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P R O J E C T

(Provisional General Title)

THE EMERGENCE OF REASON

Philosophical Inquiry into the Evolution of Man

30 – I – 2001

This major project aims at offering a detailed and in-depth analysis of what I have designated as the second major revolution in man's history after the Neolithic transition. I refer to the discovery of Reason taken as the absolute instrument of man in truly understanding reality, acting correctly within it and fulfilling his own nature. Greek Reason constituted a way of coherent thinking that provided the universal key to reveal the mystery of existence. By opening up the mind to reality the intelligibility of being was apprehended, and thought could thus disclose the logical order of things as they are. The rationality of the world-order was thereby given a specific and effective meaning.

The inquiry will exactly trace the definitive emergence of full-blown rationality, as typified by the rise of philosophical thought, during the 6th century B.C. in Greece. This emergence coimplicated all dimensions of human existence, spiritual and material. It effected a gigantic transformation in human life whose significance remains active and unparalleled even today.

The working of the spirit of rationality will be studied in all its manifestations and aspects. In particular, the circumstances and conditions of its origin will be fully attended. For example, it will have to be explained why this mighty revolution started at the periphery of the Greek World and moved to the center. The timing, location and occasion of its appearance on the world-stage are important issues to be clarified. On the other temporal side, the consequences of the revolution will be observed carefully in their main, at least, configurations. How, first of all, it shaped what came next to it, the achievements of High and Late Classicism (5th

and 4th

centuries B.C.). Its subsequent formative agency during the later phases of ancient Greek culture and civilization come also within the compass of the inquiry. It will thus be shown in what precise sense Hellenism itself may be fundamentally analysed with reference to the focal point of its peculiarly own and archetypal rationality, by the way it understands reality in thought.

The core of the investigation will however consist in attempting to understand, in principle and in detail, the nature and specific content of the Rational Revolution in its key factor, Λόγος itself. The essential character of that kind of thinking which was meant to uncover the secret of things, has to be adequately defined, in a way that can render comprehensible and operative its maximal explanatory and predictive power, its theoretical and practical paramount significance in man's life. Light should be shed on the birth of rationality out of mythical and symbolic thinking, through "mixed" and speculative endeavours. The various forms assumed by the new-born will be thoroughly analysed. The genesis and varied development of *philosophy*

in that period (later archaic era) constitutes naturally the chief object of the investigation. We should finally be able to explain why Greek reason is the ultimate way of truth, the essential means to understand reality.

The entire range of closely correlated characteristic phenomena in the 6th century B.C. will be brought under a unifying conceptual scheme. On the one hand there is the religious response to the challenges offered by the new intellectuality, a response that can be observed in the development of the Orphic movement. On the other, important transmutations took place in the economic, social and political fields. Markets, money and capital, skilled professions, *status*

– volatility and power shifts towards "tyranny" and democracy, take center place in historical developments. The interaction between theory and practice, thought and action, conception and reality was intense during that age of heightened creativity. The expression that the new spirit found in the arts and the appearance of new art forms (as with drama) will be better understood in this connection.

The bearing of these philosophical inquiries into the origin and nature of reason on a proper understanding of the subsequent history of man in its big lines, general trends and basic stages, will also be studied. Possessing a sufficiently articulate concept of Greek rationality (Λόγος) will turn out to be the crucial asset in understanding the geo-cultural categories of

East

and

West

, according to their manifold and complex significations in old-World perspectives. Thus the clarity of the primary subject of the investigation will be further enhanced by comparison to other, related types of human understanding that were developed in direct relation to it.

First

, we have the intricate relation of

Λόγος

to the Oriental spirit, starting with the initial contacts in Asia Minor and the Levant, going to the Hellenistic world that resulted upon Alexander the Great's conquests and ending with the creation of Orthodox Christianity and Moslemism, especially Islamic theology and mysticism.

There is,

second

, the Greek defining factor in the Roman order, particularly with regard to the Latin part. And,

finally

, we shall have still to penetrate into the complicated entanglement of Greek Logos with the "West" (this latter conceived as the historical

Europe

) – an entanglement that unfolded itself from medieval Scholasticism to modern spirituality, constructing in the process a variant core concept of rationality.

