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## CHRISTOPHER DAWSON AND PLURALISM\*

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PLURALISM IS PERHAPS THE CENTRAL FACT OF THE MODERN WORLD, AND ANY theory of political society must take into account the incredible variety of religions and beliefs present in modern society. This fact has generated enormous attention in recent decades, as a subset of the larger debate over the future of modernity. To begin with, there is the threshold question of what pluralism means. Political theorists such as John Gray have adopted the concept of “value-pluralism,” that is, the notion that there are innumerable ways of living that are incommensurate with one another and that cannot be judged according to some objective standard. These political theorists are rejecting the older, Enlightenment view of culture that ranked each in a hierarchy according to a particular scale of values. While still influential, this Enlightenment view has met with resistance for being, oddly, too parochial. The charge is that the “objective” values are themselves culturally-determined. From the vantage of value-pluralists, their view would allow a fresh examination of the sources of the good life. In the American political context, by contrast, pluralism has taken on a distinctly ideological cast. It has emerged as the notion of “multiculturalism,” which posits the existence of numerous separate cultures, each with varying degrees of public recognition under the law, within one larger society.

The British historian Christopher Dawson (1889-1970), however, approached the question from a different direction. Although he rarely used the term pluralism, in many ways that issue is a central theme in his work. Dawson analyzed the question of cultural interaction historically. That is, in his cultural analyses he was careful to explore within a particular culture the different cultural elements of which it was composed. As Dawson himself admitted, he employed the term culture “as the social anthropologists do, to describe any social way of life which possesses a permanent institutional or organized form.”<sup>1</sup> This definition was especially true of “Western” culture, which Dawson made an object of special study, but he utilized this framework in a number of areas.

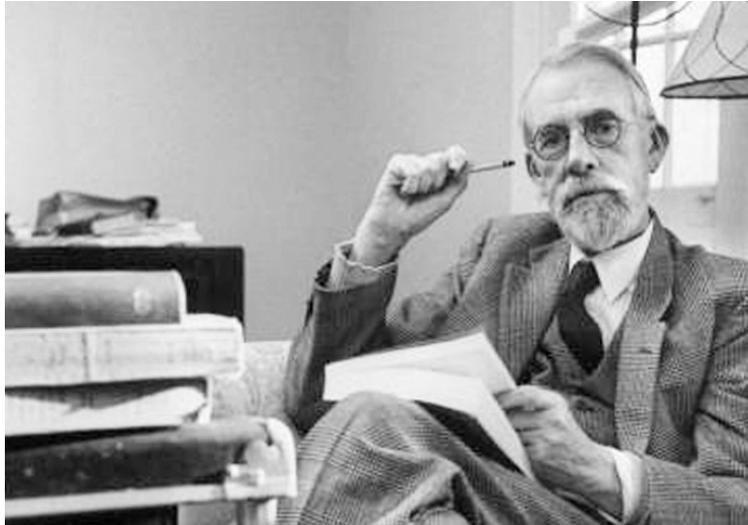
Despite his frequent treatment of the subject in his work, however, an essay on Dawson and pluralism may still need some justification. The typical characterization of Dawson is that he was the “historian of Europe,” and a Catholic one at that. Accordingly, since his death his reputation has suffered from the perception that he was concerned with matters of exclusively Catholic interest. This characterization, however, overlooks central elements of Dawson’s historical vision, elements that I think anticipate some aspects of the contemporary debate, and which make him an historian who can inform us during the current century.

In what follows, I intend to relate his thought to a central feature of contemporary life: the immense pluralism in the cultural practices, religious traditions and political ideas that are present in our society. In particular, I want to examine three aspects of Dawson’s thought: his conclusion that cultures, especially Western culture, historically have been pluralist; his contention that a pluralism of cultures preserves a sphere of freedom from dominant modern ideologies that would eliminate that freedom; and finally, Dawson’s conviction that a pluralist world represents a new opportunity for evangelization.<sup>2</sup>

