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A journal for restless minds

# Colloquī *: to discuss*

**Slogging thru the Valley of the Uns**

*The silencing of the lambs*

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**Deacon's Diner**

*Food for a restless mind*

# Slogging thru the Valley of the Uns

## *The silencing of the lambs*

**H**istory plays a broken record, replete of a race so besotted, so wedded to an ideology of conceit, hearts hardened, cruel and cold, minds made mad, souls predisposed to hell; knowing themselves superior, masters, godlike creatures; thus, by right, entitled to rule those judged inferior with contemptuous disregard. In a world of ethnic conflict and civilizational clash, belief in the universality of any culture not the master suffers three problems: it is false; it is immoral; and it is dangerous.<sup>1</sup> That is, in brief, the history of humankind, from *ongle* to *tête*.

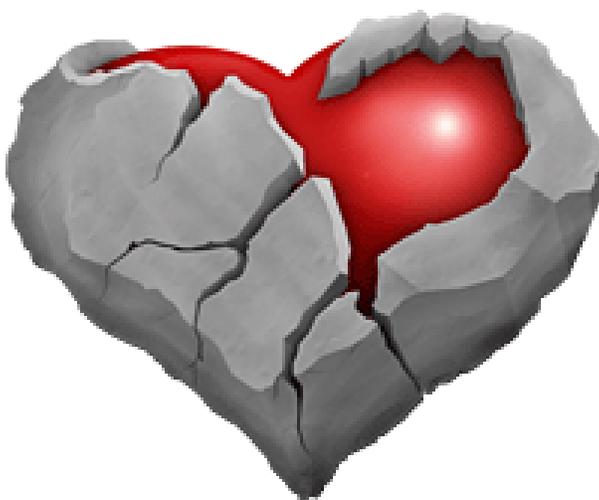
Max Weber once raised the question as to whether “A product of modern European civilization, studying any problem of universal history, is bound to ask himself to what combination of circumstances the fact should be attributed that in Western civilization, and in Western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which (as we like to think) lie in a line of development having *universal* significance and value.”<sup>2</sup> Marcello Pera suggests that while Weber was speaking of “the most fateful force in our modern life, capitalism,” the same question could be applied to any number of institutions not included on Weber’s short list.

Modern science, for example, is a Western invention that has a universal value. So, too are liberalism, separation of civil society and state or church and state, the rule of law, the welfare state, democracy, as well as the “universal” conventions, declarations, and bills of rights. These and other institutions originate in and are characteristic of the West, particularly Western Europe. They belong to specific periods of Western history, have spread and imposed themselves in other parts of the world, and claim to have universal value.

The explanations that have been offered for these unique phenomena diverge, sometimes markedly. I will not enter into the merits of the solutions, although I feel

obliged to mention that no serious attempt to account for these great moments in history has ignored the contribution of Christianity—direct or indirect, causal or concomitant, determinant or auxiliary, supportive or critical—thereby confirming that Christianity has been the greatest force in Western history. Instead I wish to focus on a new and paradoxical fact.

While the explanations have varied widely, the basic validity of the question has always been upheld. Today, by contrast, exactly one hundred years after the publication of Weber’s essay, the *question* itself is the first thing to be questioned, criticized, and ultimately refuted. The thinking that currently prevails in the West regarding the universal features of the West is that none of them has universal value. According to the proponents of these ideas, the universality of Western institutions is an illusion, because in reality they are only one particularity among many, with a dignity equal to that



of others, and without any intrinsic value superior to that of others. Consequently to recommend these institutions as universal would be a gesture of intellectual arrogance or an attempt at cultural hegemony, imposed by arms, politics, economics, or propaganda. Moreover it only goes to follow that seeking to export these same institutions to cultures or traditions that are different from our own would be an act of imperialism.<sup>3</sup>

Pera follows this train of thought with the question of extensive debate concerning the issue of “exporting” democracy, specifically concerning the initiatives promoted by George W. Bush in relation to the second Iraq war. “Opponents ... have argued that democracy should not be exported.”

They do so not because the social, economic, legal, and institutional conditions of the countries affected are still backward, which would make the entire operation *premature*.” Not because the institutions typical of democracy—the vote, equality, laws, parliaments, courts, and so forth—inevitably undergo sometimes profound modifications when they are grafted to different cultures (from England to India, for example, or from France to Algeria), which would make the operation *unilateral*. Instead they argue that exporting democracy would amount to imposing one form of life on other equally legitimate, worthy, respectable forms of life, which would make the operation *violent*.

