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Civitas terrena: On Heinrich August Winkler's Geschichte des Westens

Although presentations of the West, or the Abendland, have been, at times, loaded with cultural superiority complexes and often aggressive ideology or adversary-marking, there appears to be another way, if Heinrich August Winkler is to be believed, through this dangerous land of self-identification. The prominent German historian has provided a large contribution to a body of literature concerned with identifying the core elements and historical origins of the West. His Geschichte des Westens. Von den Anfängen in der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert (History of the West: From the beginnings in antiquity up to the 20th century; München: Beck, 2009, 1,343 pp.) has not been translated into English. After outlining some aspects of this genre of historical literature, I introduce the background of the German terminology and then attempt to summarize both Winkler's historical narrative from antiquity to the outbreak of WWI, and his unique account of the "normatives Projekt" (normative project) of the West. He describes this project in terms of unalienable rights, the rule of law, representative democracy, and the separation of power. This is followed by a brief theological engagement drawing from Augustine's De civitate Dei.

Occident derives from the Latin *occidens*, of *occidere*, 'to go down' or 'setting' (of the sun), as used, for example, in early cartography: *partes occidentis* (areas of the west), or *partes orientis* (areas of the east). The word west is related to the Greek *hesperos*, *-a*, (evening, west), the Latin *vesper* (evening, west), and the old Germanic *westana* (9th century).[1] The West qua West has been an object of interest at least since the Romantics, and today, in the wake of the 'short 20th

[1] Wolfgang Pfeifer, ed., *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen* (München: DTV, 2005), 1560-1561.

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century' (1914-1989), there are no signs of its fading.[2] The conclusion of WWII in the prevailing of liberal democracy over fascism enables one to speak of central ideas of the West that would have been less credible in the 1930s and 1940s when the world, and the West, was divided in war. What followed in the long 90s (1989-2001/2003) is also important for this literature. The resolution of the Cold War, and the economic collapse of Eastern Block Communism, confirmed for some the superiority of Western ideals for the modern world. Francis Fukuyama's popular "The End of History" thesis (1989) is a classic example of this viewpoint – a story once told of Rome by the Greek orator Aelius Aristides, as David Gress recalls. The long 90s also include the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), the founding of the EU, and the consequent flood

[2] Heinrich August Winkler, *Geschichte des Westens. Von den Anfängen in der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (München: Beck, 2009); Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: the West and the Rest* (London: Allen Lane, 2011); Jean-Paul Rosaye / Charles Coutel, *Les Sens de l'Occident* (Arras: Artois Presses Universite?, 2006); Philippe Nemo, *Qu'est-ce que l'Occident?* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2005); Michael Hochgeschwender, "Was ist der Westen? Zur Ideengeschichte eines politischen Konstrukts", in *Historisch-politische Mitteilungen. Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik* (Köln 11. 2004), 1-30; Alistair Bonnet, *The Idea of the West. Culture, Politics and History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2004); David Gress, *From Plato to NATO. The Idea of the West and its Opponents* (New York: Free Press, 1998); Thomas C. Patterson, *Inventing Western Civilization* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997); Rémi Brague, *Europe: La voie romaine* (Paris: Criterion, 1992); Oskar Köhler, "Abendland (Occident, Europa)", in: *TRE* (1977), 1.17-42; Peter Rassow, *Die geschichtliche Einheit des Abendlandes: Reden und Aufsätze* (Köln: Böhlau, 1960); Jürgen Fischer, *Oriens - Occidens - Europa: Begriff und Gedanke 'Europa' in der späten Antike und im frühen Mittelalter* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1957); Oskar Halecki, *The limits and divisions of European history* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1950); Heinrich Dannenbauer, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* (1950, The Gifford Lectures); Frédéric Gonzague de Reynold, *La formation de l'Europe* (1944-1957); Arnold Toynbee, *Civilisation on Trial* (1948); Will and Ariel Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (1935-1975); Christopher Dawson, *The Making of Europe* (1932); Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (1918-1922).

of new members in that decade. The Nine-Eleven attacks, the preemptive American led invasion of Iraq, and the various consequences of this unpopular strategic decision, are surely to be named among the decisive conditions for this literature as well. 'Where is the West going?' or rather 'Where should the West go?' seems to be answered in part with 'From where has it come?' With this developing background and the various associated questions, more than a few composite histories have sought to uncover the underlying principles, master ideals, and critical historical moments of the trans-national, cultural imperium of liberal Western democracy.

