



BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN C. H. WU

Wu Ching-hsiung (Jingxiong), also known as John C. H. Wu (1899-1986), was a Chinese author, lawyer, juristic philosopher, educator, and prominent Catholic layman. He was president of the Special High Court at Shanghai, vice chairman of the Legislative Yuan's constitution drafting committee, founder of the *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, translator of the Psalms and the New Testament into Chinese. Previously a Methodist, he was a convert to Catholicism after reading Thérèse of Lisieux's biography in 1937. Wu served as an adviser in the Chinese delegation to the 1945 United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco and served as the Chinese ambassador to the Vatican in 1947-49. After the Chinese Communist Revolution, Wu worked as a professor at the Seton Hall University School of Law in New Jersey until retiring to Taiwan in 1967. Wu authored and translated numerous books and articles on many subjects including Religion, Philosophy and Law. Important works by Wu include *Beyond East and West* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018), *Chinese Humanism and Christian Spirituality* (Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2017), and *Interior Carmel: The Threefold Way of Love* (New edition forthcoming).

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CHRISTIANITY: BEYOND EAST AND WEST
A CHRISTIAN CELEBRATION OF CHINESE NEW YEAR

ST. JOHN PAUL II ON CULTURE

Address to UNESCO, 6.02.1980

Man lives a really human life thanks to culture. Human life is culture in this sense that, through it, man is distinguished and differentiated from everything that exists elsewhere in the visible world...Poland has kept its identity, in spite of partitions and foreign occupations, not by relying on the resources of physical power, but solely by *relying on its culture*. This culture turned out in the circumstances to be more powerful than all other forces.

Address to the Italian National Congress, 1.16.1982

The synthesis between culture and faith is not only a demand of culture, but also of faith... A faith that does not become culture is not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived.

A Fresh Approach to Evangelizing Peoples and Cultures, 1.17.1987

When the Church enters into contact with cultures, she must welcome all that is compatible with the Gospel in these traditions of the peoples, in order to bring the riches of Christ to them and to be enriched herself by the manifold wisdom of the nations of the earth.

Message for the Fourth Centenary of the arrival in Beijing of the great missionary and scientist Matteo Ricci, S.J., 10.24.2001

From his first contacts with the Chinese, Father Ricci based his entire scientific and apostolic methodology upon two pillars, to which he remained faithful until his death, despite many difficulties and misunderstandings, both internal and external: *first*, Chinese neophytes, in embracing Christianity, did not in any way have to renounce loyalty to their country; *second*, the Christian revelation of the mystery of God in no way destroyed but in fact enriched and complemented everything beautiful and good, just and holy, in what had been produced and handed down by the ancient Chinese tradition. And just as the Fathers of the Church had done centuries before in the encounter between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Greco-Roman culture, Father Ricci made this insight the basis of his patient and far-sighted work of inculturation of the faith in China, in the constant search for a common ground of understanding with the intellectuals of that great land.



JOHN C. H. WU QUOTES

John C. H. Wu's Speech as the Ambassador of the Chinese Government at the Holy See to Pope Pius XII, 2.16.1947

I am keenly aware of the importance of my mission, and of my own unworthiness of it; for my mission is nothing less than to confirm and increase the intimate relation between the greatest spiritual power of human society and a people of the oldest oriental culture. The wedding between the two will be such a momentous event in the history of this, God's world, that the marriage of Cana would be viewed in the light of eternity as its prefiguration.

Excerpt from Beyond East and West

No, nothing human can be greater than these [ancient Chinese traditions], but Christianity is divine. It is a mistake to regard Christianity as Western. The West may be Christian (I wish it were more so), but Christianity is not Western. It is beyond East and West, beyond the old and the new. It is older than the old, newer than the new. It is more native to me than the Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism in whose milieu I was born. I am grateful to them, because they have served as pedagogues to lead me to Christ. Christ constitutes the unity of my life. It is thanks to this unity that I can rejoice in being born yellow and educated white.

Excerpt from Chinese Humanism and Christian Spirituality

It is precisely because I am a Thomist that I regret deeply that the other Doctors' writings, especially those of St. John of the Cross, are so little known. But frankly I cannot imagine

how anyone can go to the East without being steeped in the mystical theology of our Church as well as in the dogmatic theology.

If we want to convert the East, we must first find the real East in ourselves, and I venture to think that the real East is securely in the bosom of the Christian heritage, but we do not realize it, because we seldom probe deep enough into the hidden riches of our Church, and all too often we live in the circumference of the spiritual life.

Just as St. Augustine and St. Thomas and others "baptized" Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, so we must know how to "baptize" the pagan philosophers of the ancient East and the modern West. [We need] to conserve and deepen the ancient national Chinese culture, by giving it the rejuvenation of Christianity.