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12.1. Foundations of the Sacred

Note: We have replaced terms such as ' we man ', ' we act ', ' we woman ', ' we tree ' with 'holy man', 'sacred act', 'holy woman', 'holy tree'... because the digital translation program does not know how to translate these words. The term 'holy' is then not used in its high and ethical biblical sense, but rather as the possession of much occult, subtle power. We could also speak, respectively, of a sorcerer, a magical plant, a witch...

12.1.1. Phenomenology and historical circumstances .

Library st.: M. Meslin, *Pour une science des religions* , Paris, 1973, 139/152 (*phénoménologie fotografie et Morphologie des phénomènes religionux*)

The author desires positive science. Consequently, the phenomenological method is a thorn in his side. We explain further.

Phenomenon . - That which is directly given is, if it concerns religious experience, all that is holy.

The eidetic phenomenologist seeks to find a general concept for this, called ' eidos '.

A model.

G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* , Tübingen, 1956-2, sets out how the sacred concept of 'prince' ('king') can be found in princely customs in Melanesia and Madagascar, the testimony of the Scandinavian sagas and the prophet Jeremiah, the concept of ' shogun ' in Japan and 'imperium' in Rome, the rites concerning the rajah in Borneo, the head of the Natchez , the ceremonies at the Frankish court and at the English court under Charles II, the concept of “ monarchical power” during the Hellenistic period and during the Germanic Holy Roman Empire, the psalms and Confucius, the Kingdom of God in the Bible (oc, 114/133 (*Macht und Wille im People : of the King*)).

The reproach.

Meslin argues that this amounts to reducing phenomena situated in space and time—and thus, in his view, radically different—to a lowest common denominator, that is to say: that which is strictly identical in all the listed phenomena. He does not hesitate to dismiss this approach as an approximation of the absurd.

His reasoning.

1. He admits that in all those cases it concerns a sacred principality.
2. Yet “the truly lived values regarding the sanctification of power (...) are entirely masked ”.

According to him, in all those cases it is not a matter of sacred kingship but of the historical circumstances accompanying that phenomenon! In this regard, he says that that phenomenon “was and remains one of the great dreams of historical man”. If one takes him by his words, one of the great dreams of actual humanity is not the general phenomenon of “sacred principality” but the singularly concrete circumstances thereof!

The reproach .

Meslin goes even further. – The eidetic phenomenologist reduces historical phenomena to a common essence, but precisely because of this, he does not ask the question regarding “the deep cause” of such a sacred elevation of an ordinary man to a sacred ruler. “Which, after all, is the main question to which phenomenological analysis ought to arrive?”

Note First of all: the phenomenologist explicitly sets aside the causes of a phenomenon, because he limits himself to what is directly given (= phenomenon). Meslin apparently does not know this most elementary aspect of phenomenology!

Note - Meslin criticizes what van der Leeuw says regarding conversion. She defines this as 'rebirth'. Meslin then refers—true to his method—to the various historical forms of conversion to conclude that van der Leeuw's analysis is “really summary”. Once again, for Meslin, the set of historical circumstances is the essential element, as if a person converts not for reasons of a sacred rebirth, but for reasons of the historical circumstances that frame them!

To put it in Aristotelian terms: for the phenomenologist, the essential is

the general essence (eidos), whereby contingencies (historical circumstances) are bracketed; for a Meslin , the essential are the circumstances, whereby the general essence fundamentally appears as a contingency!

Meslin senses the danger .

In the end, he concludes: Some think that the religious phenomenon must be defined in its general concept (eidos); others believe that the same phenomenon is “a product of history.” He wishes to transcend this contradiction by defining the science of religions as “a total discipline” that incorporates the various approaches to the religious phenomenon.

There is of course truth in that, but the phenomenologist is well aware of that precise detail; however, he begins by first defining the essential in order to then take the coincidences into account.

12.1.2. Phenomenology of the Sacred .

Bible st. : - - *M. Eliade, Traité d'histoire des religions* , Paris, 1953;
-- *M. Meslin, Pour une science des religions* , Paris, 1973, 145/152 (*Morphologie des phénomènes religieux*).

Let us begin with a statement:

Reality (understand: actual religions) no longer fit within the frameworks of theory (understand: religious studies). It was therefore deemed appropriate to change them.

That is the rule of conduct of the scientific method. In doing so, one must rely at least on the humanities and the social sciences (history, sociology, anthropology, geography , etc.). Thus *J.-Cl. Ruano-Borbalan* , *La religion recomposée* , in: *Sciences Humaines* , Auxerre, 41 Guinlaoût 2003), 7, in which the author acknowledges that the religious scholars of the 1960s/1970s who argued that the decline of religions (due to secularization) was irreversible were at least partially mistaken. Their frameworks of thought must be revised. That is his conclusion.

Eliade , the phenomenologist, criticized by Meslin , the specialist scientist .

In contrast to, for example, van der Leeuw, Eliade seems to have a greater eye for the historical contextualization of the sacred, for he wishes to grasp the experience of the sacred as the opposite of the profane “through the totality of the manifestations (of the sacred)” in the course of human history. Historical man, engrossed in singular-concrete tasks, seeks their solution in

the sacred, which manifests itself in a whole series of 'hierophanies' —facts that make the sacred directly perceptible. What Meslin, true to his historicism, reproaches him for is that he posits as an essence a universal concept of 'sacred' that simply extends above historical (meaning: daily) life.

The cosmic tree.

Eliade, op. cit., 17. - Indians worship a tree, Aṣvattha, as something sacred. Eliade calls this 'hierophany': the sacred reveals itself. Such hierophany is historical, i.e. interwoven in daily life, and local, i.e. understood only by the Indians of the place. But these same Indians also know the cosmic tree as an "axis mundi" (universe). But this hierophany is found in all ancient cultures. Which is historical but not local, and therefore universal.

Holy.

The Aṣvattha is a manifestation of the universe as uninterrupted rebirth. But precisely because of this, it is a singularly concrete case of the universal cosmic tree, even though this remains local.

Criticism.

Meslin believes he must make a three-part remark in response.

1. Eliade is more of an eidetic phenomenologist than a historian. He reduces the sacred experience to an experience of something that transcends historical circumstances—of Native Americans, for example. Meslin calls this 'meta-historical'. In other words: where Eliade approaches the sacred directly in its essence, Meslin approaches it via the detour of what is connected with it, namely the daily circumstances in which the sacred—in a sacred tree, for example—manifests itself. Moreover, Eliade compares the local with the universal hierophany in that the local model is an application of the universe original, i.e., the general essence (eidos) of the sacred.

2. Eliade posits that the sacred is the opposite of the profane, for to him the profane—ultimately at least—appears as an illusion. Whereas the sacred is true reality, the profane—that is, reality before any hierophany with its life force intervenes within it—is a kind of unreality lacking any ultimate solidity and reliability.

Meslin responds —typical of his scholarly detachment regarding all that is sacred—with, "Is the sacred really irreducible to anything else?" Which is, after all, clearly doubting the sacred to such an extent that it runs the risk of simply being an illusion, whereas the historical circumstances are the essence! That explains his rabid emphasis on the everyday at the expense of

the sacred.

In other words: Meslin posits that only historical circumstances are the true access to the sacred, which he prefers to see reduced to “something else”. This is because he himself possesses no sacred experience.

12.1.3. Phenomenology of the Sacred (continued).

3. Eliade argues that there is a fundamental difference between archaic and modern culture. He takes nutrition and sexual life as models (oc, 40/42). The typically modern man is incapable of experiencing organic life as a sacred act (Eliade says: “as a sacrament”). Ways of thinking such as psychoanalysis (S. Freud (1856/1939)) or historical materialism (K. Marx (1818/1883)) believed their theses were most certainly confirmed by the importance of the role that sexuality and nutrition play in the culture of peoples labeled as “still living in the ethnographic phase”.

Both ways of thinking, however, failed to recognize the significance that nutrition and sexual life hold within such cultures. That significance differs fundamentally from that which modern man attributes to them. For modern man, they are merely physiological acts, whereas for archaic man they are rites that mediate the life force inherent in 'life' in the sacred sense—even though for archaic man, too, they are physiological acts to begin with. Power and life are 'epiphanies' (manifestations) of the sacred, understood as the 'real' reality that manifests itself in physiological acts.

Archetype.

Within sacred culture, a rite is invariably the imitation of an example (= archetype). “At that time” (let us think of “in illo tempore” with which the traditional Catholic Gospel reading began), either ancestors, deities, or other 'higher' beings performed an act that is both an example and a life force for all subsequent acts of the same nature performed by humans. The story of this is called a 'myth', a sacred story. - Oc, 350.

Polynesians relate: “In the beginning” there were only the 'first' waters (understand: 'primordial waters', the waters of origin) immersed in the darkness of the universe. From the immensity of his living space, Io, the supreme god, expressed the will to emerge from his rest: immediately thereafter, light appeared. Io resumed: “Let the waters part, let the heavens come, let the earth come!” The waters parted, the heavens and the earth came into being. Polynesians know three 'applications'—understand: repetitions, or better: visible and tangible present propositions—in which that myth is repeated as an archetype, namely the consecration of the conception of the

womb (which thereby becomes both a physiological act and a sacred act), the consecration of the enlightenment of body and soul, and the consecration of dying and other acts.

The words with which Io creates, are the same in the consecration of, for example, the fertilization of the womb, such that they make Io's consecrating life force visibly and tangibly present. Thereby the profane becomes sacred. What “in that time” or “in the beginning” (of Io in the Polynesian case) was, is there again and again. Eliade calls this “what is in historical time is situated in eternity”.

Meslin .

According to him, this is the cyclical conception of time in the form of “the eternal return of the same (= the archetypal deeds)”. The traditional or archaic cultures, which stand closer to the basic sanctifications than the modern ones, reject history not so much through the will to preserve traditions as through the will to consecrate the profane through an archetypal model.

The typical modern man has broken free both from traditions and from the consecrations of primitive humanity . This means that modernity limits itself to 'historical' time, understand: daily life, with its unholy and thus sacred nature lacking in its essence. To Eliade, this seems like a decline of a fundamental nature.

Incidentally: this viewpoint expresses his interpretation of secularization.

Meslin doubts this. He is not so sure that archaic man experiences historical time merely as a continuous repetition of archetypes and that he does not consider himself personally responsible for his own history. He admits that Eliade is right, but what archaic man does is no “simple imitation”!

