

Uprising Today: Session 4
“Conversion and What Goes Around Comes Around”
Sunday, July 18, 2004 | 3:30-5pm | IDF

Notes

Attendance: Jim (of course!), Durl, Robert, Jen, Amy, Anat, Sally, Claire, Jan, Martin, Chris, Ben, Rev. Mulberry, Jane

Today, we'll focus on critiquing Carroll's book instead of our list of social concerns and differentiate among Religion, Spirituality, Faith, and Theology.

Theology:

Two acts of theology (coming out of liberation theology)

- Line is sometimes broken between the two acts (symbolized by the dashed line of the table)
- There is some overlap/interplay

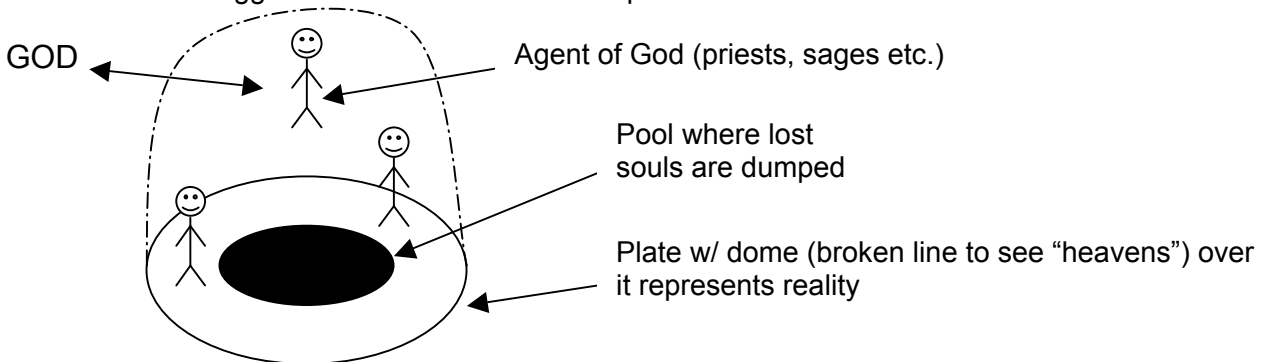
1st Act	2nd Act
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud of unknowing • Praxis (strategy is developed and acted upon) • More abstract sense of higher power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith in seeking understanding • Statement and discourse • Creed and philosophy • Always in written or spoken form • Result of reflection or meditation • Produces a kind of spirituality and nurture • Tends to be academic

Carroll's *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews*—plays with the 1st and 2nd acts and the interplay between the two

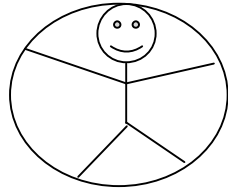
The Religious Paradigms:

Ancient One (still around):

- Format Christianity adopted between 323-1300 AD
- People can't talk directly to God, go through agents like priests
- Suggests the removed relationship with the Divine



During the Renaissance (between 1200-1300s), people began studying ancient Greek texts, new sciences, and arts



Venturian Man: created by DaVinci; perfect circle with a solid line; symbol of reason; ideal of Universal Man

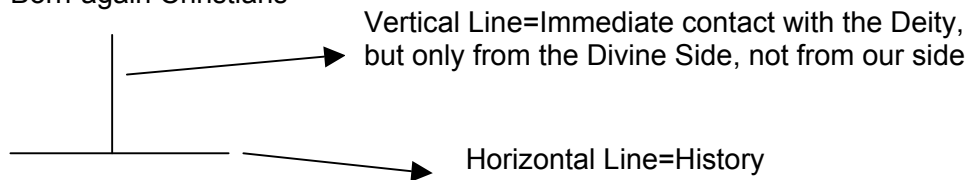
Age of Reason: 1700-1914

- The Modern Man is the Universal Man (like DaVinci's drawing)
- People begin to look more to sciences and less to religion, some disbelief in God
- Contrast to Ancient Model: People have gotten larger; no broken lines (no room for God to come in); humanistic perspective

Robert Owens (New Harmony, Indiana): perfect example of the Universal Man, he created utopias like New Harmony

World War I: Began in 1914

- No more ideal of universal man, doesn't work in the sociopolitical situation of the war
- Things got reduced to a linear plane: history
- Vertical element where the deity intervenes into history-immediate/direct contact (from the Divine side)
- Many Born-again Christians



- Nikolas Rejiov: Russian intellect, suggests the immediate contact of the Deity

French Revolution (before WWI):

- We see this in the French Revolution except that they weren't Roman Catholics (they were actually killing all Roman Catholics), they were Communist (that's why Roman Catholicism hates Communism)
- St. Joseph Hospital: French sisters had the option to flee Revolution or die, so they came to the US and started these hospitals

The process of all three models is to get human beings into contact with the Deity (the last two also are trying to get in touch with the Ultimate Reality).

Question from Robert:

What does Atheism mean? Against God. Three groups of atheists (those against God, those who believe God can't see what we're doing (not looking), those who don't believe in God)

Jim defines atheism by: Against God. Christendom has produced idolatry and it should be denounced.

Jesus Christ is Lord

Last session we talked about “Jesus Christ is Lord” (grows out of socio-political, Jesus of Nazareth Movement)

Neibuhr’s Christ and Culture: he’s not interested in the historical Jesus, is interested in the Christ of Faith

Left-Wing (LW) believe in both—does not separate the two

“Jesus Christ is Lord” is a confession. Disciples of Christ (DOC) were forced to say this before executions (that’s why they were originally Confessots)

Pliny outlawed Christianity in what is now Turkey. Pliny wrote laws and took the ideas to the Emperor, who approved it.

