

Culture and History in Eric Voegelin and Christopher Dawson

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In a time of secular ideology and positivist methodology, both Christopher Dawson and Eric Voegelin sought to recover the central role that religion and religious experience used to play in the historical analysis of Western civilization. As a response to the ideological deformation of their times, both Dawson and Voegelin believed that a restoration of religion as the central feature in historical analysis would not only provide clarity for an understanding of the past but also point toward a path of comprehending the genuine nature of reality for today and the future. The recognition that humans were fundamentally spiritual creatures who lived a historical existence would clear the ideological rubble that either denied the spiritual nature of human beings or abstracted it from any meaningful historical context. In this sense, both Dawson and Voegelin proceeded in the same spirit as scholars who sought to conserve an understanding of the past that was at its core both religious and historical.

Interestingly, neither thinker cited the other's works in either their major publications or personal correspondences. References of Voegelin in Dawson's works and correspondence are nonexistent, while Voegelin referred to Dawson only once. As a Guggenheim Fellow, Voegelin was asked to provide his views about the direction of social science and its relation to tax-exempt foundations to a congressional committee investigating this matter. In his draft, Voegelin analyzed the current state of social sciences—progressivism, instrumentalism, behavioralism, positivism—and criticized them as non-sciences. It is in this context that he evoked Dawson: "When

you jump from a sky-scraper, as Christopher Dawson said, whether you choose the window to the right or the left does not make much of a difference by the time you reach the pavement.”¹ It is clear from this quote that Voegelin knew Dawson’s works, or at least Dawson’s *Understanding Europe*; but this reference was to illustrate the poor state of social science rather than to support Voegelin’s own theoretical work on consciousness, history, or religion. Other than this fleeting allusion to Dawson, Voegelin did not cite Dawson again.

This mutual silence and near total non-acknowledgment of each other’s works is all the more puzzling because both had a similar understanding about the nature of history, the role of culture, and the problem of modern civilization. Both Dawson and Voegelin understood history as the relationship between humans and God; and both of them conceived of culture, where the events of history transpired, as something that was simultaneously material and spiritual. The human encounter with God was realized and articulated in cultural ideals and institutions that subsequently would shape civilization. But once civilization abandoned this religious dimension of its existence, it became deformed ideologically, whether categorized as “neo-pagan” as Dawson did or “Gnostic” to use Voegelin’s vocabulary. Even though Dawson wrote as a historian and Voegelin as a political scientist, both thinkers were essentially in agreement in their understanding of history, culture, and the crisis of modern civilization.

Despite these similarities, there has been no significant secondary literature comparing the thought of Dawson and Voegelin.² This article will remedy this deficiency by exploring these thinkers’ shared understanding of these themes of history, culture, and religion. I will first start with an account of Voegelin’s methodology of consciousness and then examine his theories of history, culture, and religion. What we will discover is that Voegelin lacked a definitive concept of culture in his political science that made him more of a theologian rather than a political scientist, a claim that he had always argued to the contrary. This want of culture in his philosophy in turn led Voegelin to construct a vision

of Christianity that was at odds with the more traditional understanding that we find in Dawson. For Dawson, culture was at the heart of his historical methodology and informed his account of civilization and religion. In a strange way, because of his concept of culture, Dawson, as a historian, was able to explain changes in civilization better than Voegelin, a political scientist.

A Theory of Consciousness

Trained in political science, Eric Voegelin considered himself first and foremost a political scientist, with the title of his most famous work, *The New Science of Politics*, as a declaration of his disciplinary allegiance.³ But his conception of political science was radically different from the philosophy of positivism that had dominated the discipline during his life. Confronted with the ideologies of communism and fascism, Voegelin rejected a theory of politics that was informed by positivism because such a theory could not adequately explain these political phenomena. What was required was a theory of consciousness to be at the center of a theory of politics in order to understand and to evaluate these ideologies.⁴ Voegelin therefore sought to remedy this deficiency in the discipline by developing his own theory of consciousness that would become the foundation for his theory of politics.

According to Voegelin, consciousness was neither a given in reality nor constructed a priori; rather, it was a fluid movement that continues to articulate and re-articulate itself in the reality in which it had participated. In other words, Voegelin conceived of consciousness and reality as a type of process. Through rigorous introspection, the political scientist discovered a “center of energy” that was engaged in this process and concluded that this process could be observed only from the vantage point of within.⁵ There did not exist a Cartesian perspective outside of the political scientist to understand reality: he could only understand reality as a participant within it.⁶

Within his own consciousness, the political scientist experienced the illumination of the spiritual dimensions of his consciousness in his relationship with the divine. However, this experience

of the divine for Voegelin was in the form of a process that structured time itself: the divine was understood by the political scientist as a type of process that created a past, present, and future within the interior space of his own consciousness.⁷ This understanding of the divine as a type of process that formed a past, present, and future in consciousness was perfectly acceptable to Voegelin "because it makes the divine intelligible as an analogue to man's consciousness."⁸ The political scientist could understand the divine only if the divine acted as a process that resembled the political scientist's own consciousness. Voegelin justified this assumption by pointing out that the political scientist has only his consciousness to resort to as a model to understand realities that transcended him.⁹ He has nowhere else to turn to other than his own consciousness to model reality.

The ontological and epistemological premises of this account of consciousness were that consciousness can only discover being if that being was part of its own nature. Simply put, like can only know like if they were made of the same stuff. By sharing ontologically in the same aspects of vegetation, animals, and the divine, the individual therefore can know the vegetative, animalic, and divine processes that transcended his own consciousness.¹⁰ Although these levels of beings were distinguishable with respect to their own structures, they all were to share some common basis in order for the political scientist's consciousness to recognize them. And since all levels of being participated in a common being, the political scientist can recognize levels of beings that are distinct from him, e.g., vegetative, animalic, divine.

History, therefore, with its dimensions of past, present, and future, did not unfold in sequential events in the external world but rather was a series of phases of divine illumination within the political scientist's consciousness. By using his own consciousness as a model to understand processes that transcended his consciousness, the political scientist was able to reach some knowledge about the divine and his relationship to it. However, he was to be sensitive that his "personal idiosyncrasy" did not interfere with his investigation.¹¹ To avoid misconstruing the nature of the divine and his

relationship to it, the political scientist was to root his divine-human encounter in a concrete social and historical existence.¹² And to understand this concrete social and historical existence in turn required a philosophy of history so that the model of consciousness could be a "science" as opposed to "personal idiosyncrasy."

