

HINGE OF GENERATIONS-1953

Feringer notes

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Chapt. 1

1. ERH begins with a description of the wealth and sickness of the U.S., i.e. our worship of "means" for producing wealth. With only 7% of the world population we use up 42% of its GNP, and therefore every other country must go to war with us. We over-eat (3,400 calories average where 1800 is enough), over-drink etc. WE HAVE LOST SIGHT OF OUR ENDS. This wealth does not produce genius or health or peace of mind.

2. Thus, we have put means before ends, and this does not produce a vital culture.

...we will have to learn that prophecy and vision always precede realization...In accidental events, the means come before the ends. In historical events, the ends constitute the means. (p.5)

Saints, seers, monks, poets, all creative people have the ends (vision) first, then they work on means. He cites an example of the great chemist, Kekule von Stradonitz who was not allowed to

study chemistry (which had no status as a profession at that time). But Stradonitz's vision was what chemistry should become, and he eventually followed "his bliss" as Joseph Campbell would put it.

3. Visions create new means to destinations. Today, for instance, there needs to be an integration of the secular and the religious because the two points of view live side-by-side, but each isolated from the other, and thus neither has power. (pp.6,7)

4. WHAT ERH IS DRIVING AT IS HOW TO INTEGRATE SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS.

e.g. The Church (Christian) tries to organize its ideas around how people die, secular thought, on the other hand, tries to organize around how people live. (p.8)

This process (the creative process that he declares is at the heart of Christianity) is also interested in how we change, (i.e. we are creative in the sense of seeing new possibilities for integrating thought). (p.9) He points out how change is wrapped around the notion that change is a death and resurrection, an integration of dying (of old ideas) and renewing life.

5. ...at this moment, in the world of ours, there is nothing as a carrier and bearer of spiritual truth left but the family. The family, however has been reduced to something material and physical. (p.12)

What he means by the term spiritual is the willingness between people to speak the truth to each other without endangering the relationship. In this sense, "spirit" does never exist within a person alone, but only between people. It is a commonly shared "inner" feeling of willingness for fellowship. "Spirit is breathing together of different people....it means the founding of groups." (p.13)

We seem only to be able to make people feel comfortable, thus achieving physical comfort at the expense of establishing common understanding. Organizations, government, military, industry, even the church are too big, ERH asserts, to create this common spirit.

6.[RF - It seems to me this is a crucial point defining industrial civilizations and goes far to explain the reason for the breakdowns in our lives. I have long felt that one of our main problems is to be more truthful with people. Truthful in a caring way, but without offending them. Such behavior is, of course a subtle balance between naive, inappropriate trust on the one hand, and an unwillingness to speak the truth at the right time. To be willing to hear and accept an uncomfortable truth requires courage and can only occur in an environment of a common spirit.]

He suggests that the only place to re-establish the spirit is to begin in the family. (p.13)

We seem to be artists at smiling and putting on a false face, as "...you cannot distinguish when a spirit is genuine, and when it's just put on." (p.14)

7. This notion of spirit is central to his philosophy and indicates why "religious" issues are

ultimately at the core of all problems, most of all those of regenerating the community. Only when we can be capable of truthfulness to others can we begin to restore or create human community. This aspect of belief becomes the core of our ability to change, and learn and finally to our ability to be creative (find new truths).

8.HOW TO ESTABLISH SPIRITUALITY? We cannot begin by defining what we (each of us) wants, but rather with a recognition of the sacrifices others have made for us.

This is to say, we must recognize that down through history those who have fought for freedom against oppression of any kind, against hunger, for truth in science and the appropriate establishment of professional ethics in all fields. Perhaps most difficult of all, to recognize those of our family who have gone without, so that we might have a better life.

Such a new type of defining makes for a very different yardstick for molding one's attitudes toward the community. One then must find one's own place in life BY MEASURING UP TO THESE HISTORICAL SACRIFICES BY BECOMING WILLING TO SACRIFICE WHEN NECESSARY TO PROTECT THOSE ACHIEVEMENTS. THIS IS WHAT WE OWE TO THE COMMUNITY.

Chapt. 2

1.STUDYING THE PAST MUST begin with a goal, addressing a significant problem out of the present, then derive a method (of analysis) likely to achieve a solution. Otherwise history leads nowhere!

A life is not a good life that doesn't know its direction. It is groping for the means, but it is quite sure of its destiny, of its end. (p.1)

Not to know the purpose of one's life is to duplicate the life of the animal.

2.To invest in the idea of what one is willing to die for is like "...a capital of mankind in a new bank for the unity of the human race."

We never know our destiny before the time of our death, that must be hidden from us. However, in all great literature one knows the end of the story in the beginning. What we learn is the means. The Iliad, War and Peace, the biography of the William James Senior's family (parents of William Jr. and Henry James, are examples of this point. THE POINT IS TO LEARN THE SPIRIT BEHIND THE ACTIONS, TO KNOW WHAT WENT INTO SOME PARTICULAR OUTCOME.

Our present "secular" values are based on physical comfort. One knows not the direction, but one learns means. This betrays our valuing of consumption above all else!

