

TIME (wristwatch) & JOY (wine), A refined commentary on-----Elliott #1439A

COMMENTARY on this thinksheet's title: (1) This is a present to the NYTS Administrative Faculty, reciprocating their party yesterday (18May80) and (2) its gifts of watch [chrono-alarm, yet!] and wine. (3) Call it an essay "Of Time and Joy," because the former is what I'm increasing conscious of and the latter is what I'm increasingly aiming at ("Thy kingdom-joy [simchah malchut] come," the evidence of Presence and earnest of messianic Fulcomeness). (4) "Refined" is not to be taken in the sense in which my Episcopal grandmother Elliott used it against me [always in the formula "That's not refined!"], but rather as a redaction, uninfluenced by wine, of my last-evening response to the speeches about me (well, yes, also: "on," but not "against").

very

1. While this thinksheet is swansong, sort of, it's not the last--as you can see by flipping it: the next # is on the back, and it tells more about me as "a unique teacher" (the phrase President Bill used of me in the Commencement yesterday) than any two random fistfuls of my thinksheets (1440 of them since I came on NYTS faculty Sept/69). With students or other colleagues I'm ornery or "stubborn" whenever I become sharply conscious of omissions and/or distortions in an audio-field (i.e., when human beings are trying to make intelligible noises out of the biggest hole in their heads). In literary parataxis, one omits the most important thing so as to suggest it more powerfully (e.g., David's love for Absalom emerges in the great David Saga only after his son is dead); but when what I at the moment perceive to be most important in the dialog is unpresent for some reason other than parataxis, I bespeak the omission with virtually no calculation of the cost to me or anybody else (a habit which makes me, as Dave Berry says [fellow-student of mine, of course] "not your institutional type"). Atop that, I have a hatred for the mindless use of words to bend language-and-reality to propaganda. I rage against "liberation theology" and "equality" and "free world" and "welfare," for a few examples...which brings to me...

2. THINKSHEETS! As I said at the party for me (which I hadn't even thought of the possibility of: a complete surprise!), my thinksheets are my soul pulled inside out like a sock. They serve also the two functions implicit in the above paragraph: (1) To add what has been for-me-painfully omitted in a conversation or encounter, and (2) To try to remove distortions of all types, including misunderstandings. Two more: (3) They put more clearly, and in architectonic form (rising from the type of brain God has given me, with its powers and mixed dominance), what I'd tried to say orally; and (4) They put on record, for others and myself, my heart at-and-in the moment. Minor motives: (5) To build-maintain relationships; and (6) To do work-business. Very little of (6); and as for (5), a thinksheet is about as apt to worsen as to better relationships (again, "not your institutional type").

3. Sound thinking is both painful and unlikely (on which see the splendid June/80 PSY. TODAY art., pp.33ff); but we are called to "Worship the Lord your God with all your mind," and I've never minded irritating folks in that direction. (On this, Mircea Eliade's novel THE OLD MAN AND THE BUREAUCRATS [Notre Dame/80] is a sly and powerful parable.) This includes body-owning scatology but never God-insulting blasphemy or neighbor-demeaning cursing. (Here's an instance of clear thinking over against the sloppy thinking of knee-jerk, taboo-ridden language-users; e.g., clergy who privately use blasphemy but scatology neither privately nor publicly--and other equally inauthentic variations.)

4. To paragraph #1 (above), I added "very" when I came upon my note of what Webber said in the Commencement service: "He and Loree are building a home on Cape Cod, not so far away as not to be seeing them from time to time." That kind reference led to my getting glorious stroking from students at the reception thereafter. I was writing down, for future delectation, "my greatest teacher" and "joyful heart" etc.etc. until somebody laid on me "radiantly humble"--at which I stopped writing, out of fear of sacrificing humility. Nobody said "troublemaker" (as some of my colleagues, in their speeches to/on me, did at the party), but it fits. I liked Bill's adding "evangelist" and, less, "genius" (i.e., I liked that less, because I think my being seen as genius is an illusion from my mixed dominance, an incurable brain-defect: I always turn left when Loree says "Right!" and vice versa). And I liked Loree's echoing of two notes others struck: integrity and vulnerability. And "compassionate for all in pain."

The Lord bless real good your upper and lower coils, and all between and around them.