These histories of the kingdom of the West can also be engaged by those who devote themselves to that kingdom of the Lord's Prayer, the only kingdom which can lay claim upon yesterday, today, and forever. In fact, there may be some profit won by engaging the concrete proposals of these scholars, not least in outlining distinctions and setting limits; for the propagation of this worldly kingdom, the West, should not be mistaken with that kingdom which transcends the earthly compass. And while the two kingdoms cannot be dissolved into one another, there is more than one example from history which would suggest the possibility of this confusion. In such a case, the *propagatio fidei* would be then transformed into a temporal *propagatio occidentis*, and the eternal truth of Christ's coming subsumed into a kairotic myth of a mortal crown.

I. Some background aspects of Winkler's history of the West

"There is not yet a summarizing history of the West." ("Eine zusammenfassende Geschichte des Westens gibt es noch nicht.") (p. 13). So begins the over 1,300 page Geschichte des Westens, the first of two volumes; volume one covering antiquity to the beginning of WWI, the second volume, planned for 2012, will follow into the 20th century. The well known historian is the author of a comprehensive account of 19th and 20th

century German history in two volumes: *Der lange Weg nach Westen* (München: Beck, 2000; transl.: *Germany: The Long Road West*. [Oxford: UP, 2006-2007]). There he explores how Germany, a Western nation which has profoundly influenced the West as whole, came a difficult 'long way' over the last two centuries in actualizing and adapting to the "normatives Projekt" ("normative project") (*passim*) of the political culture of the West itself. As a continuation upon these earlier books, the new Geschichte des Westens charts out the 'long way' to the West as a whole from antiquity over the late 18th century, when the normative project of the West was essentially finalized, and beyond to the outbreak of WWI. As a kind of echo from the *Sonderwegsdebatte* ("Special path debate"), a debate among historians in the mid and latter 20th century about Germany's special development into Western democracy over the 19th and 20th centuries, Winkler shows that all of the primary Western lands (USA, Great Britain, France) had a long Sonderweg. Additionally, in distinction to David Gress and Michael Hochgeschwender, who narrate the West primarily from the Carolingian Era (Gress) or from the Enlightenment (Hochgeschwender), Winkler begins in antiquity.

While normal textbooks on Western Civilization are also concerned with Western history in toto, Winkler is more specific in his approach. Here it is not only a historical retelling of events, but an explanation of the specific historical meanings in a larger narrative wherein the particular characteristics of the West emerge. Winkler's contribution is also set onto the specific background of the German linguistic context. The somewhat antiquated German term *Abendland* ('evening land', occident, the West) has been in common usage from the 16th century, and predominately in the plural *Abendländer*, or *Abendlande*. The singular use of *Abendland* becomes more common at the end of the 18th century, and is still used quite often in the adjective form: e.g., *abendländische Kultur* ('Western' culture).[3] *Abendland* implies the counterpart

[3] *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen* (see above, nt. 1), 2.

Morgenland ('morning land', orient, or the East) (Martin Luther used *Morgenland* in his translation of *anatole* in Matt. 2:1: "da kamen Weise aus dem Morgenland"; the King James Version renders it: "there came wise men from the east"). The term *Abendland* is unique in that it designates a cultural area centered in Latin Christendom, as a counterpart to Byzantium and then the East in general. As the Western part of the Roman Empire dissolved in 476 AD, and while the Germanic peoples from the migration period between the 4th and 8th centuries settled the former areas of the Roman Empire, Christianity and the ecclesial authority structure became a central component in the self-identity of the various regions of the *Abendland*. This sense of a shared identity grew as Charlemagne, King of the Franks, became *Imperator Romanorum* in 800. His crowning was, in a certain regard, or at least in a certain self-understanding, the reestablishment of the Western Roman Empire. The Crusades which followed through the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries and the *Reconquista* of the Iberian Peninsula from the 8th through the 15th century also added to the sense of identity and belonging in the *Abendland*. With the papal decline of power in the Renaissance and Humanism, *Europa* emerged among the Humanists, such as Erasmus of Rotterdam and Johann Comenius, to replace *Abendland*, a term infused with religious connotations. From the later Enlightenment onward into the 19th century, *Europe* was often used to designate the highest development of the human spirit; so as the Morgenland designated the childhood of humanity, *Europa* represented its maturity. This was famously expressed by Hegel in his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (*Lectures on the philosophy of history*): "Die Weltgeschichte geht von Osten nach Westen" ("World history goes from east to west").[4]

[4] Werkausgabe, vol. XII (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980), 134. See also: "Abendland", in: *Der grosse Brockhaus*, 16th ed. (1952), 1.12-13. "Abendland", in *Brockhaus. Die Enzyklopädie*, 20th ed. (1996), 1.30-31. "Abendland", in: *Brockhaus. Enzyklopädie in 30 Bände*n, 21st ed. (2006), 1.42.