One particularly revealing symptom shows the extent to which this mixture of timidity, prudence, convenience, reluctance, and fear has penetrated the fiber of the West. I refer to the form of self-censorship and self-repression that goes by the name of political correctness. "P.C." is the newspeak that the West uses nowadays to imply, allude to, or insinuate rather than to affirm or maintain.

We read and hear this newspeak every day. According to its dictates, everything can be compared and evaluated *within* the confines of Western culture—be it Coca-Cola with Chianti, Gaudi with Le Corbusier, Darwinism with intelligent design—and many comparisons can be made *between* aspects of Western culture and their counterparts in other cultures, such as hospitality, social customs, individual behavior, clothing, and so forth. Yet should one attempt to place in a hierarchical order these cultures or civilizations—such as the ones that Max Weber described in the past and Samuel Huntington describes in the present—or to simply organize them according to a scale of preferences, from better to worse, out pop self-censorship, prohibitions, and linguistic restraints. Consequently, as one can easily document in today's newspeak, whenever a culture lacks or flatly rejects our institutions, we are not allowed to say that our own culture is *better* or simply *preferable*. The only thing that politeness allows us to say is that cultures and civilizations are different.

To me this form of linguistic re-education is unacceptable. I reject it on moral grounds, which are the ultimate reason for refuting an intellectual position.

The notion that the judgment of cultures or civilizations constitutes an invalid mode of inquiry has been put forward, most notoriously, by the school of thought known as relativism. Various names have been given to this school today: post-enlightenment thinking, post-modernism, "weak thought,"<sup>4</sup> deconstructionism. The labels have changed, but the target is always the same: to proclaim that there are no grounds for our values and no solid proof or argument establishing that any one thing is better or more valid than another.<sup>5</sup>

Pera argues persuasively that "Relativism stems from an irrefutable fact, the existence of a plurality of values, and from a hardly refutable position, that it is impossible for all values to coexist." There are always incompatibilities that exist, differences in individual pursuits of values, such as between friendship and justice. His example of just such a conflict explains this dichotomy clearly: "when a friend commits a crime before our eyes: should we violate the friendship by reporting the friend to the police, or

should we keep the friendship by denying the truth and becoming accomplices? From such premises, relativism derives erroneous and disastrous consequences, in particular, the conclusion that sets of values, such as cultures and civilizations, cannot be judged by comparison to one another."

Two main lines of reasoning are generally adopted in support of this conclusion. The first is that cultures, theories, conceptual universes, language, games, or worldviews—depending on the methods or terminology used—cannot be measured in terms of each other. The second is that certain concepts are intrinsically paradoxical ("aporetic," to use the technical term), especially concepts that are related to values, such as state, democracy, and faith.

The best-known example of the first approach is Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*.<sup>6</sup> His thesis is that the meaning of a term is contingent upon the use that is made of it in a language ("meaning *is* use"), and that every linguistic universe has its own rules of construction, signification, and decision. The basic argument in support of his thesis is that contents cannot be separated from the criteria by which they are judged. What one community holds to be true, beautiful, and good is only so according to the criteria by which that community defines them.<sup>7</sup>

Let us pause for a moment and reflect upon Wittgenstein's relativistic hypothesis, that "meaning *is* use." Perhaps the most glaring example in currency is the ubiquitous, hyperbolic and overused word: *racism*, the belief that groups of humans possess different behavioral traits corresponding to physical appearance and can be divided based on the superiority of one race over another; it also is used to mean prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against other people because they are of a different race or ethnicity. Racism is real, there are racists now, just as there have been racists in the past, just as there have been murderers, thieves, anarchists, sodomizers, pedophiles, rapists, sociopaths, psychopaths, and others with evil in their hearts. Without excusing or diminishing the evil that is racism, current overuse has accomplished nothing but obfuscation, trivializing the original meaning, relativizing it, making it the go to word whenever nothing else will do; it means whatever one chooses to mean by it and for you to take however you take it to mean. The power is in the slur, the truth is unimportant. As Wittgenstein hypothesizes, "contents cannot be separated from

the criteria by which they are judged,” meaning if one is judged a racist, the truth cannot dispute the judgment; the merest claim is the proof of it.

It may be important to note—of what importance, I will simply leave for the reader to decide—that *Without Roots* was “born from a personal encounter” between Pera and Ratzinger after their respective lectures, Marcello Pera at the Pontifical Lateran University on May 12, 2004 and Cardinal Ratzinger the following day in the Capital Room of the Italian Senate. As Pera notes in the Preface, “This juxtaposition of the two speeches was purely by chance. As we discovered immediately after reading each other’s talks and in the private meetings that followed, however, there was nothing casual about the often complete coincidence—arrived at independently and from very different perspectives—that we found in our concerns about the spiritual, cultural, and political situation of the West, and particularly of Europe today, and also about the causes of the situation and the primarily cultural remedies that could improve it.”