The Metaxy

It is for this reason that Voegelin's science of politics was not only a theory of consciousness but also a philosophy of history: "the existence of man in political society is historical existence; and a theory of politics, if it penetrates to principles, must at the same time be a theory of history."¹³ The need for a philosophy of history was required because, although humans encountered the divine in their consciousness, these experiences were conditioned and articulated by a social and historical existence; and the articulation of these experiences ordered society concretely and historically. Thus, the symbolization of the divine-human encounter was conditioned by a social and historical existence that provided societal order.

This search for order started with the symbolization of the individual's experience with the divine. Because these symbols were conditioned by a specific social and historical existence, they appeared differently from each other, although they could contain the same type of experience with the divine. Consequently, the role of the political scientist was to penetrate past these symbols to the level of experience in order to locate those experiences that are equivalent to one another despite their different symbolizations.¹⁴ The political scientist was to be open to the experiences of various symbolizations because they may be equivalent to one another in the divine-human encounter.

This openness to the reality of equivalent experiences was to exist in a state of tension between truth and untruth that Voegelin called the *metaxy*. Human existence in the metaxy was an ongoing struggle to know realities, such as the divine, that were beyond the scope of comprehensive human understanding. The political scientist therefore was to be careful not to let his desire to know

dominate his exploration of reality: he was to avoid the desires of *libido dominandi*. The speculation of the political scientist was not to degenerate into an intentionalist desire to know the mystery of the divine as if it were some object; nor was he to assume that human realities belonged to the sphere of the divine.¹⁵ The political scientist was to strike a balance of consciousness between intentionality and acceptance of the mystery in his analysis of reality.

This balance of consciousness, or existence in the metaxy, was described by Voegelin as (1) the individual participated in a process of reality and was conscious of it; (2) the individual also recognized that the search of order transpired within reality where insights became luminous to him and limited to his perspective; (3) the individual expressed this participation in symbols; (4) the individual recognized the symbols he had created were part of the reality in which he found himself; and (5) the symbols the individual created were not the possession of truth but the articulation of the reality, which was a process.¹⁶

One of the greatest fallacies that political scientists have committed was to mistake the experience for the symbol itself. History was a continuous process for Voegelin, where the experience of the metaxy was constantly being re-articulated as social and historical existence changed. The only constant that truly existed was the experience of the metaxy itself and not its symbolization.¹⁷ Once the existence between the poles of truth and untruth were hypostatized, then the experience was lost in the analysis of reality. As a result, the political scientist's task of recovering experiences of order started at the level of their symbolizations but did not stop until he had discovered experiences that were equivalent to his own divine-human encounter in the metaxy.

The New Political Science

The study of history was to start with the symbolizations of experiences in their social and historical context in order to penetrate the experiences themselves to see whether they corresponded to the political scientist's. But the political scientist's experiences were not the only ones to evaluate; the political scientist was to

create a data set of experiences that he could use in his evaluation because

[t]heory is not just any opining about human existence in society; it rather is an attempt at formulating the meaning of existence by explicating the content of a definite class of experiences. Its argument is not arbitrary but derives its validity from the aggregate of experiences to which it must permanently refer for empirical control.¹⁸

The political scientist searched for symbols that were “amendable to theorization as an intelligible succession of phases in a historical process” so that “the order of history emerges from the history of order.”¹⁹ This datum of human experiences consisted of “God and man, world and society [that] form a primordial community of being” that the political scientist was to imaginatively reconstruct in his own consciousness.²⁰ By using his own consciousness as a model, the political scientist could uncover these experiences “by virtue of [his] participation in the mystery of being.”²¹

The results of this study were the discovery and classification of these experiences as cosmological, anthropological, soteriological, and Gnostic. Cosmological experience was the “rhythmical repetition of cosmogony in the imperially organized humanity which existed at the center of the cosmos”; anthropological experience was the experience of human participation with the divine; and soteriological experience reflected this same participation but permitted the possibility of friendship between God and humans due to Christ’s Incarnation:

The experience of mutuality in the relation with God, of the *amicitia* in the Thomistic sense, of the grace which imposes a supernatural form on the nature of man, is the specific difference of Christian truth. The revelation of this grace in history, through the incarnation of the *Logos* in Christ, intelligibly fulfilled the adventitious movement of the spirit in the mystic philosophers. The critical authority

over the older truth of society which the soul had gained through its opening and its orientation toward the unseen measure was now confirmed through the revelation of the measure itself.²²

Because anthropological and soteriological experiences had endowed humans with insight that right order radiated from their divine-human encounter, cosmological experience, with nature as its model, lost its effectiveness as an experience and symbol of order. Humans were able to be rational contemplators and masters of nature. But this new insight came at a price: instead of attributing nature as the cause of disorder, humans had to look within themselves for the root of their own troubles, i.e., their spiritual fall from grace.

Anthropological and specifically soteriological experiences presented new dangers. Whereas cosmological experience was governed by the rhythm of nature's growth and decay, soteriological experience was to be actualized in the supernatural destiny of humankind by breaking this cosmological rhythm of existence in its search for a perfection beyond temporal reality: "man and mankind now have fulfillment but it lies beyond nature."²³ Borrowing from Augustine, Voegelin believed that external history lacked any finality of meaning since it extended forever into the future, but individuals who experienced derailment from soteriological experience may seek a meaning within external history: to realize a supernatural destiny in temporality.²⁴ By adopting the Christian structures of grace and salvation, these derailed individuals engaged in a Gnostic project that attempted to realize their eschatological goals in temporal history through human action.

Voegelin discovered this Gnostic experience in Isaiah, who had invoked God to stave off military defeat.²⁵ The experience resurfaced in the early Christian Church whose members anticipated the imminent *Parousia* as prophesized by the Revelation of John in the New Testament. However, Augustine managed to suppress these chiliastic expectations in his *City of God* by arguing that the *Parousia* would not occur until "a thousand years" had passed, a

safe enough time to end any imminent expectation of it.²⁶ After the Church Fathers had defeated the Gnostics, Western Christendom continued to follow the Augustinian conception of history until Joachim of Flora, who during the High Middle Ages was terrified by the insecurity of faith because it did not guarantee redemption to anyone.²⁷

As a response to this existential insecurity, Joachim created a new faith that drew upon Gnostic sources and conceived of history in three stages—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—with each phase possessing a unique ontological quality. Joachim predicted that a great leader would soon initiate a transition from the second, imperfect stage to the third, perfect one in his lifetime. Although this did not transpire, the lasting significance of Joachim was the transmission of his Gnostic symbols to modern civilization, where the secular culture adopted the symbols of the prophet, the activist leader, and the tripartite structure of history to transform the fundamental nature of reality. These symbols and experiences had become secularized into the philosophies of Turgot, Condorcet, Comte, Fichte, Hegel, and Marx and into the ideologies of fascism, communism, and nationalism.²⁸