In the early 20th century Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) would provide a new schematization of world history, abandoning the sterile *Europa*, and taking up again *Abendland* in his *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (T*he Decline of the West*) (2 vol., 1918, 1922). Here the Abendland was one culture among the eight high cultures of world history. In Spengler's understanding, cultures are organic essences which develop according to their own inner logic. He described the *Abendland* as faustisch, Faustian (after Goethe's Faust), a continual striving after new knowledge, experience and deeper understanding. Spengler was convinced that Prussia, and its socialism, was the bearer of the tradition of the *Abendland*, even if there were two others vying for power: Britain with its liberal parliamentarianism, and France with its egalitarianism. Spengler's conception of the *Abendland* was a kind of bio-cultural analysis which provoked many to defend and preserve the cultural inheritance of the Abendland in the 1920s and 1930s; it was therefore no great surprise that the Untergang, which saw Russia as a threat on the horizon, was utilized by the National Socialists of 1933. This bio-cultural account was, however, not the only offer available in the early 20th century.

Max Weber described Western culture in a sociological narrative of progressive rationalization, one embodied in the inner worldly asceticism of Calvinist Protestantism. This process of rationalization shows itself in various areas of Western culture. In the foreword (*Vorbemerkung*) to his essays on the sociology of religion (*Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, 1920), Weber described what he found to be the characteristic descriptions of Western culture: the empirical sciences, rational harmonic music, the strict concepts of rights, the development of limited subject experts, the capitalistic desire for acquisition, the division of household and business, rational bookkeeping, the occidental bourgeoisie and the development of a rational socialism. As Winkler emphasizes, human rights, citizen rights, the separation of power, sovereignty of the people and representative democracy are not mentioned in his description. Winkler's historical

narrative offers a corrective to Weber's non-democratic description of the West. Winkler emphasizes the *project* of the West, as opposed to a determinative, organic *being* or *essence* of the West. In this regard he parts ways with Spengler and Weber in his characterization of the West as a community of values with a shared project and history. Winkler uses *Westen* to describe this community of values, and not *Abendland*, *Europa*, or *Okzident*, which allows him to include the broader extra-European West in his history.

II. A brief summary of Winkler's history of the West

In the Introduction, Winkler deals with the history of the term, the West, itself. He begins with the Persian Wars as an example of European (in this case, Greek) Western self-conception. He follows the idea of the West through the ecclesial history of the Middle Ages, with the Western Church distinguishing itself from the Byzantine. Until circa 1900 the concept of a trans-Atlantic West was unimaginable. In the age of the Cold War, however, the West would become a term which represented the trans-Atlantic political community. Winkler's historic territory of the West is, however, that area including Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He focuses on Western Christendom, all of the nations which had their cultural center in Rome until the Reformation. Going out from the Western Church, his trajectory points to the inheritance of Roman and Hellenic culture, Judaism and broader ancient monotheism. Religion and theology are of central importance for Winkler for he sees the kernel impulse of emancipation in the theological division of worldly and divine orders.

Chapter One, Die Entstehung des Westens: Prägung eines Weltteils ("*The Emergence of the West: Imprint of a part of the world*") begins with the Biblical imagery of creation: "Am Anfang war ein Glaube: der Glaube an *einen* Gott." ("In the beginning was a faith: the faith in *one* God.") (p. 25). In discourse with Carl Schmitt and Jan Assmann, Winkler

investigates the political theology of ancient Egyptian monotheism around the 14th century BC, and the development of monotheism in the context of polytheism. Winkler understands ancient monotheism and later Hebrew religion as a theological and cultural development that allowed for a rationalization of the relationship between Creator and creature, a thrust in the direction of "Rationalisierung, Zivilisierung und Intellektualisierung." ("Rationalization, 'civilization [sc. process]' and intellectualization") (p. 28). The other ancient offer, this one from Hellas, was a move from mythos to logos in the antique Greek Enlightenment. Here the *nomoi agraphoi*, the unwritten laws, provided the grounds for later developments in *ius positivum* (positive law). Here he sees a larger turn to natural rights and thus the foundation for Paul's protest in the New Testament against a simple faith in the keeping of laws as the means of salvation. Drawing upon Rudolf Bultmann, Christianity is approached from the syncretistic context of antiquity. The Stoic ideas of a single humanity, natural rights and even forms of Gnosticism find their place in the Christian religion. Christianity adopted and integrated philosophical terminology of later Platonism in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity; this highly differentiated teaching only came about, however, by aid of the Church Fathers' deep schooling in the Old Testament and its strong emphasis on monotheism. The doctrine thus embodies the joining of the antique worlds in the development of the West.

