

Minutes of Discussion Group 4th August 2006.

Isaac's Topic for Discussion.

What Are The Subtle Influences of Religion On Society?

(Different Scribe recording discussion.)

Discussion commenced with the perceived traits of the male / female aspects in respect to religious influence.

-Femininity. Females having child bearing capacity with 'caring' abilities seen from a positive and creative position from the female view, but from a males point seen as a burden.

Femininity in general was seen to have suffered badly from subtle religious pressures, and much more from the overt aggressively restricting efforts to usurp power from the feminine. It was deemed there were so many issues relating to the religious oppression of women from past to modern day that it needed a discussion night just for this subject.

-Religion - as used by the missionaries, has changed cultures dramatically over the years, with missionaries 'converting' whole races of people throughout the world, especially throughout the Pacific Island and South & Central America. The not so subtle influences were the destruction of native peoples and their customs and beliefs because they didn't fit into a prescribed point of view. We asked how can any religion be granted power by the populace to take the human rights and free will from any people in the name of God?

But in the Middle East, the Arabian peoples did not accept the western interpretation of religion, and the missionaries power was not able to 'overpower' the peoples, and hence we still experience the intolerance of one religion for another today. We talked about how the original avatars or enlightened ones must feel knowing that their loving words and wisdom could be so manipulated that violence is enacted in their name.

-Education was seen as a major entity in the influence of religious effects on society through the church run schools & orphanages, some positives were discussed but also the negatives, of judgments being placed in Gods name.

-Justice System. Even in the justice system - the oath is sworn on the Bible. Governments open their sessions of Parliament invoking some form of religious blessing and loyalty.

The group then flowed into the areas having been effected by religion, these being:

- **Clothing**, eg: head scarfs, robes etc. individual choice of clothing etc. free will being honoured.

- **Music:** with music generally being influenced over the years, and 'works'

being specifically commissioned for religious reasons & ceremonies, music styles such as chants, hymns were developed from a religious influence.

- **Art**, was generally commissioned with the Church, commissioning works for churches buildings and monasteries etc. Religious art developing its own styles and restrictions and used as the visual representation of the religious figure or occasion. Many artists works were heavily censured and restricted by church authorities.

- **Architecture**, for example 'gothic' style with its pointed arches directed towards the heavens. The church buildings being seen as the example of the churches power.

- **War, martyrdom**, and with wars being fought over religion, holy places etc and still are.

- **Finance**, with donations to the churches and corresponding 'forgiveness' offered for a price. The church over the years has held a monetary power base and / or influence over society.

- **Social Structure**, with the churches capacity to influence people and hence society generally, for they were seen, and professed to be the only 'direct' connection to God, but this is thankfully changing so all people can connect directly to God as is their right. This influence can be easily gauged during the Reformation.

- **Charity**, with most of the world charities being run by the different churches.

-**Tourism**, with a large part of the worlds tourism involving visiting religious places and with pilgrimages for different religious occasions.

-**Ceremonies**, marriage, funerals, festivals (calender) many of which were taken from so called pagan ceremonies, but incorporated into religions and altered to consume former beliefs and thereby disempower them. Sunday being an example, which came from the Pagan sun festivals.

-**Food**, strict rules brought in throughout time to incorporate religious dogma which altered as time went on. Religious adherence to these rules being mandatory.

-**Literature**, from the time of the original religious works changes were added to enforce a power base and contemporary views of those in leadership in religions. Often destruction of previous written works or works of art were part of the absorption and obliteration process. Some times these attempts to remove opposing views were subtle, more often blatant attempts to overpower and gain a power base from which to launch personal views or agendas of the scribes or authority. Great good has been achieved, but also great harm as evidence in the days of the inquisition and the millions of women who died in the name of religious power and oppression, and masculine based suppression of the feminine. This approach continues today with discoveries not being recognized which invoke greater thought process and empower

femininity. Also the churches have steadfastly adhered to a repression of females by not recognizing and incorporating females as leaders of the church bodies.

-**Politics**, medicine, science, language have all been effected by religious

influence. Many great enlightened souls were not only oppressed and suppressed, but also their scientific and artistic works restricted and humanity set back with religious interference, such as Galileo, but many many others.

-**Wars**, have been started and continue to this day in Gods name, when in truth they serve not God, but the lower aspects of humanity. War is man made, and religious differences and intolerance perpetuate this negative aspect.

- **Furniture**, even furniture has been influenced by religion, with the design of furniture customized for church use, with that design correspondingly influencing non church furniture design. Likewise, with the Fensai philosophy of design having or being generated by a spiritual influence.

- **Crystal**, with people believing that crystals have their own energies which also can be harnessed, but this is Spiritually based.

-**Satanism**, with its opposing energy to religion. Satanism has been influenced or has been generated by religion itself. The Group felt that Satanism had an oppressive effect, especially against the feminine, being more fear based male dominated energy. Hierarchy, has been influenced by religion, with the Church having the position of power throughout much of history, with this power only partially returning to the people in recent times. With the Church holding the power base it was thought that this was masculine principle, opposed to the recent committee based power of democracy.

What has not been effected by religion? Well this was really hard to find an answer for.

-**The Ocean?**

-**Minerals?**

-**Furniture**, not really, even furniture has been influenced or the design of it with religious purposes in mind.