And then it comes again: even if it is as Eliade says, it nevertheless falls to the historical man—and to the historical man alone—to perpetuate, through his consecrations, the order of things inherent in his daily life, and to build up his daily life through rites which he himself invents. That man does not flee from his historical life!

Note - Once again reinterprets Meslin what Eliade says, based on his secularism.

12.1.4. Circumstances .

Library st. : *W. Brugger, Hrsg., Philosophisches Wörterbuch* , Freiburg, 1961-8, 269 (*Sachver halt*). The author formulates: “By 'circumstances' we understand the object insofar as it corresponds to a judgment in which it is expressed”.

Curious: the author adds to this: “not so much insofar as the object is thought in the judgment as rather insofar as it exists independently of the thought of judgment”. This is a clear and unequivocal subjectivization of the objective in the concept of 'circumstances' ! For circumstances exist with or without judgment! In themselves! The author clarifies. – Circumstances thus consist in the fact that a modifier (characteristic), expressed by the predicate, fits with a being (reality) expressed by the subject of the sentence . – In other words: the author does not conceive of circumstances apart from what is said about them.

Thus it is that he is obliged to add that nothing similar corresponds to the 'structure' (the manner of being put together) inherent in the judgment in the actual state of affairs itself. The fact that the predicate fits the subject—he calls this “the identity of subject and predicate”—exists only in our thinking, not, as logical transcendentalism advocates, “in itself”. He gives an example. When we say: “God is a spirit”, this statement corresponds to no real relationship between God and his being spirit.

The author must have sensed the fallacy, for he adds to his definition “not so much insofar as the object is thought in the judgment as rather insofar as it exists independently of the thought of judgment”. Either the object exists independently of our thought content and is a state of affairs, or it does not exist independently of our thinking and is immediately something subjective, at least partially, but then it is no longer a true state of affairs!

For with 'conclusion ' one usually thinks of what already exists independently of us and can thus be grasped by our mind, namely as an objective given. Which implies that the circumstance exists “in itself”. That excludes any 'rather' and 'much more'. In that sense, “logical transcendentalism” is right. But then a logical transcendentalism—understand: a theory stating that the logical content of a statement 'transcends' the statement itself—which does not confuse what is in our mind as a psychological act with what is outside our mind, but rather states that the object itself is present in our mind as evident, directly given (phenomenon), and thus “in itself”. But that is phenomenology.

The author continues

The usage of language suggesting that a true negative judgment corresponds to an inherently existing negative state of affairs gives rise to misunderstanding. He reasons: the negative judgment—"The hall is not there," for example—is true insofar as the state of affairs referred to therein indeed does not exist, but attributing an "in-itself existence" to the act of negation is contradictory, for the negative exists only in our mind.

Such reasoning betrays subjectivism, for the objective fact that the hall is not there is an objective absence that we express in the sub-term 'not'. The hall is objectively not there, and the sentence that articulates this state of affairs states that it is not there! But the author seems to interpret logical transcendentalism in such a way that a reality of judgment in words or symbols corresponds to objective reality.

Conclusion

The author does not think phenomenologically: the object—phenomenon, that which manifests itself immediately—is not directly given in its objective presence in our mind. Consequently, it is not in our mind "in itself" but in the form of a statement. Phenomenologically, the statement in itself is merely a verbal shaping of what it asserts regarding the self-existing, immediately present object.

Note - The author says: The sentence " $2 \times 2 = 4$ " does not mean that $2 \times 2 = 4$ actually exist somewhere, but merely that the essence of 2×2 necessarily encompasses 4, such that if 2×2 is realized somewhere, then 4 is necessarily also realized. This reveals that the expression " $2 \times 2 = 4$ " represents a self-existing numerical ratio depicted in symbolic language, but in such a way that a self-existing 'conclusion', once it has become evident, is represented.

12.1.5. Natural theology

Cause to this exposition is *J. Arnould, Epreuve et preuves de l'existence de Dieu ou l'actualité de la théologie naturelle*, in: *Le temps des Savoirs (Revue interdisciplinaire de l'Institut université de France)*, 5 (*La preuve*), Paris, 2003, 15/38. - But beforehand a few remarks.

Theology

What is meant is the most scientific possible understanding of the Catholic religion. Not that other theologies are without significance; rather, that our position is the Catholic one.

God.

The term 'God' is intended in the strictly monotheistic sense of 'Supreme Being'. The Supreme Being transcends everything that is understood as divine but is finite (and thus created in the Biblical sense). A mere polytheism, as advocated by some postmodernists, is therefore not included. Only the Biblical religion of revelation sovereignly and purely upholds such a monotheism, as *Deuteronomy 5:7* states: "You shall have no other God except me" (thus says Yahweh).

Natural theology.

K. Leese, Law and Border of the natural Religion, Zurich, 1954, says this: - Bright and clear the "lumen naturale", the natural light of the intellect, burns in the Catholic Church. Leese cites the First Vatican Council (1869/1870): "The Holy Mother the Church holds fast to and teaches that God, origin and destination of all things, can be known with certainty from created things through the natural light of the intellect".

This statement is part of the "praeambula" fidei", the presuppositions of faith. Other propositions knowable and even provable by our natural reason apply to God's existence, the creation of the world, human free will, and the immortality of the human soul. Such truths are basic truths of "natural religion" and they are considered "motiva credibilitatis", reasons for the credibility of the Catholic faith. They are "rationes demonstrativae", probative reasons, for the God-given truth of the Catholic Church as a supernatural institution. Whoever takes them seriously commits "rationale obsequium", a rational obedience, to God. They form the basis of Catholic apologetics (understand: justification of faith).

Natural Theology

To be clear from the outset, the following. - K. Leese argues—in a very reasoned manner, moreover—for a natural theology that brings 'nature' to the fore in the following sense. 'Nature' here means "the reality outside man (understand: the cosmos) and the reality within man insofar as it constitutes the life of feelings and drives". This is the concept of 'nature' of vitalism (philosophy of life) since the Sturm und Drang, in the footsteps of J.J. Rousseau (1712/1778) with his "Return to Nature" and especially J.G. Herder (1744/1803), later followed by Fr. Schleiermacher (1768/1834).

Vitalism, which was incidentally adopted by Romanticism, reacted against the rationalism of the time, which placed scientific and moralizing reason at

its center. J.W. Goethe (1749/1832) went through a vitalist period in his youth.

Incidentally: in this perspective, eroticism and sexuality acquire a religious significance. Openness to the cosmic and the vital remains a constant... – Yet, while this places us within a 'natural' (accessible thanks to natural faculties) theology, the emphasis certainly lies outside classical Catholic and even Biblical theology, which is situated close to Stoic theology and Enlightenment theology .

Natural theology was indeed prepared negatively by Protestantism, which, in the wake of the fierce criticism of M. Luther (1483/1546) and J. Calvin (1509/1564), deemed natural reason highly inadequate on the basis of the Fall proclaimed in the Bible and the resulting original sinfulness of the natural mind. Protestant pessimism regarding nature and reason indeed contrasts sharply with the optimism regarding nature and reason of the Stoics, the Enlightenment, and traditional Catholic theology.

Conclusion. - With this, our subject takes on a secondary significance that is not without profound importance.

12.2. Religious experience

12.2.1. Prayer of an initiate into the Isism mysteries.

Library st.: *K. Leese , Law and Border of the natural Religion , Zurich, 1954, 192f. - We give the text first.*

Holy, never-resting helper of the human race, benevolent benefactor of mortals, you show maternal mercy to all the unfortunate. No day, no night, indeed, not the slightest moment passes without some merciful act on your part, whether you protect people at sea or on land, or calm the storms of life (...). Your salvation liberates from the inextricable threads of fate, calms the storm of misfortune, and slows the damage-causing course of the celestial bodies. - The deities of heaven and the underworld love you. You cause the rotation of the globe and the light of the sun. You reign in the heavens and are at home in Tartarus (understand: underworld). Your command is heard by the stars , it is followed by the return of the ages, the deities rejoice in it, the elements stand in your service.

At Your command the wind breathes, the cloud brings nourishing water, the seed germinates, the germ grows. For the sake of Your majesty the bird

trembles in its flight through the airspace, the wild beast in its wanderings through the mountain, the serpent lurking in its lair, Leviathan (understand: a mythical sea monster) in its swim deep in the sea. – I am too weak in spirit to praise You in a worthy manner, too poor in possessions to offer You sacrifices. The flood of my language does not reach to express how much I experience Your sublimity. Nor do a thousandfold mouth, a thousand tongues, and a never-tiring, uninterrupted series of praises reach – and reached – to that end. Consequently: I wish – only this can a pious and otherwise poor man – to do only this: I wish to store Your divine countenance and Your holy essence deep in the shrine of my heart and keep them always before my eyes.

This text is an excerpt from *Metamorphoses* XI:25 by *Lucius Apuleius* (125/180), a Latin Platonic thinker and rhetorician. Another name for this work is *The Golden Ass*. After all, the work is a novel in which the fortunes of the hero are recounted. At a certain point, he is transformed into a donkey by black magic. Thanks to the life force of Isis, originally an Egyptian goddess worshipped throughout the Roman Empire in late antiquity, he becomes human again. He becomes the goddess's holy man. What is called "the mysteries of Isis" is reflected in the structure of the novel. 'Mystery' means "secret religion," limited to initiates who—to free themselves from the unpleasant misfortunes brought about by earthly life—receive a ritual death and resurrection. The work exudes a reaction against late antique skepticism and bears witness to the rising influences of Eastern—especially Egyptian—origins .

Leese die in 1934 *Die Mutter als religiöses Symbol* wrote, sees this in the text. - The earth can be compared to the mother, can be fused with the psychic essence of the mother. But more is possible: as "Mother Earth" she can become a religious symbol because the earth and the mother are experienced as a 'force field' (understand: place where life force flows through) of divine revelation. Even more: the Earth Mother ultimately becomes an all-pervading and all-encompassing Universe Mother. - Leese calls this a "religious symbol".

That the text from *The Golden Ass*—a work that has had quite a few after-effects since the Renaissance—radiates such an impression is certain, but only in a late-antique sense. One sees Apuleius , who evidently incorporated a part of his own life into the novel, worshipping Isis as if she were God himself, as creator and ruler of the universe.

