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~~B.~~ B. The Axial Religions (Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, ^{J add Taoism} Christianity, Mithraism, Manichaeism, Islam, ^{Confucianism} Prophetic Judaism)

1. Contributions from earlier religions
 - a. Temporal events have eternal significance: immortality, divine judgment, providence

~~b.~~ b. The ethical cs of later mythic religions

2. Central change: redefinition & recasting of human personality -- from the hero to the saint.

The axial religions, in a challenge to the presuppositions of civilization, proclaim quite loudly & clearly that the values that emerge from within the human personality are of greater significance than those that issue from institutions and institutional roles.

The personal is more important than the social, and to incarnate this realization a new sort of Great Individual comes into being:

the prophet,

the one who lives from values generated in solitude and incarnates these values

for others to imitate and emulate.

The prophet represents a new self,

the product of purification,

inner cleansing (vs. ritual justifications) the subduing of animal desire.

Qualitative leap in emphasis on individuality

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A new kind of self-denial appears,
one not imposed by the necessities of social
existence,
but freely undertaken for the sake of
self-purification.

Even the goods of civilization are rejected
as temptations to the soul's integrity,
and the self is even detached from
the responsibilities of the organized community
& institutional life.

Emphasis on Personal values, the integrity of individual life,
challenges the customs of society,
and leads to the establishment
of a new kind of community,
the separate religious community of the "saved."

The fact that the axial prophet
is so ardently followed by so many
shows that he represents
an aspect of the self
not adequately represented
in either archaic
or civilized society:
he makes people aware of the fact
that they aspire to more
than animal complacency,
technical proficiency,
& social routine;

aware of greater & deeper & more
far-reaching potentialities for self-transformation.
p. 62 - "Archaic
man-to-end"

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3. The movement toward universalization

The axial religions are not entered
by birth & inheritance,
but by conversion,
by a conscious act of choice,
based on faith
and aimed at inner transformation.

They often took form
during a time of social disintegration,
offering a positive alternative
in the midst of an otherwise empty
existence.

The community of believers
consciously choosing a new way of life
could extend beyond the boundaries
of geography & inherited culture.

They fostered a belief in the universality of humanity.
Thus, p. 64: "The axial religions..."

4. The positive contributions of axial religion to
human development

- the sense of the unplumbed resources of human life
- the image of a universal human community: ^{feeling at home over a wider expanse of the earth}
- the break down of the division between classes
-- in the sight of God, the rich & the poor were ^{ed find brothers} brothers, & could belong to the same community, the congregation of believers

one becomes ever more self-
conscious about one's actions

- ← d. the addition of the ideal self
to the biological self and the social self
(p. 65, read)