With Judaism and ancient Greece, Christianity is very important for Winkler's narrative, for here a very high value of the person emerges. Even slaves were allowed to be counted equal among the Christians. By Christ's call to go into all the world and make disciples, this mission was unbound from time and place. With Christianity came also the reestablishment of the monotheistic division of earthly and heavenly power, a division between God and caesar. So while monotheism lifted one God above the pantheon and enabled the division between God and worldly authority, Christ's "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things

that are God's" (Mk. 12:17) enabled a distinction between worldly and divine authority. While at this time there was no questioning of the precedence of divine authority, the worldly authority was nevertheless confirmed, if also limited, in that it was not given rule over the areas of divine oversight. The final division between religious and secular rule would take another century to develop, but this impetus from antiquity provides the necessary ground for the separation of power, and ultimately the rule of law. Winkler is however careful to qualify at exactly this point, for Christianity was not a religion centered upon political reform. He points to 1 Cor. 7:17-24, in which Paul writes: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" (v. 20). Because the Christians were citizens of heaven, and awaiting the return of Christ, Paul could endorse slavery and settle with indifference regarding Roman civil life. In opening itself to the antique world, Christianity would spread throughout the empire which embraced it. By 391 Theodosius Magnus (347-395), forbid all of the other cultic religions, and therein declared the Christian faith the only religion of the Imperium Romanum. Because of the Christian faith's appropriation of Greek and Latin cultural goods the originally Eastern faith became more Western. In 476, as Romulus Augustus, the last Roman emperor of the Western Roman Empire, fell to Germanic armies led by Odoacer, previously a *foederatus* joined with the *Imperium Romanum* by military agreement, the *Rex Italiae* was, for the first time, a man of non Latin origin. The Germanic kings of the West never questioned, however, the primacy of the Eastern as the economic, military and cultural superior.

The hegemonic position of the Eastern Empire, as Winkler establishes following Henri Pirenne, accorded to a different path of development and, since at least 300, a definitive process of orientalization. Because of this dominance in the late 5th century and onward, it appeared that an orientalization of the Western parts would also be the course of history. With this, the Eastern unification of secular and religious power, where the emperor held absolute power over the religious

authority, would have come to the West. Nevertheless, a path of more clear distinction between worldly and religious authority prevailed. Augustine's *De civitate Dei* is a classic example of this distinction that comes to a high point later in the noteworthy line from Gelasius I (Bishop of Rome, 492–496): "Duo quippe sunt, imperator auguste" ("Two there are, of course, august emperor") (PL 59.41); thereafter he explains to the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius the distinction of powers religious and political. While Western Europe did not undergo a process of orientalization, the popes of Rome could nevertheless praise the imperial superiority of the Eastern Emperor. Gregory the Great (590-604), the most popular of all of the popes from the Byzantine period of the early Middle Ages, held that there was only one emperor who ruled over men, for the kings of the West only ruled slaves. As Winkler emphasizes, there was an implicit claim about the papal authority built into his logic, for while there was only one emperor, there was also only one pope. The pope represented the unity of Christianity and provided, in the early Middle Ages, during the period of the migration of peoples, a pillar of continuity. Bishops rebuilt destroyed cities and made them centers of ecclesial and secular administration which enabled their growth in economic trade. The church preserved the goods of antiquity in popularizing, appropriating and distributing them to the masses in a simplified Latin language. While the wandering of the peoples in the early Middle Ages led to a flattening or simplification of the antique inheritance, this was the price to pay for the preservation and continuation of this very inheritance, and the possibility for later renaissance.

Winkler then turns to the question of the relationship of the early Middle Ages to antiquity: Was it a direct transition or was there an absolute break of the tradition? He takes a mediating position in claiming that the relation of antiquity to the West was a broken continuity. Drawing only briefly upon Rémi Brague's analysis, Winkler shows that this broken continuity played an important role in the formation of Western identity. For while Byzantium retained a continuity with

antiquity by means of the Attic dialect, koiné, the West did not have this direct connection. According to Brague, this broken continuity with antiquity reinforced, in the Western regions of Europe in the early Middle Ages, the sense of mediation. Alienation and inferiority were associated with this and thus the critical sense of yearning and aspiring for the original source. This particular nostalgia is described as belonging to the early Western identity, a nostalgia which would provide the conditions for the possibility of later renaissance. The differences between the West and the East was, however, not only dependent upon a different relationship to antiquity. It was also related to the rise of Islam. Winkler draws upon Pirenne who emphasizes that the decisive caesura from the ancient unity of the Mediterranean area takes place first in the late 7th and 8th centuries with the arrival of Islam. This led to a consolidation of power in the western regions of Europe, the crowning of Charlemagne, and ultimately the final break between the Roman West and the Byzantine East. This division of Europe did not mean, however, a loss of the concept of continuity, broken or otherwise. The self-understanding of the *translatio imperii* was well established in the *imperium Francorum* before Christmas Day 800. The empire of the Greeks was understood to have been transferred over the Romans onto the Franks then onto the Lombards and with Otto the Great in the 10th century ad Teutonicos in the *Imperium Romanum Sacrum*.