The Crisis of Modern Civilization

According to Voegelin, the crisis of modern civilization was fundamentally Gnostic in nature. Voegelin classified two experiences as Gnostic: the expectation of the Parousia that would transform the world into a “Kingdom of God” and the elimination of the divine in order to make humans the measure of all things.²⁹ The first form of Gnosticism was found in the Gospel of John, the Epistles of Paul, ancient Gnostic writings, medieval heresies, and militant Puritanism; the second form was located in the secularized philosophies and ideologies of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment periods. The first type recognized the divine and its transcendent order, whereas the second type rejected it. But what was common to both experiences was the desire of the individual to dominate and transform the world into his own image: his *libido dominandi*.

The crisis of modern civilization therefore was a rejection of the divine both in individual experience and in the symbolization of that experience. To return to the experience of the divine, to the existential state of the metaxy, the individual had to be open to it and approach it as a participant within reality rather than an observer who can objectively survey the reality as if it were some object. Once symbolized, this experience was to order society. But Voegelin was silent about this process: how were individual experiences that had become symbolized to establish societal order? How did people who did not initially have the same divine-human experience accept such symbolization?⁹ And what about people who did not have the divine-human experience at all?³⁰

One possible answer where people who did not have such an experience could accept a symbolization of the experience of the divine-human encounter was Christian doctrine and dogma. However, Voegelin's attitude toward doctrine and dogma was ambiguous at best. His works were filled with criticism about the deformation of symbols into doctrinal statements of propositions. Voegelin critiqued "the genesis of 'religion' ... defined as the transformation of existence in historical form into the secondary possession of a 'creed' concerning the relation between God and man" as a loss of the individual experience with the divine.³¹ While he acknowledged the necessity of dogma as an institutional structure to transmit the insights of divine-human experiences, he was critical of its effectiveness:

The prophets, philosophers, and saints, who can translate the order of the spirit into the practice of conduct without institutional support and pressure, are rare. For its survival in the world, therefore, the order of the spirit has to rely on a fanatical belief in the symbols of a creed more often than on the *fides caritate formata*—though such reliance if it becomes socially predominant, is apt to kill the order it is supposed to preserve.³²

Voegelin's critique of dogma was to protect the divine-human experience from symbolic deformation: "There can be no question

of 'accepting' or 'rejecting' a theological doctrine. A vision is not a dogma but an event in metaleptic reality which the philosopher can do no more than try to understand to the best of his ability."³³ In this experience, the individual could legitimately communicate it through the symbol of myth and not proposition: "Divine reality beyond the Metaxy, if it is to be symbolized at all, can be symbolized only by the myth. The truth of myth then is to be measured by the truth of noetically illuminated existence."³⁴ For Voegelin, the measure of truth was the experience of truth in the metaxy; and myth was the proper conveyance of this truth. The propositions of doctrine and dogma were harmful to it.

The fullest development of Voegelin's thinking on dogma can be found in his essay "Gospel and Culture," in which he stated:

For the gospel as a doctrine which you can take and be saved, or leave and be condemned, is a dead letter; it will encounter indifference, if not contempt, among inquiring minds outside the church, as well as the restlessness of believers inside who is un-Christian enough to be man the questioner.³⁵

Voegelin's rejection of doctrine and dogma was clear: it was unnecessary, anti-philosophical, and ultimately harmful in the search for order. Clearly Voegelin had a conception of Christianity that was at odds with a more traditional understanding.³⁶

But more importantly, by elevating the divine-human experience in the metaxy as the criterion for truth, Voegelin was not able to account for how social and political change happened in historical existence. Certain experiences that became symbolized may elicit change among people and thereby become the new ordering principle for society. However, Voegelin was silent on how this process actually transpired: did only elites have to experience this for society to become reordered? Were people, or a certain percentage of people, required to experience the divine-human encounter in the metaxy for the reordering of society? And, again, what about those who did not experience it at all?

Although Voegelin may be correct in his account of consciousness as the nexus of the divine-human encounter, he lacked the conceptual apparatus to account for how this experience would spill over into society as a reordering principle.³⁷ His adamant rejection of doctrine and dogma precluded any concept for him to explain social and historical change. The irony is that as a political scientist, Voegelin's theories of consciousness, history, and politics cannot explain the basic political process of social change. In a sense, Voegelin was more a religious philosopher than a political scientist, contrary to what he had said otherwise.

If Voegelin had had a conception of culture that would alleviate the concerns he had about doctrine and dogma, then he would be able to account for how a society reordered itself in historical existence. Dawson's understanding of culture may be helpful in this regard. If Dawson's concept of culture can explain social and historical change while still adhering to the philosophical insights of Voegelin, Dawson might be able to explain processes that Voegelin's science of politics did not.

A Concept of Culture

Whereas Voegelin's historical methodology was rooted in a theory of consciousness, Dawson's approach was to write a history of culture modeled after Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. For Dawson, Gibbon's history was a model of historical writing because it not only captured the spirit of the period that he was interpreting but also left a lasting record of the author's eighteenth-century culture. History therefore served a dual purpose in the recreation of the culture that the historian was studying as well as recording the historian's own culture. In this sense, Dawson's sensitivity to the act of historical writing was similar to Voegelin's acknowledgment that the political scientist used his own consciousness as a model to understand processes that transcended it. Both scholars were epistemologically aware that any study of the past was also a study of its own time period.

