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Paper: Mon., Nov. 22:

Religion and Individuation: 1) What kind of religion?
2) What role wd it play?

What we have dealt with in the last two classes is two irreconcilable positions

on evil,

God,

and the whole person or individuated person.

At least they seem irreducible to one another.

How does one deal with evil in personality dev. The evil of psych'l suffering doesn't pose that much of a problem. Jung, the psychologist, proposes

a solution that nobody can quibble with on any psychological grounds or on any other grounds:

psych'l suffering is to be dealt with

by healing the fragmentation of the personality.

Let my criticism of Jung be taken as a blanket rejection.

I want to emphasize that nobody

has proposed a more nuanced understanding of psychotherapy (integration of spirit & matter)

than Jung. The differences re: the reality of evil are quite secondary if therapy is one's goal.

But there is also the question,

which nobody reaching for conscious selfhood can avoid,

of what is to be done with the evil

that is sin,

and on these grounds

I believe Jung is open to being interpreted in a manner

that I find objectionable. Here theology has entered into dialogue w. psychology.

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These questions & how one deals with them
will influence one's image of God,
and will have an effect on precisely what constitutes
wholeness.

There is prevalent today
-- and becoming more prevalent --
a use of Jung's thought
that involves a kind of pact with evil
as essential to the achieving of wholeness,
since wholeness is understood as
the integration of good & evil
rather than as the transformation
of evil into good
by the introduction, through conversion,
of order into a disordered condition.

My insistence on facing the issue
this emphatically
comes from exp. in Zurich (the occult)
and from exp. in reaching a point
in the conscious process of individuation
where it makes a difference
which of these two routes one takes.

Jung is valuable, even if one doesn't go his route,
in making us face ourselves as evil.

The question is what we will do with it,
and I think these two positions on the reality of evil
become imp. in understanding this aspect of pers. dev.

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H. 4. Why is sin called basic? A notion of original sin.

Christian teaching holds

that the non-self-transcendence,

the refusal of self-transcendence that is sin,
is the root of all other evil in the human situation,
of all other kinds of failures in personal development,
of all personal suffering.

How to explain this in the case of physical suffering and death
is beyond our present purpose, and beyond my capacity,
but we are told in the NT that

"the wages of sin is death"

and that he who believes in Christ

"will never taste death,"

and has already, by overcoming sin,

overcome death, moved beyond the cycle of wh. death is a part.

It would take us too far afield at present

to do more than mention these aspects of Christian teaching,
though we will return to them when we come to
discuss Christ and his meaning for us as persons.

But

we can & should indicate now

a more profound connection

between the two evils of psychological suffering
and sin

than we have discussed thus far.

We have discussed three kinds of persons

who are not developing as persons:

those who want to develop

but cannot because of psychological suffering;

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those who can develop by self-transcending questioning,
but refuse to do so;
and those who are both unable
and unwilling
to face the questions they must face if they are to grow.

The Christian doctrine of original sin
means in part that sin is at the root
of all of these failures in growth,
that even the psychological suffering
of a person who wants to grow but cannot
because of psychological suffering
is ultimately rooted in sin.

The sin that is at the root of a given person's inability to grow
is not necessarily his own sin,
but ~~the~~ sin ~~that~~ is ultimately responsible for
his psychological suffering.

The psychological wounds
that keep a person from being what he or she
wants to be ~~or~~ ^{but} cannot be
have been inflicted by a situation
permeated by sin.

His effective freedom is impaired
by a psychological wound
that may be no fault of his own,
but ultimately sin is the evil that is at the root
of all failures ^{to} develop
and sinfulness is implicated
in all failures in human growth.

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The person in question,
even if his inability to grow
is no fault of his own,
is the victim of sin,
of a history in which sin,
the refusal of self-transcendence
in questions and in action,
is implicated.

The psychologically wounded,
as well as the materially and economically oppressed
peoples of the earth,
are the victims, and often the innocent victims of sin,
of that refusal to change, to transcend oneself,
that is sin. The social dimensions of sin.

In this sense,
sin is basic, original, aboriginal,
even when it is not personal,
for all human failure to develop
toward authenticity
is rooted in sin,
even if, in the case of innocent victims,
it is not one's own personal sin.

In this sense,
even a totally innocent victim
is a carrier of sin,
of original sin,
of sinfulness.

In this sense, too,
we can understand the Christian doctrine

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that we are all born into the world
as carriers of original sin,
for it cannot be escaped,
is part and parcel of the human condition,
even of the condition of a totally innocent victim.