In the final essay, Joseph Ratzinger writes in a letter to Pera, “I would now like to say a few words about relativism. As I said at the outset, I am most grateful for all that you explained so carefully in your lecture, and I agree with you completely on everything.”

In recent years I find myself noting how the more relativism becomes the generally accepted way of thinking, the more it tends toward intolerance, thereby becoming a new dogmatism. Political correctness, whose constant pressures you have illuminated, seeks to establish the domain of a single way of thinking and speaking. Its relativism creates the illusion that it has reached greater heights than the loftiest philosophical achievements of the past. It prescribes itself as the only way to think and speak—if, that is, one wishes to stay in fashion. Being faithful to traditional values and to the knowledge that upholds them is labeled intolerance, and relativism becomes the required norm. I think it is vital that we oppose this imposition of a new pseudo-enlightenment, which threatens freedom of thought as well as freedom of religion.

That Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger held these thoughts nearly two decades ago speaks volumes for his foresight and clear understanding of the growing threat and the danger relativism, political correctness, and intolerance

would bring to bear upon future generations. We are in the midst of the establishment of a “domain of a single way of thinking and speaking,” just as he foresaw in 2004 and it is terrifying. Now, more than ever, we have come full face with the imposition of that new pseudo-enlightenment, one anyone with eyes can see “threatens freedom of thought as well as freedom of religion.”

I appreciate that you—unlike many other secular people—speak of the “person from the moment of conception,” and that you underline the deep ethical difference between the relationship with persons and the relationship of things. I can well understand your observations on therapeutic abortion and on homologous artificial insemination.

The Church’s Magisterium deals with the question of how far the Church should go in pressing its demands on lawmakers. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith prepared a document on the responsibilities of Catholic politicians that makes a clear distinction between the two levels at stake. The Catholic will not and should not, through the making of laws, impose a hierarchy of values that can only be recognized and enacted within the faith. He or she can only reclaim that which belongs to the human foundations accessible to reason and therefore essential to the construction of a sound legal order. Yet at this point a spontaneous question arises: What is this moral minimum accessible to reason that all human beings share? Is it that which all human beings understand? Is it possible to conduct a statistical analysis of these rational common bases for an authentic legal code?

Here the dilemma of human life emerges fully. If we had to place on the same level rationality and the average conscience, very little “reason” would be left in the end. The Christian is convinced that his or her faith opens up new dimensions of understanding, and above all that it helps reason to be itself. There is the true heritage of the faith (the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the sacraments, and so on), but there is also the knowledge for which faith provides evidence, knowledge that is later recognized as rational and pertaining to reason as such, and thus also implying a responsibility toward others. The person of faith, who has received help in reason, must work in favor of reason and of that which is rational: this, in the face of dormant or diseased reason, is a duty he or she must perform toward the entire human community.

Naturally the person of faith knows that he or she must respect the freedom of others and that ultimately the only weapon is the soundness of the arguments set

forth in the political arena and in the struggle to shape public opinion. This is why it is so crucial to develop a philosophical ethics that, while being in harmony with the ethic of faith, must however have its own space and its own logical vigor. The rationality of the arguments should close the gap between secular ethics and religious ethics and found an ethics of reason that goes beyond such distinctions.<sup>8</sup>

Here I must go further by first going back to Wittgenstein's "meaning *is* use" theorem. As Ratzinger notes a gap exists between secular and religious; this requires further explication. Much is argued these days about the separation of church and state which has, whether one is willing to admit to it or not, become an unspoken, undeniable litmus test applied for those who would serve in public office, especially for those who would sit on the highest court of the land, the U.S. Supreme Court. What is primary to any discussion of the supposed distinction between secular and religious and the separation of church and state are the meanings we conjure for *secular* and *state*. Interestingly, there once was a time when there was *no state* and secular meant a thing altogether different.

According to Andrew Jones, *Before Church and State*, "Thirteenth-century France was not a world of the secular and the religious vying for position and power, but a world in which the material and the spiritual were totally dependent on each other and penetrated one another at every level."

