

Healing and Creating in History -- Summary -- 4/1/'76

1. History -- human affairs
2. healing and creating in human affairs
 - if healing, something wrong; if creating, something to be done
 - diagnoses: Russell, Popper, both
 - if really intelligent, perhaps a bit wicked
 - if really good, perhaps a bit stupid
3. creating : not ex nihilo, just seems so
 - a) attacked as absurd
 - b) admitted to be true, but obvious and insignificant
 - c) granted to be so important that adversaries claim they made the discovery
4. Example: Global Reach, need for creation
 - disaster in third world
 - coming disaster in America
 - we have nothing to put in their place
 - simply carry out on global scale what has been going on for centuries on local, regional, national scale
5. Example: what is creating
 - Jane Jacobs: The Economy of Cities, repeated discovery of new uses for existing resources
 - Arnold Toynbee, Challenge and Response, sustained responding generates creative minority, failure to respond, dominant minority
6. Creating in retrospect
 - a grand strategy that unfolds in an orderly and cumulative series of steps
7. Creating in process
 - motivated by a series of disasters: otherwise the wise and prudent will protest against alarmist exaggerated views
 - executed by insights, not isolated but cumulative, coalescing, complementing and correcting one another, influencing policies, programs, reveal their short-comings in results, stimulate further complementary insights, yield system on the move
8. insight not just a slogan, sequence of insights not an advertising campaign
- ~~9. insight not just concept, source of bundle of concepts, product of enriching abstraction~~
 - ~~concepts: heuristic, explanatory (virtus dormitiva)~~

9. Insight and concept compared

Concepts: heuristico, name what you are trying to understand, 'nature of...' light life, what you would know if you were to understand light life

explanatory, produced by understanding,
one insight yields many concepts, 'one more' infinite series of natural numbers

10. Insight and concept compared with the good

The good is never an abstraction: any x is bad if it has any defect whatever; it is good only if no defects whatever
concepts are always abstract, sets of concepts are never more than sets of abstractions

insights, ongoing process, self-correcting process,
ever approximating to the concrete, so ever approaching the good

11. Why does the cumulative process of adding insight to insight dry up,

if cultures and civilizations grow and develop, why ~~xxx~~
do they suffer breakdowns, ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ decay, dissolution

in any particular case, historical study

in the general case, there are the limitations of insight itself

insights may be available, but they can be implemented only if people have open minds

the problem can be manifest, the solution can be seen, but it will not be grasped much less implemented by biased minds

bias: neurotic evading insight analyst sees he needs individual egoism: limits insights to those that help him exploit situation to his personal advantage; what's in it for me

group egoism: refuses to see that its day is over, that it is merely clinging to power by all the devices that block development and impede progress

general bias: common sense a specialty in the immediate particular concrete, regularly suffers from illusion that it is omniscient: answers with Lord Keynes, 'in the long runs we are all dead'

12. Blocking isn't by bias only half the picture

Bias distorts the ~~wh~~ whole process of growth
that process is a matter of ~~high~~ situations yielding
insights, insights yielding policies, plans, execution,
new situations, and new situations yielding further insights
that correct previous short-comings and transform resulting
situation

wheel of progress becomes wheel of decline
policies and plans suggested by insight are revised
by individual group general bias

situation becomes, not cumulative product of coherent
and complementary insights, but a dump in which are heaped
up the amorphous and incompatible products of all the biases
of short-sighted and self-centered individuals

such a dump resists further creativity; understanding
it yields no more than list of all the aberrations and
follies of the past

13. Development :: two forms

from below upwards: experience understanding proposal decision action
from above downwards: the transformation of falling in love
love of intimacy; love of neighbor; love of God
commitment, self-sacrificing devotion, joyful

14. Love dissolves biases: hatred reinforces them

Love breaks the bonds of psychological social determinisms
Hatred plods around in ever narrower vicious circles of
harsh judgment, misinterpretation and misrepresentation,
fear, suspicion, hostility, violence

ostensible love of heretic: persecution, wars of religion
secularist hatreds: feudal nobility; bourgeoisie, kulaks,