WHAT WENT WRONG IN EUROPE?
A REFLECTION ON WESTERN MODERNITY

Alexander Rosenthal y Pubúl

For some time now, our whole European culture has been moving as toward a catastrophe, with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade: restlessly, violently, headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect.

—Friedrich Nietzsche, Preface to The Will to Power

In his widely acclaimed book The Heart of Islam, Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr endeavors to turn the tables on Western scholars of the Middle East who raise the question “What went wrong with the Islamic world?” He writes:

Some have tried to fault Islamic civilization for not following the same trajectory of development that took place in Europe, and have asked “What went wrong?” in reference to the Islamic world. If we look at world history, however, the question should not be “What went wrong in the Islamic world?” but “What went wrong in Europe?” The very question “What went wrong?” implies a norm or a right against which something is judged to be wrong. Now, the global norm was once traditional civilizations rooted in a theocentric or anthropocosmic worldview, as we see in Japanese, Chinese, Hindu, Islamic, Byzantine, and medieval European civilizations. It was post-medieval Europe that deviated from the norm by substituting an anthropocentric worldview for a theocentric one, making human beings the measure of all things or, to use religious language, replacing the “kingdom of God” with the “kingdom of man.”

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To be sure, Nasr’s point may be pushed too far. Most probably he would acknowledge that much indeed has gone wrong in the contemporary Islamic world as evinced by the all too familiar issues associated with violent forms of religious extremism. But an analysis of the problems that beset Islamic civilization is not the primary subject of this essay. We hope rather to evaluate the challenges Nasr poses in relation to our civilization. Why was it Europe rather than, for instance, India or the Islamic world that first gave rise to secular modernity? And is this development the standard of historical progress, or is it a destructive aberration?

Certainly the whole structure of modern thought is permeated by the eighteenth-century idea of progress according to which history is the ascent of man from the chains of religious superstition and tyrannical authority to an enlightened age of science and rationality. Its protagonists, from the Marquis de Condorcet to Francis Fukuyama, put stock in the idea of Western modernity as the universal telos to which all civilizations and cultures will arrive, and by which their progress can be judged. It is precisely this claim of secular modernity to represent the “end of history” that this essay will challenge.

The Enlightenment’s progressivism was premised on an optimistic account of human nature and a high confidence in the beneficence of science. Yet these foundational principles were fatally undermined by the actual course of modern history. Modern scientific civilization achieved dramatic transformations of material culture, but it failed to touch the depths of the human condition, to address the problem of evil, or to give meaning and foundation to human values. Most of all it proved unable to defend the value of humanity itself. The modern project did not the realize Condorcet’s hope for “the true perfection of mankind.” It culminated rather in the carnage of the twentieth century. All this destruction and dehumanization was wrought by the dark prophets of modern totalitarianism who claimed the mantle of “scientific” socialism or “scientific” racism. Their unprecedented atrocities were enabled precisely by the new power bestowed by modern machine civilization. The contemporary West is thus beset by the paradox of extraordinary technological and economic development coexisting with processes of spiritual, cultural, and moral decline.

But whatever one thinks of this normative question, we must acknowledge that Nasr is factually correct in one crucial respect. What happened in Europe—the birth of secular modernity—is the great exception to the general historical and cultural pattern. Religion has been the most formative influence on virtually all historic civilizations, whether one looks at the role of Hinduism in India, Islam in the Middle East, or Christianity in Europe. A culture’s particular orientation to transcendent reality gives form to its distinctive pattern of social, political, ethical, artistic, and intellectual life. But Europe by the eighteenth century began to break from this traditional form of culture and gave rise to a new cultural form that Nasr correctly characterizes as anthropocentric. The particular characteristic of anthropocentric culture is that it is not oriented to any reality beyond man himself, and regards “human self-consciousness as the highest divinity.” In consequence, social institutions as well as moral and aesthetic values tend to become desacralized, uprooted from any spiritual foundation, and reflective of purely worldly themes and purposes.

The ideas and material culture associated with European modernity are now so widely diffused throughout the world that its
promises and challenges cannot be escaped by any civilization. The pleasures, comforts, and wealth it made possible have proved an inescapable attraction. At the same time, the perceived threat modernism poses to traditional cultures around the world has inspired movements of resistance—not all benign—as indigenous religious traditions endeavor to reassert themselves. Indeed, the struggle between modernism and traditional forms of culture is defining the world of the twenty-first century. The significance of secular modernity is so vast that its genesis calls for account.

