

## TREASON, THE WEST'S THREE PROTOTYPIC EXECUTIONS FOR:

SOCRATES THE GREEK, JESUS THE JEW, SENECA THE ROMAN ----- Elliott #1706

*Whatever is wrong; so when in doubt, attack.*

Anybody who would feel-think-say that would not be always a pleasant fellow to be with, and this thinksheet is about three such unpleasant fellows. (The saying is mine, of my soul--but it is shaped by the influence of these three countercultural personalities who are more than symbolic of the yeasty quality of "the West," whose way now directly/indirectly dominates the globe.) The Academy (begun by Socrates' pupil Plato), the Church ("the body of Christ"), and the advocacy style of jurisprudence (early Roman but with shaping from the Stoic-Cynic diatribe--thus, Seneca)--none of these institutions has been treasonable to the extent of their founders; but in adjusting to, then appropriating, power, each has retained at least some of the virtue of its founder's outsider posture. *QUESTION: What, today, is the function of this posture in school/church/state and in the interrelations among the three?*

1. School/church/state all are embattled within and among themselves on the question. Possible sub-postures: inside-insider, outside-outsider, inside-outsider, outside-insider. We are all in a more hopeful condition if we can, however indistinctly, identify (1) where I am in this dynamic and (2) where you are.

2. Transculture, Inc., provides a simple process for enabling this self/other-location in/between/among institutions/persons. Our book of methods, for use with the allegories, is to be published soon. The Transcultural process fosters reaching down into one's heart & heritage, across to one's neighbor, and up in hope with one's neighbor.

3. THUMBNAILS on our three countercultural progenitors:

(1) SENECA (d. AD 65) was executed for writing a lampoon on the death of Emperor Claudius--who, he said, upon dying, turned not into a god (which the state priests claimed) but into a (!) pumpkin (titling the lampoon "A Turning Into a Pumpkin"--Greek, *Apokolokunto·sis*, a pun on "*Apothe·sis*, "A Turning Into a God"). To feel the violation of filial-political piety, imagine Charlie Brown, who every Hallowe'en has trouble with the Great Pumpkin, as President of the United States!.... As in the case of Socrates, Seneca was given the opportunity of "death with dignity" (a phrase today used for Hospice et al): exercising a final freedom, viz., suicide--a freedom that cannot exist in cultures in which, as ours, suicide is itself a crime. He developed a form of literature which has high countercultural potential, viz., the horror story (a genre comfortable for outsiders, e.g. Poe and Alfred Hitchcock). The virtual ruler of the Empire during Nero's reign, Seneca was an example--as was, a few generations later, the other great Roman Stoic, Emperor M.Aurelius--of the inside-outsider. As a final grand-style nose-thumbing to the powers that be, he invited his friends to a feast and went out in history's only suicide banquet.

(2) JESUS (d. AD 30), executed (crucified) as a criminal though he was (according to my heart/mind/life) a god (in the Greek-Roman sense) and God (in the unJewish sense of the unique *apothe·sis* of the biblical deity, Maker-Father of Heaven/Earth).

(3) SOCRATES (d. 399 BC) was executed for the root-treason of corrupting the young with radical notions and for impiety.