Criticism. - First of all: the earth is, to begin with, a planet; the mothers

of humankind are ordinary people. Only a sacralizing 'experience' elevates both to 'sacred' beings. But what reality value does such a 'experience' possess? It is certain, however, that if earnestly revered—and this still happens today, even by intellectuals—Isis is a powerful figure, but as a natural goddess, she is ambivalent, establishing both good and evil.

12.2.2. Shaftesbury's nature hymn .

Bible st. : K. Leese , *Recht und Grenze der natürlichen Religion* , Zurich, 1954, 226f.

JG Herder (1744/1803) has the *Nature Hymn* by AC Shaftesbury (1671/1713) translated into German . We are not concerned with the poetic aspect, but rather with the ideas. We present the text first.

Receive me, arable land! Holy forests, take in the traveler who escaped the city noise, who seeks rest and refreshment here in your shade. Grant them to him lovelyly. - Hail be to you, green, joyful meadows! Hail! Places full of silent blessing! And you, distances crowned with magic and ornament, hail to you and all that lives within you! - You, dwell of blessed people who, withdrawn from envy, freed from delusion, live here in innocence quietly and joyfully and cheerfully and behold You, great nature. - Nature! You, the most beautiful among the beautiful, you, benevolent one! You love everything, worthy as you are to be loved by all, wholly divine, full of wisdom, full of grace, of all that is sublime, the high content. - Friend of the Deity, wise representative of Providence, or - Creator, Creator Himself? - Creator, behold, I kneel down and pray, I worship You in the holy place - of the high temple.

From You, the Exalted One, is this silence; from You this inspiration which, though in disharmonious tones, drives me to sing. - Unison, order of beings and cosmic harmony that merges into You, unfathomable, flowing source of all that is beautiful, sea of perfection. - In Your fullness all thoughts take root, the wings of fantasy lose their luster, without end or shore, everywhere center, nowhere circumference.

Whenever I set out, I returned within myself of my insignificance, - permeated by your infinity. And do I still dare to fathom you, abyss of thoughts? - To know you, eternal beauty, to love you wholeheartedly, yearning to approach you, to this end you created me and gave me striving and will. Give me strength! Be my assistance! When I am searching in the labyrinth of creation, you lead the searcher, who have filled me with spirit and love. Lead the one who loves, to you.

Shaftesbury belongs to the English moralists. Amidst the debates at the end of the 17th century concerning morality and religion, he defends the autonomy of ethics vis-à-vis religion and politics. He bases morality on “moral feeling.” Whatever serves the harmony of the personality is morally good. He equates morality and beauty and cherishes an aesthetic view of the world and life.

Contrary to Th. Hobbes (1588/1679), he argues that the state of nature of man does not exhibit pure selfishness as a fundamental characteristic, for that selfishness is accompanied by naturally given inclinations toward sympathy and social compassion. From this arises the inner, direct “moral sensibility” of what is good and evil. Moral sensibility contains a sense of order, harmony, and balance. Consequently, conscientious sensibility merges with the aesthetic sensibility of all that is beautiful.

The concept of 'genius', that spontaneous, intuitive, and creative disposition, resonates in Lessing's *aesthetics* and in Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*.

Shaftesbury's legacy was very great and profound, even outside England. His conception of nature—nature as a self-contained whole brought to life by a 'form' (understand: essence) present within it—influenced Herder, as is evident from the poem above, and Goethe. Furthermore, Voltaire, Rousseau, German Classicism, and Romanticism were influenced by Shaftesbury.

Note - Regarding the content of the above poem, the following: It is a dithyramb, a highly emotionally charged poem. Hence the jubilant accumulation of adjectives and laudatory nouns. Exaggerated for many of us, of course, but typical of a modern version of naturalistic immersion in nature, fundamentally strongly influenced by rationalism, in which only the beautiful (aesthetic) and good (moral) aspects come to the fore. God as creator is acknowledged, but in this poem it seems doubtful whether he transcends the deified nature. In any case, it sounds rather pantheistic and certainly not strictly Biblical.

12.2.3. Naturism and demonism

Library st. : K. Leese, *Recht und Grenze der natürlichen Religion*, Zurich, 1954, 295ff.. –

The author is a principled defender of nature religion, yet with the

necessary Christian reservations. We consider his reflection: "To what extent is a Christian attitude to faith (...) significant for piety in nature?"

The course of nature as a reality outside of man and outside his intellectual-rational aspect within him is never simply a revelation of God as Christianity understands it. That course is not holy in the Biblical sense, but it can be holy in the sense understood in that way. That is Leese's thesis. We will follow him briefly in his reasoning.

Christianity sharpens our gaze regarding the demonic aspects of naturism. By 'demonic,' the author understands that which in nature religion is anti-godly, destructive, indeed, satanic. - Interacting with the elements of nature, with plants and animals, and especially with ourselves and our fellow human beings, makes us aware that 'nature' (albeit usually guided by man's intellect and will) exhibits an aspect that encompasses horror, horror, cruelty, and mercilessness (parasitism, the struggle for survival). Refusing to see this is not only a sign of a lack of sincerity but, moreover, of an undeniable lack of Christianity . -

Leese expresses himself in these terms ! He is crystal clear: "Within a Christian attitude of faith, nature mysticism (understand: nature religion) is inconceivable without praying 'Come, Holy Spirit, Lord God'" (oc, 296).

Old Testament

The grand religious and world-historical model of the fact that nature, and with it nature piety, can degenerate into demonization and immediately become unholy to the highest degree (in the Biblical sense), illustrates the confrontation of the Israelite Yahweh with the Canaanite Baal. The Semitic religion in Near Asia was one of farmers and vineyard keepers. The supreme god was Baal. In the guise of many local Baals, he enjoyed worship as "Lord or Owner of fruitful things" such as trees, forests, springs, ponds, lakes, and rivers. This worship preferably took place on hills and mountains, on 'high places of sacrifice' under the open sky. The gifts were fruits and produce of the region.

Memorial stones in the shape of a sacred phallus erected next to an altar symbolize creative life energy, indeed, the visible and tangible presence of Baal himself. - With every Baal came an ' Asherah ' (Phoenician: Astarte ; Babylonian: Ishtar ; South Arabian: Athar or Atargatis) as a female complement. She was the goddess of plant and animal fertility and of human sexuality, representing the harmony of opposites: she distributed life but also

destroyed it. - The young bull was a symbol of Baal, while a naked woman clasping her breasts represented the Asherah . ' Asherah ' is also the name of the sacred wooden pole that represents the tree as the source of the fertility of 'nature'.

In the service of the primordial couple stood 'consecrated' men and women who surrendered themselves to sexual rites in sanctuaries, in the service of (understand: as a visible and tangible representation of) Baal and Asherah . Drinking wine, dancing to intoxicating music, and wildly ecstatic celebrations accompanied the actual sacrifice and the accompanying sacrificial meal. That religion is therefore called 'orgiastic'.

Yahweh believers regularly succumbed to the temptation to sin in the religion of Baal (which was called 'adultery'). Yet “an event of unimaginable scope to this day occurred” (oc, 298): “The worship of Baal that had penetrated the religion of Yahweh was exposed in its demonic nature and overcome by the Old Testament prophets”.

Indeed: for the prophets (from Amos around -750), 'holy' is inseparable from 'conscientious' (which shows the true scope of the open-ended nature of the Decalogue). This is a religious-historical revolution.

Leese .

A nature mysticism that fails to do justice to the 'ethos', the high morality, of the Bible is radically unacceptable to Old Testament and, for that matter, to New Testament religion.

Note - A summary of that opposition, starting from the Book of Genesis, is the “flesh/spirit” pair, understood as: “naturism/Yahweh religion”.

12.2.4. The religion of Yahweh is first and foremost living conscientiously.

Library st. : K. Leese , *Recht und Grenze der natürlichen Religion* , Zürich, 1954, 298f..

The author cites several texts that prove that in the 8th century BC, the Yahweh religion, confronted with the naturalism of the time, unleashed a revolution.

Amos.

This shepherd, called by Yahweh, ministers under King Jeroboam II (-783/743). He lets God speak: “I hate, I despise your celebrations (..). I reject

your grain offerings and I do not even look at your calf offerings. Away from me with the noise of your songs, for the playing of your harps means nothing to me!— The water of righteousness, the conscientious life as an everlasting stream: let it well up!” (5:21/24).

One sees the contrast expressed in the manner of a countryman.

Osee (Hosea).

This contemporary of Amos vehemently opposes the “adultery” that Israelites commit in the sanctuary in Bethel, where Yahweh is worshipped as a bale. In Os. 6:6, he lets Yahweh speak: “No sacrifices! I desire love! No burnt offerings! Knowledge of God!” Note well: in the Bible, 'knowledge' means “intimate relations with.” Osei is the first to translate the “God/Israel” relationship into marriage terms of “husband/wife.”

Isaiah (Isaiah).

In 740, he is called upon by God in the temple in Jerusalem to announce the destruction of Israel and Judah as a result of false religion .

Is. 1:11/17 . -

“What do your countless sacrifices matter to me, Yahweh? I am satiated with burnt offerings of rams and with the fat of fattened calves! I derive no pleasure from the blood of bulls, lambs, and goats! When you enter (the sanctuary) to “behold my countenance” (understand: to enter into direct contact with me), who then has asked you to trample my courtyards? Stop offering me senseless sacrifices, for they are an unbearable fumes to me! New moon, Sabbath, convocations for assemblies: I cannot stand hypocritical ceremonies! Your processions and feast days: I heartily hate them. (...). When you raise your hands, I turn my eyes away from you. No matter how much you pray, I do not even hear it! For your hands drip with blood. – Wash yourself, cleanse yourself! Away with your unscrupulous deeds! Get them out of my sight! Stop the unscrupulousness. Learn to act rightly and Set your minds on justice. Drive those who commit violence within their limits. In court, assist the orphan and plead on behalf of the widow .” – The blood dripping from the hands is the blood of innocents that was mixed with that of the victims. The orphan and the widow belong to the economically weaker ones for whom the prophet stands up.

Mikeas .

Contemporary of Osee and Isaiah . - *Micah* 6:6/8 . - “With what shall I show myself before Yahweh , bow down deeply before God on high? Shall I

appear before Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Shall He delight in thousands of rams, in the pouring out of streams of oil? Shall I have to offer my firstborn as a ransom for my transgression, the fruit of my womb as an atonement sacrifice for my soul? - What is good, what Yahweh expects of you, was impressed upon you, man. To provide justice, - nothing else! To set your minds on what is goodness. To live consciously of your limits in God's presence."

