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V. The Religion of Realistic Consciousness

A. Civilization and its Discontents

1. ^{From the tribe to the city, and ~~the~~ during minority} Why did humanity leave behind the securities and intimacies and solidarities of archaic man?

The movement was late

in the total span of human history, and was the experiment, at first, of a minority in a handful of early communities, and, in some parts of the world dates back to c. 4000 B.C. to 5000

It is marked by

the building of cities and temples,

the development of all manner of art, the keeping of written records.

The weakness of tribal culture

is that it was ingrown,

the strength of civilization

that it widened the human circle, producing personalities and ideas that transcended the limitations

of restriction to one cultural milieu.

There is an inertia, a lethargy,

a collective self-absorption,

to the mythic mind,

that eventually could not withstand

the onslaught of the further question, Why?

- the question of the individual, of the daring minority. ^{again reading back, 2} There seems to be always, in

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every culture,
 a minority who sense that there are possibilities
 of a larger human growth
 beyond the way we're doing things now.
 This minority is the operator of change,
 and our myth is
 that such a minority
 moved humanity
from the tribe to the city.

This means that the change was
 the outcome of deliberate invention
 and conscious choice.

It did not happen automatically,
 but was part of "a general growth
 of self-consciousness,
 individual and collective" (38),

accompanied by
 internal struggle, competition,
 tension, & conflict.

2. The Division of Labor The organization of culture

was now based on the division of labor

1. th. on ^{collective} harmony w. the rhythms & processes of nature,
 as in mythic culture:

Specialisation, and thus deliberate repression
 and an endangering of the balance of energies.

But, nonetheless,
 specialisation encouraged
 the emergence of a sense of individuality.

Because of specialization & division, & the movement away from
law had to be formalized, externalized, codified,
 collective es,
 a matter of explicit rules & regulations
 binding together
 an increasingly differentiated society.

This made labor

a purchaseable commodity,
 i. e. a shared communal function,
 and increased

the possibility of
 the subordination of life
 to function

and the equation
 of the freedom to live
 with property & power.

The beginnings of a proletariat,
 and classes in society.

Only the ruler gained autonomy
 in this development;

the slaves simply lost their primitive wholeness
 without gaining any individual freedom
 as compensation.

Life came to mean working life, efficiency,
 conscientious dedication.

Work and play and family & religion
 no longer were balanced off
 agst. one another.

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Communal life becomes
less a matter of neighborliness,
and more one of castes,
professions,
guilds,
v associations.

The self becomes partialized,
differentiated perhaps,
but nonetheless split.
Specialized competence
is put above the whole self,
and one's partial community
above the whole community.

The gains are clear:

autonomy, independence, self-consciousness, choice
(for the rich v powerful); the overcoming of
cultural isolation (for all)

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the price is also clear: the temptation to
~~relativize~~ place personal v small group
concerns above the health
v prosperity of the group;
and the division of the self
into a developed light side
and a repressed dark side.

3. The Great Individual and the masses

Only in the powerful v often deified ruler, the absolute
did men first achieve individuality, monarch,
an autonomous personality,
the freedom to be a law unto oneself.

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Furthermore,

the class of the rich & powerful
was liberated from the necessity of breadwinning
and permitted to cultivate the mind.

Institutions of learning (libraries, observatories)
and of law (palaces, courts of justice)
came into existence,

institutions that were to play a role
that potentially could serve all men.

Calendars were developed,

along w. the art of calculating & counting,
and, dependent on this, an economy of money
and the identification of power w. money.

But the rest of the population, the laboring class,
participated only vicariously (as opposed to tribal man)
in the values created by this more organized society.

And he projected

the desire for personal importance & autonomy
upon the person of the ruler,

who became a deified corporate self.

4. Repression and the creation of the shadow

The partialization of life

on the part of the working class,

the "habit of working day after day at the same task,
w/o any immediate reward,

deferring present goods for doubtful future benefits,
with the work life itself absorbing energy

that might be profitably expended in the
offices of love & parenthood" (45)

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involves a repression

of all autonomous functions
& expressions of life
(play, art, sexuality)

that is very hard to understand.

Moreover,

the capacity to organize masses of people
for the sake of ^{internal} law and order
w/ society

included also the capacity
to organize them
for violence against
external peoples,

to perfect & incorporate into cultural life

the art of organized warfare.

War was used

to project the conflicts caused by repression
w/ the state

onto an external enemy,

a scapegoat for frustrations
that are internal in nature

but that can't be handled

internally w/o challenging

the foundations of civilized life
in the specialization of labor.

The invention of organized warfare and drill quality
increased the regimentation of human activities
and served as a rudimentary mechanization of man.

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Thus: " Men made themselves
(47) into collective machines
thousands of years before they acquired
sufficient technical skill
to make machines into working counterparts
of their collective selves." (47)

And: " Man, in achieving the docilities & co-operation
(48) of civilisation,
independently reinvented an institution (caste status)
not found in nature
except among creatures
who are equally divided
& crippled
in their nature:
the social insects.

Now that he must undo
this radical error,
in order to save himself
from his own
misguided inventions,
it is time to re-examine
w. a sharper eye
other related institutions
he has taken too complacently
for granted."