This was a world not of the religious and the secular, but of the New Testament and the Old, of virtue and vice, of grace and law, of peace and violence. This world offered a coherent vision of the whole in which mankind moved through grace from the lesser to the greater, from the fallen to the redeemed.<sup>9,10</sup>

**Our own vision is secular. Even when we acknowledge the importance of religion, we do so from within the assumption of the secular: that reality itself is ultimately free of the religious. Religions come and go; they are relative. The secular is permanent; it is absolute and universal. To us, the secular is the field on which the game of history—including religious history—is played. Within this secular vision, religion as a sociological category is often considered inessential to the concept of society itself. In this view, religious societies are, in a sense, accidentally religious: their religion can fade away. ... To us moderns, the secular is fundamental. ... In such an approach "religion is a category that functions *within* the secular."<sup>11</sup> (*emphasis added*)**

According to Jeffrey L. Morrow,<sup>10</sup> "Jones lays the fundamental groundwork that is necessary to understand the vision of medieval society he articulates—derived directly from the primary sources. He calls for the abandonment of the anachronistic categories we habitually use and read back into the medieval sources—like 'secular' and 'religious,' 'Church' and 'State.' These individual terms were used, but not in the way we employ them today. He also introduces us to the main figures who will serve as the focus of his study: Saint Louis IX (1214-1270; ruled France 1226-1270) and Gui Foucois (1190-1268). Both men are incredibly interesting characters."

Saint Louis was a layman and temporal ruler. He is the last king to have been canonized thus far—the only canonized king of France—and thus provides us a glimpse into how a saint governs in his society. Foucois is particularly fascinating in that he played important roles in both the spiritual and temporal realms. He was a married layman with children and served as an important legal aid to the king, Saint Louis. After the death of his wife, Foucois was ordained a priest and then very quickly was ordained a bishop. He was named a cardinal and served as the papal legate to France. He was then elected Pope Clement IV and reigned from 1268-1273. The ways in which Saint Louis and Clement IV worked together provide a great example of what Jones is trying to describe.

Jones explains what their medieval context was like, in contrast to our own:

In the Middle Ages the "secular" was integral to a conception of social reality that was thoroughly "supernatural" in character. ... The "religious" was not accidental to this world, and the kings were not the State. It was a sacramental world in which the material and the spiritual were everywhere and always present together. **The spiritual power was the power of the priests to dispense the grace that sustained this society in charity and they wielded the spiritual sword of excommunication against the moral sinner. The temporal power was the power of the laymen to organize the world of things and events, and they wielded the temporal sword against the violent.**<sup>13</sup> (*emphasis added*)

In his conclusions, Jones reiterates a point difficult for moderns to keep in view, but essential for understanding medieval history.

**The State did not exist at all. The State exists only as a particular organization scheme of thought and**

**practice, as a particular social order at a particular time and place. It has no independent, transhistorical or transcultural existence, no universal applicability.** (*emphasis added*) It may be true that the State described by Max Weber ... had historical reality in the West during the modern period, but that was as transitory as was the social order of the thirteenth century. ... "The State" and its companion, "the secular," have a history, and there was a time before they existed. ... The "religious" has a history, and the construction of the concept of the Church as the realm of the religious is a product of that history.<sup>14</sup>

Reading salvation history necessarily requires a focus on natural law and the reality of sin, a thing ignored and left *unfocused* by post-modern relativists. "Although natural law reflects God's design for how we are to live, sin rendered us unable to live out these demands apart from grace." Human law is by design intended to be "nothing other than the practical determination of the natural law, its application." Saint Thomas Aquinas, moreover, argues that sin has so fundamentally damaged us that we do not reason or act in accord with the dictates of the natural law, and this affects our human laws. The Old Law, according to Aquinas, was intended by God "to begin to correct this condition."

The Ten Commandments were the most basic dictates of the natural law. Through them, God re-promulgated a law that before sin had been immediately available to reason. ... The totality of the natural law, the entire life in accordance with reason and so with virtue, was contained within the precepts of the Old Law. Through the Old Law, God's promulgation of the natural law internally through the illumination of the human mind and through human reason's contemplation of creation, now compromised by sin, was re-accomplished externally through the revelation of the same law.<sup>15</sup>

It was as they operated in the realm of sin that the most pronounced distinctions between the temporal and spiritual powers emerge: they became most clearly two powers when they were the two swords. ... Against the violence of sin, the temporal power was that authority that used force, and the spiritual power was that authority that invited the sinner back to the realm of true peace, that preached penance and offered mercy and so a return to grace through the sacraments. ... The spiritual sword sought to scare the sinner back into the realm of grace before he really left it. Excommunication was first medicinal. ... If this failed, ... the temporal sword would be deployed to frighten or force him into accepting a worldly peace. This exterior peace not only

protected the society of true peace from the violent but also created in the sinner habits that were conducive to acquired virtue and conversion, and it was the space within which the spiritual power sought conversions back to, first, a sort of faith and so subjection to the divine law (as had been the case under the Old Law), and then to Charity through grace and so freedom and true peace.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, it can be understood from the spiritual perspective, that the ultimate purpose of Church law was to regulate "the availability of the sacraments to a fallen world."<sup>17</sup> The purpose of human law from the perspective of the temporal power was "to build a society of virtue." Thus, the spiritual and temporal powers worked together in their different ways for the same goal: the beatific vision.<sup>18</sup>