Cultural interaction, which is a starting-point for a discussion about pluralism, appears in various forms in Dawson's work. For example, the image of borders, and the mixtures of cultures and ideas that occur at those borders, is a consistent theme of his writing. Dawson himself, we should remember, was born of a Welsh mother and an English father. He grew up on the border between Wales and England, in a time when the differences between them were perhaps more distinct than they are now. Localism, and local differences, were still noticeable and set one apart. In fact, it was to this confluence of cultural influences that Dawson would later attribute his interest in history and culture. In his short memoir, *Tradition and Inheritance*, Dawson wrote that, due to his dual heritage and early experiences, "I acquired my love of history, my interest in the differences of cultures and my sense of the importance of religion in human life, as a massive, objective, unquestioned power that entered into everything and impressed its mark on the external as well as the internal world."<sup>3</sup> This interest in cultural interaction was complemented by events in his personal life, not only his conversion in 1914 and his marriage to his wife, Valery, who was raised Catholic, but also his significant work with the ecumenical organization, The Sword of the Spirit. This last association brought home to him the interest shared by Catholics and Protestants in a Christian culture that might face what he saw as the coming totalitarian or technological culture of the modern age. His interest in constructing a workable pluralist vision should therefore not surprise us.

In a famous passage written in 1952, Dawson described Europe not as a single entity but as a "society of peoples."<sup>4</sup> For Dawson, Western culture in particular is not a monolith but a mosaic, both culturally and religiously. Indeed, it is the restless juxtapositions of practices and ideas that propelled Western culture to world power, in comparison, for example, with Byzantium or the ancient Eastern civilizations that had imposed upon their societies a more unified cultural vision. The nations of Europe have inherited a strong tradition of regional

ism and autonomy, which has expressed itself in a wide range of cultural and political institutions. This tradition is largely a result of the expansion, then retreat, of the Roman Empire and the waves of barbarian invaders that swept through Europe throughout the late classical and medieval periods. In his 1932 work, *The Making of Europe*, Dawson wrote that "it is the barbarians which provided the human material out of which Europe has been fashioned; they are the gentes as against the *imperium* and the *ecclesia*."<sup>5</sup> Dawson expressed a hope that the nations of Europe would form a new supranational society that recognized the unity of European culture as well as protected its internal variety.<sup>6</sup>



*Christopher Dawson*

us, is an Eastern Judaic religion supported by a Greek theological system and not, therefore, native to what we now call Europe. As Dawson wrote in his 1960 book, *The Historic Reality of Christian Culture*,

The Church itself, though it bears a Greek name, *Ecclesia*, derived from the Greek *civic* assembly, and is ordered by the Roman spirit of authority and law, is the successor and heir of an Oriental people, set apart from all the peoples of the earth to be the bearer of a divine mission.

Similarly, the mind of the Church, as expressed in the authoritative tradition of the teaching of the Fathers, is neither Eastern nor Western, but universal. It is expressed in Western languages in Greek and Latin but it was in Africa and Asia rather than in Europe that it received its classical formulation. Greek theology was developed at Alexandria and Antioch and in Cappadocia, while Latin theology owes its terminology and distinctive character to the African Fathers—Tertullian, Cyprian and, above all, St. Augustine.

While these men wrote in Latin, it was not the

Latin of the Romans; it was a new form of Christian Latin which was developed, mainly in Tunisia, under strong Oriental influence.<sup>7</sup>

Aside from Christianity, Dawson did not hesitate to locate sources of Western culture beyond what is now Europe. As Fernando Cervantes has pointed out, Dawson recognized pluralism as an historical fact in Western history, and thought that its pluralistic heritage was of real value.<sup>8</sup> Thus, Dawson praises the intellectual and cultural achievements of Islamic Spain in his *Medieval Essays*, noting that although religion was the binding factor in the Moslem world, tolerance of other religions was a central element of the medieval Islamic worldview. He specifically credits the intellectual and sophisticated Moslem culture in Spain with preserving and improving the Greek scientific heritage, and for providing the basis for the later medieval romance tradition.<sup>9</sup> Just as importantly, Dawson notes that this culture itself was composed of a multitude of elements: “[a]lthough it was nominally Arabic, it was based on the tradition of Greek culture transmitted by Syriac scholars and developed by the common activity of Moslems, Christians and Jews.”<sup>10</sup> Losing elements of that history such as the connections of the West with Byzantium in the Middle Ages constituted a diminution of Western civilization. In a sense, for Dawson Western culture from its inception was pluralistic: its natural expansionist impulses were channeled and enhanced by the missionary impulses of Christianity.