All neurosis, then,

in this perspective,
is rooted ultimately in sin,
even when the sin is not one's own.

This explains why some authors,
e.g. Ernst Becker,
can find such similarity
in descriptions of sin (Kierkegaard)
and of neurosis (Rank).

The similarities are so strong
because the two kinds of evil
are related to one another,
even when the neurotic's suffering
is not his/her own fault.

Even then, it is rooted in sin,
in evil as basic sin,
in sin as basic.

And even then,

it is perpetuating a situation that is sinful,
even if it isn't the neurotic's responsibility.

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Furthermore, if this is the case,

if sin as basic is the root of psych'l suffering,
even when the sin is not the sin of the sufferer,
there can be no effective healing of the psychological suffering
of the human race
without conversion.

For even if it is the case

that a given individual
would be suffering in total innocence,
so that therapy alone would solve the problems for him
(and I think this is rare, except in certain
psychotic conditions),

what gave rise to his suffering

was the permeation of his environment
by refusal, by the negation and privation of good
that is sin,

by unwillingness to self-transcend,
by absence of character,
by refusal to love.

And refusal's only remedy is conversion.

And if this is the case,

then psychotherapy
will never succeed in its ambition
to conquer psychological suffering
unless it formally and explicitly
learns from authentic religion
how to persuade to conversion.

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Psychotherapy's task of overcoming psychological suffering
and religion's task of cooperating with God
in the transformation of evil into good
are necessarily related to one another,
in fact, are so strongly related
that only conversion is radically therapeutic,
for only conversion is transformative
of the irrational root of all
psychological suffering: sin.

At least two of the original depth psychologists
had at least a glimmering of this:

Jung once made the statement:

"Among all my patients in the second half of life
-- that is to say, over thirty-five --
there has not been one whose problem
in the last resort was not that of finding
a religious outlook on life.

It is safe to say

that every one of them fell ill
because he had lost

that which the living religions of every age
have given to their followers,

and none of them has been really healed

who did not regain his religious outlook."

(Modern Man in Search of a Soul, p. 229)

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And Otto Rank once said:

" Man is born beyond psychology
and he dies beyond it
but he can live beyond it
only through vital experience of his own
-- in religious terms,
through revelation,
conversion,
or re-birth." (Beyond Psychology, p. 16).

Jung even said

-- and I quote this to indicate
that he was on the right track,
even though the final articulations
as found in, e.g., MDR, show that he did not follow
this track to the end --

" It is as though,
at the culmination of the illness,
the destructive powers were converted into healing forces."

But they can only be so "converted"
if the therapy has involved
the transformation of evil into good
that is precisely what I mean by conversion.

Destructive forces are destructive
either because they are not integrated with the rest of
one's being, as in psychological suffering,
or because one does not want them to be anything
but destructive,
as in sin.

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The second kind of evil
is at the root of the first
in a basic sense,
and so the most radical and most therapeutic
of all healing
comes through conversion,
the transformation of ~~wishes~~ unwillingness
into willingness,
of self-absorption
into self-transcendence.

And if a person wants to participate
in the healing of our planet,
one can do nothing more radical
than co-operate with the conversion process
in one's own life
and, by so doing,
becoming an instrument of conversion in the lives
of others.

According to this vision,
only converted subjectivity
is healed subjectivity,
all converted subjectivity
is healed subjectivity,
and only converted subjectivity
is healing subjectivity,
for it is co-operating with God in the work he is doing in the world
-- healing the world from sin.

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Conversion, then,
is a new creation.

Out of nothing it effects being, out of the privation of good it effects good.
out of a non-occurrence it effects the fullness
of an event that, in the limit,
is all it can and should be
for harmonious development to take place.

Conversion is the ultimate source of human harmony,

for the ^{ultimate} root of ^{all} disharmony is sin.
The ^{permanent} full conversion of ^{of the human subject,} ~~all human subjects~~, never to be realized short of
what ^{is} ~~is~~ ^{called} resurrection of the body,
would be,

is,
the redemption of ~~the human race~~.

And ^{even} the ^{conversion} ~~redemption~~ of the human race subjects
in this life, however partial and developing and precarious,
is also the freeing of cosmic and psychic energy
for channeling into self-transcendent purposes
in the construction of a more humane world.

A more humane world

is one in which neither essential freedom
nor effective freedom
is impaired by sin,
and so conversion is the ^{radical} key
to a humane world.