What Dawson admired in Gibbon's work was how Gibbon was able to recreate the period as "an ordered and intelligible whole."³⁸

This presentation was due to Gibbon's "extraordinary literary gift" as well as his close identification with the subject:

I believe that he has identified with his subject as no other historian has done ... possessed and obsessed by the majestic spirit of Rome. His conversion to the Church may have been transitory and superficial, but his conversion to the City and Empire was profound, and governed his whole life and work. He felt as a Roman; he thought as a Roman; he wrote as a Roman.³⁹

Furthermore, Gibbon left a valuable record of his own age that subsequent historians could use to understand the eighteenth century: "We cannot fully understand an age unless we understand how that age regarded the past, for every age makes its own past, and this re-creation of the past is one of the elements that go to the making of the future."⁴⁰ Gibbon's work therefore was not only an invaluable account of the Roman Empire but also invaluable as "a translation of the past into the language of eighteenth-century culture."⁴¹

However, Gibbon's work was defective in Dawson's view because of the role that Gibbon attributed to Christianity as a contributing factor to the decline of the Roman Empire, not to mention Gibbon's own general skepticism toward religion.⁴² Dawson interpreted Gibbon's account of Christianity as a reflection of educated eighteenth-century attitudes toward religion rather than Christianity's role, or lack thereof, in the decline and fall of the Roman Empire:

His thought had been so moulded by the culture of the Enlightenment that he could recognise no other values ... everything which was of value in the world came from antiquity or the modern classical culture that was rooted in antiquity.... This complete lack of sympathy and understanding for the religious forces which have exerted such an immense influence on Western culture is Gibbon's great

defect as a historian: and it is a very serious one, since it invalidates his judgment on the very issues which are most vital to his subject.⁴³

Although Gibbon was able to portray the culture of the Roman Empire correctly, his own prejudice against religion blinded him from the positive contributions that religion had played in the formation of culture. Like Gibbon, Dawson wanted culture to be at the center of his historical studies but without being prejudicial to religion. On this matter, Gibbon was in error, and Dawson wanted to avoid this same mistake. Accordingly, Dawson defined culture as

a conscious adaptation of social life to man's external environment and to the order of nature. What the animal does instinctively, man does with conscious purpose and with a greater or less degree of rational calculation. Thus, culture is rooted in nature, just as the higher achievements of the individual mind are rooted in culture.⁴⁴

Culture for Dawson was simultaneously both material and spiritual in nature. Although the articulation of culture was conditioned by the material, social, and historical context of the individual, the origins of this articulation was the individual's intellect and spirit.

Dawson understood culture as "a way of life" that involved "a certain degree of social specialization and the canalization of social energies along certain lines."⁴⁵ Even in primitive cultures, there existed "an intensive effort of social discipline directed toward the incorporation of the individual into the community and its social order."⁴⁶ What made and sustained a culture was a shared understanding among its people: "a common way of life involves a common view of life, common standards of value ... a culture is a spiritual community which owes its unity to common beliefs and common ways of thought."⁴⁷ A society without culture is merely formless, "a crowd or collection of individuals brought together by

the needs of the moment.”⁴⁸ Without a shared understanding of values, beliefs, and thoughts, culture cannot exist.

Although culture possessed a spiritual aspect in its values, beliefs, and thoughts, it also contained material and non-rational elements, for a “change of a culture is not simply a change of thought, it is above all a change of life,” which included these elements.⁴⁹ But whereas material elements of a culture may be destroyed, the spiritual aspects not only can transcend “the limits of racial and geographical conditions” from which they were derived but also live in other cultures: “Religion and science do not die with the culture of which they formed a part. They are handed on from people to people, and assist as a creative force in the formation of a new cultural organism.”⁵⁰ But the continuance of these spiritual elements required “a continuous moral effort.”⁵¹ Without such effort, culture would collapse and its values would be forever lost.

Change in Culture

Thus far Dawson’s understanding of culture comported with Voegelin’s “new” science of politics. Both conceived of humans who possessed a spiritual dimension that was articulated and conditioned by a specific social and historical existence. But Dawson’s emphasis on the materiality of culture provided insights into historical existence that Voegelin’s science lacked. Specifically, the material aspect of Dawson’s culture can better account for the interaction between the individual’s spiritual values and his material existence as well as changes that transpired in his culture.

With Voegelin’s science of politics, historical change was primarily due to a rupture in the metaxy caused by the individual’s *libido dominandi*. The interaction between the individual’s spiritual values and his material existence was essentially unidirectional from the individual’s divine-human encounter. Although Dawson agreed that the divine-human encounter was primary, he did not downplay the role of material existence in the formation of culture. The result was that Dawson’s concept of culture made his historical methodology more pluralistic and open to other factors to account

for cultural change. Because of this, Dawson was able to explain cultural interaction and change better than Voegelin.

According to Dawson, the spiritual values that animate culture developed in interaction with other factors and were also, in turn, influenced by them:

A culture is a common way of life—a particular adjustment of man to his natural surroundings and his economic needs. ... Not that man is merely plastic under the influence of his material environment. He moulds it, as well as being moulded by it.⁵²

Furthermore, neither material nor spiritual elements of culture were static entities for Dawson but continually evolving:

[A] culture is essentially a growth, and it is a whole. It cannot be constructed artificially.... Hence every culture develops its own types of man and norms of existence and conduct, and we can trace the curve of the growth and decline of cultural life by the vitality of these characteristic types and institutions as well as by the art and literature in which the soul of the culture finds expression.⁵³

To trace the contours of a culture, the historian looked first to “Religion, then Society, then Art, and finally Philosophy. Not that one of these is cause and the other effects. They are all different aspects of functions of one life.”⁵⁴

In this account, Dawson provided specific material features of cultures that were articulations of spiritual values—religion, society, art, and philosophy—and were to be studied in a holistic fashion. Whereas in Voegelin’s science of politics the divine-human encounter usually manifested itself in religion or philosophy as the primary unit of analysis, Dawson called for a study including additional factors like society and art.⁵⁵ Dawson furthermore did not give methodological weight to religion or philosophy—“Not that

one of these is cause and the other effects. They are all different aspects of functions of one life.”—as we find in Voegelin with his emphasis on religion or philosophy. Dawson’s holistic approach to historical existence therefore not only included factors that were downplayed or secondary in Voegelin’s methodology but also acknowledged how material factors influenced spiritual ones.