3. ERH goes on for several pages to tell why he venerated William. James Senior, to whom he attributed the possible regeneration of Christianity in this country, although James claimed to be an atheist!

James practiced and spoke of Christian principles, but never quoted the Bible He lived it! The same with Saint Paul, who ERH claims is the greatest disciple. Paul never quoted Jesus, but spoke of the live moment, applying the principles to himself. (p.6) This represented a oneness, a unity, a universality of principles for all people. This revealed a common spirit that could unit a community.

4.*** Act first to demonstrate the principles, only then can they be understood. [RF - Now I understand what he has said in other places on this point that we can only understand that which we have experienced] "...history is a mysterious process of confronting a new situation which might be called `B,' then relating it to an old event, `A' " (p.9)

The power of this idea ERH demonstrates in the life of the James family as a great story. where William Jr. and Henry, although they tried, could not escape the ethical principles taught them. That is, the principles molded their spirit because they understood and lived them.

5. In this way the meaning of the principles is advanced, because each succeeding generation fulfills the prophesy and in the process attempts to out-do it. Is this the meaning of the term, "getting back to basics?" One is both free to advance (change), and reflect the wisdom of the past at the same time, (an apparent paradox). (p.11)

6. SACRIFICE: If there is no willingness to sacrifice for a principle, then ultimately war will arise to settle the issue. The revolt of youth of the 60's in the U.S. is an example of the consequence of liberalism, where ERH claims the parents sacrificed for the children, but didn't demand or teach them that sacrifices had to be made by them. Likewise in pre-WWII Germany, where the immature youth were asked to make decisions, and this resulted in the rise of Nazism.

7. The job of teachers is to hand to the next generation what their own generation has given them. If students have not been taught that the past has something to say to them about their survival, then teachers are in a Catch-22 situation, held in little respect. **THIS SEEMS TO BE THE ATTITUDE OF OUR TIMES NOW.** One's own age is too limited, too narrow in experience to be a complete source for understanding our experience.

Only history of the ages, if one has studied it properly, can reveal the purposes for which we must make sacrifices. For instance, carrying on the "eternal varieties" such as freedom, speaking the truth, being one's brothers keeper, etc. The relation of one's freedom to one's own age is that one must understand what is necessity.

8.***History, in order to make sense, requires that a bridge is built between past generations and the present. Each new age faces new variations of old problems, and some new problems as well, and is therefore unique; and it must understand itself to be unique. Then when problems arise, it

looks backward to see its relationship to the past wisdom. Another of live's many paradoxes is that one needs to be individualistic, but also universal. (p.16)

In the process of looking back one must ask "What is spiritually dead?" How much of tradition is to be carried forward? One can only answer this by saying, "First I must be independent, then I must be interdependent."

Chapt. 3

1.ERH believes that civilization will fly apart unless there is unity of time in this way; that is, since the basics of survival cannot be understood to be revealed in any single epoch, all epochs of human existence must be drawn from. And he points out that progress does not occur in a logical, evolutionary manner.

Rather, each generation tends to forget the principles upon which it was founded. It attempts to reinvent the world, seeking its own uniqueness, and in the process setting aside lessons from the past. In practice shortcomings of its limited dogma should force it to look backward for both learning and visions of the future. [RF, it seems to me he implies that each generation reinvents reality (or tries to), then understands it has merely put "old wine in new bottles." Hopefully, the hard edges of reality penetrate its consciousness, forcing it to understand its freedom to invent is limited.]

2.This process seems to define a religious life, meaning that we see ourselves as needing to pass on the insights for survival to the next generation and instill in it the power of wisdom so that the future may be fulfilled. In other words, to live not only for ourselves, but also for future generations. It is therefore anathema to believe we have the moral right to live only for ourselves! THAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RELIGIOUS AND A SECULAR ATTITUDE! A religious life is one that lives to contribute toward the community and its continuance, while a secular life lives only for itself, as though no past or no future existed. "People are loved who have been able to go beyond their temporary will." (p.2)

3.The next question is, "How can an independent generation, without loss of character and individuality, enter the interdependence of generations?" (p.2)

ERH says the answer is given by example of the James family described above, where the spirit of one generation enters that of the next generation. This describes "how the spirit of one generation enters the hearts and ears of another generation."

This is the essence of moral questions. And the response is, each person must begin to act morally, caring for the welfare of others in addition to him/herself. William James, Sr. for example, had brought moral values into his home, down to earth, so to speak.

...the church had come down to earth in every life, and wasn't dependent on a Sunday service, or on a liturgy, or on any denominational tie-up.

...something denominational just doesn't work...because everybody feels that we live in a universal society-a greater universe. And no denomination can cover it totally. It's just impossible. (pp.3,4)

4.He points out a "great historical law", THAT THE HERETICAL FORM OF AN INSTITUTION, AT THE RIGHT MOMENT, HAS THE POWER TO OUTLAST THE ORTHODOX BECAUSE IT ALREADY HAS A FOOT IN THE FUTURE. This is because it becomes eloquent in the fact that it is responding to a situation has presented a barrier to progress. (p.5)

***Obviously here he speaks directly about the universal principles common to all serious religions. How does one realize this power to transcend one generation into another, or, by implication, renew an institution?