Commentators claim that Amos emphasized justice, Osee goodness, and Isaiah a sense of boundaries.

Jeremiah .

He was born around 650, a little over a century after Isaiah . The tradition stating that the temple is inviolable angers him, for he claims that Yahweh can leave the temple . The reason - *Jer. 7:9/11* - "What! Stealing, murdering, committing adultery, swearing perjury, offering incense to Baal, following deities you do not know, and then coming to show yourselves before Me in this house (the temple), which bears My name, and claiming: 'With this we are safe' only to (immediately) thereafter continue all those monstrosities! Has then, in your eyes, this house that bears My name, become a den of robbers? I, at any rate, see it so! - Thus speaks Yahweh."

In *Matthew 21:13* , confronted with the commercial practices in the temple, Jesus repeats the expression: "It is written: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer.' But you have made it a den of robbers."

12.2.5. Theism (n).

Bible st. : *W. Brugger, Hrsg., Philosophisches Wörterbuch* , Freiburg, 1961-8, 325 (Theismus).

Let us mention in passing *Th. van Baaren* , **Doolhof der goden **, Amsterdam, 1960, where 'theism' is defined as "the conception of the gods as personal beings who created and sustain the world". This is evidently a religious-historical definition: one indeed encounters cultures in which one or more deities are interpreted as personal beings that are creative and sustaining. Yet this interpretation is not the most frequent.

The doctrine which states that a personal God, transcending the universe, brought the universe into existence out of nothing (outside of Him) thanks to an act of creation, is called 'theism'. - *A. Lalande* , *Voc. technique et critique de la philosophie* , PUF, 1968-10, 1123 (Theism) says: "The doctrine which posits the existence of a personal God as the cause of the world is theistic".

P. Foulquié / R. Saint-Jean, Dict . de la langue philosophique , PUF, 1969-2, 723, states: “A doctrine that accepts the existence of a single, personal God distinct from the world.” It is the opposite of pantheism (God coincides with the universe), polytheism (belief in many gods), and atheism (denial of God).

Peculiar: *P. Poupard , dir., Dict . des religions* , PUF, 1984, does not even mention the term!

Polytheism posits a plurality of beings called 'divine,' often such that they live under the dominion of a supreme deity. It is clear here that 'divine' is used in the broader sense.

Henotheism is a polytheism that, notwithstanding the multitude of deities, turns to the one God in prayer and worship as if He were the only God.

Incidentally: quite a few syncretisms that combine, for example, Christianity with polytheism, are henotheistic .

Monotheism

Monotheism differs from this in that, in doctrine and worship, it prioritizes the one God alongside whom no other 'deity' is possible. In this context, the term 'divine' is employed in a much stricter sense, namely in the supreme sense. Indeed: 'Supreme Being' implies that God is strictly infinitely exalted above all that He creates.

Deism

In its 'God', deism denies God's uninterrupted creative activity in creation, His providential control over it, as well as the possibility of intervening in an extraordinary manner through revelation and miracle. In other words: the deistic 'God' is an otherworldly God who is distant and unreal. Consequently, deism differs fundamentally from theism.

Pantheism

Pantheism posits that 'God' is so one with the universe that He coincides with it. Theism, on the other hand, posits that if God is supreme, He is fundamentally distinct from His creation and a deep chasm separates Him from it. This does not prevent Him from being, at the same time—precisely because He is so 'exalted' (distinct and separate)—so intimate and omnipresent within the created, in its very essence and life, without hindering it. What is also striking in pantheism is that God, as a personal being, fades into a kind of accompanying phenomenon.

Dualism

Dualism posits that alongside 'God' exists a reality equaling Him, which created evil and matter. Strict metaphysical dualism explains finitude and evil by positing a 'principle' or 'reality' responsible for these two, which exists eternally alongside God and constantly opposes God's creation and control of the universe. In Plato's philosophy, this is a kind of eternal matter that makes one susceptible to finitude and evil. In Manichaeism, this counter-reality is a malevolent antagonist to the good God.

One sees the fundamental distinction between dualism and theism. The latter considers an equivalent counter-reality to be radically contrary to its concept of 'God'.

Naturism

Naturism—also known as naturalism—for example in the form of phallic worship, seeks 'God' in nature, for instance as a generative or birthing being in the phallus and the vulva. The higher power, which the nature religion worships in the phallus or the vulva or in all of visible and tangible nature, is then called 'divine' in the sense of “higher or more sublime than the many earthly things”. Usually, the deity in naturism is an ancestral figure who ensures fertility. Theism acknowledges God's action in nature as well, but as infinitely elevated above it.

12.3. Forms of religion

12.3.1. Stoic natural religion .

Library st. : *K. Leese , Recht und Grenze der natürlichen Religion*, Zurich, 1954, 15/28.

Stoicism begins with Zeno of Citium (-336/-264) and lasts until the second century AD.

Axiomatics

The logic of the Stoics prioritizes observation, from which basic concepts common to all people arise effortlessly. They are 'prolèpseis', presuppositions. God and some of his attributes, conscientiousness and certain conscientious behavior types, and since Cicero (-106/-43), also the awareness of immortality, form the triad of axioms.

Cosmology

Heraclitus (-535/-465), the patriarch of Stoicism, states that the universe

is guided by the 'Logos', the divine universal understanding. That universe is alive, animated, rational, and spiritually endowed. The becoming and passing away of things is thus logically governed.

Theology

God, as Stoicism conceives him, is an immortal, rational, perfect thinking spirit that is thoroughly conscientious and blissful. As the creative All-Father, he is Providence. He bears many names: Zeus, Hera, Athena, Hephaestus, Poseidon, Demeter. — Thus says Zeno: “The all-encompassing lawfulness that exists in right thought and permeates everything is the same as Zeus, the ruler of the order of the universe.” — It sounds pantheistic but leaves room for a personally conceived God.

Ethics

The omnipresent Logos is simultaneously the moral law binding all beings in conscience, as Heraclitus already taught. Good and evil, right and wrong based on natural law, show God as present in all people. Justice does not rest on human opinion or attitude but on “Zeus and the omnipresent nature,” as Chrysippus (-280/-207) says.

The fundamental rule of Stoicism is therefore: “To live in accordance with nature.” This amounts to living in accordance with the Universe Logos, the Universe Mind. Nature and mind coincide.

The Stoics call the goal of the conscientious life 'freedom' in the sense of an intellectual and rational life, as freeing oneself from the external things of nature and from the passions within human nature. Cool self-control therefore characterizes Stoic morality, which cherishes 'apatheia', dispassion, as an ideal.

In the later Stoicism, therefore, one encounters astonishing statements that bear witness to contempt for the body. For instance, according to *Seneca* (1/65) in his * *Epist.* 65* and **Ad Helv.* 11*, the body is a prison, a heavy burden, a depressing weight, a punishment of the soul. According to Marcus Aurelius (Emperor 161/180), the body is earth and defiled dust, flesh, stinking stain, and dust in a sack. Freedom from this is true freedom. Clinging to the body is true slavery.

Proofs of God's existence . -

The cosmological proof starts from the world as a given, but in such a way that not man in his limitations, but only the Logos can be its cause.

The teleological proof departs from nature insofar as it is a purposeful and purposeful whole that bears witness to a higher wisdom and splendor, and is therefore not the result of chance but of a divine architect of the universe.

J. Kant says that it must undoubtedly be mentioned with respect: it is immediately the oldest, clearest, and most appropriate proof to common sense.

The conceptual —usually called 'ontological'—proof of God does not proceed from experienced existence but from a concept, namely “the most perfect being”. This could not be the most perfect being if it did not actually exist. The concept of 'man' does not qualify for this, but rather a higher being that does not differ from the Logos. Perfection essentially encompasses, in addition to other characteristics, the characteristic of 'existence'.

Leese .

The natural religion of the Stoics rests—concessions aside—on a pursuit of naturelessness, whereby 'nature' is understood as nature insofar as it exists before man appears within it and remains below the human (especially in the life of feelings and drives). This natural (understand: intellectual-rational) religion, which despises 'nature' (in that naturist sense), has weighed very heavily on Western culture, and in particular on religion up to and including the deism of the enlightened minds, as well as on Christian theologians. Not without having created serious problems. Thus Leese .

12.3.2. Deism(s).

The term was introduced by L. Sozzi (1525/1562) and F. Sozzi (1539/1604), the founders of the Socinians, to distinguish themselves from the atheists in their Catechism of Rakan (1605/1609). From Poland, they spread throughout modern Europe.

In the 17th century, Socinianism encompassed criticism of religion, anti-dogmatism, and rationalist, humanitarian, pacifist Christianity.

According to *P. Poupard , Déisme* , in: *P. Poupard , dir., Dict . des religions* , PUF, 1984, 383, term comes from 'deus' (Lat.), god.

Herbert of Cherbury (1582/1648) gave the first exposition of this 'natural' religion in **De veritate** (1624), literally “On the truth”. He asserts: there exists a God, creator of all things, whom all people must worship, primarily by living conscientiously. That is the core of all religions, including (though perhaps

still imperfectly) the pagan ones.. Deism wishes to remain a purely natural religion but rejects both atheism and religious fanaticism.

The deism of the Enlightened minds becomes understandable from the beginning of their confrontation with “the prejudices, the coercion, the dogmas” of established Christianity. The 'enlightened' mind is guided by “reason,” which tolerates no revealed religion. Thus, J.-J. Rousseau - (1712/1778) states that reason is the sole authority regarding religion .

P. Bayle (1647/1706) writes that “the difference between deists and atheists is almost nothing”. The emphasis lies on the exclusive role of reason and its freedom of thought, stressed by the freethinkers .

Deism originated in England in the 17th and 18th centuries and spread to France and Germany, taking on extreme and moderate forms along the way.

JH Walgrave, *The Great Century of German Philosophy* , in: *Tijdschr. v. filosofie* (Leuven) 49 (Mar. 1987), 93, states in this regard that J. Kant (1724/1804), after his *Critique of the Pure Vernunft* opposed the scientism that could be derived from it, and defended the values of reason, based on a just, all-transcending God, with natural reason. Such reason grounds what it calls 'faith,' but naturally a rationalistic faith. This faith can be interpreted as a further elaboration of the deistic tradition.

