the American Founding Fathers Tended to Identify Democracy Rigorously with One of Its Manifestations—*Direct* Democracy
    - a. As Strict Republicans, They Were also Deeply Critical of Most of the Principles of Indirect Democracy

- o. Mortimer Adler: The Dawn of American Democracy Begins with Jackson
- 4. Precepts of Democracy (The Classical Concept)
  - a. Legal and Political Equality, That Is, a Franchise for All
  - b. "Self-Government" Based on the *Rule of the Majority* of Equals, Either Directly by the Whole Populace or Indirectly through Representatives
- 5. Representatives in an Indirect Democracy Have the Duty of Repeating the Views of the Electorate [**Delegate Theory**]
  - a. In the Opposite Case [**Trustee Theory**] We Have a **Republic** Rather than a Democracy
- 6. Respect of Minorities, Freedom of Speech, Limitations Imposed upon the Rule of Majorities Are *Liberal* Tenets
  - a. They May or May Not Be Present in a Democracy
- D. MONARCHY COMPARED WITH DEMOCRACY (150-51)
  - 1. Monarchy is by its Nature Dissociated from Party Rule
    - a. Democracy Is by Nature Party Rule
    - b. President (or Prime Minister) Lacks General Backing
  - 2. Monarch Is the **Political and Social Head** of the Nation
    - a. President of the United States Is Not a "Social" Leader
    - b. Monarch Can Rule Not Only through Law But also through His Prestige
  - 3. Monarch Has the Advantage of Being Educated for His Profession
    - a. A Democratic Leader Can Only Have the Hasty Technical Training of Those with a "Late Vocation"
    - b. The *Raison d'Étre* [Rationale] of Democracy is Not Truth, Efficacy, Reason, Study, and Reflection, but **Volition** [Will] Pure and Simple
    - c. Widespread General Education Cannot Compensate for a Professional Education [See Below the Distinction between *Scita* and *Scienda*]
      - (1) Goals Set by Democratic Apologists Can Only Be Reached by Small Fractions of Highly Gifted Individuals [Natural Aristocrats]
      - (2) What They Do Not Take into Consideration Is the Hard Fact of Human Imperfection, of Original Sin
  - 4. Education of Ideal Monarch Is Not Only Intellectual But also **Moral and Spiritual** 
    - a. Democratic Leader Coming into Power Is Always "Unprepared"
      - (1) The Sudden Rise to Fame and Authority Turns the Mind and Upsets the Balance of the Careerist in a Democracy
      - (2) Corruption of Power Is Worst in a Plebiscitarian Dictatorship
- E. DEMOCRACY AND ITS DISCONTENTS (273-75)
  - 1. The Growing Gap Between **Scita** [Theoretical Knowledge] and **Scienda** [Expert Knowledge] Is a Crucial Issue
    - a. Witness the Large Percentage of Non-Voters
  - 2. "Politics" Is a Dirty Game
  - 3. General Contempt for the Clergy Resembles That of the Middle Ages
  - Council of Trent Reformed the Church; No Such Reform of Popular Government Is Possible
  - 5. Sadism of the French Revolution
- F. PORTLAND DECLARATION (275-78)
  - 1. It Supplies a Need for Minimal Government of Highest Quality
    - a. What We Have Now Is Maximal Government of the Lowest Quality
  - 2. It Envisages a Government Directly Responsible for Homeland Security, Defense, Justice, Ecology and Foreign Affairs
    - a. It Would Merely Survey Mediating Institutions (**Subsidiarity**)
    - b. **Federalism**, Not Centralism, Would Be Its Guiding Principle
- G. THE PROBLEM OF OUR TIME (279-81)
  - 1. The Ancien Régime [Old Monarchy] Displaced, Then Replaced by the "Dawnists"
  - 2. Bankruptcy Arrived within Half a Generation [Again, the Revolt of the Masses]
    - a. Illustration: Firestorm Caused by Allied Bombing of Dresden, 1945
- H. EUROPE: PRESENT AND FUTURE (280-82)