By translating all the liturgy, the sermons, the chorales, the hymns, the thoughts, the prayer of the Psalms, of the Church into dinner talk, into breakfast talk, into the witty and cordial exchange, and the affectionate speech between parents and children. (p.5)

5.ERH goes on to show another example in history, of the revolt of the Patricians and Plebes against the Roman Senate, whereby Cneius Flavius broke the taboo of keeping secret the Roman law. (p.5)

During the next few pages he gives several other examples in history of the same phenomenon whereby generations were connected. And, getting back to the James family, Henry James was a heretic. WHERE, IN OUR PRESENT AGE OF DOMINATING SCIENTIFIC THINKING, WHERE WE WILL NOT ACCEPT THE MORAL PRECEPTS OF THE POPE, OR THE PRESBYTERIANS, OR EPISCOPALIANS, ETC., WE WILL ACCEPT THE SAME IDEAS SPOKEN IN SECULAR LANGUAGE. The implications of this notion of the HERETIC are fundamental. It means that no one need become the slave of the organized church, that he/she can serve the community in the name of ethics (when the institution of the church becomes corrupted). One can deny the authority of that institution. (p.6)

6.In the same vein, the older generation cannot claim final authority; the heretic is essential for regeneration when reform is essential. Such heresy is founded on the love for our maker rather than for any earth-bound authority!

The James family was an example of the regenerating unit; in this age of bigness where personal commitment does not carry much power, the family is the unit that must preserve ethics, where they must be taught and lived out. The reputation of the mindless bureaucrat is the image that one is left with as an alternative, an alternative that is obviously sterile in this age of little dedication beyond self-interest or avoiding blame for failures!

In the case of Henry James, he could inherit the spirit of comradeship better outside the church, but with no intention of weakening the church.

7.Private and public life must be one; there cannot be, as the business men assert, different standards for different institutions in life. **THE POWER OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE DEPENDS UPON OUR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR DECLARATIONS, OF OUR COMMITMENTS. THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IS THEREFORE NOT PRIVATE, NOR PUBLIC, BUT OPENLY CONFESSED.** In this sense we must live in the open, our commitments known to those around us.

8.Regeneration of our community and the success of our sons and daughters (whether of our own blood or of our community) lies, not in their parroting our ideas, but in their having the same spirit of invigoration and application to what we do, and to seeking and reflecting the truth, and representing the great achievement of the ages. Our offspring will do it in a different way than we do, but we must have faith that they will do it. [RF - if properly taught, one must add.]

The heretic cannot command that his followers follow his ideas, because his very heresy disqualifies him from such work. [RF - I'm not sure of the meaning of this notion, the reader is referred to the text. (p.12)

9.The notion behind heresy is that we know today's ideas are not the same as those in 1895, nor will they be the same tomorrow. But the seeking for truth, the faith in the future, and willingness to change will be the constants that must be passed on.

10.My purpose must be to make myself known to the next age, to belong to all ages, but to represent the past to the next generation so that they may have some reference points by which to judge their own lives.

11.To live a truly religious life is to stand for the whole of creation, the whole community and all that is in it, and for its continuation, its future. (p.19)

One functions on several levels, for the self, for the family and group, for one's profession, but ultimately all of this must have its place in creating the good community. "The world as created is good, gentlemen, but it isn't good enough."

Chapt. 4

More examples of previous points.

Chapt. 5

1.God is the power in us that allows us to speak. It is the power to appropriate within us the power of language.

...all your rights to live in a democratic society depend on our conviction that you can appropriate the spirit of the institution in which you live by the power of the word....instead of

becoming a product of your environment (as are animals)-- you become the creator of your environment--the re-creator of your environment, by this strange volunteering for the affirmation. (p.1)

2. We are a strange mixture of animal and divinity. If the community is to survive, one must honor the language, speak the truth and get involved in commitments to the community. When too many people abuse this gift, they believe they can lie, cheat, refuse to get involved, all with impunity; as a result of course, the community degenerates.

3.*** We tend to live in a world filled with much fantasy [RF - Even scientists display this quality, I would suggest. They cling too long to questionable theories, unable to let-go of ideas which seem comfortable.] The world of the mind is safe, comfortably hidden from scrutiny. It is reality that people often mistrust us, abuse us, our actions are unfruitful, our assessment of how people would respond to us is all off. This is the price for living too much of our lives in fantasy, in daydreams; we are frustrated by the gap between our beliefs and reality.

Ultimately the way to a fulfilled life is to live as much reality as possible; that is, to not abuse the power of speech! To find reality, truth (only possible through real speech), is to live a fruitful (religious) life.

4. Our nature, our natural faculties, are our animal part. "Man begins where you declare that your nature isn't good enough." (p.5) We begin to overcome and rise above our nature through development of our spirit, of our soul. This is the process of becoming human in the true (spiritual) sense.