The term 'God' in American political discourse is deistic. The Second Vatican Council (1962/1965) acknowledges that the emergence of deism is partly due to the substandard proclamation of the Biblical religion and the all too often unchristian behavior of Christians. Let us consider what follows in that light.

P. Bayle , in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1696), stemming from his skepticism and his critique of the sources of the Old and New Testaments, opened the way to a tolerant attitude towards religions based on an unbiased reading of the Bible, independent of established churches.

J. Locke (1632/1704), the father of the modern Enlightenment, published a work in 1695 on “a rational Christianity as revealed in the Bible”. He fiercely criticizes the development of Christian doctrine through, for example, a whole series of councils, proposing in its place “the simple and rational doctrine” that can be derived from the Gospels.

Note - P. Foulquié / R. Saint-Jean , *Dict . de la langue philosophique* , PUF, 1969, 157, states that the deistic term 'Supreme Being' is “rather indeterminate”. B. Pascal (1623/1662) is quoted in his *Pensées* (1670): “All those who seek God outside of Jesus Christ (...) fall either into atheism or into deism, two things which the Christian religion rejects almost equally strongly”.

H. de Lubac , *Sur les chemins de Dieu* states: “The God of deism is the God of several modern ' theodicies ' (note : theories that defend God) who judge Him and fathom Him rather than 'defend' Him. Of that God, one does not know whether He can still say: “I am” (*Exod. 3:14; John 8:24; 8:28; 3:19*). (...) He is simultaneously stripped of his mystery, a God made to measure for us and defined by our ideal. He is confused with the “moral order of the universe” as a human being might conceive of it.”

12.3.3. Religion (s).

Library st. :

-- Fr. Heiler , *Hrsg., Die Religionen der Menschheit in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* , Stuttgart, 1959;

-- W. Schmidt, *Origine et évolution de la religion (Les théories et les faits)*, Paris, 1931;

-- P. Poupard, *dir ., Dict. des religions* , PUF, 1984,1421/1425 (*Religion*).

'Religion' .

According to Heiler, the term ' religio ' was borrowed from pre-Christian usage by Christendom, and very early on. ' Religio ' (verb: re.ligere) means “to attend to something with care”. This is in contrast to ' neg.ligere ', to neglect. Once in contact with all that is 'holy' ('sacral'), religio means “to attend to the holy (Heiler uses 'the numinous ' with care).

'Religion' .

Schmidt defines it as follows: Given one or more sacred (he says: 'supernatural') powers acknowledged as personal. Once in contact with them, man reacts with the awareness of being dependent on them. As a scientific object, 'religion' is the totality of externally verifiable acts—prayer, sacrifice, sacraments, liturgy, mortification (asceticism), moral precepts—in which the inner conviction regarding the sacred expresses itself.

This definition is nuanced because it prioritizes two facts:

1. power, of which Heiler says that it is numinous , i.e., “filled with a force exceeding nature (understand: life force)”;

2. Personal: “We posit ‘personal power’ – according to Schmidt – for one

can consider oneself dependent on an impersonal power, yet only in such a way that one cannot maintain a dialogical contact with it. Whether it concerns a material force such as the cosmos or an inviolable law of an intellectual nature, it amounts to the same thing, for such things are slow and mute. If contact must be mutual contact, then in no case with such things.”

Thus, according to Schmidt, the oldest Buddhism cannot be a religion insofar as it denies every personal deity. It is a 'philosophy'. The situation is different with later and popular Buddhism, which acknowledges an unmanageable number of deities within its all-encompassing grasp.

'Religion' . – M. Despland , in **Dict . des religions** , starts from a provisional definition which he borrows from E. Durkheim (1858/1917), the founder of the French school of sociology: “A religion is a solidary system of beliefs and practices that apply to sacred things”. – However sociological it may be, paying attention to groups, the sub-term “sacred things” cannot be eliminated.

Approaches.

The three definitions above already demonstrate that the same given can be approached in different ways. This has led some to conclude that there are as many definitions of 'religion' as there are authors. This is a mistake: apart from secondary elements, the essence of religion returns time and again: given (the sacred) and requested (a response to the sacred).

Schmidt defines his approach as “comparative historical science ”. – 'Comparative' means that one does not adhere to exactly one religion (a 'theologian' of a religion does this) but in principle studies all possible concrete approaches to the sacred with the openness required to do so. In doing so, one aims to uncover a general concept of 'religion'.

Historical **Science**

'Historical science' means going back to the very beginning of religious facts. This does not imply following a purely chronological order, but it does mean that, just as the entire culture has a history—including developments and declines—so too do religions have their own history—revealing their essence—with rises and falls.

Note: With the term “comparative historical science, ” Schmidt distinguishes himself from, for example, psychology, sociology, or the philosophy of religion. He assigns his field a distinct place within the entirety

of the sciences that have religion as their object. It is more or less in this sense that we wish to present a number of short chapters to the reader so that—through a series of small-scale samples—he gradually develops a general and 'real' concept of 'religion' in his mind.

12.3.4. “For lack of evidence”.

Bibl . st.: A. Maeder, *L'absence de preuves* , in: *Le Temps* (Geneva) 21 October 2003, 44.

The author is an astronomer. We rewrite his text and apply it to the realm of the sacred.

Axiom. - In the absence of proofs, both formal logic and life wisdom compel the absence of unambiguous derivation.

Application . - In the absence of proof, both formal logic and common sense compel the deduction that this is no proof of the absence of a problem situation.

Models. - Today, the international research community finds itself in a multitude of such applications. - Which necessitates the application of the precautionary axiom .

1. The problem of harmful electromagnetic radiation.

To date (2003), there is no apodictic (meaning: irrefutable) evidence for the proposition that they cause harm to humans—via installations or cell phones . Nevertheless, this absence of irrefutable evidence is not proof that there is an absence of harmfulness. The precautionary axiom calls for caution.

2. The problem of genetically modified plants.

This problem—the cause of sometimes very heated disputes—has not been scientifically investigated nearly sufficiently. From the absence of apodictic evidence that such plants are harmful to the environment, other plants, animals, or humans, it cannot be logically deduced that there is an absence of harmfulness. With the deduction : precautionary measures.

3. The problem of global warming.

To date, there is an absence of apodictic evidence for the proposition that there is an absence of warming. However, indications in one direction are accumulating, namely: a rise in average temperatures, an increase in the number of dog days, a weakening of snowfall, melting of glaciers, and a shrinking of polar ice caps.

Result:

The number of experts denying global warming is decreasing. But in the meantime, the fact remains: the absence of global warming cannot be used to conclude that global warming is absent. Consequence: as long as doubt persists, precautionary measures are necessary.

Apodicticism is not yet universally accepted.

Maeder quotes M. Planck (1858/1947): “Theories never die on the basis of rational counter-evidence. They do die on the basis of the disappearance of their last defenders.” In practice: against any of the theories mentioned, as well as against other theories, a stubborn expert can always find refutations, so that confusion persists among experts and thus—at least in appearance—a theory that is true thanks to apodictic proofs nevertheless does not garner universal agreement.

Conclusion. – In the absence of evidence, one can of course always reject a proposition. But – and Maeder emphasizes this – even with theories supported by a comprehensive body of evidence, a stubborn expert can always obstruct progress. This is what we see in the debate regarding the human consequences of mad cow disease, tobacco smoking, unleaded gasoline, and nitrates. – Maeder concludes: let us remain critical of 'experts' and apply the precautionary axiom .

Note - One of the basic arguments against religion states: “There is an absence of proof in favor of all that is called holy.” And by 'proof', most opponents understand “scientific proof,” preferably of an apodictic nature.

They are right, insofar as there is indeed an absence of strictly scientific—understand: irrefutable and universally accepted—proofs. But let them consider what Planck and, following in his footsteps, Maeder state: even in the presence of proofs, there are always stubborn experts who attempt to refute those proofs “against their better judgment” (one should say). If the critics of the absence of strictly scientific proofs in favor of religion were to take into account what can be seen within the strictly scientific domain, they would demonstrate that they are not applying double standards.

12.3.5. 'Primitive' mentality .

Bible st. : G. Welter, *Les croyances primitives et leurs survivances (précis de paleo-psychologie)* , Paris, 1960,32/42 (*La pensée primitive*). –

To begin with, the author takes a stand against L. Lévy-Bruhl

(1857/1939), who, in two voluminous books, attempted to prove that the 'mentality', or the axiomatics, of the peoples initially dismissed as 'savages', was 'prelogical', situated before the later, 'logical' (understand: modern) cultural stage. Fierce discussions followed for years. Yet in his *Carnets* (only published in 1949), he notes: "In fact—for at least twenty years—I no longer use 'prelogical', which caused me so much trouble." With this, Lévy-Bruhl, as an honest scholar, admitted his error.

Primitive way of thinking .

In the same *Carnets*, he wrote: "It is impossible to attribute to the primitives a distinct mentality that is solely their own." Welter vehemently opposes such an opinion. He considers the way of thinking of the primitives to be so inherent to their nature that he could do nothing other—so he says—than dedicate a separate discipline to it, namely paleopsychology .

Note - It should be noted that Welter thereby reduces the primitive mentality to a matter of psychology. Which is highly open to criticism. - He relies on a statement by V. Cousin (1792/1867): "Reasoning is merely an instrument that is equally useful for false as for true statements".

Note - This does not articulate the essence but the usefulness of logical thinking and living, and underestimates its inherent validity.

Primitive logic .

Welter argues that wild logic masters it as an instrument just as well as we do. Take the Australian Aborigines, for instance: their marriage system is very complex, but their deductions from its presuppositions are strictly justified. Welter deems their presuppositions 'irrational', 'untrue'.

Note - Welter speaks like a strictly modern man, radically convinced of the exclusive value of modern thought.

Preliminary positions

The axioms of the primitives are false for two reasons: they think 'synthetically' and 'animistically'. – We will now briefly discuss this.

1. The primitives confuse what we moderns keep separate. Welter calls this 'synthetic' as opposed to 'analytical'. The visible and the invisible, the part and the whole, the model and the original, the name and the one who bears the name, things and their mana (occult life force) – the past and the present, the present and the future, the distant and the near are confused.

The primitive immediately thinks concretely: an inhabitant of the Indian Ocean, for example, says “my/ your/ his knife” but cannot say “a knife” as an abstract term, while that same Oceanian lists eighty-seven seashells.

