

## **Quotations from Ayn Rand relevant to the impetus for the Astraeon Individualist Society**

### **On Giving Up:**

"It is not in the nature of man—nor of any living entity—to start out by giving up, by spitting in one's own face and damning existence; that requires a process of corruption whose rapidity differs from man to man. Some give up at the first touch of pressure; some sell out; some run down by imperceptible degrees and lose their fire, never knowing when or how they lost it. Then all of these vanish in the vast swamp of their elders who tell them persistently that maturity consists of abandoning one's mind; security, of abandoning one's values; practicality, of losing self-esteem. Yet a few hold on and move on, knowing that that fire is not to be betrayed, learning how to give it shape, purpose and reality. But whatever their future, at the dawn of their lives, men seek a noble vision of man's nature and of life's potential." (Ayn Rand, "Introduction", *The Fountainhead*, 25th Anniversary Edition)

### **On Youthful Idealism:**

"...this is the view which—in various degrees of longing, wistfulness, passion and agonized confusion—the best of mankind's youth start out in life. It is not even a view, for most of them, but a foggy, groping, undefined sense made of raw pain and incommunicable happiness. It is a sense of enormous expectation, the sense that one's life is important, that great achievements are within one's capacity, and that great things lie ahead." (Ayn Rand, "Introduction", *The Fountainhead*, 25th Anniversary Edition)

### **On Supernatural Religions:**

"Religion's monopoly in the field of ethics has made it extremely difficult to communicate the emotional meaning and connotations of a rational view of life. Just as religion has preempted the field of ethics, turning morality against man, so it has usurped the highest moral concepts of our language, placing them outside this earth and beyond man's reach. "Exaltation" is usually taken to mean an emotional state evoked by contemplating the supernatural. "Worship" means the emotional experience of loyalty and dedication to something higher than man. "Reverence" means the emotion of a sacred respect, to be experienced on one's knees. "Sacred" means superior to and not-to-be-touched-by any concerns of man or of this earth. Etc.

"But such concepts do name actual emotions, even though no supernatural dimension exists; and these emotions are experienced as uplifting or ennobling, without the self-abasement required by religious definitions. What, then, is their source or referent in reality? It is the entire emotional realm of man's dedication to a moral ideal. Yet apart from the man-degrading aspects introduced by religion, that emotional realm is left unidentified, without concepts, words or recognition.

"It is this highest level of man's emotions that has to be redeemed from the murk of mysticism and redirected at its proper object: man." (Ayn Rand, "Introduction", *The Fountainhead*, 25th Anniversary Edition)

### **On Precondition for a Better World:**

"It is impossible to predict the time of a philosophical Renaissance. One can only define the road to follow, but not its length. What is certain, however, is that every aspect of Western culture needs a new code of ethics—a rational ethics—as a precondition of rebirth.

And, perhaps, no aspect needs it more desperately than the realm of art.

"When reason and philosophy are reborn, literature will be the first phoenix to rise out of today's ashes. And, armed with a code of rational values, aware of its own nature, confident of the supreme importance of its mission, Romanticism will have come of age." (Ayn Rand, "What is Romanticism?", *The Romantic Manifesto*.)

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Is there enough of the American [all Americans, not just US] sense of life left in people—under the constant pressure of the cultural-political efforts to obliterate it? It is impossible to tell. But those of us who hold it, must fight for it. We have no alternative: we cannot surrender this country to a zero—to men whose battle cry is mindlessness.

We cannot fight against collectivism, unless we fight against its moral base: altruism. We cannot fight against altruism, unless we fight against its epistemological base: irrationalism. We cannot fight against anything, unless we fight for something—and what we must fight for is the supremacy of reason, and a view of man as a rational being. (Ayn Rand, "Don't Let It Go", *The Ayn Rand Letter*, Dec 6, 1971)

### **On Love and Reason:**

"...if there are degrees of evil, then one of the most evil consequences of mysticism—in terms of human suffering—is the belief that love is a matter of "the heart," not the mind, that love is an emotion independent of reason, that love is blind and impervious to the power of philosophy. Love is the expression of philosophy—of a subconscious philosophical sum—and, perhaps, no other aspect of human existence needs the conscious power of philosophy quite so desperately. When that power is called upon to verify and support an emotional appraisal, when love is a conscious integration of reason and emotion, of mind and values, then—and only then—it is the greatest reward of man's life." (Ayn Rand, "Philosophy and Sense of Life", *The Romantic Manifesto*)