Dawson brought this same insight to his examination of other civilizations. As early as 1927, for example, Dawson was praising the art and literature of China as “among the supreme achievements of the human spirit.”<sup>11</sup> His first book, *The Age of the Gods* (1928), constituted his first large-scale study of what John Mulloy has called “the cross-fertilizing contacts between different civilizations and cultures”<sup>12</sup> and was an examination of cultural origins in Europe and the ancient East. (In this context, it might be noted that Dawson’s method itself was pluralist, combining in new ways the insights of history, sociology and anthropology.) To return again to his study of and appreciation for Islam, he thought that “of all types of mysticism that of Islam is the richest perhaps in the quantity and certainly in the quality of its literature.”<sup>13</sup> Dawson praised in particular the tradition of Sufism within Islam, while, interestingly, condemned the “Puritan traditionalism” of Wahabism.

His masterpiece, *Progress and Religion*, is a wide-

ranging analysis of the sociological, cultural and historical factors reflecting religious belief, and the emergence of the idea of progress in the modern West. His marvelous, though largely overlooked, introduction to medieval European travel narratives, originally entitled *The Mongol Mission*, but called in a more recent edition by the University of Toronto, *Mission to Asia*, examines with precision and an open mind the phenomena of cultural interaction.<sup>14</sup> The stark comparisons, for example, between the plain Franciscan friars and the splendor of the courts of the great khans, or the existence of the ancient community of Nestorian Christians in China and the Near East, described in *Mission to Asia*, only confirmed for Dawson that culture cannot so easily be defined by geographic, racial or linguistic criteria.



Dawson, therefore, was blind neither to the pluralism that created Western culture, nor to the worldwide existence of other great world-cultures, with which Western culture has been intertwined since its beginnings. Dawson, like Gray, rejected the Enlightenment vision, in which every civilization inexorably moves toward a modern, secular and technological culture. However, Dawson likewise rejected the historical relativism of historians like Toynbee, who would reduce the true differences in culture—which for Dawson reflected true differences in belief—to historical irrelevance. What was needed in order to face the challenges of the modern world was “some middle way between the blind faith of the nineteenth century in the superiority of Western culture and the skepticism regarding the ultimate values of Western culture which result from the relativist view of the philosophic equivalence of cultures.”<sup>15</sup> It was precisely the disintegration of a proper understanding of the driving forces in Western culture that, Dawson thought, resulted in the exploitation that arose out of the colonial period. It spawned either a narrow nationalism—expressed in its purest form by Germany in the 1930s and 1940s or a bland cosmopolitanism, exemplified best perhaps by the United States. In fact, Dawson preferred the variety of cultures to a uniformity that “might be more favorable to religious unity.”<sup>16</sup> Such pining for a nonexistent “dead level of uniformity” denied the dynamic interaction of place, work and faith that conditions the creation of culture.

These questions of historical pluralism therefore had for Dawson a contemporary resonance that the main stream of contemporary thought had merely pushed beneath the surface without really addressing. The beliefs and values of these different cultures had to be addressed and understood, both for what they had to teach about the centrality of religion in the life of humanity and also to better understand their potential relationship to Christianity.

## II

We can say with some certainty, then, that Dawson was a pluralist, at least in a historical sense. He recognized that no culture develops in a vacuum, and he was appreciative of the other great world cultures. Does Dawson's generous historical vision, however, address pluralism in our contemporary political context?

The problem of pluralism is perhaps the central political question of our time. As the world becomes smaller, differences in culture and values have become more noticeable, and the necessity of developing appropriate means of understanding these differences has only increased since Dawson's day. The events of this past September are a terrible reminder of the differences between cultures that must be understood, if for no other reason than as a defensive mechanism. These issues are also becoming ever more prominent within nations such as the United States, in which a wide array of cultures coexist.

Modern liberalism has generally addressed this issue by removing from political discourse any substantive questions of value, and in particular by segregating religious belief from public life. This is the well-known neutral liberalism espoused by John Rawls and, in a legal context, by Ronald Dworkin.<sup>17</sup> This approach elaborates upon the Enlightenment contention that there are neutral rational principles (of justice or tolerance, for example) that will allow people to live as they wish, without any contentious moral or cultural questions arising in the political sphere. In their place, liberalism has established an abstract system of values that represent the lowest common denominators of human life.

