JUSTIFICATION & JUSTICE XIV

AND SINFUL/RIGHTEOUS HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Taking **conformity to the norm** as the base note or tonic of "tsadiq" (see J&J XIII on "righteousness"), "sin" as antonym is **deviance from the norm**--culpable & crippling if willful, rebellious; if ignorant, only crippling. In the Hebraic root of our spirituality, that norm is personal, the character of God, his "holiness," which includes insistence on conformity ("justice") & mercy toward penitent violaters ("justification"). Our Hellenic strand is (by the time of Homer) impersonal, the norm being the structural nature of things ("diké"), ignorant or willful violation of which results in suffering (as in Greek tragedy) one's "fate" ("moira")--& to this the Hellenistic strand adds escape through mystic initiation in "the mysteries." (This Hellenisticism is the soft form of Hellenism, as Amida / Pure Land are soft forms of Buddhism, involving salvation by faith.)....This Thinksheet relates all this to current understandings of human development exploiting/converging psychology, anthropology (especially Ashley Montagu), and literature (esp. Robert Bly).

1. How early in your human development can things go wrong, can there be sin? Your genes, which have four or five defects (among hundreds of possible cripplings!). In spite of this, some folks still don't believe in "original sin"! "Nature" comes to us not pure but mixed: what's wrong runs through "all things." Those who think there's nothing basically wrong "are not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven," ie for biblical religion. They say "If it ain't busted don't fix it," & they claim it ain't busted, it ain't lost so don't find ("save") it. To such, evangelism must begin with trying to convince them of the bad news, that things are worse than they think no matter how bad they think things are. I must make this §1 because so many liberal Christians lack this pervasive sense of sin & so experience "justification" as unnecessary or at most only a "normal" aspect of human development, only a maturation factor: the atonement has been taken psycho-captive to moral education.

2. The positive correlate of "original sin" is that there is an Eternal love in comparison with which all our loving & all our loves are defective (except when completed by yielding to this Eternal love), deformed (until healed by this Eternal love), & dissident (until reconciled by & with this Eternal love). "Original sin" is a negative necessary to experiencing this Eternal love as positive. Humanity-demeaning understandings of original sin are themselves sinful--those of some Christian theologians, "nineteenth-century evolutionary biology, and psychoanalytic theory in the first half of the twentieth century" (quoted, p.289, M.F.Ashley Montagu, THE DIRECTION OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL BASES [H&B/55]; on the same p. he rejects that we're born bad or "neither good nor evil but indifferent" & affirms "human beings are born good--'good' in the sense that there is no evil or hostility in them, but that at birth they are wholly prepared, equipped, to function as creatures who not only want and need to be loved by others but who also want and need to love others."). But a state-of-the-art definition of original sin, instead of denying the "want and need to love others," speaks to the ("sinful") factors impeding two-way loving. By this my assessment of the human condition, "justification" is the divine action enabling the removal of those impedences in the soul, & "justice" is human action aimed at removing such impedences in society.

3. If one accepts the biblical norm, the aim is "the glory of God" (a pregnant phrase inclusive of better news for us than we unaided by grace could manage for ourselves). Montagu's aim is love ("the optimum degree of health and happiness," p.288). The embattled deities in our country today are YHWH-Jesus, Dionysos-Eros, & Apollo (reason, knowledge "the information revolution"). "Love for and knowledge of God" encompasses this trinity; but when love & knowledge each does its own thing without God-honoring, we have one God & two idols....Notice Montagu's inclusion of the goddess Hygeia; he accepts Freud's definition of health as the ability to love & the ability to work. And the test of whether a human being has been educated to love? This: is this human being "harmonically satisfied" so that his/her "principal interest lies in satisfying others" (292; in a Christian word, "agape"). Again (309): "Human beings (with a few possible exceptions) are basically good, but by unfortunate conditioning they are frequently caused to function badly. 'Goodness,' then, is virtually equatable with 'love,' and 'badness' with a failure of love. ¶Ethics, then, for us becomes both the art and the science of the reciprocal adaptation of human beings to each other in love--in loving attitudes of mind and in loving conduct....What is

new is the scientific validation....(314) Man requires no supernatural sanctions for love. Love is a fact of nature, and it is the most important of all facts about human nature. Love is and should be the most natural of religions for human beings....violence is not only contrary to man's basic nature but inimical to it....(315) Human nature is good. It is our present human nurture that is bad. We need to conform human nurture to the requirements of human nature." Education (Browning, "Paracelsus") is more "'opening out a way / Whence the imprison'd splendour may dart forth, / Than in effecting entry for the light / Supposed to be without.'"