-**Crystal energy.**

-**Animals** - the Bible tells us that animals have been placed here for our use, and the Church tells us that animals have no soul.

Synopsis. At the commencement of the discussion, the group found it difficult and struggled to identify what religion did influence. But once, the group started to discuss the issue, it had difficulty in finding areas where the world we live in was not heavily influenced by religion.

Footnote:

Even in world politics at the moment, world leaders use religious influences or allegiances based upon common religious affiliations or recognition of commonality and loyalties to make major decisions, the middle east being a major source of problems.

Diplomacy and democratic rights of all people to have free will honoured is often overlooked to further religious bonds and economic rationalism. In short we found that there are major influences which still steer our world

course towards a rather dismal future, if a dissolving of religious differences can not be found.

This brought to us the importance of this discussion group as an example for the rest of the world, to look at all aspects of our world, all belief systems to find the positives, but be realistic enough to understand and recognise the negatives. For this is where truth can be found in open minded discussion and having the ability to let go of rigid, antiquated energies which do not serve the greater good of the planet. World harmony and peace can only come by finding the essence of love that is the jewel laying hidden beneath the rubble which is at times a sad history of humanity.

Leonardo Da Vinci said, "Until women are treated as equals and held in a sacred space by all religions, all belief systems, there will not be peace, and this may be a strong statement, but I repeat it. Until women are treated as equals and held in a sacred space by all religions, all belief systems, there will not be peace." Perhaps equality and love as Christ, Buddha, Mohammed and many other great enlightened souls practiced it would be best revealed by open and loving energies of incorporation within established religions.

This would be a great start.

SUBTLE INFLUENCES OF RELIGION ON SOCIETY

Summary of topic discussion: Subtle influence of Religion of Society.

- * Looking at it from a western, particularly Christian, perspective.
- * It is about religion and its influence upon society. It is not a comment on the original Christ impulse, which we believe, was far more balanced.
- * Looking at the subject from an 'energy' rather than just a doctrinal point of view. In fact, the interpretations of the original Christ story that resulted in the doctrines was also influenced by the imbalance in energy. For example: the Church actively suppressed the Sacred Feminine principle and became excessively masculine in their 'energy' and thus their influence upon society. Even though Jesus himself certainly did not teach this, and there are many instances in the New Testament that attest to this, and it is not to say that there have not been many people over the centuries who have naturally absorbed this deeper truth (of balance), nevertheless, the suppression of the Sacred

Feminine still influences our perception of religion, of what it means to live in this world. We, therefore, isolated the masculine principles associated with religion and extrapolated from there its effect upon our society. It has to be pointed out, however, that both energies are vitally important. A problem only occurs when one becomes dominant over the other.

* Each of the points are interconnected, and so some overlapping will inevitably occur. This is just a jumping off point: there was a feeling of barely have scratched the surface.

Masculine Principle Effect on Society with its balancing Feminine Characteristic

Head, Logic, Thought.

Masculine characteristics were considered superior to feminine therefore men superior to women, western society superior to indigenous, book and university learning superior to internal knowing, knowledge more important than wisdom, written word superior to oral tradition, that which can be described and analysed superior to the ineffable, that which is scientifically 'provable' is the only 'reality'. Literal readings of Bible= fundamentalism, black and white understanding of reality. Excessive head, people disconnect with the world about them, including other people: lack of empathy for people, animals, planet, us vs them, we are 'good' and they are 'evil' - justification for attack of anybody that is the 'other'. (Balancing Feminine Characteristic: Heart, Intuition, Emotion)

Action

"Doing" more important than 'being', "being" associated with nothingness, only those who have 'achieved' in the physical considered of value, what is not able to 'act' is considered expendable e.g. forests, people with serious disabilities. "Taking" or "making" life happen as opposed to 'receiving' from God. Inability to be alone and just 'be. Must keep busy! No time to look within. Looking within a waste of time. (Balancing Feminine Characteristic: **Being**)

Visible/material

What can be seen is more important than what cannot. External trappings of power emphasised from Church to government, inner realities barely relevant or controlled by Church. (Balancing Feminine Characteristic: Invisible to senses)

Structure

Emphasis on rules, regulation, prescriptive, pedantic attitudes, rules and laws more important than people and love, distrust of inner knowing, strict moral code (Balancing Feminine Characteristic: **Free Flowing**)

External Achievement

"Salvation" is through external: priest, church, sacrament. What we own and

possess has true value, possession and outward appearance all important, doing the 'right' thing for the 'wrong' reason (e.g helping the poor but doing so in order to show how 'good' you are to other people)

(Balancing Feminine **Characteristic: Internal beingness**)

Power over

"having" "owning", of people, land, control of people through guilt and fear from all directions: church, government, education, media, marketing. Dumbing down of the population. Suppression of free speech, of alternative ideas, anything that challenges the status quo is bad, evil and perceived to be a threat and attacked.

Flip side: the giving up of responsibility to the powers that be, non participation by the masses, the inevitable corruption at higher levels, and the seeds planted for the birth of corrupted democracies and dictatorships.

Technology designed not to work in harmony with nature or people but to have 'power over' it.

((Balancing Feminine Characteristic: Self Empowerment)

External Authority

Excessive reliance on external authority eg priest, doctor, politician, pop star – the elevation of some people above others, inequality, disempowerment of the individual. (Balancing Feminine Characteristic: Internal Authority)