But there is a growing consensus that the liberal attempt to create a value-free pluralism has failed, as even its recent proponents are admitting. John Gray, who has turned from a friend of liberalism to an astute critic, ar-

gues that this new liberalism simply reduces politics to theories of jurisprudence that ignore the historical and political realities that the liberal thinkers are presumed to be explaining.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Stanley Fish, in an energetic recent book, argues that all the liberal theories of tolerance that have emerged in the last few years inevitably turn to enforcing the theorists' own prejudices, and conspicuously have no place for those who do not already agree with the theory's premises—most specifically, religious believers.<sup>19</sup>

Dawson saw very early that the liberal age begun by the Enlightenment and secularization had begun to decay by the early twentieth century. Indeed, as early as 1920, Dawson was writing essays describing "The Passing of Industrialism," by which he meant the structures that allowed liberal thought to flourish. He anticipated the rise of what he called a "vague moral idealism" and a "vague rational optimism" that would try to replace belief in modern political societies. He also foresaw that this replacement would be insufficient in the face of the challenges of the modern world first the regimes of Germany and the Soviet Union, but also the soft tyranny of consumer societies such as Britain and the United States. The natural conclusion of this liberal secularizing process is totalitarianism, which elevates one idea—the concept of race, or the class struggle, the state, or an undefined "tolerance" over any others, and uses the powers of government to enforce that idea. Because liberalism dispenses with a recognition of the normative force of spiritual values in the polity, it becomes vulnerable to appeals to economic utility or political power. These cannot substitute for a religious faith that allows for plural expression of eternal truths or uncontrollable elements of the spiritual life Dawson names for example prayer, repentance and contemplation. As Dawson wrote in *Judgment of the Nations*, his book confronting the dark days of the 1940s, "The liberal movement in the wider sense transformed the world by an immense liberation of human energies, but liberalism in the narrower sense proved incapable of guiding the forces it had released."<sup>20</sup>

In contrast, Dawson invoked the example of the British Empire as representing the best modern attempt to steer a course between a narrow nationalism and a centralizing imperialism. The Empire had "developed the pluralist and self-determining element to its extreme limits,"<sup>21</sup> while still creating a common political society that preserved freedom. Now, of course, praising empires is out of fashion, but we should recall that Dawson

was comparing the British Empire to the growing Communist domination, which represented to Dawson the dark side of Western dynamism. It fostered a materialistic culture that denied the transcendent an approach not only false to human nature, but also culturally and politically disastrous.

Dawson would agree with the liberal contention that tolerance must be a basis for a just society. He would disagree, however, with the corollary contention made by the Rawlsians, that tolerance must necessarily include a refusal to make religious concerns part of the public sphere. Such a view of liberalism echoes the “antidogmatic principle” that Dawson, following Newman, denounced. Such a view of the place of religion, he thought, would result in a “civilization that fails to satisfy the needs of man’s spiritual nature,” one which “produces a state of spiritual confluence and moral maladjustment which weakens the vitality of the whole social organism. This is why the modern machine-made civilization, in spite of the material benefits it has conferred, is marked by a feeling of moral unrest and social discontent.”<sup>22</sup> Dawson restated this theme even more strongly in his 1960 essay, “America and the Secularization of Modern Culture,” where he spoke of the violence that lay underneath such a secular order.<sup>23</sup>

Instead, Dawson contended that the religious principle that he found at the root of every culture was, paradoxically, better suited to address inter-cultural differences than the secular society. “[I]t is only when the religions of different cultures,” he wrote, “come into contact with one another . . . that real contact is made with the spirit of the alien culture.”<sup>24</sup> Liberalism, by denying this universal human trait, seems parochial in contrast. It is unable to deal with the larger passions of political and social life. Adam Seligman makes this same point in his recent book *Modernity’s Wager*, in which he argues for a renewed appreciation for the importance of transcendence in the construction of social reality.<sup>25</sup>

Rather, Dawson sought to re-establish liberalism on what he saw as its true foundation: the tradition of Western thought centered on the “ultimate and indestructible” value of the individual, which is ultimately

based upon a recognition that humanity is made in the divine image. This would be the new basis for what he called “co-operative society,” which would recognize the separate and coordinate functions of human institutions apart from the power of the state churches, families schools and other institutions that would be animated by the religious principle.<sup>26</sup> These institutions would create and preserve freedom, both “of association and some choice of vocation.”<sup>27</sup>