This leads Winkler to the Crusades, which were a unique Western phenomenon in contrast to Byzantium. Only in the West, and already before the Crusades, could the popes of Rome use the promise of salvation to call the faithful to arms. Drawing upon Michael Mitterauer, Winkler emphasizes how central the popes were in the war against the Muslims. Although the Crusades were the Christian answer to an older, long standing offensive from the East, and South, the ultimate failure to settle the Holy Land in the 13th century meant the failure of the authority of the popes. Looking ahead to the 14th and 15th century, the Muslim Ottoman Empire went forth as victors in the internal conflict between the

Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium and the failures of the Crusades. With Moscow becoming the 'Third Rome', and the new capital of the Orthodox Faith, many of the educated of Byzantium escaped to Italy and joined the Renaissance. Before going on into the 14th century, however, Winkler turns to a key ecclesial conflict already long past. One of the critical moments in Winkler's narrative of the Middle Ages is the 11th and 12th century Investiture Controversy between the ecclesial authorities and imperial magistrates. Winkler shows how the resolution of this Western controversy, by means of a balance between papal and sovereign power, was a reconfirmation of the concept of the division of power. With the established *libertas ecclesiae*, the development of the liberal sciences, the systematization of ecclesial and secular law from the 11th century, and the development of scholastic theology, Winkler can follow Otto Gerhard Oexle in speaking of a general scientification of thinking and scholarship in the Middle Ages and the elevation of the discipline of law. The founding of the University of Bologna in 1088, and those to follow in the next two centuries, harmonize with Winkler's narrative of the emergence of an academic culture of advanced scientific thinking, rationalization and professionalization. These institutions and traditions of the 11th century would be, looking ahead, the necessary ingredients for later developments in the West, and not least the formal tripartite separation of power into executive, legislative and judicial sectors. Looking back, however, Winkler again calls attention to the ideas of the division of power in Christ's words. The critical impetus from the antique world of the East, which allowed for the contradiction of powers, also enabled the movements of liberal education, science and the advance of rational law in the Middle Ages. An equally important aspect of the high and late Middle Ages is the emergence of the bourgeoisie and the renaissance of trade. Only in the Western regions of Europe, and not in the Christian East, did a robust *Bürgertum* (*bourgeoisie*) develop around the castle (Lat. *burgus*, Ger., *Burg*, Old Engl., *burg*, *burh*, and *borough*). This development, which was related to

the settlement of Western Europe after the wandering of the peoples in the early Middle Ages, extended freedoms to lower classes. As the German expression describes the Middle Age law: *Stadtluft macht frei* ("city air makes free"). Freed serfs, peasantry, or farmers could become freemen and granted limited rights within some Middle Age cities after having resided intra muros for a year and a day.

Military power also plays a key role in Winkler's history, for the emergence of the *bourgeoisie* and the establishment of a *libertas ecclesiae* were possible because of the victory of Otto the Great and the Holy Roman Empire over the Hungarians; this victory near Augsburg in 955 closed off external invasions of the West and allowed for significant freedoms to develop. The English Magna Carta of 1215, which confirmed the division of kingly and noble power, was also an example of the expansion of the freedoms to those under the sovereign. In Winkler's narrative, England plays a critical role in developing freedoms in the Middle Ages. This was largely enabled by its geographic distance from the European continent and the coupled political pressures which would have otherwise restricted leeway. These critical divisions of power in the Middle Ages take place in the Western Church and not the Eastern, where a tradition of caesaropapism developed. In the East there was neither a clear division between pope and caesar, nor sovereign and noble authority. In the Middle Ages, the East also lacks the tradition of the bourgeoisie and corporative and individual freedoms. The inheritance from the Middle Ages promoted the development of an inner worldly dualism in the authority structures of society. Winkler understands this dualism to be the hallmark of the West and the germinal basis of freedom. In the Middle Ages, the development of representative divisions of power in the middle estates and among the nobles moved together with the development of political states in Europe. Here Winkler turns to the birth of the modern nation states. He shows how the various nations developed around either shared cultural and language similarities or political and state relations. He can therefore address a

long standing essence of Europe, a "Geist der Vielfalt" ("spirit of diversity") (p. 431). Drawing upon Hermann Heimpel, he argues that this Middle Age tradition of nation states can be understood as an expression of the pluralism of Europe in that it stood, and stands against the striving for absolute authority.