5. We all grow up with the acquiescence of others who forgive us our inanities. They have faith that one day we will mature and contribute to the community, and respond appropriately to them. Eventually we will do our part, in other words. Our innocent youth is analogous to the fruit ripening on the tree. At this time, nothing we say is held against us. Judgment is held in obedience because of our innocence. **EVENTUALLY, THEN, WE ARE MORALLY OBLIGATED TO PAY SOCIETY BACK.** Certainly the argument that none of us asked to be born is irrelevant. We are here and given a gift, and therefore owe repayment whether we like it or not. We never stop using the language we were taught, or the knowledge passed on to us. **EARLY EDUCATION SHOULD BEGIN TO MAKE YOUTH CONSCIOUS OF THIS FACT AND TEACH THEM TO ADMIT THE REALITY OF THEIR CONDITION.**

In short, it is our religion to give youth food, shelter, clothing, and most of all appropriate freedom to make up one's own mind, in spite of the fact that youthful decisions are usually poor ones. But, most of all, the youth should be taught to realize what they are given.

...the conditions of this freedom are very clear. You cannot do less than we are doing for you. The society which you have to establish by your own deeds has already certain minimum requirements. And they are unassailable. (p.7)

These are the Christian prerequisites of life. They are also the American, German, Egyptian, Muslim, Buddhist or tribal prerequisites that followed the universal principles of community-building through the ages.

6. TEACHING, is a metaphorical term. Whoever speaks the truth about reality is in the role of teacher, or father, or mother, or mentor, regardless of age. The role is that of the speaker, and the students, son, daughter, etc. are to be listeners most of the time. All cultures through the ages have developed and protected the integrity of languages and given this gift to the youth of each generation. This is why anyone who uses and accepts the power of language is admitting the value of religion.

7. 24th book of the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi has a strange prediction. He says the earth must be cursed, and will perish, unless the parents turn their hearts to their children, and the children turn their hearts to their parents. And...the New Testament is considered the fulfillment of the Old...When Jesus comes, He says that the hearts of the parents now are turned toward their children. But the other held, that the hearts of the children must be turned toward their parents, is left to the Americans to fulfill. (p.10)

ERH points out that Henry James and his family is an exemplification of this prophesy. At risk is the future of any community when one denies the wisdom from the past. **THE TEACHER MUST HAVE AUTHORITY AND BE SEEN BY THE STUDENTS TO HAVE THAT AUTHORITY, AND STUDENTS MUST TAKE THAT AUTHORITY ON FAITH AT FIRST.**

Chapt. 6

1. Each age tends to live by a dogma, isolated from the past and future. To survive one must realize this, articulate that dogma, and fight against its parochialism. "That is what the ancient people called the 'question of salvation'." We are always called upon to rise above the dogmatism of our own age.

The genius of the just-past age was what created our own age. An effective heretic must therefore go back, to, not to the letter, but to the creative spirit of the genius of that past age. The other side of the coin is just as necessary, to see the fallacies of that age and let go of them!

It is precisely that spirit of genius from the past age that is greater than our individual spirit, however necessary that individual spirit is; that "received" spirit is what regenerates the universe. It is the same with church dogma. Paradoxically, dogma is necessary, but more important is the spirit behind it. The dogma must always be overcome; but the spirit behind it must live on. This universal spirit thus frees us from the dogmatism of our individual spirit.

2. When we abdicate the discipline required to listen to the wisdom of the ages, or the lessons from the past age, we do not have freedom, but live in the prison of anarchy and war. **THIS IS WHY WE HAD TWO WORLD WARS. OUR LEADERS DID NOT LEARN THE LESSON**

OF THAT EXPERIENCE. These were caused because the past age lived within the dogma of its own age, without listening and disciplining itself with past wisdom.

3. What we do not solve in one generation arises in the next. As of today, over-population, political/cultural isolation (as in Yugoslavia), uncontrolled massive bureaucracies, grossly unbalanced distribution of wealth (between rich and poor, both people and countries), despoiling of nature, disrespect for language, and most of all, lack of concern for the education of the young.

4. We cannot know everything, it is difficult to see the wisdom of a command from an authority or even recognize an authority. One must learn to obey and be satisfied to learn of the meaning later. Paradoxically, if our leaders are seen to be stupid and slothful, one must react against them (such as when they make decisions for personal expediency, which seems to be common these days). IN SUM, WE MUST BE MORE WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES BEFORE WE UNDERSTAND. (p.7) [RF - Of course, ERH's assertions about accepting commands from leaders "on faith" assumes those leaders deserve this respect. If not, they must be thrown out before the community can move ahead with its problem solving.]

5.***The basic plight and goal of mankind is that one must carry on from the past that which is worth carrying on. But also in our age we must strike out toward new ground, begin anew.

The main question is, ...We come too late in our own lives unless we are allowed to continue what is worthwhile, and unless we are going to rely on other people to do with our lives something in continuation. (p.10)

6. Probably, each of us comes too late into our own lives by not understanding what must be continued from the past. At the very least, we can pass on our own mistakes to others. Thus, our lives are wasted if we do not pass these mistakes on, because we usually cannot see to correct them during our own lives.

But we must also learn authority by having the freedom to discover it. "Freedom begins with the recognition of necessity." (Hegel) - just another paradox in living.