It was, he contended, a certain understanding of liberalism that forced a unitary moral and cultural system upon all the members of society by restricting the sphere of private belief. To its modern proponents, liberalism seemed to grant a wider range of freedom to the individual than any other system. Yet, considered as a political and economic system, liberalism surrounds individuals so completely that real freedom is impossible. The individual is torn between a political system that governs almost all areas of life, and an economic system that purports

to answer his every physical or psychological need, at the price of true autonomy. In *Religion and the Modern State*, Dawson describes this contradiction:

[I]he modern State is daily extending its control over a wider area of social life and is taking over functions that were formerly regarded as the province of independent social units, such as the family and the Church, or as a sphere for the voluntary activities of private individuals. It is not merely

that the State is becoming more centralized but that society and culture are becoming *politicized*.<sup>28</sup>

Dawson uses the issue of education to demonstrate his point. Compulsory education (usually in state-sponsored schools) is a hallmark of a modern democratic society, and long regarded as close to the center of the “American way of life.” It has been used in America to inculcate inculcate “democratic values,” as espoused by thinkers such as John Dewey, whom Dawson compared to the Communists “in their subordination of educat-

  
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tion to the needs of the political community” and to serve the purposes of the state.<sup>29</sup> More recently, the function of the school is considered the training of students as “consumers” ready for the global marketplace. While purporting to be neutral in matters of ultimate truth, such a school system will inevitably condition the beliefs of its charges. In advocating a new co-operative society, Dawson sought to combat these tendencies, which, with the growth of mass communications and sophisticated advertising and marketing techniques, have only grown in our time.

### III

Dawson concluded, then, that pluralism was a fact of Western history. Further, Dawson favored cultural pluralism, both because it allowed varied expressions of the natural human religious impulse and also because it allowed for a realm of freedom against the technological modern state. I now want to make a few remarks on Dawson and religious pluralism.

Dawson’s interest in pluralism should never be separated from his concerns for unity. The disruptions in Western history caused by the breach in religious unity at the Reformation had a consistent place in his understanding of history, and we should not forget that clearly Dawson wanted to reunite those separated portions of the Christian world. Early in his career, however, Dawson concluded that a return to the “undifferentiated unity of medieval culture,” which in any event existed more in theory than in fact, was impossible and indeed undesirable.<sup>30</sup> Rather, Dawson contended that the Church should embrace the new possibilities presented by the age, which he often compared with the confused period of the Roman Empire in the first few centuries of Christianity.

In these circumstances, Christians should not seek to be used as “instruments of secular power and politics” but should stand as witnesses to eternal truths and sources of cultural renewal. Their influence will extend beyond the political and economic concerns of the state and into the cultural sphere. This new situation will allow for what Dawson called “more openings for the action of grace,” which is more important than any particular cultural practice or political dominance.<sup>31</sup> Any resulting unity will represent not a flattening of different cultures under political pressure, but a common recognition of the transcendent and its role in the formation of

human civilization. A Christian culture would preserve the knowledge of the divine represented in and through each of its constituent parts.

America, which Dawson had written about since the 1930s and which he visited in the late 1950s when appointed to the Chair in Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard University, provides an example of the opportunities Dawson eventually came to see in the new religious situation. Dawson at first considered American-style democracy and liberalism only as insufficient surrogates for the lost coherent religious tradition of Christendom, giving rise in America to the possibility of “a purely secular type of culture which subordinates the whole of life to practical and economic ends and leaves no room for independent spiritual activity.”<sup>32</sup> *In Progress and Religion*, American civilization was depicted as the embodiment of technology gone awry: life was concerned only with consumption and production, “more cinemas, motor-cars for all, wireless installations, more elaborate methods of killing people, purchase on the hire system, preserved foods and picture papers.”<sup>33</sup> America merely represented the obverse of socialism: the capitalistic version of materialism. Both ideologies subsumed the spiritual to the political and economic.

That attitude was to change over the years, especially after Dawson’s extended stay in the United States. Dawson came to believe that America represented overall a healthy elaboration of the Western tradition. Its origins in the extreme sectarianism and pluralist traditions of Protestantism had established a realm of personal and communal freedom that remains a resource in the modern world, and of which Christians could take advantage. Freedom of religion was an “essential condition” of the American system, and of a piece with the American tradition of individual liberty.<sup>34</sup> To resist the forces of secularization that accompany the growth of a technological society, America needed to return to a true pluralist vision.

