

FOUR DISANGELISTS - 1954 - BEFORE AND AFTER MARX

Lectures 1-2
Feringer notes
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Lecture 1

1.Problem: It is difficult today to get into other people's minds, as they seem to be driven by nobody but themselves. ERH likens the situation to the weatherman who can't predict the weather because he can't get it into the laboratory. "...certainly we can't put ourselves into a laboratory and experiment with ourselves..with war...with our children,...or with housewives." (p.3)

[RF - I interpret this issue as how we experience the same events, but see them rather differently. Our attempts to speak to each other about them results in distortions and misunderstandings, which in turn have dire consequences when issues are significant to us.]

2.How, then, do we communicate with others? This leads to the next question; by what type of commonly agreed-upon rules, (values) can we guide our lives? The answer is that we do so by "connecting the times." This, ERH asserts, is why Judaism and Christianity have been given to us.

3.The times become too fragmented when each culture and age has its own mythology, its own invention, art and science. **HOW THEN CAN WE GENERALIZE ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION AND FIND GUIDANCE AND FULFILLMENT?** In the beginning of tribal life there existed nothing but fragmentation (chaos). It would seem that each culture and generation battles the same evils -- the prospect of death and destruction.

4.PROGRESS begins in understanding ourselves, in identifying the parochialism of our own times - in other words, finding truth. Social truth, we learn can only be established over a period

of more than one generation (it takes 3, minimum). This is because peace is established by agreement, and agreement takes much more time than truth in natural science.

5. Prophecy and fulfillment must be a central part of our finding social truth and in establishing the validity of our guiding rules. [RF - The primary source of common experience in Western Culture (Christianity) is the Bible, and this is the source cited for examples from which generalizations can be deduced.

There seems to be 4 stages in the process of becoming "disentangled" from our parochialism: 1) the prophecy, 2) the coming, 3) the defeat, then 4) the gospel (the story of what happened). In Christian literature these are manifest in the stories of, John the Baptist, Jesus, the apostles, and the four gospels.

6. The fulfillment (the end-point of an era) never looks like the prophecy (the beginning point of anticipation).. THE TERM "DISANGELISTS" REFERS TO THE FACT THAT FOUR 19TH CENTURY THINKERS REVERSED THE ORDER OF PROPHECIES OF THE EVANGELISTS. What these four did (Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud) was to proclaim that, according to the culture of our times:

1) "...there is no history, but that everything has to go in reverse." (p.6)

Freud says that children must be emancipated from their parents, therefore there is no history of the culture to build upon.

2) Darwin proclaimed the survival of the fittest, when we know that when a species had evolved to its limit, it was the weak, frail, adaptable ones with sufficient flexibility that heralded the new direction of evolution. People have survived because they were capable of change, of reorganizing in every generation.

3) Marx divided history into promise and fulfillment, but he separated them so that they had nothing to do with each other. (p.6) In the ideal Marxian society there is no longer a need for struggle.

4) Likewise as with Marx, with Nietzsche said that we can no longer be led by our ideas, by our values because our values change.

These four have destroyed the "Greek thinking of our time" -- that there was no difference between the good, true, and beautiful (Plato) on the one hand, and Christianity on the other. They essentially said that, 1) you can do nothing about the class wars, 2) the fight for survival is endless, 3) we cannot inherit tradition (Freud), and 4) man can only go from one sensation to the next (Nietzsche). Christianity opposed all of these concepts, but in spite of this opposition, the four concepts of these 19th century thinkers have dominated our thinking today.

7. We need myths in order to achieve. (p.15) Christianity posits that one needs frenzy and passion to achieve anything. "There is no way of growing, except by going through the myth,

through your mythical period." (p.16) "Every age and every sex and every nation has to have their own myth. Otherwise one cannot pass through the terrible ordeal where they fail to be recognized by the rest of the world. (p.16)

THE GIFT OF THE DISANGELISTS WAS TO ARTICULATE THE VALUES OF OUR AGE, THAT NO PEACE AND NO DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN SOCIETY WAS POSSIBLE WITH OUR PRESENT (GREEK) VALUES. These values stated that "self knowledge was more important than creativity." (p.16) We can be creative, but we cannot know how we do it at the time; another way of putting this is that we cannot analyze any act until it has been completed. We live with the original "faith" that it is possible for us to create. Marriage, for instance is not based on logic. Lindberg's love of his plane, the Wright brothers' love of building an airplane are cases in point. In other words, love (charity), faith and hope are the basic elements of creativity.

8.Christianity came into the world against idealism. Idealism says to each of us that , "I am God." There is no time element and no history in idealism; both are "out of this world." Every one of us, if he is creative, goes through the 4 phases of prophesy, fulfillment, apostasy, and gospel.

The 19th century was a time of Unitarianism, of not recognizing miracles, of not going through the mythical period or the four phases of creativity, of no divinity, of no obeying commands from the past or from the spirit of the times. They didn't see the miracle that peace is when it breaks out, for instance.

Lecture 2

1.The key to creativity is in going through these 4 stages.

The four "disangelists" carried out the 4 phases backwards, first gospel, then the apostasy, then fulfillment, then prophesy. In effect they demonstrated that our "Greek"/humanistic ways, mistaken for Christianity, reduced man's creativity, his ability to change and grow. Their assertions would reduce humankind back to the animal state.

2.Humanism infers that we wish to have our cake and eat it too; to have peace without war, and to have peace with the luxury of being a pacifist. (p.3) This is to say that the mind (with its idealism) and the body are not free to do as they please (if society is to continue). One must follow the commandments necessary to maintain society and seek peace. Our weakness has been in not recognizing the reality of cause and effect. "If you don't obey God, then you have to obey General Eisenhower...But if you only wish to think about peace, because that's so much nicer, you will not think at all." (p.4)

3.For instance, if we can't communicate, if we allow language to hide lies, if we lack trust and faith, - in short without the "living word" - there will always be war! Certain things can only be

achieved by war, such as stopping Hitler!

4. The second point is the downfall of Marxism. Marx failed to realize that the workers of the world were not brothers, but patriots willing to fight for their country and against each other.

The only country that took up Marxism, against Marxist prediction, was a non-industrialized country, Russia. In two world wars, workers fought each other for their country.

Prophecy always comes in ways not predicted, or not accepted, just as the Jews prophesied Jesus, but didn't recognize him.

Four Disangelists - 1954 - Before and After Marx - Review

This is a remarkable and tightly knit essay about how four 19th century thinkers disprove the notion that scientific (Greek) thinking is a valid basis for the analysis of social problems. The author shows how the thinking of Freud, Darwin, Marx, and Nietzsche have proven un-prophetic when applied to our social experience of recent times, and that creativity (our ability to think anew about ourselves), follows from Christian doctrine, not Greek Humanism.

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