In light of all this, it is a mistake to view the legal developments of the thirteenth century, and prior in the twelfth, as some sort of early beginnings to modern secularization, modern state-building, and so on, over and against the religious. On the contrary, as Jones has demonstrated quite persuasively, "it was the effort to convert more and more of the world from violence to true peace, to produce in the law the bridge from fallen nature to redeemed nature."<sup>19</sup> Jones brings his important volume to a close ... wherein he explains how Jesus—the Second Person of the Trinity taking on human nature—is the ultimate grounding of the relations between temporal and spiritual. The two powers worked together, and both needed each other in order to be fully themselves: "What made the spiritual power a power was that it operated in the material world of the temporal. ... What made the temporal power a power, rather than the violence of the pagan kings, was that it operated within the spiritual, that it participated in divine law."<sup>20/21</sup>

By the "secular" we typically mean something like the world apart from God: the public space from which "religion" has been banished. Jones problematizes this dichotomy as it is too often applied to earlier times where such words meant something quite different. As he explains, "in the Middle Ages the 'secular' was integral to a conception of social reality that was thoroughly 'supernatural' in character."<sup>22</sup> Or as the anthropologist Talal Asad states, "At one time 'the secular' was part of a theological discourse."<sup>23</sup>

Certain segments of the Catholic theological world have retained this older sense. Thus we still speak of religious life in reference to religious orders, and diocesan priests are understood to be secular clerics. Some official Church documents still write of the secular as the

temporal realm where God is present and which is the ordinary operating theater of the lay faithful.<sup>24</sup> We find this as well in some of the writings of the saints.<sup>25</sup> Changes in definition become clear as secularization enters English idiom in reference to the violent “stripping of the altars,” as detailed in Eamon Duffy’s book by the same title, whereby lands held by the Catholic Church were violently taken over by the state in the English Reformation.<sup>26</sup>

As Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger has observed, “The secular state arose for the first time in history, abandoning and excluding as mythological any divine guarantee or legitimation of the political element, and declaring that God is a private question that does not belong to the public sphere or to the democratic formation of the public will. Public life came to be considered the domain of reason alone, which had no place for a seemingly unknowable God: from this perspective, religion and faith in God belonged to the domain of sentiment, not of reason. God and His will therefore ceased to be relevant to public life.” As Morrow notes, “The idea that the secular required the demise of religion has not died, as we are likely all too well aware.” I would argue this ideological premise is very much alive, that it permeates virtually every aspect of our lives, public and private, socially and culturally, morally and legally. As Jones points out, “Our own vision is secular. Even when we acknowledge the importance of religion, we do so from within the assumption of the secular: that reality itself is ultimately free of the religious.”

In an all but forgotten volume entitled *The Lord of History*<sup>28</sup>, Monsignor Eugene Kevane entitled his seventh chapter “Modernity as Apostasy from God” which is a telling description of the pervasive atheism and secularism of the modern world.

The implications are that modern atheism and secularism are, in a certain sense, Christian heresies. With meticulous detail, Jones documents the unified Christian world of thirteenth-century France. One gets the sense that the sacramental vision was not unique to France and her workings with the papacy, but obtained throughout Christendom. It was a theological and political whole. What modern secularization does is keep the legal structure in place—at least some of it—and jettison the theology that rendered the law and social order intelligible.<sup>29</sup>

It may well seem that I have strayed far afield and ended up neck deep among the muck and weeds. I must admit to slogging far deeper than where I had expected to travel toward the valley of the Uns and for that I can only ask for your forgiveness and forbearance. I hope I have not lost you with the thirteenth-century history lesson or the twenty-first philosophy discourse for I assure you there is a purpose to my apparent madness.