In what follows I shall suggest two broad conditions that may help provide answers to the descriptive question of why modernity first emerged in Europe—first the synthetic character of Europe’s culture, and second the process by which the Christian humanism of the Renaissance unraveled. Each of them is related to dualities that are quite particular to the West. First there is a duality between the classical and Christian traditions of Europe. But there is also a duality within Christianity itself between the divine and the human. This has manifested itself historically in Christian civilization as the division between the spiritual and the temporal. In secular modernity the balance between these elements was disrupted by the effort to create a purely anthropological civilization from which the divine is excluded. And yet Christianity itself contributed to human affirmation through its belief in a transcendent human dignity. Thus modernity must be understood through investigating the particular evolution of Western humanism. How did this defining element of European culture—one with profound classical and Christian roots—end in a hyperbolic humanism that elevates man to the highest being?

The Synthetic Character of European Culture

To address the question “Why did secular modernity emerge first in Europe?” it is first necessary to identify something distinctive about the character of European civilization. In geographical terms Europe is simply the Western portion of the world’s largest land mass—as Paul Valery once put it, “a little promontory on the continent of Asia.” Although some like Jared Diamond have given significance to Europe’s physical aspect, it is ultimately in its spiritual, intellectual, artistic, and political conceptions that Europe’s distinctive character is revealed. Since Edward Said, it has become somewhat fashionable in academic circles to dismiss the East/West distinction as “orientalism.” It is true that no unitary “Eastern civilization” unites such great historic Asian civilizations as China, India, and Islam. At the same time there are cultural characteristics that distinguish Europe from Asia.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr identifies the key point when he notes that “Oriental civilizations are generally of a traditional character, rooted in the Divine Principle which presides and dominates.” Nasr’s idea well accords with Christopher Dawson’s concept of the Asian civilizations as “religion-cultures.” Asia after all is the birthplace of the great world religions, and to this day Asian cultures are generally tied to a particular conception of divine reality: the Islamic civilization of western Asia, the Hindu civilization of India, and the Buddhist-Confucian civilizations of East Asia.

What then is the peculiar form of culture that took root in Europe? One of the clearest answers was provided by Pope Benedict XVI, who noted in his Regensburg Address that European civilization is rooted in a distinctive synthesis:
This inner rapprochement between Biblical faith and Greek philosophical inquiry was an event of decisive importance not only from the standpoint of the history of religions, but also from that of world history—it is an event which concerns us even today. Given this convergence, it is not surprising that Christianity, despite its origins and some significant developments in the East, finally took on its historically decisive character in Europe. We can also express this the other way around: this convergence, with the subsequent addition of the Roman heritage, created Europe, and remains the foundation of what can rightly be called Europe.10

The aforementioned ways by which Europe can be understood are instructive. From one standpoint “the West” is limited to what is properly European—the Greek and Roman inheritance. The Greeks certainly had a consciousness of “Europe” and its distinction from Asia. Thus Herodotus already in the fifth century BC, after narrating the origin of the enmity between the Greeks and the Persians, writes that “the Persians claim Asia and the barbarian races dwelling in it as their own, Europe and the Greek states, being in their opinion quite separate and distinct from it.”11 Aristotle defines the distinction in political terms—in Asia the mode of governance is despotic,12 in contrast to the Greek polis, where the ruled partake in ruling.13

Another contrast is that while Hellenic civilization gave rise to some of the most significant forms of political, intellectual, and artistic life, the Greeks possessed no particularly profound or enduring religious tradition. Indeed Dawson describes a deep spiritual yearning within Greek culture as that of “humanism in search of a theology.”14 Thus one could set up an antithesis between Europe as a culture centered on ideas, and Asia as a culture centered on religions. From that standpoint, Christianity as a religion with historic roots in ancient Israel spiritually belongs to Asia—to “the East”—an influence that entered Europe from without. But from another, deeper standpoint the Christian faith is itself constitutive of European culture, and Jerusalem no less than Athens and Rome must then be considered a direct ancestor of Europe. It was in the form of a distinct spiritual community under pope and emperor—Christendom—that the diverse peoples of Europe first found a real bond of unity.15 The Christian faith became that new wine in old wineskins that infused the social, intellectual, and artistic life of Europe.