7.***We must also learn, and pass on to our children, that we must be, not only contemporaries of our own age, but contemporaries of another age. This is to say that heretics need to have help from another age in order to make their point.

If you are totally nature, then only your own time counts. If you are not totally nature, you can get out of the accident of birth, the accident of your own time. But then immediately you must look for allies in other times. (p.13)

Chapter - 7

1. The essence of ERH's opening comments are based on the notion that WAR is the normal condition of human relations, and every once-in-a-while PEACE breaks out. Furthermore, if one

does not take this fact into consideration, wars continue to be the normal course of events. The cure for this is to prepare for future peace during peacetime, acting as though a war could happen at any moment if one does not anticipate its possibility..

These two realities, war and peace, must be kept in mind all the time; when one does not try to create peace all the time, war is always inevitable. [RF - ERH believed that war was occasionally necessary because, when brutes or tyrants are allowed to arise, like McCarthy in the America of the 50's, or Hitler, or Mladic (in Yugoslavia), people must get rid of them, and this may require violence. If one does not fight them then the brutes continue to rule.

...the double ring of life consists of an alternation between faith and knowledge, between darkness and daylight, between war and peace. (p.2)

War is universal throughout society, including the battle of the sexes, war between friends at times, between boss and worker at times, between businesses - in addition to shooting wars, which are merely one manifestation.

2. One also prevents shooting by not sitting in judgment of others too quickly. In the U.S. today, we tend to judge too soon the intentions of our enemy, or ignore them until the time for reconciliation has passed. No cause becomes fruitful unless someone is willing to die for it. Concordance results from putting oneself into the other's shoes.

3. In this next section he dichotomizes rationalism and emotion.

Rational is everything sexless...Rational - (meaning) where no children have to be born and no people die - you can be rational. But as soon as you get into this mystery, that if you do not sacrifice, there is no continuity of history, you get into the story of Adam into the last judgment day. (p.7)

This is nothing more than another expression of the notion of life always being half war and half peace, half rational and half emotional. We tend to think like Greeks, i.e. in a world of abstractions, of theories, of ideology. "Plato and Aristotle, left the city of Athens and lived happily ever after in an academy, and taught what they pleased. BUT the result was that the first disciple was Alexander the Great..." (p.7) In real life one is not free to think just anything, if one wishes to survive. It was for this reason that ERH believed William James' MORAL EQUIVALENT OF WAR is nonsense.

4. War comes when the sacrifices of the last war are forgotten. We must admit, he asserts, that we owe our existence to war and to peace.

5.***To be a Christian is to be willing to lay down your life, to make sacrifices for your community. Of the several roles in life, one must be ready and willing to take on any of them as the time demands, to be a civilian, to be a soldier, and to be a martyr. Willingness to sacrifice is what Christianity means. It is to pay the price of creativity, to create a life, a community, or to

recreate (regenerate), constantly. That is what renews life, continues the generations. The meaning of the "virgin birth" in Christianity is to be reborn by a spirit that has been passed to you, then you become willing to pass it on to another.

To be a Christian is to fight for an integration of mankind, of equality among races, of justice, for example. The Jews believed, for instance, in one God. This was heresy at that time because rulers were believed to be a god of the religion of that culture. It was for this reason that they were persecuted by almost all cultures. That antipathy has lived on to a great extent.

6.The true soldier does not hate the enemy, "...only civilians do." (p.16)

7.Life is not just physical existence, but also a way of life, a culture. Thus, fear of death is not just a fear of physical existence, but also for the culture, for the community. (p.22) He points out that physical existence, as a total value, is very limited; the French, in his example, were willing to surrender to the Nazis' rather than to have Paris bombed. Ironically, it was this very spirit (of value for the physical) that represented the degeneration of the soul of the French at that time. Sticks and stones were more important than the spirit of the people!

Ironically, the very willingness to sacrifice physical survival for the cultural or spiritual survival of your community, means that the prospect of war is reduced. (p.24)

Chapt. 8

1.ERH venerates Jonathan Edwards, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and William James, who "...have rebuilt the American way of life three times." (p.1) Edwards put the question of the scientific mind "...squarely into the center of his work..." In 1758 he was called to become the president of Princeton University, for integrating the church and the "secular brain", of "...science gone wild on its own."

2.We pray individually, in the privacy of our homes, but only a congregation can give us understanding of our age and our obligation to it (an obligation that may be against our will and self-interest). Our personal desires (wills) are of no interest to the world of mankind. The demands of the community are what are important. "You don't go there (to church) for good feelings). (p.3)

3.THE MINORITY in any organization or country or community must rule, that is, if they are the top. However, he says that if the minority, only, reflect or manipulate the majority for their own selfish benefit, then the minority must not rule. But the majority are never strong enough to stand on their own feet, they must be morally led by the "top minority." The prophets are those who should lead.

4.Edwards recognized three communities he needed to address. Each had to be addressed in different ways, just as with the apostles. These were, the fundamental church members (the converted), the agnostics (doubters), and the outright "sinners", those who opposed the gospels.