There is, I believe, an unsettled place, where uncommon, unsavory, unfaithful, unbelieving, unfocused, unre-membered, unhappy, unloved, un-lived, unchristian, unforgiven and unforgivable people reside; it is a valley of shadows, of death and evil spirits. There is no God, no hope, no joy, no rejoicing; only fear, hatred, anger, lust, avarice, greed, resentment. It is the valley of the Uns, a gated community, a suburb of hell. Religion is anathema, so also God. As discussed above, it is a secular place, secular in the modern sense of the word, occupied by those who subscribe to a progressive, unreligious, anti-religious, anti-Christian creed. Life has no value except to the one who owns it; all is relative and subjective: you live and then you die, the rest is unknowable. God is unknowable, so heaven and hell, good and evil, right and wrong are what one chooses, but only if one finds a need to choose.

In the *Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis imagines hell as an unending gray expanse, ever-expanding because those who reside there are desperate to separate themselves from everyone else. That is an apt description of the valley of the Uns, a place occupied with souls unsatisfied, wanting to unsocially distance themselves from anyone and everyone. Everyone wears a mask to hide their perpetually unhappy faces, to muffle the sound of their unbearable complaint. Unsurprising, each believes with absolutely no effort on their part, that the Un elite and the Un bureaucratic State, if they would only do their jobs, could make the sun shine transforming rainbows into pots of gold, while changing the valley into a far better, more pleasant place for eunuch unicorns in uniforms. Every denizen is uninterested in anyone but their own uninformed, uninteresting selves. If the Uns are bothered in the least, it is from their unremitting unabashed attempts at silencing the lambs being led to slaughter to feed their unrequited appetites.

The Uns are by-in-large trolls who feed on the innocent rather than forage for themselves. They see themselves as kings or even gods who must be obeyed or be beaten, tarred and feathered, burned at the stake, most certainly cancelled. Their word is law, but wait a minute and they

will change it to fit their mood. Natural law, God's laws are subject to their law. Obey their law or be crucified; be crucified and enjoy the ride.

Finally, I will remind you of particular points made earlier throughout this essay.

- Christianity has been the greatest force in Western history.
- The notion that the judgment of cultures or civilizations constitutes an invalid mode of inquiry has been put forward ... by the school of thought known as relativism.
- the more relativism becomes the generally accepted way of thinking, the more it tends toward intolerance, thereby becoming a new dogmatism.
- Political correctness ... seeks to establish the domain of a single way of thinking and speaking.
- Being faithful to traditional values and to the knowledge that upholds them is labeled intolerance and relativism the norm. It is vital that we oppose this imposition that threatens freedom of thought as well as freedom of religion.
- Most importantly, we must remember and remain aware that our own vision is secular, even when practicing our religion, we do so from within a secular reality.

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1. Derived from the political thesis of Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 310. Huntington wrote: "In the emerging world of ethnic conflict and civilizational clash, Western belief in the universality of Western culture suffers three problems: it is false; it is immoral; and it is dangerous."
2. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 2d ed., trans. Anthony Giddens, (New York: NY: Routledge Classics, 2001), 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1992; first English edition 1930.
3. Marcello Pera, "Relativism, Christianity, and the West," in Joseph Ratzinger and Marcello Pera, *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*, trans. Michael F. Moore (New York: Basic, 2006), 1-3.
4. Translator's note: The term *pensiero debole*, or "weak thought," was coined in the early 1990s by the Italian philosopher Gianni Vattimo to denote his own brand of nihilism, and has subsequently become a blanket term to describe Italian post-modern thinking.
5. Marcello Pera, "Relativism, Christianity, and the West," 4-5. Author's own footnote: "To whoever might take issue with my use of the word "ultimate," I would point out that we reject Nazism, fascism, communism, racism, anti-Semitism, and fanaticism not because they conflict with some logical theorem, or because they are empirically or scientifically false, but because they offend our consciences, contradict our deep intuitions about human rights, and violate our fundamental values. We reject them, in other words, for practical rather than theoretical reasons." 137-38.
6. Ludwig Josef Wittgenstein (1889-1951), Austrian-British philosopher, one of the founders of relativism.