Note - Welter refutes this, because although the Oceanian says “my knife”, “your knife”, “his knife”, he invariably repeats 'knife', which is the identical and therefore abstract term!

Note - The listed 'confusions' are further made understandable in Welter's solid little book from an axiomatics that, while not modern, is still valid, namely within occultism (although not always as primitives put it).

2. Primitives experience all that exists as 'mana', charged with mysterious life force. Welter equates life force with soul and calls the prepositioning of mana 'animism'. Terminologically, that is his prerogative, but it is subject to criticism: the same soul can first be mana, charged with force, and through black magic no longer be charged with force. One should therefore not too readily confuse 'dynamism', the prepositioning of mana, and 'animism', the prepositioning of soul.

Welter, who furthermore gives wonderful examples in his booklet of both dynamism and animism, calls such a view of the world and life “unpredictable, never necessary, always unexpected and arbitrary” (oc, 36s.). Naturally, this is based on his modern axiomatics, which fundamentally rejects dynamism and animism as false.

Nevertheless, he states: the primitive (the magician) creates order by being able to control and direct mana, and, for example, combat mischief-causing life force and favor salvific power. He calls this 'magism', i.e., the practice of magic (control of life force). However, in Welter's eyes, such the establishment of order is unmodern and therefore untrue.

12.4. Religion and magic

12.4.1. Magic and religion

Oc, 66/68. - The prioritization of life force (manaism) results in magism and magic. This is - according to the author - “the skill of influencing, by means of appropriate rites (sacred acts), the situation, the course of events, or the behavior of individuals” (oc, 66).

Note - This description does not provide a true definition but mentions a few notable applications of magic.

Magic is not a religion.

Welter indicates two differences.

1. The magical rite achieves its goal solely on the basis of the rite itself. “That is precisely what distinguishes it from the religious rite” (ibid.), which is first and foremost faith in a higher power. If it achieves its goal, it is thanks to the fervor of the religious person who relies solely on a non-human power that answers prayer. - In summary: “Magic compels; religion can only plead” (ibid.).

The author does admit that a certain analogy (partial similarity and connection) connects magic and religion, but “this is merely an illusion” (sic).

2. The magical rite differs from Christian rites. This is because magic is essentially 'amoral', that is, disregarding morality: it seeks only material and selfish benefits. These are “perhaps justifiable” if, for example, they involve the healing of a sick person or a successful harvest, but to be condemned if, for example, they aim at the killing of a fellow human being. The result determines whether or not magic seeks to achieve 'good'.

Thus one regularly hears speak of “the religion” of the Bambara , “the religious rites” of the Kanak or of the Jivaro . Whoever speaks in this way speaks improperly. One may speak of 'belief' to indicate the anxiety or the hope that animates these primitives. For they do not ask a deity to put an end to their worries or to fulfill their expectations. For they themselves hold the instrument in their hands to achieve the goal, and if they do not achieve it, then the instrument, the magical rite, has been mishandled.

Witness remains. - Welter states: magistic rites dominated life in the archaic period but are far from having disappeared in the course of evolution. They went hand in hand with polytheistic religions (which prioritized a multi-goddom), and the 'average' Christian believed for a long time—and sometimes still believes—that the gestures of the officiating priest possessed an intrinsic value. Moreover: amidst our modern societies, one encounters strange forms of superstition.

Note - What would Welter say of our current New Age? For example, the client in Parisian haute couture asks that the 'virgin' (' vierge '), the youngest of the 'little hands' (" petites") mains ”), spits into the hem of the garment being

finished. Rites of this kind never change while religions evolve. Thus Welter .

Paradox.

Welter says : “In summary: primitive magic is the acquaintance with and the control of spirits” (oc, 68).

Note - If one now knows what high role “the spirits” (deities, ancestors, nature spirits, deceased mages) play within the system of a primitive culture - and Welter knows this too - then this clearly conflicts with the non-religious image he portrays of primitive (and of all) magic : even if magic believes in its own efficiency, the mage still usually appeals to higher powers and is not exclusively autocratic but also genuinely religious.

Paradox

Welter states that magic is “by definition” amoral but neglects the – sometimes elementary – conscience that all connoisseurs of magic – the primitives included – establish if they take the trouble to observe themselves as participants (“ participating ”). observation ”). In his work, the author gathers an enormous mass of genuine data, but as a modern and therefore all too detached observer. So detached that the facts themselves do not come into their own in their full givenness. Now, he is far from alone in this: very many modern observers are so convinced of the superiority of Western thought that they reduce everything that is religion, and especially magic, to what they project onto it, namely their own presuppositions, which they impose on the data, in the belief that they possess “the truth” on the matter .

12.4.2. Primitive folklore

Oc, 198/207 (*Le folklore des primitifs*). - A common definition of 'folklore' reads: “the collection and system of non-material cultural achievements characteristic of non-literate or agricultural societies ”. Religious beliefs , rites, worship, celebrations, and stories are mentioned as folkloric cultural expressions .

Welter translates this as “traditional folk wisdom”. He refers to two interpretations:

- 1 . folklore includes only oral folk literature;
2. Folklore also includes cultural expressions such as customs , rural architecture, traditional tools, and rituals (see A. Van Gennep (1873/1957; *Manuel de folklore français contemporain* (1937/1958)). Welter considers this second definition too broad and limits himself to everything that has aesthetic value in the creative activity of primitives (aesthetic folklore). The scope is oral

texts, songs, music, dance, and plastic arts . We will consider a few models he cites.

Magic word or power word .

True poetry, but texts charged with life force, is found in the Indian Vedas, for example. The Russian people—according to the author—preserved this type most vividly. Let it be quoted as a fragment: “I shall clothe myself with clouds. I shall gird myself with the dawn. I shall bow like the rising moon. I shall adorn myself with countless stars.”

Incidentally: the magical intention is that the one who speaks in this way attempts to appropriate the life forces in clouds, dawn, rising moon, and stars. But Welter keeps faltering on its poetic nature. – Words of power are sometimes expressed in a language that no one understands anymore. Welter gives as a model the 'prayers' that cattle breeders in Western France 'recite' in the stables for the sake of the animals' well-being: Latin and Old French sounds merge therein with totally incomprehensible 'words'.

Ritual drama

Russian folklore takes center stage here, with full dramatic action taking shape in a very meticulous place devoted to words, gestures, and songs. Take, for instance, the wedding play that lasts for hours, filled with a series of scenes such as the steps the matchmakers take at the girl's parents' house, the abduction, and the grief at leaving her parents. All of this intertwines with countless songs that express the emotions of all those involved.

Magic or power drama .

The wedding game, however, is more than aesthetic: it is charged with life force (' mana ') that drives out evil spirits, favors abundance in children, ensures home safety, and underpins the fertility of plants and livestock.

Welter cites *Evreinoff* , *Histoire du théâtre Russian on* .

At the end of the 19th century, Eveinoff encounters a village where virtually everyone was illiterate. Yet all the girls were capable of performing the complete wedding game—including all the words and songs as well as the entire rite in the church. It is worth mentioning that the rural folk, although deeply attached to the Orthodox Church, only regarded a church wedding rite as fully 'valid' if it was 'reinforced' by a wedding game—apparently charged with life force (mana).

Animal story.

Some religions give rise to this. Such as totemism, which posits a sacred—understand: power-laden—animal as the source of life force for a group. Thus also that Hindu religion that upholds 'metempsychosis', the transmigration of the soul of a deceased person into an animal, as a dogma.

A frequent theme is the “out-of-body soul”. A ‘giant’, a ‘glutton’, a magician cause fear in the community. People chase after him, they kill him. But he is not truly dead with that, for one must kill his soul, usually having fled inside a little bird in a distant tree. In a Tatar story, two youths kill a female magician by tearing out her entrails; but she lives on. They ask her where her soul is. She answers: “Under my shoe sole in the form of a seven-headed snake”. One of the youths chops the sole in two with a sword and cuts off the seven heads of the snake with it: the witch is dead .

Note - This is the veiled depiction of the magical battle against a black magic figure: the resistance of black magicians or sorceresses follows a similar pattern: one eliminates; one keeps eliminating, but the witch reappears time and again until one radically eliminates its soul. The story is a model of such an original.

12.4.3. Manism(s).

Library st.: W. Schmidt, *Origine et évolution de la religion* , Paris, 1931, 88/104 (*Le manisme*).

'Manes' (Lt.) means “shadows of the dead” or also 'underworld'. - H. Spencer (1820/1903) developed the sociological theory of A. Comte (1798/1857) but evolutionarily: seven years before Ch . Darwin, he published *The Development Hypothesis* (1852), in which he advocates the idea of evolution not on the basis of facts but as an ontology (theory of reality). Peculiar: he recognizes virtually no decline: to such an extent, evolution is in his eyes purely progress. -- Religious specialists gave Spencer a cool reception.

Spencer's theory is the most comprehensive and radical form of ' Evemerism ', the religious theory of Ehemeros (Evemerus (4th/3rd century BC)), whose work, written around 270 BC, enjoyed great popularity in antiquity. Main thesis: ancient rulers and deified heroes were worshipped as deities over time on the basis of their deeds.

Schmidt summarizes what Spencer's work *Principles of Sociology* (I (1876), II (1882), III (1896)) says on the subject .

Fundamental Theory

There is no exception: 'ancestor worship' in the broadest sense means "worship of the dead". It is the common root of all religions. Behind the deities, behind all other higher beings, we always discover a human personality.

To the 'savage,' anything exceptional is something supernatural or divine. This is how he designates people who stand out from the crowd. For instance, the ancestor who is considered the founder of the group (tribe), the leader known for his strength and courage, the healer of great renown, the inventor of something important, or a stranger who was, for example, a conqueror.

Schmidt's assessment.

First of all: no religion consists exclusively of manism. This is always only one aspect of religion.

Schmidt then notes that the manisms reflect the stages of culture. - We reproduce what follows. - Most primitive cultures exhibit a Supreme Being who has neither wife nor family, and beneath that the ancestral couple who, once created by the Supreme Being, founded the tribe. This is the case with the Pygmies in Central Africa and Asia, the Australians in Southeast Australia, some Californians, the primitive Algonkin, and to a certain extent with the Koryaks and the Ainu.

Among the Australians just mentioned, the two ancestral figures appear in the form of two sexual totems (usually small birds), one of whom is the progenitor of all men and the other the ancestress of all women.

