# THE POLITICS OF EQUIVALENCE, or STONEHENGE SOLVED --Elliott #1749

THESIS: *Human society is creation-vs.-chaos repeated at the human level: it is the politicization, or political expression, of imago dei and thus liturgical obedience to God, in whose "image" we are being made. Human freedom, however, equally image-of-God, requires perpetual vigilance in the interest of chaos-vs.-creation, because    social ordering tends to degenerate into oppression (the exclusion of freedom) through self-sanctification: social orders deify themselves by the hubris of Promethean self-claims (sanctions) with attendant rewards for submission and punishments for dissidence. "The politics of equivalence" is my phrase for the sociodynamic teeter-totter whose ends are* violence and mathematics *and whose fulcrum is* language.

PROJECT: *This thinksheet's project is to make some set-suggestions for focusing on our present local and global politics the kleigs of megalithic prehistory and of "the Rulership of God" as future-dream. This dual illumination promises to deliver "history" from its self-destructive game of stabilizing/destabilizing pingpong. This metahistorical deliverance is worthy, as marxian theologizing is not, of being called "liberation theology."*

1. The projects the Hudson Institute (Herman Kahn) employed me for had to do with the consciousness/history connection in being and in potential: what's the dynamics (and data) of the dialog between power and "what people (are aware they) want"? Principle may rule the question locally, but--because there is no humanity-wide consensus on the prior question "What are people?" "What is 'man'?"--pragma rules globally. Accordingly, "scenaro-ing" (Herman's term) is never free from the nature-of-man dialectic except in culture-simple (non-pluralistic) "local" situations. Since "morals" (action-principles grounded in assumptions about the nature of man and the nature of nature/God) can by persuasion-from-within-man control passions only in culture-simple situations, in culture-plural situations the social-moral need for ethical order is either unmet (=anomie) or overmet (=tyranny).

2. 17 years ago, one of my H.I. projections was that Argentina would become ungovernable because of the incipient breakup of the landlord/church/military alliance: young priests were beginning to break away and "identify" with the peasantry. The dynamic would be repeated in the whole of Iberian America (America "South of the Border"), whose ecopolitics recapitulated the Holy Roman Empire feudalism. Now, in 1983, Argentinians are suffering the last stage of this deterioration of antiquely organized society. In the terms of my teeter-totter model, language is unable to serve its equivalating (freedom/order balancing) function because it has been throttled into serving the mathematics and violence of the ruling elite. Among the social roles, only the clergy (1) are trained speakers (2) who are not landlords (nobels) or military; 17 years ago I heard them beginning to cry out for justice for the peasantry (and so the death of Bp. Romero et al). The Latin-American "liberation theology" problem is that (1) the preachers are seen (by Reagan, the Pope, et al) as more marxian than they are: they are more using, than being used by, marxian theory; but (2) to the extent that marxian military succeed in their guerilla activity, the emergent structure tends to be ideologically marxian and therefore inherently anticlerical: the clergy are presented with the Hobbesian choice of "going with the revolution" ideologically or becoming "enemies of the people" (i.e., being cast in with the classes they've become alienated from, viz., the landlords and the military). (When the House UnAmerican Activities Committee accused me of being a Communist dupe, I replied "The Communists are my dupe: I have no fear of Communist mouths.")

3. On this subject of mouths, contrast N./S. America. Adam Smith in

1776 (1) predicted chiasmus within the Western Hemisphere: the rich (Latin Am.) would become poor because of its antique ecopolitics, and the poor (AngloSaxon Am.) would become rich because of its dialectical ecopolitics. Both continents followed Smith's prophesied trajectories. In the terms of my math/language/violence sociomodel, what happened in S.Am., viz., the control of language by the land/military alliance, did not happen in N.Am. Our FF were landowners ("math") with hearts made peasant ("violence") by Europe/Britain's land/church/military alliance, and they used language--magnificently! --as the fulcrum in the politics of equivalence (i.e., the balancing of freedom/order needs). They theorized that all human beings are capitalist at least in the sense of wanting land ownership in the sense of land control (a principle which Marx accepted, and collectivized), and that citizen land-ownership (1) motivated to productivity and thus to economic freedom, (2) provided a personal base for courageous human-values standing over against the tyrannies of state and church, and (3) fostered the emergence of cultural institutions free of government control. Their consequent land-distribution praxis: the Homestead Acts, the land-grant colleges, REA (rural electrification), etc.* (As to this last, I can testify: in the mid-1930s I preached in many pre-ERA churches with two kerosene lamps swung out from the pulpit. REA was, literally, "power to the people"!)

4. In this thinksheet's title, "Stonehenge Solved" is tongue-in-cheek: the "meaning" (meaning meaning-to-us-moderns) is unavailable to us, but my surmise is that the math-controled, math-expressing prehistoric megaliths were the politics of equivalence made visible: their creation captured force (which, when uncaptured by authority, is "violence") and chaos. In the interest of social order under cosmic sanction, the megaliths are "poetry" in space as language is poetry in time (a "poet," in Greek, is a "maker"). The primordial land/military/industrial/church complex, keeping primitive man (1) alive and (2) primitive (on which compare the sacramentals of contemporary aborigines, stone-age man as living fossil); also the fossil-likeness of most current ecopolitical systems on the earth). Here I go with the rising conviction among scholars that milleniums before Pythagoras and Plato, megalithic society was geometric, *cosmico en cosmo*, earth's order reflecting and reproducing heaven's order (and thus, later, the virtual divinity of Pythagoras' numbers and Plato's geometric cosmology)...(On this, see the superb HAMLET'S MILL. G. deSantillana & H. vonDechend, David R. Godine/77:--numbers before words, art before analysis, expression-ordering (structure) before thought-organizing (system), number-demonstrating before word-telling. So on to "gematria," the mystical-rational relating of words to numbers (including in the Bible: when a few days ago I tried evangelizing a man who was fishing, he turned out to be a Jehovah's Witness and evangelized right back at me with "What do you make of 144,000 in Rev.14.1?" It's unnerving to have people lay their gospel on me in response to my trying to lay my gospel on them. Another instance: I was the defense witness in Berger v. The United States; we won because I was able to prove to the Jewish judge's satisfaction that the Bergers had a numinous fear of numbers in the hands of government--the underside of the Pythagorean love of numbers --and were honestly using the Bible's "666" as divine guidance against letting their children receive Social Security numbers; give the Bergers "F" for cultural level and "A" for courage. These agree that 3 is the essential number and the triangle is the essential structure: LaoTzu, Pythagoras, Plato, Alex. Thom (in his now-classic MEGALITHIC SITES IN BRITAIN, Ox/67), Keith Critchlow (in TIME STANDS STILL, Gordon Fraser/79), Buckminster Fuller, Willis Elliott (whose teaching structure is geometrical, with special reliance on triangle and cube: see esp. my #479A & #896). Must-reading on the megaliths and the future: L.R.Lippard's OVERLAY: CONTEMPORARY ART AND THE ART OF PREHISTORY (Pantheon/83) visually beautiful, philosophically fresh).