Each were spoken to in different terms. To the "outsiders" (sinners or intelligencia - people who believe in the dominance of their own willpower), he could point out the shortcomings of their views by reason.

It is a truism however, that the powers that run the world are not reason, but emotion! The majority possessed this innate power and were (are) poor in scientific expertise (reason), the intelligencia widened this gap and thereby raised their own importance.

5. Restoring the balance between science and religion was the reform that Edwards sought, after the beginning of the scientific age.

The social problem of humanity is caused by, or deepened because of, different points of view between neighbors. This will always be, but one must also accept the fact that we are one and the same part of humanity. Paradoxically, we remain different, but also the same. The problem is to learn to live together in peace. This is a non-secular assertion. This unproven fact is not proven by any secular rationalization.

...no self interest can ever explain why the man who is interested in his own aims, and in his own self, has to feel that the people who do not serve his self-interest, like, for example, a good priest, or a good missionary, or a good preacher, or his wife, or his mother, why they are more intimately connected with him, and have more solidarity with him than all the people who he can make jump at his command and at his whim. (p.10)

This isn't a dichotomy of two opposites, but one between perpetuity and of transiency. The secular world is transient; the ecclesiastical is more permanent. The secular tendency, as a dominant force, leads therefore to degeneration because it becomes the law of the jungle, survival of the fittest leading to constant war.

6. The true contributors to the community therefore are those who do service without needing to be recognized. PARADOXICALLY, INDIVIDUALLY GUIDED BY OUR CONSCIENCES WE CEMENT THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE, PERPETUATING THE COMMUNITY AND THE CULTURE. (p.12)

7. The driving force to perpetuate the community is love, not will; love and will are opposites. Love is like a newborn baby, weak but full of potential, the future. Will is like the bomb, full of power, but enormously destructive when undisciplined by love.

8. The theme of secular philosophy in the last 300 years is that knowledge, emotions and will should have authority. But these three qualities do not indicate that we are members of humanity, of a community, and they therefore possess no innate authority to require us to listen to them.

Secularism is an attempt to rival religion as a source of authority, describing the individual as not a member of a church, not married by love to a larger unity, and not taught and inspired by a

higher authority. Thus, secularism, at the core, is brute force, pure force! (p.14)

9.The sinful ego is analogous to Freud's theory that we are driven by desire, and all of our rationalization is an attempt to justify those desires. What Jonathan Edwards calls man's bleakness, despair, blackness, being fettered by his repressions, and his pains and desires, are given in Freud's analysis.

10.We are free only at certain times, and not at others. We have freedom of will, but are also driven by desires. We are part god and part animal, and we must learn when to act as one or the other. When we fear, we are not free, and when we do not fear we can be free. Our will is an addiction that can enslave us. "Freedom is something constantly lost and re-acquired." (p.16) The universal prayer in Christianity is to be emancipated from our own will, because the will isn't free, and we are god-like when free.

The person who has everything - money, success, women (or men) - no longer belongs to humanity and therefore cannot be taught, or guided, or inspired. He no longer represents the order of the universe in his own time. When are people free, and when enslaved, is the crucial question. The animal is never free.

Chapt. 9

1.ERH differentiates between Greek and Christian. The Greeks are encyclopedic and objective. The Christians can love other than themselves. The Greeks loved only Greek creativity. [RF - interesting statement; meaning that the Christian fundamentalists and homeopaths are Greek in their thinking, not Christian!] The Greeks might be said to be passionate about ideas in the abstract. Christianity, by contrast, asserts that mankind must be one, that there must be peace (between the intelligent and the stupid, between different races, and all forces that divide humankind).

2.Romanticism creates a second world, not of our world, but one that supplements it. Romanticism is "...just a world of feelings." Fiction is the creation of a second world, a toy, a plaything. Intellectualism, the worship of ideas, creates a world where the mind (logic) rules, e.g. Darwinism, where the brutes exploit all others.

The implication for intellectuals is deep. The educated classes tend toward Greek thinking, pre-Christian, the veneration of logic. The time in which we live has nothing to do with the stage of our thinking. That is, dominant logical, secular thinking is pre-Christian, and it perpetuates violence, exploitation, inequality, etc. THE HISTORICALLY MINDED PERSON KNOWS WHAT HE/SHE WANTS, WHICH IS NOT TO REVERT TO THE WORLD OF PRE-CHRISTIAN, BECAUSE HE HAS LEARNED THROUGH HISTORY WHAT THIS TYPE OF THINKING LEADS TO. (pp. 4,5)

Chapt. 10

1. ERH introduces the problem of choosing, as contrasted with having chosen, in which case one reduces the arena of choice. In other words, to have order in one's life, one must choose a point of view that dictates other choices, and this is PURELY AND SIMPLY ONE'S RELIGION. Once this occurs, one must become passionate about taking action. One cannot live a useful life without acting. One cannot survive always being encyclopedic. In other words, one cannot survive with Greek thinking, as ERH calls it.