Because of his methodological openness, Dawson could account for cultural change in historical existence that went beyond Voegelin’s explanation of the *libido dominandi*. According to Dawson, a culture

represent[s] a fusion of a number of elements, and the history of world civilizations is a complex process of diffusion and cross-fertilization and hybridization like the blending of different racial elements in the growth of a nation. . . . The most common form of cultural change is that which results from the conquest of one’s people by another, so that it also involves biological and racial change.”⁵⁶

Although cultural change was an extremely complex process, culture generally speaking changed “not from within, but from the foreign pressure of some external culture.”⁵⁷

The adoption of “some elements of material culture developed by another people” can bring cultural change of great importance and show “the close interdependence of cultures.” For example, “[w]e see how in the past the use of metals, agriculture and irrigation, a new weapon or the use of the horse in war, have spread from one end of the Old World to the other with amazing rapidity.”⁵⁸ Such “innovations may alter the whole system of social organization,” but more likely than not “external change of this kind . . . leads not to social progress but to social decay.”⁵⁹ Cultural progress was the “exceptional condition, due to a number of distinct causes, which often operate irregularly and spasmodically.”⁶⁰ “As a rule,” Dawson judged, “to be progressive, change must come from within, as culture is a living, organic whole.”⁶¹

However, new material elements were not the only factors that could affect culture. Spiritual values, as conveyed by religious movements, could have a more dramatic impact on culture, bringing “revolutionary changes that are by no means rare in history.”⁶² Islam was such an instance, where a new religious movement transformed a culture:

Here we see in full clearness and detail how a new religion may create a new culture. A simple individual living [in] a cultural backwater originates a movement [that] in a comparatively short time sweeps across the world, destroying the historic empires and civilizations, and creating a new way of life which still moulds the thought and behavior of millions from Senegal to Boreno.”⁶³

Another example was the Renaissance and the Reformation, where the respective ideas of “the apotheosis of Humanity” and “the supreme example of the anti-humanist spirit, the enemy of moderation and human reason” supplanted the medieval Catholic world with its balance between the material and spiritual elements.⁶⁴ The result of these two movements was the secularization of culture so that nationalism and the Enlightenment “shut its eyes to everything but the natural virtues of the human heart, and salved the wounds of humanity with a few moral platitudes.”⁶⁵

Dawson’s explanation of cultural change therefore was not limited to material factors; spiritual elements could also play a role. By studying culture and cultural change in a holistic fashion, Dawson was able to account for changes in culture that were more dynamic and open to other factors than what we find in Voegelin. But despite these differences, both Dawson and Voegelin believed that religion or religious experience was at the core of cultural formation and the standard from which to measure cultural growth or decay. The recovery of religion to study culture consequently was important to both thinkers not only to understand the past but also to comprehend the present age that was characterized by ideological deformation.

The Role of Religion

Like Voegelin, Dawson rejected the methodologies that sought to understand cultures while denying their religious character:

The apostles of the eighteenth century Enlightenment were above all intent on deducing the laws of social life and progress from a small number of simple rational principles. They cut through the luxuriant deep-rooted growth of traditional belief with the ruthlessness of pioneers in a tropical jungle ... they traced religious origins no further than the duplicity of the first knave and the simplicity of the first fool.⁶⁶

The heirs of the Enlightenment, the positivists, were “haunted by the dream of explaining social phenomena by the mathematical and quantitative methods of the physical sciences, and thus creating a science of society which [would] be completely mechanistic and determinist.”⁶⁷ However, this purportedly objective approach often “carried them beyond the limits of sociology proper into the deep water of ethics and metaphysics” and prompted them into “the practical work of civic reform.”⁶⁸ Instead of studying societies in order to understand them, the positivist wanted to study societies to reform them—and usually in their own image.

Rebuffing the positivist’s denial of religion, Dawson instead adopted an Augustinian approach to historical existence. Dawson often evoked Augustine’s distinction between the cities of man and of God, where these “two cities are interwoven and intermixed in this era, and await separation at the last judgment.”⁶⁹ For Dawson, these two cities did not meet spiritually but did intermingle physically:

We must remember that behind the natural process of social conflict and tension which runs through history there is a deeper law of spiritual duality and polarization which is expressed in the teaching of the Gospel on the opposition of the World and the Kingdom of God and in St. Augustine’s doctrine of the two cities Babylon and Jerusalem

whose conflict run through all history and give its ultimate significance.⁷⁰

The object of the individual's love was what separated membership into these two cities; the city of man "looks for glory from men" and the city of God "finds its highest glory in God."⁷¹ Dawson likewise adopted this position: "There is no aspect of human life and no sphere of human action which is neutral or 'secular' in the absolute sense."⁷² Everything was subject to this dualism, even material forces whether they remained secular or spiritualized.

Augustine was "the founder of the philosophy of history" for Dawson because Augustine had discovered that history itself has spiritual meaning.⁷³ Unlike the Greeks who had a cosmological perspective, Christians believed that the purpose of history was part of God's plan; or, to use Voegelin's vocabulary, Christians introduced soteriological experience to supplant the cosmological one. As a philosophy of history, Dawson used Augustine's theory of history because it was concerned about the nature of history, the meaning of history, and the cause of significant historical change that involved the whole of humanity with its temporal and eternal destinies. However, these destinies did not transpire in temporality for Dawson: "the existing order of things had no finality for the Christian."⁷⁴ Like Voegelin and Augustine, Dawson rejected a definitive endpoint in temporality, thereby discrediting the legitimacy of certain ideological or Gnostic projects that claim insight into the fundamental structures of reality.

In addition to Augustine's account of history, Dawson also accepted aspects of Thomism in his works.⁷⁵ According to Dawson, Thomas's affirmation of the Incarnation's sanctification of the concrete and material was his fundamental principle and therefore made it permissible for someone like Dawson to study the material elements of culture.⁷⁶ This sanctification of the concrete and material allowed Thomas to balance the material and spiritual elements in Christian culture: "the whole Thomist synthesis" was governed by "the concordance in the difference of these two orders—of Nature and Grace, of Reason and Faith, of the temporal and

spiritual powers.”⁷⁷ This equilibrium was the essential significance of Scholasticism for Dawson. In Thomism Dawson saw the potential of a “really catholic philosophy of history” whose “dominant spirit” would be a spiritual unity among different national states.⁷⁸

Influenced by both Augustine and Aquinas, Dawson claimed that “religion is the key to history” and that “we cannot understand the inner form of a society unless we understand its religion.”⁷⁹ As an organized way of life that was based on a common tradition and environment, culture’s defining feature was its worship of the same divinity that included doctrines and dogma. The loss of religious faith necessitated the eventual destruction of a culture. In other words, there was no possibility of a secular culture for Dawson because culture, by his definition, was rooted in religion itself.⁸⁰ Religion therefore was

based on the recognition of a superhuman Reality of which man is somehow conscious and towards which he must in some way orientate his life. The existence of the tremendous transcendent reality that we name GOD is the foundation of all religion in all ages and among all people.⁸¹

Religion served as a bridge between the spiritual and material elements in culture; and such a study of religion would not only include the experiences of individuals but also their rituals, doctrines, dogmas, and institutions. Religion consequently was both material and spiritual in nature, and the historian’s task was to study every aspect of it.