The very fact, however, that European civilization was a complex synthesis of disparate elements derived from ancient Greece, Rome, and Israel and held in a delicate balance made tension among these elements a consequent possibility. This tension was inherently less likely in Asian cultures, in which the intellectual traditions were organic expressions of the traditional religious culture itself. As Nasr points out about the intellectual traditions of the East:

What is usually called Oriental philosophy is for the most part the doctrinal aspect of a total spiritual way tied to a method of realization and is inseparable from the revelation or tradition which has given birth to the way in question.16

For example, Indian philosophical systems like the Vedanta grew out of profound reflection on the sacred scriptures and concepts of the Hindu religion.

In contrast the Greek philosophical tradition that shaped European modes of thought developed autonomously not only from
biblical Judaism and Christianity but even from the Greek religion itself. The Greek inner conflict between a religious-poetic mode of discourse (mythos) and philosophical rationality (logos) is attested by the trials of various philosophers for impiety such as Anaxagoras and Socrates. Yet Greek philosophy evinced its own profound spiritual impulse. In Plato and Aristotle, philosophy arrives at a divine principle, which is the highest good and first cause; it speaks also of the immortality of the soul and its cultivation through the ethical virtues. All this was far in advance of the crude polytheism of popular Greek religion and made possible the later engagement between Greek philosophy and the Christian faith that lay at the heart of Christian culture.

This synthesis had two main stages. The first was in the patristic theology of late antiquity where figures like St. Augustine and the Greek Fathers made broad use of the concepts of speculative mysticism found in Neoplatonism as well as absorbing Stoic influences. The second stage was that of Catholic Scholasticism, which developed in Latin Christendom in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with the assimilation of Aristotle’s corpus of ethics, natural philosophy, and metaphysics. For the medieval Catholic intellect, one could engage philosophy confident in its ultimate harmony with divine revelation, because, like faith, reason was also a gift of God. As St. Thomas Aquinas avers, “The proper operation of man in so far as he is man is to understand” (proprae autem operatio hominis inquantum homo est intelligere). But while the effort of the Catholic Church to achieve a harmony between the Christian faith and Hellenic rationalism resulted in a brilliant and enduring philosophical achievement, it was in the cultural sense always precarious and tended to break down in modernity.

The break took the concrete form of a biblical critique of Greco-Roman culture (associated with the Reformation), and a rationalist rejection of revealed religion (the radical Enlightenment). The Protestant Reformation was in general hostile to the synthesis of Christianity and Hellenism, as evinced by Martin Luther’s attack on the Catholic university as a place where “the blind heathen creature Aristotle, rules even further than Christ.” In contrast the philosophes of the French Enlightenment sought to renew the ancient Greek conflict between philosophy and religion by casting Christianity as a set of myths and superstitions from which reason and modern science would liberate man. It is this latter movement that provides the immediate intellectual underpinning of secular modernity. The French Enlightenment itself was the culmination of a peculiar development in the concept of humanism.

**The Devolution of Christian Humanism**

Humanism finds its first clear expression in the unique Greek ideal of education, which encompassed all aspects of Hellenic culture. Its aim was, as Werner Jaeger put it, “the process of educating man into his true form, the real and genuine human nature.” It sought not so much the acquisition of specific practical skills as the full development of human excellence. In a sense then the Greek conception of human dignity was that it was acquired through perfecting human potencies. It reached its high point perhaps in the Aristotelian conception of man as the rational animal fulfilling his nature through the cultivation of moral and intellectual virtues. As Christopher Dawson notes in *The Crisis of Western Education*, this classical humanist model of liberal education that began in ancient Greece is one of the most continuous
influences on European civilization, having been transmitted to Rome, thence to the medieval monastic and Scholastic curricula, and onward to the Renaissance and modernity.