Note The term 'totem' comes from the Odjibwa (Great Lakes Indians), where 'ototeman' meant 'family members'. Totemism is highly controversial as a theory, but it refers to an undeniable reality: an object, plant, or animal plays the role of common founder of family ties (family, clan, tribe), such that every member is a totem bearer, respectively.

Among the Australians mentioned, the totems are involved in initiation rites in which the young people become like the ancestors and thus share the rights enjoyed by the active members of the group. The totems also participate in the rites that prepare for marriage.

The dead are often approached not with fear, but with love. Thus, for months, the surviving relatives, and especially the widow, carry bodily

remains—namely, the skull and the bones—with them as cherished memories. This is how it happens among the natives of the Andaman Islands and the Kurnai in Southeast Australia .

The African and Asian Pygmies leave their encampment when a member dies, not so much out of fear for the deceased, but out of deep reverence for the Supreme Being. This is the case with a premature death—which is frequent— which is interpreted as a punishment from the Supreme Being, whose wrath one flees in such instances. Among the Fuegians (South America), similar data are found.

Schmidt strongly criticizes Spencer's manism in general. However, he emphasizes that the ancestor, particularly the first man, in many cases pushes the leading role of the Supreme Being into the background, so much so that it seems to vanish. Something that Spencer failed to notice. Thus Schmidt.

12.4.4. The essence of magic.

Library st.: *Th. Van Baaren , Labyrinth of the Gods (Introduction to Comparative Religious Science)*, Amsterdam, 1960, 189/195.

The author begins by stating that there is considerable disagreement regarding the nature of magic, and defends his own interpretation in response.

Models .

The Papuan of the Trobriand Islands puts a great deal of magic into building his seaworthy canoe:

1. He knows very well that to be effective, his canoe must meet all natural requirements, for a poorly built canoe will prove unusable, even with all possible magic;
2. This does not prevent him from appealing to supernatural powers in building it.

The Eskimos (Alaska) perform ritual dances to ensure a successful catch:

1. they appeal to deities and spirits that can respond freely to their supplication;
2. Results are therefore not mechanically enforced.

Rhetorical theory .

Van Baaren appeals to the English scholar Hildburgh . The latter pointed

out that in many cases, magic is a kind of demonstration, as is evident from Japanese customs. A fire breaks out. One pours out a bowl of water—not in the conviction that the ritual of pouring out water will extinguish the fire within itself, but to actually convey an idea to higher beings: one persuades them not only in thoughts, nor only in words, but also in deeds. One ritually shows what one wishes, in a visual manner. That is 'magic' according to Van Baaren in most cases. Magic is therefore not contrary to religion, but a form of religion!

Note - Rhetoric is the skill of conveying a message. In this case: a message, expressed in deeds (rituals), directed to higher helpful beings.

Mythical origin .

The Ewe , a people in Togo, have an origin story regarding magic. - In the beginning there was God. Man lived with Him. When man came to live on earth, he could no longer ask God directly for help. Thereupon God created the magical power and ritual so that man would save himself in times of need. - In other words: according to the Ewe , magic is of divine origin.

A popular image .

The magician who acts arbitrarily and achieves results with automatic certainty is a concept dating back to late antiquity. Through the Renaissance and the 17th century, this theory has come down to us and has, to a certain extent, become commonplace. There do exist a kind of magical practice—on an international scale—that is virtually the same everywhere, and which is supposed to ensure a “mechanically certain” result. The concept of commonplace applies to this, but—as Van Baaren argues —the rites in question are merely a byproduct of religion.

Pseudoscience

E.E. Tylor (1832/1917) and J.G. Frazer (1854/1941) state that magic is a pseudoscience and is therefore doomed to failure. Magic is thus judged from the perspective of the concept of “modern science.” This is, of course, open to criticism, because in fact, magic is not a technique to achieve results using non-scientific means (unless in the popular sense mentioned above).

Magic and dynamism .

RR Marett and A. Bertholet interpret magic dynamically , i.e., as the application of the belief in life force. However, they contrast this with what they call 'animism' and 'religion'. In other words: magic is working with life force but without higher beings. Van Baaren considers this an exaggerated

interpretation of dynamism. That theory fails to answer the question: “If magic is merely the control of impersonal life force, why is it that in virtually all magic as it is actually practiced (except for popular magic), appeals are made to higher beings—spirits?”

Conclusion . - Van Baaren concludes that rain magic (to achieve desired weather obtain), war magic (to subdue the enemy), fertility magic (to produce offspring) and similar more religious rites encompass that achieve results but not flawlessly, autonomously, and mechanically.

12.4.5. Religion and secularization .

Bible st. : M. Hunyadi, *Le chef-d'œuvre de Max Weber questionné* , in: *Le Temps* (Geneva) 29.11.2003,46. –

M. Weber (1864/1920) publishes in 1904/1905 *Die Protestant Ethics und der Geist des Kapitalismus* , a work that is fundamental to scientific sociology . His method avoids the boundaries of those sociologists who reduce sociology to a natural science, and transcends the humanistic method of W. Dilthey (1833/1911), who emphasized the psychology of experience. Following in the footsteps of J. Droysen (1808/1884), Weber holds the understanding (' Verstehen ') of culture with its values in very high regard, with the understanding that he does not place the experiences of individuals at the center, but attempts to develop an ' Idealtypus ', a kind of comprehensive concept of culture.

A French translation .

Hunyadi connects with the new translation by J.-P. Grossein, a sociologist of religion and expert on Weber, who attempts to fathom Weber.

The issues.

Weber attempted to analyze the contribution of Protestant morality to the emergence of modern capitalism. His answer was: there exist “preferential affinities” between the code of conduct of Protestants—especially of Calvinists—and the “ethos” (understand: behaviors, customs, and mentalities) of capitalists. The comprehensive method and its ideal types focus on these.

Weber views, on the one hand, Protestant (especially Calvinist) religion as a secular religion that focuses primarily on this earthly world, and on the other hand, capitalism as a 'rational' (meaning: attuned to the secular) calculating way of life. By classifying such religion as a presupposition of an economic phenomenon, Weber distinguishes himself from the Marxist (meaning:

historical-materialist) interpretation of the economy, which views the latter as the product of the mutual material relations of people. Weber therefore does not regard the class in which a person is situated as the exclusive factor in the sociological and economic spheres, as Marxism does.

“ *Entzauberung der Welt* ”.

to replace the classic French translation of that term, namely “*désenchantement du monde*”, with “*démagification du monde*”, but he ultimately stuck with the established translation. We translate this as “disenchantment of the world”: through the turn of Protestantism and modern capitalism towards this earthly world—which is called 'secularization', 'worldification', even 'worldization'—one of the typically 'modern' types of religion (and of capitalism) emerged. The traditional sacredness that previously—in what is also called “pre-modern religion and capitalism”—gave earthly activities their essence as “a heavenly canopy”, becomes 'nothing' or “the great void”, or, less secularly, a 'deism' (which posits a vague 'God') or an appendage as a remnant witness of pre-modern life within earthly life.

Vulnerable points. Hunyadi names the five great ones.

1. How can ideas or articles of faith influence daily—and economic—life?
2. Is Weber now a materialist or a non-materialist by daring to undertake such analysis?
3. What kind of causality do the preference relationships exhibit? Specifically: did capitalism prefer Protestantism or did Protestantism prefer capitalism? Why? How?
4. Does the interpretation of both cultural aspects, Protestantism and capitalism, stem from their conception of the sacred and the divine, respectively, or from their psychology?
5. What role does the irrational play in human behavior? Immediately: how to define 'rational'? To what extent is capitalism rational? To what extent has Protestantism contributed to 'rationalization' (understand: secularization)?

What is correct 'to understand'?

According to Hunyadi, a first and a second reading are possible.

1. One reads Weber's work and acquires information about the similarities between Protestantism and modern capitalism.
2. One reads with Weber how those similarities, which in themselves cannot be materially established, can be demonstrated and with what kind of proof. In other words: one grasps what 'understanding' might be!

12.5. Subtle forms and entities

12.5.1. A fetish.

Bible st. : PW Schmidt, *Origine et évolution de la religion* , Paris, 1931, 86/88 (*La religion fétichiste*).

The Portuguese word 'fetiço' – from the Latin 'factitius' – is 'fetish' in our language. The Portuguese came into contact with West African cultures and observed the Negro -Africans using all kinds of objects, such as teeth, legs, tails, feathers, horns, shells, pieces of iron, rags, clay balls with pins, etc. The Negro -Africans venerate them, pray to them, and offer them as sacrifices. They expected results from this. However, they emphatically stress that this veneration in no way applies to the purely material.

Schmidt fetches A. Glyn Leonard, *The Lower Niger and its Tribes* , London , 1906. He denounces the irresponsible use of language regarding 'fetish'. The visible and tangible object “contains within itself or represents the deified ancestors of the family, the tribe, or the group”.

The language used by Glyn Leonard suggests that 'fetish' means “magical object” (which is correct), - 'amulet' (which is an application, namely “magical object as protection”); - 'throw of fate' (which is a malicious application).

Element.

Nowhere in the world—not even in West Africa, the quintessential region of what is called “fetishism”—does the entire religion merge into the engagement with a fetish. It is not even the main component of the religion.

Schmidt states.

1. In West Africa, a sky god is worshipped as the highest being with sacrifices, prayers, and rites, together with his highest wife, the earth. From their unity a multitude of deities arise.

2. In addition—and almost on the same level —ancestors and princes or village chiefs are worshipped. These are often worshipped with great massacres of people . All these higher beings occasionally inhabit both their images and any material object whatsoever that—after processing—becomes a fetish.

Fetishism

Ch. de Brosses (1709/1777) in his work , *Du culte des dieux fétiches ou*

parallel de l'ancienne religion de l'Egypte avec la religion de la négritie , Paris, 1760 , sees fetishism as An first phase in the development of religions . -

A. Comte (1798/1857; founder of positivism) in his *Cours de philosophie Positive* , Paris, 1884, likewise views fetishism as the first phase (followed by polytheism and monotheism), but within a new conceptual framework. Comte designates the sun, the moon, and the earth as “the great fetishes”.

J. Lubbock (1834/1913) in his *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man* , London, 1870, following in Comte's footsteps, posits that after an atheistic phase, a fetishistic religion emerged. - It is curious that neither Comte nor Lubbock had any notable followers.

Schmidt .