Catholic Culture

Dawson believed that Christianity, and specifically Catholicism, was the standard by which to evaluate culture. In his analysis of culture, he employed a concept that he called metahistory:

[T]he Christian view of history is not a secondary element derived by philosophical reflection from the study of history. It lies at the very heart of Christianity and forms an

integral part of the Christian faith. Hence there is no Christian "philosophy of history" in the strict sense of the word. There is, instead, a Christian history and a Christian theology of history, and it is not too much to say that without them there would be no such thing as Christianity.⁸²

The connection between Christianity and history led Dawson to accept the orthodox Christian truths to understand history and culture. Of particular importance was the Incarnation in Christianity that made religion a "culturally creative force" because it affirmed the material elements in culture.⁸³ Catholicism embraced this sanctification of the temporal and material, whereas Protestantism did not because it was "ferociously iconoclastic as the early Moselems" and therefore "the antithesis of Humanism."⁸⁴ In fact the Protestantism of his time, as in Barth, "went further than Calvin himself in their denial of human values."⁸⁵ This hostility to the sanctification of the material in turn "contributed so largely to the progressive secularization of Western culture."⁸⁶

By contrast, Catholicism always had a tendency to "incarnate itself in culture," as it sought to order the whole of life toward a unity "not by the denial and destruction of natural human values, but by bringing them into living relation with spiritual truth and spiritual reality."⁸⁷ Catholic respect for the material world did not translate into a conformity, rejection, or mastery of it; rather, Catholicism desired to sanctify it spiritually. By making material reality in its proper relation with spiritual reality, Catholicism became for Dawson the measure by which to evaluate other religions and cultures.

According to Dawson, the archetypal pattern of Catholic culture was represented in the medieval period between the fall of the Roman Empire and High Middle Ages of the twelfth century.⁸⁸ This Catholic culture consisted of three components: the Augustinian understanding of the relationship between the cities of God and man; the pre-political reform movements of the monasteries that provided the material and temporal dynamism of European culture; and a spiritual unity of Europe that was centered

on the universal Church. The Church itself was the creative force behind medieval culture by not being completely identified or absorbed in either the ideals of Hellenistic humanism or the eschatological prophecies of Israel. It was this tension between Church and culture, and between the spiritual and the material, that made Western Europe a dynamic order, as opposed to the static arrangements in Byzantium.⁸⁹ The Augustinian perspective prevented culture from being associated solely with the spiritual or material but rather as a “field of continual effort and conflict.”⁹⁰ Once culture—and history—was viewed as something less than ultimate, Christianity could work within it without betraying its ideals.

The demystification of the material world allowed Christians to adopt a missionary attitude toward culture. Without materiality, spiritual values cannot transform themselves into actual practice:

It is only in Western Europe that the whole pattern of culture is to be found in a continuous succession and alternation of free spiritual movements; so that every century of Western history shows a change in the balance of cultural elements, and the appearance of some new spiritual force which creates new ideas and institutions, and produces a further movement of cultural change.⁹¹

The burden of spiritual reform was placed on religious institutions, such as monasteries, to address social and political ills because they were nonpolitical actors. Dawson warned that religion could only be creative in its cultural tasks if it renewed and protected its own spiritual integrity first. If religion were to be completely absorbed by culture and politics, it would lose its vitality. The “principles of an autonomous Christian order” have “again and again proved to be the seed of a new life” for moral reform.⁹²

Finally, the medieval Church was able to unify Europe not on the basis of power politics but as a spiritual ideal because it was able to maintain its independence from culture and politics: “For here the church did not become incorporated in a social and political order that it was powerless to modify; it found itself abandoned to its own

resources in a world of chaos and destruction.”⁹³ Under the unity and leadership of the Church, various ethnicities and nationalities were permitted to maintain their identities and still be part of the same community because of the transnational character of Christianity. By contrast, modern attempts to unify Europe on ideology have proven to be disastrous.⁹⁴ Although religion has been banished from modern, secular culture, the religious impulse still exists, manifesting itself as an “anti-social force of explosive violence.”⁹⁵ Denied its natural satisfaction in religion, culture “substitute[d] religions” of class, race, and other ideologies for religion’s place.⁹⁶ The crisis of modern civilization therefore was a cultural one with the replacement of religion by ideological deformation.

Conclusion

This conceptual confusion about culture—to deny its religious and spiritual character and accept only its material aspects—was predominant during Dawson’s time, as the term served “as a convenient omnibus expression to cover all the subordinate non-economic social activities which have to be included in the organization of a planned society.”⁹⁷ This understanding of culture was often paired with political ideology that created “historical myths as a psychological basis for social unity.”⁹⁸ With these ideas, historians looked to the national state as the fundamental unit of analysis in their studies that, as a result, affected historical inquiry: “Since the unit is a political one, the method of interpretation has tended to be political also, so that history has often sunk to the level of political propaganda.”⁹⁹ Dawson envisioned himself as returning his discipline back to objective inquiry rather than political commitment by recovering an understanding of culture that was both material and spiritual in nature.¹⁰⁰

For Dawson, the historical dependence upon a philosophical system of ideas was fundamentally different from a dependence upon a cultural paradigm. Thus, Dawson rejected a purely philosophical approach to a revitalization of Western civilization because such a method was too abstract and too absolute given the diversity of humankind’s religious and cultural experiences.¹⁰¹ Without

taking into consideration the historical conditions under which its ideas were conceived, philosophy was impotent in its tasks. Extracting ideas from their historical context was unacceptable to Dawson. Culture, properly understood, could illuminate historical existence while philosophical systems could not.

As a political scientist, Voegelin also shared Dawson's concern about studying ideas abstracted from their historical context. On this point, as well as many others, Voegelin and Dawson were in agreement.¹⁰² But where they diverged was in their conceptions of culture. Voegelin did not provide a clear conception of culture, with the result being that individual experience became the primary factor to explain the growth and decay of society. By contrast, Dawson's account of culture, particularly with its focus on its materiality and his openness to all aspects of it, allowed him to explain the internal dynamics of societal cohesion as well as external processes of growth and decay.

Although both believed religion or religious experience was central to the recovery of Western civilization, they differed in their answers. For Voegelin, the recovery started and ended with the individual; for Dawson, the process began with and concluded in culture. Of course, both are required to understand historical existence as well as to revitalize modern Western civilization. But the absence of a conception of culture in Voegelin's methodology made his claims about being a political scientist a difficult one, as he could not account for societal cohesion and change other than by reverting to individual experience. However, Dawson, the historian, could accomplish these tasks with his conception of culture. In this sense, Dawson appeared to be more the political scientist than Voegelin.