The history of sectarianism, however, had fostered a feeling that religion was a merely private matter and inappropriate for public discussion. It left Americans unprepared to defend themselves against the prosperity and dominance that the United States assumed after the Second World War. Privatization of religion, while originally conceived of as a protection for faith, resulted in vulnerability. vulnerability. Thus, Dawson thought that Catholics, whose traditions extended beyond Americans

sectarianism or liberalism, had to assume a role as protector of these various other minorities against state and private economic power. It was their responsibility, he wrote in 1947, “that every possible effort should be made to preserve at least some societies which protect man’s spiritual freedom.”<sup>35</sup>

As Joseph Koterski, S.J., notes, Dawson anticipated the move toward recognizing full religious liberty that came about in the Second Vatican Council. Koterski argues that Dawson, like the modern Popes, placed a “personal right to religious freedom within a larger body of social tracing” that is “encompassed within the evangelical mission of the Church.”<sup>36</sup> Drawing upon the work of Pope Pius XI, Dawson believed that religious freedom was rooted in the natural law and in the sacred character of the individual. The new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* agrees with this view. Paragraph 2107 states that even if a privileged position is given to one religious community, all others are to be accorded religious freedom. And paragraphs 2106 and 2108 emphasize that religious liberty is, within just limits, a fundamental attribute of the human person.<sup>37</sup>

Christianity, because of the primacy it places on the relationship between the individual and God, must recognize free will, and a Christian social order must allow appropriate room for the exercise of individual conscience. A Christian society would incorporate and be guided by the Two Cities of Augustine—whose influence is everywhere in Dawson’s work—and the biblical injunction to render to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s. Of course, Dawson was not blind to the historical record, in which supposedly Christian societies trampled upon individuals and other faiths. But Dawson maintained that only Christian social thought had the resources to correct the tendency toward intolerance and to resist any future totalitarianism, based upon modern technology, foreshadowed by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. These new dominating ideologies, by their enveloping force, employ the coercive powers of government and communications to compel adherence. This view is worlds away from the free submission of the will espoused by Christianity, which can only be given voluntarily.

The separation of church and state which Dawson saw as allowing the Church to fulfill its divine mission without being tied to any particular political system—has become, through the prism of liberalism, “the means

of secularizing the American mind.”<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, despite these dangers, he did not advocate any formal union between church and state, declaring that “political religion is an offense to both religion and to politics: it takes from Caesar what belongs to him of right and fills the temple with the noise and dust of the market place.”<sup>39</sup> Today, that offense comes not primarily from a state-sponsored cult, but from unofficial creeds, such as efficiency, capitalism or the therapeutic state, that become in fact an official religion.



The foregoing discussion helps explain why Dawson could favor freedom of belief, on the one hand, as well as the particular claims of Catholic Christianity to the whole truth, on the other. Dawson was quite clear that cultural pluralism could be an aid to the spreading of the Gospel, and not a hindrance to it. His accounts of St. Paul and the first Christians, and his descriptions of how Christianity burst upon the old Roman Empire with a new flowering of belief, demonstrated that for him, Christianity was not limited in its ability to utilize the instruments of different cultures to deliver its message. John Paul II has taken a similar approach in addressing the questions of evangelization and inculturation. In his 1999 letter, *Ecclesia in Asia*, given in New Delhi, the Pope recalled these actions of Paul as a way of reminding Christians that the great evangelists addressed their audience in their own cultural framework. He went on to say:

[T]he Church not only transmits her truths and values and renews cultures from within, but she also takes from the various cultures the positive elements already found in them. This is the obligatory path for evangelizers in presenting the Christian faith and making it part of a people’s cultural heritage. Conversely, the various cultures, when refined and renewed in the light of the Gospel, can become true expressions of the one Christian faith.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, in his letter, the Pope stressed, as Dawson did, that Christianity does not belong to any one culture; “indeed, it transcends these limits and indeed

challenges all cultures to rise to new heights of understanding and expression.”<sup>41</sup>

For Dawson, Christianity’s adaptability was one more reason to believe its truth claims, as it imparted a universal message that could be suited to the sensibilities of other cultures.<sup>42</sup> Because of his emphasis on the importance of the missionary character of Christianity, Dawson was acutely aware of the needs of the missionary to “translate the Gospel into a new language and speak with strange tongues” and “to think in terms of an alien culture and accept its social standards and values,” as he stated in a late essay entitled “Is the Church Too Western?”<sup>43</sup> It was the denial of spiritual values, not their multiplicity, that threatened Christian belief in the modern world.