For Winkler, the Middle Age context further changes in the Reformation, but some of the early developments can already by see in the 11th century. He follows Oswald Schwemmer's argument for the development of a self-secularizing movement in Christianity, particularly in the close relationship of philosophy and theology. Berengar of Tours (c. 1000-1088) is questioning the doctrine of transubstantiation in the 11th century; the late 12th and early 13th century Francis of Assisi is listed for his anti-authoritarianism and his calling upon the *ancient* tradition against the concrete, *actual* form of the *traditio*. Drawing upon Johannes Fried's analysis, Winkler also points to Peter Abelard's raising of doubt to a principle of philosophy in the later 11th and early 12th century. John Wyclif in the 14th and Jan Hus in the late 14th and early 15th century were both operating upon the traditions of the Middle Ages in criticizing papal authority and promoting a Bible based anti-clericalism; with these, the German mysticism of Meister Eckhart and others, and the programmatic *ad fontes* of Renaissance Humanism, were also critical groundwork which enabled the Reformation. (One might also mention the double and triple papal appointments of the late Middle Ages, and the calls to reform throughout Christendom in the 15th century: *reformatio in capite et in membris* ["reformation in the head and in the members"]). Although the Reformation, a *Fürstenrevolution* ("Princes' revolution"), so Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, was a significant achievement in its recognition of individual conscience, it also occasioned the rise of a new authoritarianism. Both the Lutheran and the English reforms finally resulted in authoritarian structures which unified state and church to such a degree that they actually fell behind that status of spiritual and worldly division of power reached in the Middle Ages. Winkler holds that the lords of the land more or

less took over the office of the bishop in Germany; the result was an overturning of an established tradition of the division of power in that the sovereigns effectively became popes in their own territories. This new Protestant authoritarianism in England actually provided the conditions for the possibility of modern democracy. As a response, the Calvinistic, Reformed Non-Conformist in England nurtured a democratic spirit against the top-down English state church. This democratic spirit developed so strongly on the other side of the Atlantic, in colonies which had no history of feudalism, that it would eventually provide the political environment which enabled the final break with the motherland. Winkler tracks the development of the West from Humanism and Hobbes through the Enlightenment, and follows the ideas of the American and French Revolutions to the transformation of Europe and the world in the 19th and 20th centuries. He recounts all of the significant moments, and is careful to read the secondary literature and offer it a place in the conflicts of interpretation.

A central focus is however identifiable in Winkler's massive book: the *Gewaltenteilung* (separation of power) returns again and again as the kernel impulse of Western identity, an impulse which was brought forth from the world of religion and carried over onto the political sphere. The emphasis on the division of power is highlighted in Montesquieu's *L'esprit des lois* (1748), an exemplary and influential account of this concept from the Western tradition. The separation of power is joined together with unalienable rights, the rule of law, and representative democracy in Winkler's description of the normative project of the West. Winkler is however careful to emphasize that this project was not a new creation of the Enlightenment but rather the development of an inheritance from a great cultural tradition going back through the Middle Ages, and onto antiquity: *ex oriente lux*. He is also alert to draw attention to the internal contradictions of the West, e.g., slavery, the oppression of Native Americans in North America and the ancient inhabitants of Australia, and violent radicalism in the French Revolution; he also lists 19th and 20th century

nationalism, and its consequences, as a product of the modern West and an internal, chronologically differentiated process of Westernization in the West, i.e., the process of according to the normative elements of the project: unalienable rights, the rule of law, representative democracy and the separation of power. It required around two centuries before the entire West agreed to this normative project; in fact, a large portion of the history of the 19th and 20th century can be described as the battle for either taking up these ideas from 1776 and 1789, or abandoning them. Winkler ends his tour at the outbreak of WWI, but then looks out ahead at the close (also in his Einleitung [Introduction]). The devastation of Europe at the end of WWI resulted in the rising power of the USA, an informal empire from the Monroe Doctrine (1823) onward, and the strengthening of the normative elements of the West. This is replayed in WWII in the defeat of fascism and the resulting American influence on Europe. The conflict to follow in the Cold War, and the final collapse in 1989 point again to the gathering strength of the normative project of the West. Winkler then pauses, for while some hold that the normative ideas of the West would spread across the world (sc. Fukuyama), the seasoned historian does not want to endorse this argument. He retains the possibility that the unified project of the West could fail in the future. Although many Westernized or partly Westernized nations have taken up the values of the West, the West no longer dominates the world; even when one gathers the nations of the world together which count themselves as Western, these are still a minority of the world's population. Winkler then ends in a summarizing thought: As long as the unalienable rights of man, which Winkler follows back to the Catholic Salamanca School of the 16th century, remain a universal value but are not universally accepted in the world, the project of the West remains incomplete. In this context, Winkler holds that the best thing that the West can do is to be self-critical in its own application of these values. For much of the history of the West has been a matter of self-contradiction, and no one can be forced to accept the normative project

of the West: unalienable rights, the rule of law, representative democracy and the separation of power.