One's religion must be an end in itself! It must be all-encompassing, it must be the meaning of one's life. It is not a means, but an end in itself. Franklin, the scientist and secularist, said the ends are the means. Means to what? He doesn't say; a good life maybe, but that leads to the secular thinking described above. (p.3)

2. The willingness to treat all others as equal, the willingness to serve the community, the ability to experience the joy of giving and receiving, the unwillingness to destroy or to exploit, the willingness to trust and to love, are all ends in themselves. When present in one's spirit, they represent the omnipresence of the divine spirit within us.

Ultimate "ends" and "means" are entirely different things. Concepts and theories are means, and human beings are ends (hopefully becoming endowed with the divine spirit as defined above). "All escapists hide behind concepts. The problem is that we often find it difficult, or cannot distinguish means from ends. "This is a terror of life." (p.7)

3. ERH asserts that historically, Franklin and others subscribing to scientific (Greek) thinking were still accepted as religious members of the community. But in time that thinking manifested itself into the form of what it always leads to, exploitation, then the wars, racism, ethnic cleansing, hate and exploitation in all its forms.

(RF, My sense is that, unless we believe that our intelligence and our power, is loaned to us, and that the source of our inspiration is one common spirit, then we degenerate into our animal nature of Greek thinking, as ERH calls it.)

The truth is charity, and hope, and faith, every quality of unconditional membership in human society can never be reasoned out by people who say that everything has to be useful. This talk about enlightened self-interest is just ridiculous. (p.9)

4. The essence of secular humanist/logical thought is that we can have the content of religion without its form. That we, individually, can decide ethical elements of social life, that we can be masters of our fate. On the U.S. dollar bill this form of secularism is imagined; the pyramid, the eye of Horus, the 5-pointed star is Egyptian, a pagan star.

5. We live by dogma and cannot avoid it. Our dogma in America is the Constitution, or commonly accepted moral values. I cannot kill you except in self defence, etc. And, by inference ERH says the existence of a good community is an end in itself.

It is not possible to have an opinion about anything without a dogma. We all depend upon dogmas every day.

The Trinity dogma is 1) everyone believes that God created the Universe, 2) people can redeem (create human community at peace), and 3) humans, acquiring the Holy Spirit is the method by which this could be accomplished. (p.13)

6.ERH differentiates "real" or sublime literature from mere melodrama; real literature talks about reality, people in earnest trying to deal with life, with undesirable characters, and with man "whole," not romanticized, into two dimensional characters.

Chapt. 11

1.Useful historical thinking is not just anecdotal, but tries to find the ideas of the ages reflected in the thought and actions of historical persons. It ties together past, present, and future.

With this perspective one cannot predict from past experience in human society. One must await one's death or the end of an age before knowing the consequences of actions, because humankind is capable of changing on short notice and taking a new, unpredicted direction, acting on passions or dogma rather than on logic. When a new course of action is taken by a community, we must therefore wait to see all its manifestations.

We can only write the history of George Washington now, and the man who writes this history fifty years from now must write a different and a better story...because he knows better. (p.2)

2.History is most informative when the long-range consequences are known. Events cannot be understood at their beginning. In the beginning, Christianity could very well be mistaken for 50 other religions. History begins only when one man's life leaves an impression on another man's life. We can therefore only know the minimum when it spans two generations; this is the atomic unit of history.

3.Faith connected with action reflects one's personal religion, or one's manifestation of the religion one proclaims.

Tragedy is not that grief befalls people, but rather that their actions had no influence on others.

...I have taken the liberty of trying to give you the problem of a history of the human spirit, as opposed to the history of the human body, or human bodies of the mortals in us ... (p.9)

...reflecting the relation between the religious and the secular.

4.The problem of the historian is to get into two generations, two different "times." A generation that follows another either enlarges the first values, or diminishes them, and this can never be

predicted by causes, but it can be described after the fact. "By their fruits we shall know them."

Secular history looks at causes. [RF - As an aside, today we even hear about raising our standard of living, about expanding production and consumption, when in reality we need to lower our standard of living. Obviously the value of consumption and of free enterprise has become destructive of environment and of the family, as has our allopathic medical practices, our educational system, our courts and justice system, all revealed to the perceptive observer. Yet, the destructive nature of these practices has yet to be accepted by the average historian.

5. The story (meaning) of Christianity can be destroyed if one looks only at individual lives SEPARATELY. The major point of Christianity is that we see two generations as a unit; for example, the life of Jesus and that of the Apostles. Jesus laid out the ideas, then died and turned everything over to the Apostles. THIS MEANS IN PART THAT EVEN THE LOWEST FISHERMAN COULD INHERIT THE SPIRIT OF GENIUS. This was the first time in history that the unity of generations was proclaimed, and that is why it heralded the beginning of a new era.

6. A universal story meant that now all peoples could understand their relation to other generations, and therefore how to live in relation to others in the present. (p.15)

7. Here ERH takes off on an essentially new and significant idea, that Christianity also means that one must decide the economics between spending all one makes, or planning for sustained resources for future generations. This is the whole problem of the capitalistic system, that it has failed to restrain greed or to consider sustaining future generations. [RF - The excuse is, "Technology will solve the problem", while ignoring abundant facts to the contrary. Atomic waste is one of many examples.]