7. Marcello Pera, "Relativism, Christianity, and the West," 11-12.
8. Joseph Ratzinger, "Letter to Marcello Pera", 127, 131.
9. In other words, "the Middle Ages were neither religious nor secular because the religious and the secular are two features of a single construction: the modern Western social architecture of 'Church' and 'State,' 'private' and 'public,' 'individual' and 'market,' and so on. The societies of the Middle Ages had a different architecture based on different assumptions and different concepts, ultimately on a different vision of the cosmos."
10. Andrew Willard Jones, *Before Church and State: A Study of Social Order in the Sacramental Kingdom of St. Louis IX* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2017), 2
11. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 3.
12. Jeffrey L. Morrow, Seton Hall University, "Once There Was No Church and State: Re-Envisioning the Social Order in Light of Thirteenth-Century History", *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition of the International Theological Journal, Vol. 18, No. 3 (2020): 991-1015.
13. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 5.
14. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 394.
15. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 408-9.
16. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 426-27.
17. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 428.
18. Jones explains: "The temporal power sought to build a society of virtue, a task that included education, good counsel, leadership, discipline ... and protection from outside threats. ... The spiritual power was necessary for the achievement of this object [a virtuous life] because ... true virtue was not possible without grace. ... What is more, the end of human society was not simply the life of virtue, but rather, through it, to achieve the enjoyment of God, the beatific vision, which was perfect grace. ... The royal and the priestly were therefore distinct but united in a single endeavor that was rooted in the united kingship and priesthood of Christ himself. The spiritual power was "higher" than the temporal power not because the rule of the temporal world of virtue was a delegation from the spiritual power, but because the temporal world of virtue was brought up and into true peace through the spiritual power."
19. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 431.
20. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 452.
21. Morrow, *Once there Was No Church and State*, 1005.
22. Jones, *Before Church and State*, 5.
23. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 192.
24. E.g., *Lumen Gentium* §31 and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* §2.
25. E.g., Pope Saint John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America*, §44 (which is a formal document of the Church).
26. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400 – c. 1580* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1992).
27. Ratzinger, *The Spiritual Roots of Europe*, 62-63.
28. Eugene Kevane, *The Lord of History: Christocentrism and the Philosophy of History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2018); 1<sup>st</sup> ed., (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1980).
29. Morrow, *Once there Was No Church and State*, 1012.

## Deacon's Diner

*Food for a restless mind*

**F**or those restless minds that hunger and thirst for more. Each week this space will offer a menu of interesting and provocative titles, written by Catholic authors, in addition to those referenced in the articles, for you to feed your restless mind.

### BOOKS

**Salvation: What Every Catholic Should Know**

*Michael Patrick Barber*

Ignatius Press

2019, 189 pages.

**Faith and Politics**

*Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI)*

Ignatius Press

2018, 269 pages.

**The Day Is Now Far Spent**

*Robert Cardinal Sarah*

Ignatius Press

2019, 350 pages.

**G.K. Chesterton Collected Works: Volume XXXVI**

*The Illustrated London News 1932-1934*

Ignatius Press

2011, 613 pages.

**Return of the Strong Gods: Nationalism, Populism and the future of the West**

*R. R. Reno*

Regnery Gateway

2019, 182 pages.

**The Irony of Modern Catholic History:**

How the Church rediscovered itself

*George Weigel*

Basic Books

2019, 322 pages.

**Letters on Liturgy**

*Father Dwight Longenecker*

Angelico Press

2020, 164 pages.

**Immortal Combat**

*Father Dwight Longenecker*

Sophia Institute Press

2020, 144 pages.

### PERIODICALS

**First Things**

[www.firstthings.com](http://www.firstthings.com)

**Touchstone**

[www.touchstonemag.com](http://www.touchstonemag.com)

**Catholic Answers Magazine**

[www.catholic.com](http://www.catholic.com)

**Catholic Herald**

[www.catholicherald.co.uk](http://www.catholicherald.co.uk)

**Chronicles**

[www.chroniclesmagazine.org](http://www.chroniclesmagazine.org)

**Gilbert!**

[www.chesterton.org](http://www.chesterton.org)

**The National Catholic Register**

[www.ncregister.com](http://www.ncregister.com)

**Our Sunday Visitor**

[www.osvnews.com](http://www.osvnews.com)

### ONLINE

**Crisis Magazine**

[www.crisismagazine.com](http://www.crisismagazine.com)

**The Imaginative Conservative**

[www.theimaginativeconservative.org](http://www.theimaginativeconservative.org)

**Catholic Exchange**

[www.catholicexchange.com](http://www.catholicexchange.com)

**Intellectual Takeout**

[www.intellectuالتakeout.org](http://www.intellectuالتakeout.org)

**Life News**

[www.lifenews.com](http://www.lifenews.com)

**Life Site News**

[www.lifesitenews.com](http://www.lifesitenews.com)

**OnePeterFive**

[www.onepeterfive.com](http://www.onepeterfive.com)