But humanism is also a factor to which Christianity itself contributed decisively by imparting a transcendent foundation to human dignity. This idea draws deeply from Israel’s understanding of man as created in God’s image and as having dominion over the rest of visible creation. But it is also founded on the idea of the Incarnation, in which, as Nicholas Berdyaev says, “the humanity of God was revealed.” The Christian faith affirms that, in Jesus Christ, God Himself has assumed and ennobled human nature and entered into the texture of human history. Just as Terence said that “nothing human is alien to me,” so Christianity affirms that nothing truly human is alien to God. It is this factor that perhaps explains Christendom’s openness to the authentic achievements of the human culture. Christian anthropology is expressed with eloquence in the words of the fourth-century church father St. Gregory of Nyssa:

Oh man, scorn not what is admirable in you . . . consider your royal dignity! The heavens have not been made in God’s image as you have, nor the moon, nor the sun, nor anything in creation . . . behold of all that exists there is nothing that can contain your greatness.

This lofty view of human nature was of course balanced in patristic and medieval Christianity by a deep consciousness of man’s fallen and sinful nature. But during the Renaissance, it was the humanistic side of Christianity that came to the fore. Pico della Mirandola, for example, in his famous Oratio de hominis dignitate wrote of man’s unique ability to determine his own destiny through his transcendent power of freedom:

We have made you a creature neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lowest, brutish forms of life; you will be able, through your own decisions, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine. Oh the unsurpassed generosity of God the Father or wondrous and unsurpassable felicity of man, to whom is granted to have what he chooses, to be what he wills to be!

On the one hand, man is a “free and proud shaper” of his own being, able to be what he chooses. On the other hand, this very transcendent freedom is a gift of God to man. Thus the Renaissance represented a Christian humanism capable of fully assimilating the Greek understanding of education as the integral cultivation of all aspects of human excellence.

The extraordinary development of the arts in the Renaissance proclaimed the glory of man through the idealized beauty of the human form but most of all through the vindication of human creative power. Above all, the Renaissance represented, as Reinhold Niebuhr expressed it, “a tremendous affirmation of the limitless possibilities of human existence.” This Renaissance emphasis on realizing hitherto latent intellectual and creative possibilities no doubt underlies the extraordinary achievements of European culture first in art and then in science in the early modern period. The nexus between the Renaissance and the sciences is seen already
in the new concern for nature that art sought to depict and science sought to understand.\textsuperscript{27}

As a consequence of the scientific revolution, European man learned not only to understand his natural environment through science but also to become its master through the technology this science made possible. That the scientific revolution bore extraordinary fruit is beyond dispute. At the same time, dramatic improvements in material conditions made possible by modern science and technology produced a subtle shift. Was it not the human mind that had penetrated the secret things of nature, and human ingenuity that transformed and subdued the natural world? And if this is man’s achievement, was God really necessary? It was a short but fateful step from the Christian affirmation of human dignity to the prideful assertion of human self-sufficiency. In the French Enlightenment we find the theme of Christianity as an enemy of the humanist idea—the free development of human reason and powers of achievement. This notion comes through clearly in the writings of the Baron d’Holbach in the eighteenth century:

The human mind confused with its theological opinions, forgot itself, doubted its own powers, mistrusted experience, feared truth, and abandoned her direction blindly in order to follow authority.\textsuperscript{28}

The modern revolutionary movements, from the French Revolution to Marxism, are based on this anti-Christian humanism.\textsuperscript{29} Yet, ironically, at the very moment when humanistic naturalism dethroned God, it also implicitly dethroned man. This idea was strikingly set forth by Nicholas Berdyaev, who saw a “self-destructive dialectic” within modern humanism:

Humanism not only affirmed man’s self-confidence and exalted him, but it also debased him by ceasing to regard him as a being of a higher and divine origin . . . the result of man’s self-affirmation once he had ceased to be conscious of his tie with the higher and Divine and Absolute nature . . . was to bring about his own perdition.\textsuperscript{30}

As human self-assertion displaced God, man could no longer be considered as having a transcendent value or origin. Thus the progress of modernity: what begins by elevating man ends by degrading him, regarding the human being from an exclusively naturalistic vantage point.

The most profound irony of modernity for Berdyaev is that its very humanism gave rise to the most profound antihumanism, whose contours became clear amid the horrors of the twentieth century. The ideologues responsible for the dehumanizing cruelty of the twentieth century were crude naturalists who exalted natural science and the brute material forces of race (National Socialism) or economics (Marxism) over and against the spiritual value of the human person. In 1935, as these ominous forces were gathering for the great slaughter, Berdyaev wrote:

What is taking place in the world today is not a crisis of humanism (that is a topic of secondary importance) but the crisis of humanity. We face the question, is that being to whom the future belongs to be called man, as previously, or something different? We are witnessing the process of dehumanization in all phases of culture and of social life. Above all, moral consciousness is being dehumanized. Man has ceased to be the supreme value: he has ceased to have any value at all.\textsuperscript{31}
Secular Modernity—the End of History?