Not only does the rigorous comprehension of Greek Reason provides the sole solid and objective basis on which to construct an adequate explanatory framework for human history in its central stream (the so-called Central Civilization); moreover, such a thorough understanding of Greek rationality possesses extreme relevance to defining issues of contemporary reality at the turn of the millennia. Humanity begins now to be actually unified at the whole-world level for the first time in its history. Globalization creates above all else a common market for ideas and techniques of rationality. A single, integrated field is constituted, within which all intellectual weaponry, all conceptual schematizations, all ways of understanding reality, all value codes, will have to act and counteract in close combat among themselves. They will thus prove by unimpeded competition their respective real worth. The initial confused juxtaposition of alternative approaches, will give way to a meaningful mosaic of coordinated, functionally differentiated, spiritual identities. In the end, the unavoidable mixings, blendings and fusions will produce a novel dominant synthesis of human understanding, in which each element will contribute according to its power and efficacy.

In the contemporary environment of postmodernism and the new age, Greek Λόγος can become purer and thus more potent and efficient by reason of its inherent fuller universalism. It may prove the most useful tool in organizing effectively the incessant flow of events and information into meaningful patterns capable of successful application in definitive decision-making. In order to see whether this is the case, we must reexamine our modern understandings of classical thought; we shall have to get a deeper understanding of the ancient Greek “Rational Revolution”. And this is what the present project aims to accomplish, thoroughly and comprehensibly.

There is furthermore more to the undertaking than the satisfaction of prime and legitimate, intellectual curiosity. Theoretical knowledge is, for the ancient mind, the foundation of “practical wisdom”; it provides the rules for successful action, it constitutes, in its power of application, the τέχνη (art), the know-how to do things in all departments of man’s life, in the productive, aesthetic and moral fields alike. The way one understands reality is not simply intimately connected to the way one acts and makes things, it is the sole objective determinant of the observable patterns in human action. The concept of rationality operative in any given age and place may serve, therefore, as the proper focal point with reference to which both the macrocosmic structures embodied in the underlying corresponding world-view and the microcosmic fabric of man’s world at the same era, are clarified and coordinated. The order of things and the order of things human are correlated, to their enhanced mutual intelligibility. The pragmatic logic of reality can thus be employed in an increasing level of specificity to explain phenomena ranging from the nature of being to the concrete actions, motivations, valuations, functions, structures and institutionalizations of human existence. In particular, it is crucially important to see how the principle of rationality (of coherence) is transformed into the *principle of organization*

. How, in other words, cosmic and human systems, of whatever degree of generality, are ordered, and perform in time, according to the logic of being. A twin major application will be made in this respect. First, the implications for the nature and evolution of the societal bond will be studied in detail. The apparent contradiction between atomistic individualism and integrative “communionism” (or, in economic terms, between open-marketism and institutionalism) will thereby be resolved: the natural systemicity of being is a necessary result of its atomicity; whereas introducing artificial regulatory constraints in a system’s freedom of movement, in fact reduces its efficiency, impoverishes and chronically destabilizes it. And secondly, the theory of management will be grounded on a philosophical basis. The analysis will proceed into the significant specifics of the relevant form of organization involved in any command and control system and established for a definite end.

PROPOSED TERMS OF THE ENGAGEMENT

The project involves basic research into the subject, writing of the text which will present the results of the inquiry and publication.

The planning for the realization of the project envisages 28 months of research and preparation of the text. Arrangements can be made so that effective publication can take place by the end of 2003.

The main full text will amount to a minimum of 1200 pages standard size, to be incorporated into two volumes, probably divided between exposition and elaborate notes. An additional third volume of about 300 pages will (a) codify the gist and results of the investigation and (b) elaborate on the correlation between rationality and organizational order in the case of, on the one hand, societal basic institutional structures, and, on the other, of management theory and practice. Finally, in a compact form extending to approximately 50 pages, a general concluding survey of the entire work will be presented, with a concise summary of the results obtained, particularly in their bearing on the efficient organization of economic activity (business management) within various societal and cultural nexuses, and on the evolving new human integral in the coming age. This booklet will be co-authored by Mr. Apostolos Pierris and Mr. Jeremy Watts, Managing Director of the sponsoring firm.

Heracles General Cement Company S.A. will be the sole and exclusive sponsor for the entire project.

The research budget (excluding publication costs) is estimated at GDR 20.000.000 (plus VAT, if this is applicable). Publication expenses will require (at the present level of prices, for three volumes, hard-cover, on paper of 100 gr/m² weight, in 1000 copies each) approximately GDR 12.000.000. Extra allowance will have to be made for the publication costs of the booklet, as the case may be.

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A specified number of copies (including all copies of the booklet) will be put at the disposal of the sponsor.