#### IV



## NOTES

\*Editor’s Note: A version of this paper was given in March 2000 at Belmont Abbey College, and will be published by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute in a volume edited by Gleaves Whitney.

1Christopher Dawson, “What Is a Christian Civilization?” in *Christianity and European Culture*, ed. Gerald J. Russello (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 21.

2 For a good introduction to the varieties of pluralism emergent in the modern world, see V. J. Peter, “A Primer on Pluralism,” *Communio* 10 (Summer 1983): 133.

3Quoted in Christina Scott, *A Historian and His World: A Life of Christopher Dawson* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1992), 11.

4 Christopher Dawson, *Understanding Europe* (New York: Sliced & Ward, 1952), 5.

5 Christopher Dawson, *The Making of Europe* (Meridian Books, 1956), 73. Indeed, as J.G.A. Pocock reminds us, even our definition of Europe or “the West” has changed dramatically across the centuries, as different cultural influences emerged. See J.G.A. Pocock, “What Do We Mean by Europe?” *The Wilson Quarterly* (Winter 1997).

6Christopher Dawson, *Judgment of the Nations* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1942), 215-20.

7Christopher Dawson, *Christianity, and European Culture: Selections from the Work of Christopher Dawson*, ed. Gerald J. Russello (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 100-01.

8 Fernando Cervantes, “Progress and Tradition: Christopher Dawson and Contemporary Thought,” *Logos* 2 (Spring 1999): 84.

9Christopher Dawson, “The Moslem West and the Oriental Background of Later Medieval Culture,” *Medieval Essays* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1954), 117-34.

10*Medieval Essays*, 122.

11Christopher Dawson, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1933), 128. See also his appreciative words on “The Confucian Tradition,” *The Dawson Newsletter* (Spring 1993).

12Christopher Dawson, *The Dynamics of World History*, ed. John J. Mulloy, (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956),

- 13 *Enquiries*, 159.
- 14 Christopher Dawson, ed., *Mission to Asia, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching*, vol. 8 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).
- 15 “Christianity and Western Culture,” in *Russello*, 88.
- 16 *Judgment*, 175.
- 17 See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) and Ronald Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985).
- 18 Gray makes this argument most recently in “The Light of Other Minds,” *Times Literary Supplement*, February 11, 2000, 12-13. See also his *Enlightenment’s Wake: Politics and Culture at the Close of the Modern Age* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
- 19 Stanley Fish, *The Trouble with Principle* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- 20 *Judgment*, 65.
- 21 *Understanding Europe*, 62.
- 22 “The Modern Dilemma,” in *Christianity and European Culture*, 121.
- 23 Christopher Dawson, “American and the Secularization of Modern Culture,” (Houston: University of St. Thomas, 1960), 24-25.
- 24 Christopher Dawson, *Religion and Culture* (1948), 104. See also Fernando Cervantes, “Christopher Dawson and Europe,” in *Eternity in Time*, ed. Stratford Caldecott (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 51-68.
- 25 Adam Seligman, *Modernity’s Wager* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- 26 Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State* (New York: Sheed & Ward 1938), 135-36.
- 27 *Judgment*, 189.
- 28 *Religion and the Modern State*, 45.
- 29 “Christianity and Western Culture,” in *Christianity and European Culture*, 91.
- 30 Christopher Dawson, *Beyond Politics* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1939), 20-21.
- 31 *Beyond Politics*, 134.
- 32 Christopher Dawson, *The Modern Dilemma* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1932), 96.
- 33 Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1929), 6.
- 34 “American and the Secularization of Modern Culture,” 16.
- 35 Christopher Dawson, “It Shall Not Happen Here,” *Sword of the Spirit* (1947), 7.
- 36 Joseph Koterski, S.J., “Religion as the Root of Culture,” in *Christianity and Western Civilization* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 25-26.
- 37 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Missouri: Ligouri Publications 1994).
- 38 Christopher Dawson, “Modern Civilization in Europe and America: The Enlightenment and Technology,” in *Communio* 22 (Winter 1995): 723.
- 39 *Understanding Europe*, 122-23.
- 40 *Ecclesia in Asia* (New Delhi, 1999), #21.
- 41 *Ecclesia in Asia*, #20.
- 42 On this point, see also Peter Henrici, “The Church and Pluralism,” *Communio* 10 (Summer 1983): 128.
- 43 “Is the Church Too Western?” in *Christianity and European Culture*, 99.