In light of modernity’s European genesis, is the secular civilization of the West a valid norm of historical progress by which to judge cultural evolution? The question in some sense is as old as modernity itself. A basic conceit of the eighteenth-century French Enlightenment was the universal validity of its civilization. In the writings of the Marquis de Condorcet, just as reason and technology allowed man to understand and conquer nature, so it would allow him to order his moral life and achieve the “true perfection of mankind.” Since no culture is “debarred by nature from the enjoyment of freedom and the exercise of reason,” eventually all cultures could achieve “enlightenment.” A main obstacle was the persistence of religious “superstition,” but even this would eventually be overcome through science and education. Mankind could look forward to an ostensibly bright future in which “the sun will shine only on free men who know no other master but their reason; when tyrants and slaves, priests and their stupid or hypocritical instruments, will exist only in works of history or on the stage.”

A more recent but closely related example of this premise is found in the writings of Francis Fukuyama, who in the year the Berlin Wall fell wrote of “the triumph of the West, of the Western idea.” It is notable that Fukuyama’s “Western idea” is essentially of modern liberalism. Fukuyama’s narrative is therefore essentially one of prophecy and fulfillment—the defeat of communism marked the “total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism.” To be sure, it is not secularization that Fukuyama finds most salient about modernity. Rather it is the emergence of a globalized culture marked by “the universalization of Western liberal democracy.” But secularism, or at least materialism, is inevitably associated with a view that sees the “end of history” in terms of “the ineluctable spread of Western consumerist culture.”

Fukuyama’s article acknowledged that negative reaction to the secular and materialistic dimension of Western modernity “attests to a broad unhappiness with the impersonality and spiritual vacuity of liberal consumerist society.” At the same time, he does not believe that a return to religious foundations is likely, because secular modernity was itself a revolt against the inadequacies of religiously based culture:

Modern liberalism itself was historically a consequence of the weakness of religiously-based societies which, failing to agree on the essentials of the good life, could not provide even the minimal preconditions of peace and stability.

For a diametrically opposed view about the meaning of secularism, we may turn again to Christopher Dawson, who viewed it not as a symptom of progress but of decadence: “the great world cultures correspond to the great world religions, and when a religion dies the civilization that it has inspired gradually decays.” If Dawson is correct, then what is the future of Western civilization? In Dawson’s 1932 article “Prevision in History,” he writes:

The complete secularization of Western culture may be followed by its gradual dissolution and by the reassertion of the traditional religion-cultures of Asia, which have been temporarily overshadowed by European world-hegemony.

In the 1930s a religious challenge to the West must have seemed virtually unthinkable.
given European supremacy. Yet just as Fukuyama was proclaiming the victory of secular liberalism, a broad global process of “desecularization” had already begun. The clearest example of this is the religious resurgence thundering across the Islamic world, which rejects the Western ideologies and demands the primacy of Islam in all aspects of life and culture. Its manifestations include violent events like the Iranian revolution of 1979, as well peaceful, even democratic processes of evolution like the Islamic restoration in Turkey, once the heartland of Middle Eastern secularism. If the West’s own path is simply presumed a priori to represent a necessary law of historical progress, then this Islamic resurgence must appear as shocking, even unintelligible. The dogma that all civilizations will follow a linear path to secular modernity may lie behind the persistent strategic miscalculations of the West about the direction of events in the Middle East.

The reasons behind the Islamic world’s increasing rejection of the West are highly complex. It appears on one hand that the West is repudiated for its materialistic culture, which threatens traditional Islamic values and civilization. For Ali Shariati—an intellectual progenitor of the Iranian revolution—it made no sense for Africa and Asia to continue resisting “Western imperialism” under the banner of Europe’s own ideologies (for example, Marxism and nationalism), for these bore its baneful cultural characteristics. These included a “categorical denial of any immaterial or spiritual dimension of man,” the “confinement of human needs and ideals to the narrow limits of material consumption and power,” and “the gravitation of philosophy or at any rate morals and psychology, toward materialism.”