III. The West as Civitas terrena

Winkler offers his reader both a calculated analysis, and yet also an optimistic and careful narrative of continuity, progress and expansion of the central values of the West. Although the book goes from antiquity to the eve of the French Revolution in 300 pages, and then dedicates the remaining 900 pages to the French Revolution and on, the content of the first chapters echo through the entire work. His approach allows him to emphasize, as he looks back through history, the promising new hopes of historical development, while not forgetting to call attention to the reliability and necessity of old customs in those very developments. His history is also large enough to capture the failures and evils of the West. *Geschichte des Westens* is an encompassing work and a brilliant achievement, one which raises many important questions.

One of these points of inquiry from a historical perspective might concern itself with the descriptive limits of the normative project in Winkler's concept of the West. If the West is indeed a community of values, perhaps there are other values which should be taken into consideration. Another question might be directed at the close relationship between freedom and the project of the West in Winkler's history; it would be interesting to see how Winkler's account of freedom contrasts with the handling of this subject in the Cold War period.[5] One might also inquire, from a more traditional philosophical

[5] Cf., Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, "Im Kampf um Frieden und Freiheit. Über den Zusammenhang von Ideologie und Sozialkultur im Ost-West-Konflikt", in: Hans Günter Hockerts, ed., *Koordinaten deutscher Geschichte in der Epoche des Ost-West-Konflikts* (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftverlag, 2003), 29-47; e.g.: "Der Kampf für die 'Freiheit' im Westen und für den 'Frieden' im Osten sollte in Politik und Gesellschaft hüben und drüben identitätsstiftend wirken." (p. 36). See also Hochgeschwender, *"Was ist der Westen?"* (see above nt. 2). Winkler's

perspective, into the location of freedom's counterpart, the good, in his history. In the philosophical and theological traditions of the West, freedom is often treated in close alliance with concepts of the good. Winkler's understanding of human rights, and his narration of the concept of rights themselves, could also be profitably introduced into the English language debate about this matter with Nicholas Wolterstorff and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, for example. Winkler's understanding of the history and emergence of monotheism, and his reliance upon Jan Assmann may be another place for further investigation; Assmann sees the shift to monotheism as the basis of a problematic friend-enemy complex. From the German intellectual context of the mid and later 20th century, one might look into the differences and similarities of Winkler's *Projekt des Westens* with Jürgen Habermas's *Projekt der Moderne*. It would also be interesting to see how Winkler's moderate account of the emergence of secularism (the *Selbstsäkularisierung* ("self-secularization [of Christianity]"), and his retrieval of Max Weber, would contrast with some of the more critical Anglo-American literature on the emergence of secularism of late, such as Charles Taylor's. From a theological perspective, one of the main questions would be directed at the place of religion in Winkler's historical construction of the normative project. This matter will be briefly addressed in the following remarks.

Winkler complicates the claim that contemporary political structures of a Western democracy are matters which have exclusive origins in the Enlightenment, and were only forged by resistance to, and ultimately defeat of religion. Contra this hysteron proteron, he shows that the core idea of the separation of power in the Western tradition has deep roots in the Judeo-Christian inheritance. To the anti-clericalism of the French Revolution, and the later anti-clericalism of the early 20th century in France, he speaks of a "Verkürzung des

forthcoming volume on the 20th century will likely provide additional resources for this inquiry.

historischen Horizonts" ("diminishing of the historical horizon") (p. 1088). These moments in history were guided with little reflection to that which had first enabled the very emancipating developments; he goes on to address the peaceful and subversive content of the original Christian message and its challenges to absolutism; he also takes up the separation of powers between God and caesar. These ideas from Christianity, and ancient monotheism before, were the basic material for the very logic of emancipation so strongly emphasized in the late 18th century and thereafter. This close relationship of Christianity with the normative project of the West quickens reflection about the ideals and essence of the West in relation to the ideals and essence of Christianity.