Policy Pliny developed this law:

“I will ask you, do you believe that Jesus is the Christ (liberator)? If you answer it three times affirmatively you are dead.”

Those who refused to say no, they were Confessots (later they were called Martyrs)

God’s Will: Can It Be Known And Can It Be Done?

DOC believes YES. It’s all based on your relationship with Jesus of Nazareth of the 1st Century (historical Jesus).

Luke 4:18-19 –

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release of the captives and recovering the sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

**Interesting translation: those who’ve been blinded refers to punishment of political prisoners*

Ideology: spirit of the lord, preach good news, Lord’s favor

Political: poor, sets prisoners free

Economic: poor, year of Yahweh’s favor (Jubilee), egalitarian economy

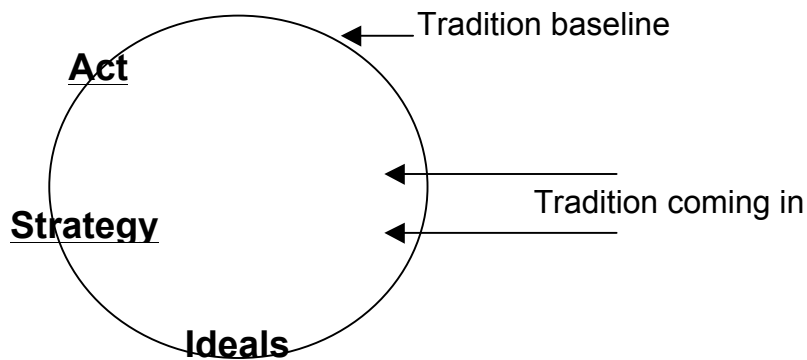
Luke 4:18-19 is a reference to: Leviticus; regarding the idea of Jubilee, where in that year belongings are returned to owners etc,

Hermeneutical Circle:

The tradition with which you are a part (whether religious or secular), you have been reared in it and absorbed it (we *are* the American Dream): Can you apply it critically?

Our tradition is our baseline. Our situation brings new questions to our tradition.

You may get to a point within the Hermeneutical Circle where you must choose to engage the ideas you are interacting with.



Jesus of Nazareth Movement (historical Jesus):

- Challenging Roman law
- Challenged the Roman money system, by bringing in traditional Jewish views of sharing what you have, working for things etc.
- Jesus was a “crook” (in Constantine’s eyes), was always moving around
- Non-violent resistance to Roman Imperial rule (worked/traveled on the Sabbath), showed the problems of the laws against the poor and meek
- Work stoppages (among small fishing fleets etc.)
- Challenging and offending Roman soldiers on duty
- Challenged taxes
- Disrupted Pax Romana at the temple in Rome during Passover

The intention was NOT to overthrow Rome, but to do work for the deity (described in Micah 6:8)

“We live in this horrible mess and you have to do something about it.”

--Jim’s interpretation of that belief

Jesus was betrayed, abandoned, and executed for it. He failed in his project.

Now, it’s “Everything will be fine if you just believe...”

The Enigma: The Jesus of Nazareth example vs. Modern Christianity (If you believe...)

A lot of our contemporaries won't consider that enigma (ie. LBJ, Nixon, UI BOT)

Where does this leave Modern Christians? What about the Left Wing?

The Left Wing remains in the margin. They are ad hoc groups (surface when there is something wrong that needs to be addressed).

Carroll is calling for Vatican III. Would leave the Church if he thought it WAS really anti-Jew. So *he has some faith in the institution and it's ability to reform.*

Some feel that the Vatican Council II has been diluted by now. DOC has mini-Vatican Councils every two years. There is some value in dogma, resolutions, and statements by the higher ups in religion. No one individual can pull it off. It takes organizing to bring together enough people to do something (to get a hearing, and maybe even an action).

World Council of Churches (Rev. Mulberry): Has been splintered by the war and by LGBTQ inclusion. Ecumenical talk happens at an esoteric level. But when push comes to shove, things don't happen like that. The people in the pews want the unity, and the priests are having a harder time doing anything. Ecumenism is not happening on a broad enough scale.

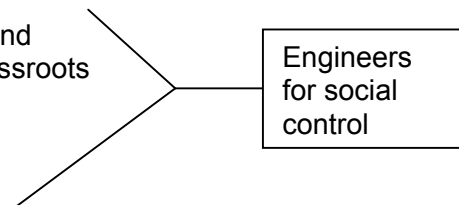
Social Order=Stability

Social order provides us with stability and survival.

Ecumenics deal with Faith and Order. It is run by the elite and social engineers (these people don't get involved in the grassroots Left Wing causes).

It mirrors politicians' Law and Order.

Grassroots is the name of the game. And it's the easiest to cut down. Unless the weeds have gotten tall.



Reading:

1. "Q Thomas Reader," Kloppenborg.
2. "The Five Gospels," Funk, Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar.
3. "Reconstructing Herod's Temple Mount in Jerusalem," Ritmeyer.
4. "Honest to Jesus," Funk.
5. **Read 475-543 in Carroll's *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews***

Next Session: Sunday, July 25th, 2004 from 3:30-5pm at IDF (in Bondurant Room)

Last Session: Sunday, August 1st, 2004 from 3:30-5pm at IDF (in Bondurant Room)