



THE AMERICAN TRINITY

DENNIS PRAGER

Ask almost any American what's different about America? Why are American values different, let's say, than France's values or Britain's values or Uruguay's values or any Democracies values? Is there anything unique about the United States and especially is there anything unique about the American values system? Well in fact it is unique; it's part of the reason some people speak about what we call American exceptionalism, meaning that America's values have been exceptional.

The uniqueness of the American values system, which has made American unique and has made the American experiment indeed the experiment for humanity. That's why people who come here assimilate faster than in any other country in the world – without disparaging any other countries, and there are many wonderful people in every country, and many miserable people in our own, surely.

But nevertheless the American experiment is unique. If you come to Germany, let's say, from Turkey where many people have emigrated from, you will find that most Turks remain Turks for generations. They are not considered fellow Germans or fellow Swedes or fellow Danes nearly as much as somebody from Turkey would be within a week in the United States. Why is this? Why is America unique.

Well, we have a unique values system. I call it the American Trinity. It's not to be confused in any way with the Christian Trinity, that's a theological statement of Christianity. The American Trinity is the 3 pillars of American values.

And I finally discovered this uniqueness of America looking at a coin one day. There it was in front of me my entire life, the American values system on a coin. We have all three values on every coin and no other country has these three: E Pluribus Unum, In God We Trust, Liberty.

No country in the world has those three values as its essence.

E Pluribus Unum: from many, one; meaning that we don't care where you are from. We don't care about your blood origins, your ethnic origins, your racial origins, your religious origins. We don't care. From the many, one: you work with us to make America, you are one of us, whatever your color, creed, race or what have you.

In God We Trust. America is founded on the notion that God is the source of values.

That's why the Declaration of Independence says that we have inalienable rights, but they're not from humanism, and they're not from great thinkers; they are from God. No God -- then

rights can be taken away by people, because they were given by people. So God is central. The God that we're talking about? That's another course for another time.

And third, the third of our American Trinity, is liberty. Now you will say, "Well the French Revolution, they said Liberty, Equality, Fraternity; we're not the only ones to enshrine Liberty." That's true, we're not the only ones to enshrine liberty; we're the only ones to enshrine Liberty and E Pluribus Unum and In God We Trust. Liberty is not the same as the French understood it because the French understood it in their revolution as with equality. Notice equality is not part of the American Trinity. That's a European value.

We are all born equal, that's an American value, but ending up equal, that's a European value. Where you end up, that's your business.

Our business in America is to enable you to have the liberty to end up wherever your talents and abilities and, yes, luck bring you. So we don't believe in equality as such because the truth is liberty and equality are often in conflict. If you want to enforce equality then you tell people how much they can earn, and that is one example of the removal of liberty.

That's the American Trinity. It has worked. We are fooling with it though, because too many Americans, especially the well-educated end up subscribing to the European system, and not the American system of Values.

E Pluribus Unum: from many, one; Liberty, not necessarily Equality, and in God We Trust -- God is the essence and basis of our values. That's the American Trinity, and I'm Dennis Prager.