Endnotes

1. Eric Voegelin, *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (hereafter CW) (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990–2009), Vol. 30, *Selected Correspondence 1950–1984*, ed. Thomas A. Hollweck (2007), 197. The actual quote from Dawson was in reference to the unlikelihood that modern Western civilization would survive after it had abandoned Christianity for neo-paganism: “neo-paganism jumps out of the top-story

window, and whether on the right-hand window or the left makes very little difference by the time one reaches the pavement.” Christopher Dawson, *Understanding Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1952), 16. For more about Eric Voegelin’s own life, refer to CW 34, ed. Ellis Sandoz (2006), and *Voegelin Recollected: Conversations on a Life*, eds. Barry Cooper and Jodi Bruhn (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008).

2. The one exception is Jeffrey C. Herndon, who in *Eric Voegelin and the Problem of Christian Political Order* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007) describes the similarity between Voegelin and Dawson in their understanding and use of Augustine in their works. However, this comparison is secondary to the broader theoretical question of Voegelin’s conception of Christian political order.
3. CW 34, 33–34. For more about Voegelin’s contribution to political science, refer to Ellis Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Press, 2000).
4. CW 5, ed. Manfred Henningsen (2000), 88–108. For more about Voegelin’s theory of consciousness, refer to Steven R. McCarl, “Eric Voegelin’s Theory of Consciousness,” *The American Political Science Review* 86 (1992):1, 106–111; Barry Cooper, *Eric Voegelin and the Foundations of Modern Political Science* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999); and Jerry Day, *Voegelin, Schelling, and the Philosophy of Historical Existence* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003).
5. CW 6, ed. David Walsh (2002), 68.
6. CW 12, ed. Ellis Sandoz (1990), 305–306.
7. CW 6, 68–69, 335–336.
8. *Ibid.*, 76–77.
9. *Ibid.*, 69–70.
10. *Ibid.*, 76–77; also refer to CW 12, 289–291.
11. CW 12, 306.
12. CW 5, 76–77.
13. *Ibid.*, 88.
14. CW 12, 115–116.
15. CW 18, ed. Ellis Sandoz (2000), 23–24, 29, 31–32, 36, 81.
16. CW 12, 119–122.
17. *Ibid.*, 123–124.
18. CW 5, 138.
19. *Ibid.*, 138; CW 14, ed. Maurice P. Hogan (2001), 19–24; also refer to 39–50.
20. CW 14, 19–24.
21. *Ibid.*

22. Ibid., 89–90; *CW* 5, 150–151.
23. *CW* 5, 183–186.
24. Voegelin used the terms “external history” and “temporal history” interchangeably. Both terms correspond to Augustine’s idea of the history of the city of man. Despite their similarities, it is important to note that Voegelin believed external history would never cease, whereas Augustine did believe it would, although no one knows when this would occur (*De Civitate Dei*, XVIII.53). For more about the similarities and differences between Augustine and Voegelin, refer to *CW* 5, 175–178, 295–313; John von Heyking, *Augustine and Politics as Longing in the World* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001); Mark Mitchell, “Regarding the Balance: An Augustinian Response to Eric Voegelin,” *Humanitas* XV (2002): 1, 4–31; and Robert McMahon, “Augustine’s *Confessions* and Voegelin’s Philosophy,” *Modern Age* 48 (Winter 2006): 1, 37–46.
25. *CW* 14, 23.
26. *CW* 5, 175–178, 295–313.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid. For Voegelin’s relationship to modernity, refer to *Eric Voegelin and the Modern Continental Tradition*, Lee Trepanier and Steven F. McGuire, eds. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011).
29. Ibid.
30. Voegelin believed that only a few people were capable of divine-human experiences and could symbolize them as ordering principles for societies. *CW* 29, ed. William Petropulos (2009), 63.
31. *CW* 14, 427.
32. Ibid., 427–428. For Voegelin, all articulations of experiences, including dogma, doctrine, and creed, were symbolic in the sense that the articulation of the experience is separate from the experience itself. This explains Voegelin’s ambiguous attitude toward the value of dogma, doctrine, and creed because, although the content may be true, the reception of it is one in which the articulation is often mistaken for the experience itself. The result is someone who believes the truth not for experiential reasons but for symbolic ones and therefore is more vulnerable to ideological manipulation.
33. An event in metaleptic reality is when humans encounter the divine in their consciousness as meditative reflection rather than through dogmatic instruction. *CW* 17, ed. Michael Franz (2000), 307.
34. Ibid., 83.
35. *CW* 12, 174.

36. For more about Voegelin's conception and relationship to Christianity, refer to Bruce Douglass, "The Gospel and Political Order: Eric Voegelin on the Political Role of Christianity," *The Journal of Politics* 38 (1976): 1, 24–45; James Rhodes, "Voegelin and Christian Faith," *Center Journal* 2 (1983): 3, 44–67; Michael P. Federici, "Voegelin's Christian Critics," *Modern Age* 36 (1994): 4, 331–340; William Thompson-Uberuaga, *Jesus and the Gospel Movement* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006); Herndon, *Eric Voegelin and the Problem of Christian Political Order* (2007); Michael Henry, "Eric Voegelin on the Incarnate Christ," *Modern Age* 50 (2008): 4, 332–344; and John J. Ranieri, *Disturbing Revelation: Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, and the Bible* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009).
37. Voegelinian scholars have explained social and historical change but have not identified this problem of culture in Voegelin's methodology. For example, refer to Ellis Sandoz's *A Government of Laws: Political Theory, Religion, and the American Founding* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001) and *Republicanism, Religion, and the Soul of America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006); Glenn A. Moots, *Politics Reformed: The Anglo-American Legacy of Covenant Theology* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010); and Scott Philip Segrest, *America and the Political Philosophy of Common Sense* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010).
38. Christopher Dawson, *The Dynamics of World History* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1957), 333.
39. *Ibid.*, 335.
40. *Ibid.*, 352.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Gibbon argued that Christianity's emphasis on the afterlife contributed to a loss of Roman civic life that, in turn, led to the decline of the Roman Empire. Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 179–233.
43. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 333–334.
44. Christopher Dawson, *Religion and Culture* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1948), 131.
45. *Ibid.*, 47.
46. *Ibid.*, 56.
47. *Ibid.*, 48–49.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 388.
50. *Ibid.*