8. Paul never quotes Jesus, he lives the holy spirit instead. Speaking with or claiming AUTHORITY does not derive from quoting others, but rather from living an idea and paying the price for doing so! (p.17)

9. Americans are usually half-hearted, practicing one thing and acting on only part of the idea. We claim to be democratic, but revere police and pay a heavy price (perhaps too much) for order in our communities. Instead of preventing crime, we put money into prisons and punishment.

Obviously we need both centralized and decentralized decision-making, but the problem is how much of each, and how to bring balance. In other words, we should seek to be neither extreme centrist or decentrist but rather progressive, balancing each according to the demands of the situation.

10. ERH asserts that the great decisions of history have nothing to do with morality of the individual who takes action. It has everything to do with whether those decisions support the great movements and allow for progress. Even the criminal can be redeemed if he/she carries out the right acts to help the community. "...if you have this sixth sense of history, you are fit for the kingdom of Heaven." (p.21)

11. The condemnation of Greek science or Greek philosophy is valid only when science and secular philosophy lead our thinking, rather than being led by the Christian principles. We need science, but it is not an end in itself!

Chapt. 12

1. Secularism means one lives by one generation. To live only in one generation renders one impotent, unable to regenerate the culture.

2. To create a future one must be in earnest and disciplined in that direction. In today's world, people get ahead who smile, who are pleasant, and sympathetic, friendly, who "get along." However, he asserts, "Fruitfulness is not amiability." (p.3)

[RF - ERH's statements in this segment about loving the opposite as meaning fruitfulness is not developed and seem to me un-understandable at this time.]

Chapt. 13

1. The soul is different from the mind.

2. Nature is neither good nor bad, it just is. The notion is fundamental to beliefs of the secularists/naturalists like Thoreau and Emerson and Franklin, who held that nature is good and society is corrupted. The point is, we cannot take our cues from the animal kingdom. Their nature doesn't change, but ours does every day.

3. We require and must live in more than one generation because our own is too limited, too parochial, too self-centered. To live in another generation also renders the ability to make a comparison and thus, to see reality better.

The act of seeking the truth, no matter where it leads, always connects us with all of humanity, and this act is much more important than that of our own lives. (p.7)

4. To seek truth then is to be able to compare our own beliefs with something else, validating experience, so to speak, to find a higher truth.

Chapt. 14

1. [RF - the essay is rather abstruse here, but I believe he is making a distinction between seeing our fellow humans disconnected from ourselves. We often think of each other "objectively," which makes our fellow humans into (its). This becomes a barrier to seeing one's fellow humans with compassion. The difference is profound because we cannot really objectify our sense of interpersonal relations without separating ourselves from others, putting ourselves outside their lives. To put ourselves outside their lives means disconnection; "we cannot take or give orders to

them."]

Ultimately, to be unable to consider ourselves a member human is to act in an animal way. IT IS ONLY IN RELATION TO OTHERS THAT WE CAN RISE ABOVE AND GROW OUT OF, OUR ANIMAL NATURE. This means to be capable of speaking to another. To exercise this choice, i.e. to be either part of, or consciously separate ourselves from others, is the only type of freedom we have as humans, and we possess this freedom only by virtue of communication.

2.Human beings cannot fathom why they think, unless they confront themselves with the fact that they, or a loved one, will die some day, or has died.

3.We think because we know we will die. "If only we would live (indefinitely), we would not think." (p.6)

Our experience teaches us different things about life, and we are constantly fluctuating in our opinions about that experience. To generalize (to think analytically) is to stabilize our thinking, to ascertain some truth about life. And to ascertain truth inevitably leads us to see death all round us. We attempt to see our destiny, and we measure belief in a cause to the extent that we will die for it. Thus in our history we cannot avoid martyrs.

4.Catastrophes always bring out the more profound forces in humans. Catastrophe, risk, destiny, and the destiny of mankind "...becomes only known by those acts of yours where you risk your life."

5.FIVE RINGS OF IMMEDIACY : These indicate the descending importance of risks we take in life. The first four are essential for living, the last represents greed.

a. Any event that demands death is most important.

b. Any event that demands personal devotion, dedication, standing up and being "counted", i.e. a marriage, taking an oath of office etc.

c.Loyalty to some cause

d.Criticizing, but not acting (this is what most do, most of the time according to ERH)

e.To have an "attitude" an opinion, to describe, only events, puts one outside society. The business tradition tends to live in this sphere, little loyalty, as little risk as possible, not to take a stand unless one must. The attitude is self-centered.

All of this revolves around willingness to sacrifice (self) for the community. The first four are "living" - the fifth is just greed.

6.These are important rules for the continuation of the community. All persons must be concerned with the destiny of the community, because without it all individuals perish. All of

the first four are essential, one cannot pick and choose if one wishes to find peace and progress.

7.To speak of the destiny of mankind is to know what has allowed society to progress, and to know that those qualities in the community must persist. This means law, civil rights, economics, education, etc, all must exist in any generation.

8.To know all these things is to know that the past, present and future are one unit of time, and then one lives across the generations.

END OF SERIES

HINGE OF GENERATIONS-1953

Feringer notes

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