**Catholic Vote**

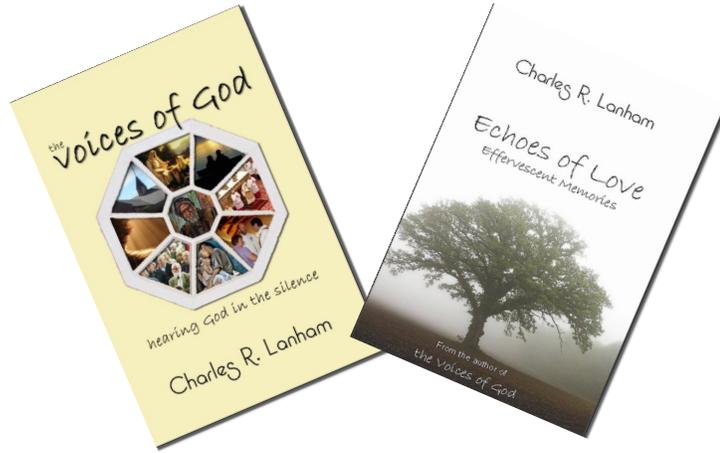
[www.catholicvote.org](http://www.catholicvote.org)

**The Catholic Thing**

[www.thecatholicthing.org](http://www.thecatholicthing.org)

**PragerU**

[www.prageru.com](http://www.prageru.com)

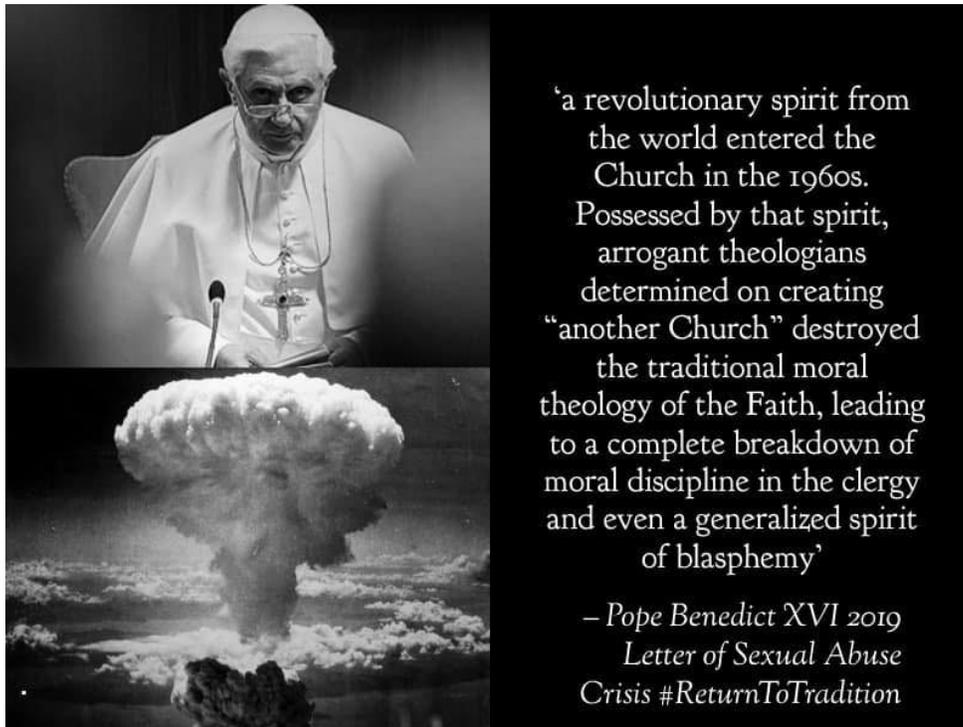


Books are available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or from the author's web site at:

[deaconscorner.org](https://deaconscorner.org)

**Deacon Chuck Lanham** is a Catholic author, columnist, speaker, theologian and philosopher, a jack-of-all-trades like his father (though far from a master of anything) and a servant of God. He is the author of **The Voices of God: Hearing God in the Silence**, **Echoes of Love: Effervescent Memories** and has written over 500 essays on religion, faith, morality, theology, and philosophy.

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'a revolutionary spirit from the world entered the Church in the 1960s. Possessed by that spirit, arrogant theologians determined on creating "another Church" destroyed the traditional moral theology of the Faith, leading to a complete breakdown of moral discipline in the clergy and even a generalized spirit of blasphemy'

– Pope Benedict XVI 2019  
Letter of Sexual Abuse Crisis #ReturnToTradition

**Colloquī**, the present infinitive of *colloquor* (Latin: *to talk, to discuss or to converse*) is a Deacon's Corner weekly journal. Its mission and purpose to encourage serious discussion, to promote reasoned debate, and to provide serious content for those who hope to find their own pathway to God. Each week **Colloquī** will contain articles on theology, philosophy, faith, religion, Catholicism, and much more. Be forewarned! Essays may and often will contain fuel for controversy, but always with the expressed intent to seek the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth, so help us God.

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