4. On a long walk & at dinner with him 3 Apr 56, not many months after that book came out, I challenged his dogma of inherency as the old rabbit-in-hat trick. As the conjurer must put the rabbit in the hat before taking it out, so Ashley put "love" (his definition) in human nature & then--of course without aid from beyond human nature--pulled it out, unfairly quoting an orthodox Christian poet, whose "imprison'd splendour" was a divine gift & implantation. Said he, "If you want to put it that way, how about my saying 'Love God first, and then he will love you'?" Said I, "No go. By giving us the love initiative, you're merely restating your doctrine of inherency." He: "I'll have to think this over." Of the famous Jewish banking tribe, he told me he was born sensitive--so sensitive he suffered at seeing the way draught horses were treated on London streets; & his sensitivity was intensified by antisemitic vilifications when a child growing up in a generally gentile world. He conceded "Jesus was right, my gospel is the Sermon on the Mount. But I would lose my witness to scientists if I were to say so....My work is more important to mankind than that of Darwin, whom I'm trying to stand on his head [by teaching that cooperation is more basic to survival than is competition]." (He appreciated something I'd given him to read on "agapé"-love as rooted in Judaism & flowering subjectively in Protestantism [Nygren et al] & objectively in Catholicism [D'Arcy et al].) I: "You are the flower of your spiritual heritage." He: "I think so." I: "Are you still in the synagogue?" He: "Alas, no. But I would not change places with anyone--though I am not particularly good or intelligent." But the book rejects not only "eros" ("man seeking God in order to satisfy his spiritual hunger") & "agapé" ("whole-hearted surrender to God, placing one's entire faith in Him, and desiring only that His will should be done"--he was aware of Paul Tillich's LOVE, POWER, AND JUSTICE [Ox/54, the year before Ashley's book].) (On the loves, I'm quoting here from p.310.) His love-word is "philia": "Christians believe that God is Love. Our inquiry in this book has amounted to the conclusion that Love is God....Jesus himself felt also [in addition to "God is Love"] that Love is God, that love of God was essential, but equally essential was the love of man for man. This seems to me to represent the great contribution of Jesus, the development of the seedling Old Testament injunction to love one's neighbor as oneself. Jesus not only sent men to God, but he also sent God to men, by sending men to men." But "philia" "is not identical [with my concept, which] "is best called by what it refers to, namely, *maternal love*. (311) It will fall principally to mothers and teachers to spread this gospel," so nursery school should be "the principal agency" of that convergence," where "children between two and five years of age would, for a few hours, each day receive the benefits of mother and teacher working together," especially on "the most important of all skills--human relations." GOAL (313): The child "having had a loving order made within himself will make loving order in the world." 309: "The churches should continue to develop and consolidate what has been taught in the home and in the school--if what has been there taught is sound and humane. If it is not, it does not seem to me that the church can do much to undo the damage." Churches can "develop a religious attitude which embraces a sense of the possibilities of existence and a devotion to the cause of those possibilities." (Yes, Ashley was a founder of what was to be called, beginning a decade later, the human-potential movement. In this book, & four years later in his technical HUMAN HERIDITY [World/59], he accents nurture over nature--eg, in his optimistic statement, 159, "There is every reason to believe that with changes of the social environment in the right direction criminal behavior could be reduced to the vanishing point." Such "liberal" thinking lies behind scores of now failed/failing programs at all levels of American government).....This Thinksheet, then, is chiefly a <u>case study</u>, Ashley himself, in the human-development roots of "justification & justice" in our culture today.