Yet, also conscious of a much longer history of antagonism between Islam and Christendom that often turned violent (the seventh- and eighth-century Arab invasions, the Crusades, the Turkish conquests in Eastern Europe, modern colonialism), certain Islamic radicals regard Western secularization as evidence that an old foe is faltering. As Youssef Choueiri writes in relation to the Sunni radical Syed Qutb’s ideas:

The leading role of Western man in world affairs was coming to an end. Not because the economic and military strength of Western civilization had weakened, but as Qutb explained, as a result of moral bankruptcy and its devastating effects . . . thus the present age presented Islam with a golden opportunity to stake its claim for the leadership of the world.43

Quite as Dawson had predicted: the de-Christianization of the West has coincided with the reanimation of another religious tradition once regarded as moribund.44 The realm of spirit no less than that of nature seems to abhor a vacuum. The forces that fill that vacuum are not necessarily benevolent. The violent fanaticism of Islamic radicals—who of course do not represent Islamic civilization as a whole—has fueled hatreds, revolution, terrorism, religious persecutions, and sectarian conflicts.

The same holds true of the forces unleashed by Europe’s effort to fill its religious vacuum through the embrace of ideology.45 Since 1789 the politics of the West (and much of the world) had been shaped by conflict among the European ideologies spawned in the wake of the crisis of Christianity—liberalism, Marxism, Nazism, and Fascism. These conflicts ultimately led Europe on the grim and bloody path to self-destruction. It is not history but only this ideological project that ended in 1989. That modernity has many accomplishments—the freedom and material prosperity enjoyed in modern
democracies—is beyond question. Yet even freedom, if unhinged from any moral order or higher end, is aimless and nihilistic.

It seems, then, that the “spiritual vacuity” Fukuyama recognizes is not a minor impediment in Western modernity but its fatal flaw. It has built a culture that, for all its genuine achievements, flees from what is eternal and clings to what is transitory. Yet man aspires beyond material goods, comforts, and pleasures; he also searches for meaning, value, purpose, and transcendence. A form of culture that denies or neglects the spiritual dimension of existence must stand against the full truth of human nature. As such it cannot claim to represent the highest and final stage of human history and of civilization.

Against the anthropocentric civilization of Western modernity, Nasr counterpoises the theocentric civilization of traditional Islam, marked by a “divine principle which presides and dominates” over all human life. But the Islamic cultural form does not precisely correspond to the inner character of Christianity, which is not wholly anthropocentric or theocentric but Christocentric, that is, grounded upon the divine humanity of Jesus Christ. Correspondingly, the Christian culture it formed was not based on the divine principle alone but on a fructifying interplay of divine and human principles—the spiritual and the temporal, church and state, grace and nature, faith and reason.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that humanism found fertile soil in European Christendom. Kept in balance, this element has been a potent source of Western accomplishment. In late modernity, however, Europe begat a new form of culture based upon the human principle alone. But the historical unfolding of this anthropocentric idea revealed that where the divine is excluded, the human also is devalued. Considered only as a natural being in a godless universe, what is the source of human worth? The idea of a special human dignity so central to Western culture cannot be defended on the basis of modern materialism. The reinvigoration of European civilization will require the resources of her classical and Christian origins—the perennial foundations of her highest values and creative achievements.


Nasr, *Comparative Philosopohy*, 55.


16 Nasr, *Comparative Philosopohy*, 55.


23 From *In Cantica* 2, quoted by Henri de Lubac in *The Drama of Atheistic Humanism* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 20.


28 In Isaac Kramnick, ed., *The Portable Enlightenment*, 143, from D’Holbach’s *Natural Ideas Opposed to the Supernatural*.

29 Cf. De Lubac, *Drama of Atheistic Humanism*.


33 Ibid., 27.

34 Ibid., 30.


36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 4.

38 Ibid., 14.


42 Youssef Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boston, MA: Pinter, 1997), 129.

43 Youssef Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boston, MA: Pinter, 1997), 129.


48 For a discussion of these antinomies, see Rémi Brague, 154–68.

49 I would like to thank Ted Roedel for looking over my work and providing invaluable suggestions, many of which I have incorporated—as the distinction between acquired and accorded dignity in Christian and Greek thought.