51. Ibid., 159.
52. Ibid., 56–57.
53. Ibid., 387.
54. Ibid., 50.
55. Voegelin did look to literature as a source of symbolization of the divine-human encounter. The most famous example of this was his essay, “On Henry James’s *Turn of the Screw*,” in *CW 12*, 134–171. Also refer to Charles Embry, ed., *The Philosopher and the Storyteller: Eric Voegelin and Twentieth-Century Literature* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008) and *Voegelinian Readings of Modern Literature* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2011); and Glenn Hughes, *A More Beautiful Question: The Spiritual in Poetry and Art* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011) for other examples. Voegelin also spoke of the primordial community of being—God, man, world, and society—that constituted historical existence. However, Voegelin did not demonstrate how these other factors actually worked in his methodology. In his major publications, Voegelin focused only on the divine-human encounter and neglected these other factors.
56. Dawson, *Religion and Culture*, 198.
57. Ibid.
58. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 8–9.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., 7.
61. Ibid., 9, 56.
62. Dawson, *Religion and Culture*, 52.
63. Ibid., 53.
64. Christopher Dawson, *The Dividing of Christendom* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956), 67; *Crisis of Western Education* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1961), 32.
65. Christopher Dawson, *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (New York: Sheed & Ward), 303.
66. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 11.
67. Ibid., 21.
68. Ibid., 14–15.
69. Augustine, *City of God* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1972), 46.
70. Christopher Dawson, “The Social Factor in the Problem of Christian Unity,” *Colosseum* 4 (1983): 11, 14; “Is the Church Too Western to Satisfy the Aspirations of the Modern World?” in *World Crisis and the Catholic: Studies Published on the Occasion of the Second World Congress for Lay Apostolate (Rome)* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), 168. Also refer to

- Dawson, *Dynamics*, 294–325 and Bradley Birzer, *Sanctifying the World* (Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 2007), 63–93.
71. Augustine, *City of God*, 591.
 72. Christopher Dawson, “The Problem of Christ and Culture,” *Dublin Review* 226 (1952): 64.
 73. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 320.
 74. *Ibid.*, 297.
 75. There is a dispute about the extent that Dawson adopted Thomism in his work. Davies and White claimed that Dawson was a neo-Thomist, while Hitchcock and Mulloy argued that Thomism was a secondary influence in Dawson’s works. Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England*, Vol. 5 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 184; Hayden White, “Religion, Culture, and Western Civilization in Christopher Dawson’s Idea of History,” *English Miscellany* 9 (1958): 247–287; James Hitchcock, “Post-Mortem on a Rebirth: The Catholic Intellectual Renaissance,” *American Scholar* 49 (1980): 211–225; and John J. Mulloy, “Christopher Dawson and G. K. Chesterton,” *Chesterton Review* 9 (1983): 226–232.
 76. Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1992), 173–175.
 77. Christopher Dawson, *The Formation of Christendom* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), 242.
 78. Christopher Dawson, “The Kingdom of God and History,” in *Christianity and European Culture: Selections from the Works of Christopher Dawson*, Gerald Russello, ed. (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 206; *Religion and Rise of Western Civilization* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1950), 237.
 79. Christopher Dawson, “Relationship between Religion and Culture,” *Commonweal* 49 (1949): 489. Although he also was influenced by social scientists like Comte, Durkheim, and Weber, Dawson actually believed—and argued—that religion was not only foundational to the definition of culture but also had legitimate truth claims. By contrast, Comte, Durkheim, and Weber rejected the truth claims of religion as social scientists because of their positivist adherence to the fact-value distinction.
 80. Dawson, *Religion and Culture*, 48–49.
 81. *Ibid.*, 25.
 82. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 234. For more about secondary literature on Dawson’s metahistory and interpretation of Christian culture, refer to Birzer, *Sanctifying the World*, 63–93, and Peter J. Cataldo, *The Dynamics Character of Christian Cultures: Essays on Dawsonian Themes* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984).

83. Christopher Dawson, "Hope and Culture: Christian Culture as a Culture of Hope," *Lumen Vitae* 9 (1954): 428.
84. Christopher Dawson, "The European Revolution," *Catholic World* 179 (1954): 90.
85. Christopher Dawson, "Christianity and the Humanist Tradition," *Dublin Review* 226 (1952): 2.
86. Dawson, "Hope and Culture," 430.
87. Dawson, *Formation*, 14; *Essays in Order* (New York: MacMillan, 1931), vii; also refer to Dermot Quinn, "Christopher Dawson and the Catholic Idea of History," in *Eternity in Time*, Stratford Caldecott and John Morrill, eds. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 69–92.
88. Dawson, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, 1–72; Christopher Dawson, *The Making of Europe* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 25–72; also refer to Fernando Cervantes, "Christopher Dawson and Europe," in *Eternity in Time*, Stratford Caldecott and John Morrill, eds. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 51–68.
89. Dawson, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, 117–40; *The Making of Europe*, 103–117.
90. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 239.
91. Dawson, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, 21.
92. Christopher Dawson, *Medieval Essays* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1954), 64; also refer to Michael O'Brien, "Historical Imagination and the Renewal of Culture," in *Eternity in Time*, Stratford Caldecott and John Morrill, eds. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 151–192.
93. Dawson, *Progress and Religion*, 132.
94. For more about the problems of ideologies for the modern Western civilization, refer to Christopher Dawson, *The Gods of Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 1972) and Birzer, *Sanctifying the World*, 123–149.
95. Dawson, *Progress and Religion*, 228.
96. Christopher Dawson, "Foundations of a European Order," *Catholic Mind* 42 (1944): 314.
97. Dawson, *Dynamics*, 103–104.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid., 4.
100. For more about Dawson's life, refer to Christopher Dawson, "Why I Am a Catholic," *Chesterton Review* 9 (1983): 110–113; Christina Scott, *A Historian and His World: A Life of Christopher Dawson* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1991).
101. Christopher Dawson, "The Relation of Philosophy to Culture," September 7, 1955, ND/CDAW, Box/Folder: 1/15.

102. Like Dawson, Voegelin believed that ideas needed to be studied in their specific historical context. To accomplish this task, Voegelin wrote an eight-volume work, *The History of Political Ideas* (CW 19–26), that began with the Pre-Socratics and concluded with Nietzsche. However, this work was not published because it did not incorporate his theory of consciousness that he discovered after *The History of Political Ideas* was completed. With this theory of consciousness, Voegelin published the five-volume *Order and History* (CW 14–18) that included new material. In all his works, Voegelin did his own translations, which required him to learn at least a dozen languages, as well as included the latest secondary literature on these subjects. In this sense, Voegelin's philosophical task was essentially a historical one and, as a work of history, rivaled, if not surpassed, Dawson in breadth, depth, and rigor.