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The Conquerors had Conquered Without Trouble...

Tiqqun

2001

The conquerors had conquered without trouble: they had taken a city that had gotten rid of its gods.

No one recalls today, among the insurgents of times past, what exactly happened at the start. In place of a response, certain had a legend; but most only answered that “everyone is a start”.

This commenced in the heart of the metropolises of yesteryear. There reigned there a sort of frozen agitation, with crowded intersections where everyone pressed together, preferably in a tiny metallic box called an “automobile”. It began thus in this manner, by gatherings without object, silent gatherings of masks, in the margins of the general busyness.

An impression of a great idleness emanated from these little groups of masked men, who played at chess as well as at other more enigmatic games, who carried immobile signs with sibylline messages, who without a word distributed petrifying texts; but it was a rich idleness, inhabited, worrying but discreet.

There must have been someday, somewhere, the first of these gatherings. But there were soon so many that their remembrance

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itself was drowned in their number. They pretend that the first one was held at Lutece on a carnival day. And since then, the carnival has never ceased.

First they hurried in the police. But they quickly had to renounce this: hardly had they dispersed one of these strange aggregations when another formed itself elsewhere. It even seemed that they multiplied at each arrest. It was as if men were imperceptibly won, contaminated by the silence and the play, by the anonymity and the idleness.

It was spring and there were so many of these gatherings that they began to circulate, wandering from place to place, street to street, intersection to intersection. There was joy, casualness, and a curious determination in these errant corteges. A secret convergence even seemed to guide them. When evening came, they massed in silence in front of the places of power: seats of newspapers, governments, multinationals, media empires; banks, ministries, commissariats, prisons, soon nothing escaped from this silent encirclement.

A great menace, at the same time as a great derision, were given off by the crowds of mute masks with their regard riveted on the entrenched conquerors. These conquerors were certainly not mistaken as they hastily denounced the conspiracy of a certain Invisible Committee. They even spoke of a major peril for civilization, for democracy, for order and the economy. But in the interiors of their chateaux, the conquerors became afraid. They felt themselves more and more alone with their victory. A world that, even yesterday, appeared to them entirely captured, incomprehensibly escaped them, piece by piece. Thus they finished by opening the doors of their chateaux, thinking to appease this indefinable jacquerie in showing that they had nothing to hide. But no one entered, unless by accident, because from the masks emanated a power more desirable than that of the ancient. The conquerors themselves, at heart, must have been seized with a great lassitude: no one knows, since then, what has become of them.