5. While the arts often precede the sciences, our second case study shows an artist, the American poet Robt. Bly, following, poeticizing, practicalizing, what scientists (Jung, Campbell, et al) laid foundations for. An ACOA, Bly's intrafamilial function in the family's codependency with this alcoholic father was to be "the cheerful one," presenting to the world the everything's-all-right-in-our-family face. Not till he was 46 did he come to emotional honestly & freedom, long after he'd embraced poetry as his lifework. The best I've read/seen of him is in the 1½-hour PBS with Bill Moyers, "A Gathering of Men" (Jan/90), herinafter quoted.

Using our familiar grid to clarify points & simplify exposition, let's see what he has to say about what goes right/wrong in human development (esp. in the case of males, the video [which I copied] being of him with male audiences): ....Eight entities are discussable here. Eg, "D^f" is a female's separating, getting maturing-space distance from, her mother; & "A^m" is a male's bonding with his father, which in Bly's case did not occur till his father was 63....As you work through the following comments (all quotes Bly's), keep in mind our overarching question *How does Bly's gospel, his understanding of how men in our culture can be delivered from their psychodeformity, comply/conflict with biblically informed "justification & justice"?* Note first that like Montagu, he believes that developmental booboos account for male trouble, nothing more serious (such as original sin) being involved. People, male & female, including ourselves, got us males into trouble; & people, esp. ourselves, can get us out without benefit of divine grace (his only references to God being on the parent-to-mentor-to-God scale, once to male & once to female experience; he identifies himself as Lutheran, but his gospel utterly bypasses the central Lutheran theme of repentance toward God & justification through Christ--which omission he might--I don't know that he does--try to justify on the ground of poetic indirection). Here, now, is his diagnosis & cure:

	NEEDS	
	BONDING	SEPARATION
FATHER	A	B
MOTHER	C	D

6. "Men can't mix words and feelings as well as women," & they rage at women who bully them with this female superiority--so they need to deal with the problem in the absence of women: men's groups are necessary to male health & healing. Besides, there's a male-way-of-being, & only men can initiate boys into manhood (as only women, girls into womanhood)....Because industrialism has separated fathers from sons more than mothers from daughters, sons are more deprived of the same-sex parental teaching & are therefore less mature: many of them are only boy-men instead of men--which is as great a problem for women relating to such immature men as it is for the men themselves....Parenting has a soft side, viz instruction (in which there's joy on both sides) & a hard side, viz discipline (which is painful on both sides). When father (now mother, too!) comes home tired at night, there's time & energy only for discipline; & this has given patriarchy (esp. in the women's movement) it's bad-hard name....Initiation into manhood cannot be done by father alone, for the father-son relationship is too complex. A male mentor is required, as pre-industrial societies knew & know. (Grandfather may serve as mentor, but even that relationship is apt to be too intimate for thisessential function.)....In our culture, the central unhandled emotion in men is grief, so "grief is a door to [male] feeling." "The proper attitude toward what you needed & didn't get is mourning." Perhaps it reflects something profound in the whole of nature, "'lacrimae rerum'" (the tears in [all] things)....It's sickening to have grief but not to grieve. (He referred to the book of two psychiatrists worrying about post-WWII Germans, on the inability to grieve [I don't know whether DIE UNABHAENGIGHEIT DES TRAUENS has been translated, but I read parts of it in Germany].) We all should be, but "only the veterans are grieving the Vietnam war." And our presidents haven't repented of it; Reagan, an ACOA who's never dealt with his grief over his alcoholic father, couldn't--but Lincoln & Whitman could & did grieve over the Civil War....You can't separate from a parent you've not bonded with: no "BD" without "AC." Bonding is more difficult for fathers than for mothers, for both biopsychological & cultural reasons. "A^f" failure makes relating to males difficult & promotes antipatriarchy; "A^m" failure is even worse, for it cripples growth toward manhood. "Your father came to you, you must go find your mentor." "Men need blessing by older men."...."To be a man, you must develop the warrior, a defender of the boundaries," & the warrior without a king, destroys: "Young men must step from father to older man to God."