

Review and Reflection

I. The Five Elements of Europe as a Culture

- (1) man is a being of worth and dignity;
- (2) the universe is orderly and purposeful and man can rationally know it is so as well as believe it is so;
- (3) there is an ethical, transcendent deity overseeing the universe and human affairs;
- (4) institutions and the social order should correspond to the ideal order underlying the universe;
- (5) the future can be and will be better for man than the present and the past.

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II. Basic Premises of the Course

- *Important to know basic elements of Europe.*
- *Know how they originated*
- *Know how they combined to form Europe*
- *Europe has been dynamic, changing over time.*
- *I have presented evidence that this is true.*
- *Perhaps you have evidence it is not true?*

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III. A Quick Look Back at Europe's Sources

- *Judaism produced four of Europe's beliefs, values and ideals.*
 - *Worth and dignity of man*
 - *Ethical, transcendent God*
 - *Society should reflect permanent order underlying world*
 - *Future will be better than the past or present.*

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III. A Quick Look Back at Europe's Sources

- *Greece produced three of Europe's elements:*
 - *Worth and dignity of man.*
 - *Universe as orderly and purposeful, intelligible to man.*
 - *Society is valid and ideal if it reflects ideal order of the world.*
- *Rome's contributions were two-fold:*
 - *Adopt and spread Greek culture.*
 - *Provide a seedbed for Christianity.*

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III. A Quick Look Back at Europe's Sources

- *Christianity became formative force drawing together the synthesis of Greco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian outlooks.*
- *Why? Because it best answered vexing questions, doubts, and issues in Roman imperial life in first two centuries A.D.*
- *Christianity triumphed in late Empire and began the synthesis of Christian (by then Judaeo-Christian) and classical (Greco-Roman) cultures.*

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III. A Quick Look Back at Europe's Sources

- *The next phase was the assimilation of Germanic influences (5th to 9th centuries). This had happened basically by Carolingian era.*
- *This set the stage for the First Europe (900-1350).*
 - *The worth of man as a soul needing salvation.*
 - *The future as the next world for which man needed to prepare.*
 - *The world as God's world.*
 - *Social institutions as a "remedy for sin."*
 - *God as a wrathful, avenging God.*

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III. A Quick Look Back at Europe's Sources

- *The Era 1350-1650 as one of paradox, contradictions, the juxtaposition of old and new: a search for new authorities focusing on individual.*
- *Examples of this theme.*
- *What happens in History 1122?*
 - *The Enlightenment or Second Europe.*
 - *The Impact of Revolutions in the 19th century on the Second Europe.*
 - *Revolt against Europe in the 20th century.*
 - *Will there be a Third Europe?*

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IV. Some Afterthoughts

- *Have I idealized Europe?*
 - *Europe's ability to transform itself and adapt itself.*
 - *The values of Europe enable critics of Europe to be critical.*
 - *Europe has made technology, science, and economic progress possible for all others.*
 - *Even revolutionaries are thinking European values when they attack the West for whatever reason.*
 - *Whatever evils have come out of Europe, so has great good.*
 - *G. K. Chesterton*
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IV. Some Afterthoughts

- *“The highest gratitude and respect are due to the great human civilizations such as the old Egyptian or the existing Chinese. Nevertheless it is no injustice for them to say that only modern Europe has exhibited incessantly a power of self-renewal recurring often at the shortest intervals and descending to the smallest facts of building or costume. All other societies die finally and with dignity. We die daily. We are always being born again with almost indecent obstetrics. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that there is in historic Christendom a sort of unnatural life: it could be explained as a supernatural life. It could be explained as an awful galvanic life working in what would have been a corpse. For our civilization ought to have died, by all parallels, by all sociological probability, in the Ragnarok of the end of Rome. That is the weird inspiration of our estate: you and I have no business to be here at all. We are all revenants; all living Christians are dead pagans walking about. Just as Europe was about to be gathered in silence to Assyria and Babylon, something entered into its body. And Europe has had a strange life -- it is not too much to say that it has had the jumps -- ever since.”*
([Orthodoxy](#))

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Questions

1. The preceding paragraph is based on my conviction that one can only criticize Europeans (those sharing Europe as a culture) for their supposed domination and victimization of the rest of the world if one accepts the assumptions of Europe as a culture. You've got to have a basis for making such moral judgments. That basis is the fundamental outlook of Europe about human nature and a just society. A strict Buddhist or Confucian will never have the sense of moral outrage about injustice that someone sharing the European heritage has. The whole outlook is different. You've got to be within the tradition of Europe to criticize it. And if you are part of the tradition of Europe as a culture, why the venomous hatred of Europe? Your thoughts?

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Questions

- 2. My comments about the revolutionary tradition as revolting against Europe, but growing out of it?*

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Questions

3. *Consider another principle growing within the Western tradition and nowhere else: freedom of expression. “The ability to stand outside your own political system, your own culture, and your religion, to criticize your own society and to pursue the truth, is something we today take so much for granted that it is almost part of the air we breathe. Without it, our idea of freedom of expression would not exist. We should recognize, however, that this is a distinctly Western phenomenon, that is, it is part of the cultural heritage of those countries—in Europe, the Americas, and Australasia—that evolved out of Ancient Greece, Rome, and Christianity. This idea was never produced by either Confucian or Hindu culture. Under Islam it had a brief life in the fourteenth century but was never heard of again.”* (Keith Windschuttle, “The Journalism of Warfare,” The New Criterion Vol. 23, No. 10, June 2005). Your view?