The West is not an independent theological category and can therefore only be subordinated under the broader question of a Christian's relationship to the social and political order. Furthermore, the question about the essence and ideals of the West, or the project of the West, and the question about the essence and ideals of Christianity, or the 'project of Christianity' (which is itself difficult to imagine considering the religion's inexorable diversity), can never be answered identically. This *aporia logike* is a consequence of insurmountable differences in the nature of their respective constitutions, tasks and ends. When these answers begin to melt together, as for example in Friedrich Novalis's *Die Christenheit oder Europa* (*Christianity or Europe*) (1799), a simplification has occurred and the complexity must be reestablished. On the other hand, simple disassociation from the powers that be is also erroneous, for the broad social order has a positive role to play as a *coetus multitudinis rationalis, rerum, quas diligit, concordi communione sociatus* ("an assembly of a rational multitude, united by matters of concurring association, which it values") (Civ. Dei, XIX.24). This complexity reflects the difficulty of a simplified concept of a *patria*, or *civita*s (city/state, citizenship) for the Christian. One of the central impulses of the Christian faith was and remains a supplanting of the fixedness or insularity of this very concept; as Christ taught (employing the rhetorical

absolute): "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:26; cf. Jn. 19:27). Thus Christians have been known to go against the grain at certain times, and have even been called anti-social by participating in *flagitium* (flagitiousness, scandal), as Tacitus remarked (*Ann*. XV.44). There is something like a dual citizenship for the Christian in that he is hopefully a member of the *Civitas Dei*, the city of God, and by default in the *Civitas terrena*, the earthen city, in these ages when they are mixed together. In a world ravished by the violence of nationalism, racism, fixed ideologies, and cultural superiority complexes (*amor sui*), there is something welcoming about a more differentiated understanding of citizenship, one which is displaced, or properly coordinated by a much more inclusive orientation (*amor Dei*).

Thus while it is easy to endorse generally the values of the West which Winkler describes (unalienable rights, the rule of law, representative democracy, and the separation of power), the identity forming function could restrict the expansive beauty of the faith's all encompassing character. This is the case even if the West is defined as a trans-geographical, trans-national and trans-cultural community of values; as such, it nevertheless defines an identity, those who belong and those who do not, those who have adopted the project and those who have not. The bond between Christians, and all lovers of the highest good, is, or at least should be, more expansive than the community of Western values. Thus while the *content* of the project, in its broad strokes, is laudable, the identity founding *function* could potentially simplify, or curtail an otherwise complicated understanding of citizenship. A complex account of citizenship gives rise to questions about allegiance, priorities and devotion, as it did for Rahab (in the *sensus allegoricus*). It would be a fatal error to fail in distinguishing *Civitas hominum*, the city of men, a city of contingency, and penultimate meaning, a city of interfered allegiance where man occasionally creates idols of himself, from

that *beatissima Civitas*, the most blessed city, an eternal city in which angels and mankind are unified in their allegiance to, and love of God. Antigone's response to Creon in Sophocles's tragedy presents itself as a perpetual model of the priority of the *Civitas Dei* over the *Civitas terrena*, and an impeccable example of both the skill of distinguishing between them, and the ability to manage the complexities of the dual citizenship. When she was asked why she gave her dead brother a proper burial against the law, as that his corpse was committed to rot dishonorably in the open air, she responded regarding this inhumane decree: "it was not Zeus who made this proclamation, nor was it Justice who lives with the gods below that established such laws among men, nor did I think your proclamations strong enough to have power to overrule, mortal as they were, the unwritten and unfailing ordinances of the gods. For these have life, not simply today and yesterday, but for ever."[6]

In the 20th century, the decrees of the *Civitas terrena* were far more ruthless than Creon's, and the lower kingdom to the Left Hand of God has shown itself to be sometimes incapable of serving that *iustitia* known from the *lex naturalis*. Winkler's depiction of the earthen city's trajectory going out of that century is much more hopeful, and for this reason it is all the more important that this trust be rightly ordered. Perhaps one can endorse the common good, and even the need to defend the ideas of unalienable rights, the rule of law, representative democracy and the separation of power, while also holding that neither Zeus nor Justice, but mortal men called these ideas into being, borrowing some fire from the gods, no doubt, and that they, like all things of the *Civitas terrena*, are to be embraced with a cautious affection and all the complexity associated with a higher and greater *politeuma en ouranois* ("citizenship in heaven") (Phil. 3:20). As Tertullian, the father of Latin Christendom, makes clear, one may pray for the emperors and the peace of the political order without swearing to

[6] *Sophocles*, transl. by Hugh Lloyd-Jones (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1984), Antigone, 450f.

the *genios caesarum* ("genii of the caesars"), which are, as he points out, also known as *daemonia*; he clarifies that daemons are to be expelled and not conferred divine honor (Apol. 32). Winkler's account of the lower and lesser *Bauchreich* (Ventral Kingdom), so Luther, and the theological roots of the separation of power provide some important insights that would prevent a simplification of this complexity and a dissolving of the *duae civitates* into a singular citizenship without external reference. For his masterful history, and most of all for his reminder to be self-critical in one's own context, historians and theologians alike have much to thank Dr. Winkler, and much to consider because of his learned work.