

This thinksheet fulfils a promise I made to a New Yorker whose marriage had just gone bust and who asked me "What is love, anyway?" My use of "house" here is Hebraic (=space/relations/powers/privileges/obligations), paralleled in mod.Heb. by "hand" (=institution/instrumentality/function-field.) The three "houses" or hands are those of **Parent, Judge, Ruler** (with divine-name parallels: Father, Judge, King; and, more roughly, the christological titles Priest, Prophet, King). ...One tool of city-planners is the polygrid, a series of see-through matrices or grids superimposable on each other within a geographical constant: an analogy for the complexity, the polymorphicity, of "love," (as the song says) "a many-splendored thing." Part of the problematics of love at all levels and of all kinds is our too-human impatience with the complex, the polymorphous, which feels amorphous and "therefore" nebulous and "therefore" impossible to get a hold of and deal with--so that divorce (again, various levels and all kinds) provides the elan of life-simplification (though at the generally, at least momentarily, unnoticed fact that the cost-correlation is a loss of richness). The ideal inner-heart of all loves is the marriage of simplicity and truly human wealth, wealth, covering the curve, the rich curve, of human needs and yearnings. "Love" as the relative term representing this ideal points to fulfilling relationships with Creator/creation/creature/fellow-creature--and so is, ineluctably, personal, religious, political....Divorce? Since love is a permanent project of our humanity, a developmental inexhaustible given, divorce has occurred when a lover becomes exhausted in the will-to-grow-in-love. Gloom: In this sense of divorce, most actual marriages are divorces, early on became divorces (many, during the honeymoon). What a challenge to church and education, family counseling, "conflict management," "peace academy," "industrial relations," "spirituality" ("transcendence")!

HOUSE #1: family (in both the bio- and the extended senses), what the Hebrews called "the father's house" (which Gottwald's TRIBES claims as basic to Israelite life, not "tribes" in a wider sense)--familial relationships ("clan" being the social structure of interfamilial relationships). In that this is the basic social reality, other social realities are specializations (at the cost of distortion and at the threat of both impoverishment and perversion) of specific familial values and functions. Predifferentiatedly, nothing is left out when Jesus calls God "Father" (not mother, not judge, not king), in the Lord's Prayer and (Jn.14.2) "In my Father's house...." A comprehensive feedback loop between intimacies and ultimacies. Dynamic (ethical, rather than legal) interadjustments among the forms of love: self-affirmation (*eros*), mutual affirmation (*philia*, which is ego-enhancing), and self-"denying" affirmation of the other (*agape*, which is ego-subordinating). (See #1847.3.) "Abraham" being the personal symbol of House #1, see in him *eros* (leaving Ur/Haran), *philia* (friend of Lot), *agape* (offering up Isaac). Having my way, our way, Your way. Being apart from, being with (Tillich's being "a part"), being under (versus Tillich's "the courage to be"). Father, Spirit, Son (with "est"/"non-est" of the medieval shield). God's being/doing/self-giving. Jesus' preaching, "friends," cross/resurrection.

HOUSE #2: court, the judge's house, situated between (and interadjusting the values/claims of) the family residence and the palace. Love here is the "right" that "the Judge of all (or any part of) the earth" does (Gn.18.25)....I object to narrowing love so as to contrast it with (Tillich) power and justice, (R.May) will: my father saw love as his motive and goal in all three houses. Love is "permissive," but it is also (ugly word!) "judgmental." Justice-as-love suppresses (crime, disruption) (= "judgment") and releases (the exploited, the oppressed) (= "fairness," "liberation").

HOUSE #3: temple-palace--in Gottwald, the Canaanite-hierarchical, against which the Israelite-egalitarian was a revolt (of, 611, "mono-Yahwism," in, 608, "the religion-society complex" loop). Centralized power radically qualified the familial-jurisprudential egalitarian tendency in monarchic Israel (as, later, in Constantinian Christianity). Hierarchy, the most suspect form of love.