Fetish belief does not exist anywhere as a separate religion. As such, it cannot be interpreted as the first phase of religion. Moreover, fetish belief does not originate in very primitive cultures, but within tribes that already possess a more developed civilization. Primarily, these are the Negro -Africans in what was once called 'Upper Guinea', the Polynesians, the Dravidians in India, a series of Native American tribes in the south of North America such as the Pueblos and the Maskogi , as well as the Algonkins and the Sioux, who, for example, have pouches containing 'medicines'.

Conclusion

The term 'fetishism' means either the belief in fetishes or the theory concerning them (de Brosses , Comte , Lubbock). Although fetishism has been discredited as a comprehensive theory, quite a few people still use the term to designate a religion.

A model.

J. Lantier , **La cité magique **, Paris, 1972, 194, writes: “In regions where fetishists and followers of Islam, who are much more evolved, live side by side, similar jewelry does not have the same meaning. What is intended to ward off evil spirits in fetishist women becomes a means of seduction for followers of Islam.”

Incidentally: Islamized women are very rarely veiled. Immediately, the mouth is freed from its reinforcements. Only the nose and the ears bear adornments which, moreover, are no longer ordinary objects but jewels with economic value.

And, when speaking with Africans or acquaintances using the Afrikaans language, one very easily hears, for example: “He consulted a fetishist ” to indicate that he consulted a magician.

12.5.2. The 'yidam ' as a kind of thought form.

Library st.: J. Mann/ L. Short, *Het lichaam van licht* , Amsterdam, 1992 (or.: *The Body of Light* , New York , 1990).

In this work, three aspects of human existence are addressed:

1. the existence bound to the biological body (body and mental life);
2. the system of energies (called the "subtle body");
3. the pliable cosmic energy that is distributed everywhere (the “cosmic body”) .

The subtle or energy body is central: it is rooted in the physical body and, if it develops sufficiently, it is the cradle of the cosmic body that “the liberated human” acquires amidst the omnipresent cosmic energy. With this, we find ourselves in dynamism.

The authors note that regarding this threefold nature, there are numerous differences of opinion and different viewpoints spread across the globe. They attempt to bring some order to this tangle. Thus, they discuss the Hindu traditions first, and then the Buddhist traditions. Buddha himself dismissed all questions regarding divinity, reincarnation, and the like as irrelevant, and adhered to precisely one theme: awakening from the dream that is the world and life.

Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism, and especially Tantric Buddhism, developed concepts regarding the subtle body. Particularly since G.K. *Gyatso* , * *Clear Light of Bliss* *, London, 1982, it has become apparent that the subtle body, its chakras, and energy channels ('nadis') play a decisive role in Vashrayana or Tantric Buddhism. A difficulty is that the descriptions, insofar as they conceal non-essential data—left to oral teaching— also describe states of consciousness as 'bodies'. This is understandable to a certain extent, since every type of consciousness encompasses its own matter.

Special aspect .

Tantric Buddhism has its own aspects such as ' shod ' (a fierce rite), ' tulku ' (a reincarnating wisdom teacher), 'stupa' (a memorial monument), instruments (daggers, for example), and ' yidam '.

The daily exercises in self-liberation of students have as their basic Buddhist axiom “the creative void” from which all that exists arises . This does not prevent the students who live from that void and liberate themselves from needing both a guide and a higher level of existence.

The ' yidam ' plays that role. On the one hand, the yidam is a kind of bisexual deity (who is worshipped), and on the other hand, that 'entity' is merely an emanation or creation of the disciples themselves.

By way of comparison, the authors say: “In Christianity, no believer would ever think that the Virgin Mary forms a part of his deeper nature.” – The Yidam is in the disciples and at the same time outside, indeed, above them.

The yidam stands central to mental efforts. The authors call this entity an 'archetype', a kind of higher embodiment in and above the one who pays homage to it. The yidam is situated in a higher 'body', an energy ideal. One can make contact with it, indeed, gradually identify with it through rites and prayers.

A wisdom teacher

“It is incredibly reassuring—at the moment the need arises—to feel the presence of such a being, as a sort of benevolent or wrathful cosmic teacher-and-partner who takes over at the point where the human guru (wisdom teacher) fails” (oc, 51).

Note - Buddhism is essentially - certainly in the case of the historical Buddha himself - a humanism in the sense that divinity (if not absent, then at least) is highly subsidiary and human efforts and 'possibilities' are the basis. But the belief in a subtle body and in an energy-charged cosmos in which we bathe means that Buddhist humanism exhibits a dynamism - important in all traditional religions. In that sense, it is 'religious'.

The religious aspect is of course clearly present in Mahayana and Vashrayana Buddhism, but in such a way that they deviate significantly from the historical Buddha.

Whether something like a yidam makes sense within Christianity depends on the development of thought forms: these originate from man himself and reflect him, but gradually lead a kind of independent existence. A yidam is, after all, a thought form.

12.5.3. Demonic 'totality'.

Bibl . st. : *WB Kristensen , Collected Contributions to the Knowledge of Ancient Religions* , Amsterdam, 1947, 131/290 (Cycle and Totality).

In the first part, the sacred concept of 'cycle' is discussed (oc, 233/266). The second part speaks more explicitly of 'totality', meaning: the combination of opposites (good/evil, salvation/disaster, health/illness, for example, and their inverses). We will dwell briefly—too briefly—on the latter.

The connection.

The ritually conceived cycle—both local and temporal—expresses the 'eternally' recurring life that underworld —demonic—deities bestow upon earthly humanity. The cycle consists of a rite being performed from a point in time or space that returns circularly to its starting point. That is the sign. The signified is the life that knows ascent and descent, and again descent and ascent. When the sacred act has returned to its starting point, the cycle is 'finished', 'completed', 'perfect', for it encompasses ascent and descent, descent and ascent, i.e., the totality of what the demonic has to offer. The cycle is the expression of the very essence of the underworld deities controlling us.—More on which now.

A Babylonian model .

Anu was the supreme god, ruler of the universe. As such, he was the universal determiner of destiny. How did he do that? He bestowed the cycle, i. downfall (death), as well as ascent (resurrection) in the form of sickness/health, salvation/disaster, good/misfortune. That cycle repeated itself 'eternally' (understand: without any prospect of true deliverance from such a spiral of circles one after the other).

'Demonic' .

First of all, ethically. – Anu determined his own code of conduct by his own accord. What earthly people upheld as a code of conduct “was no law for the world leader” (oc, 272). Conscience in the Biblical sense was unknown to him – or at least of no value.

Then, in terms of fate .

His will was “the fate that instilled in people as much fear as trust—the two poles of the demonic concept of 'holy'” (ibid.).

Consequence: he was “inscrutable and unpredictable”. He was thus “the god of totality”. He was equally the origin of good as of evil and thus “harmony

(understand: merging or totality) of opposites.”

Thus we understand that Kristensen sets forth the 'sacred' cycle and the 'sacred' totality in the same chapter. They are the external appearance (cycle) of the origin of that external appearance (totality).

Scope.

Among most ancient (understand: ancient, i.e., pre-classical) peoples, the deities were 'sacred'. Such as the Greek Zeus, the Indian Varuna, the 'double' Fortuna in Rome, the Mazdean Ahura Mazda (Ormuzd). Kristensen claims that the God of Job was also equally two-edged. This is based on a misinterpretation, for although it appears that good and evil flow “from God’s hand,” the Biblical God is essentially conscientious and by no means the creative source of good and evil, a totality He abhors.

Sense of life.

“The deities mentioned were not righteous in the ordinary sense of the word (oc, 273)”. At the same time, they established laws for people and yet denied those same laws! Ancients, that is to say: pre-classical thinkers, were acutely aware of such a contradiction in the very essence of their deities. The Babylonian lamentations, the myth of bound Prometheus—the Book of Job in its own way—were the expressions of the ancient religious sentiment that reflected the duplicity in the sacred itself.

Dualism.

Kristensen, oc, 274, states that alongside such demonic views, what he calls a 'dualistic' view was also held, particularly in magical texts. Repeatedly, 'evil' deities are combated by appealing to 'good' deities. This entails the notion of two camps (hence the term 'dualism'). The author rightly observes that both camps are situated within the demonic totality: the 'good ones' are good because they help, even though they are just as unscrupulous and 'total' as the 'evil ones'!

12.5.4. Hermes as 'swindler'

HJ Rose, Hermes, in: *M. Cary et al., ed., The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford, 1950-2, 417f., states that Hermes was the 'god' (understand: patron) of those who use the roads, particularly merchants and also thieves. The author sees virtually no connection with the rest of the 'figure' (totality) that the god Hermes once was. Let us examine what Kristensen (oc, 123v.) says regarding this.

Scope.

Not only thieves and dishonest merchants but also “the great multitude of believers ” belong to the class that “knew very well that the divine thief, like the deceiver, was a divine figure”. This is evident from what Plutarch says: following the sacrifice to Hermes Charidotes in Samos, everyone was allowed to steal!

Kristensen's interpretation .

The celebrating ones were thus the visible representation of the essence and activity of the worshipped god.

Kleptein .

That ancient Greek term meant any form of outsmarting in the ancient sacred sense .

The myth .

For murdering Adonis, Ares lay in a metal 'vat' (a visible representation of the underworld) for thirteen months, destined to perish. Yet Hermes ' ex.eklepses ' Ares. Literally: “Hermes saved him by outwitting,” saved him from the grip of the punishing underworld! That is what Kristensen calls “the religious meaning” of the so-called 'stealing,' which in fact shows that Hermes controls life from the underworld.

Comparison .

The Babylonian god Ea saved the flood hero Utnapishtim by a ruse (in ancient Greek: ' ex. eklepses ') , not without incurring the wrath of other deities: he too managed to snatch the life of underworld deities through outwitting.

Orestes ' rescue .

Orestes murders his mother and thus falls into the terrifying power of the raging Erinyes, who drive him to madness. This means that he is no longer capable of earthly life, as he is already 'alive' in the underworld (which resembles death more). Yet, with Hermes, Apollo cleanses (catharsis) him in a mischievous manner and thus brings him back from the realm of the dead. Whereupon the Erinyes cry out to Apollo: “You have stolen, murderer!” In Greek: ' ex.eklepsas ', cunningly you have snatched.

In such a context, the most famous theft by the god Hermes becomes understandable: he stole the cattle of Hades, the Underworld, the metaphor for wealth and thus for the life of 'earth' (understand: the underworld).

The 'sacred' reason for the worship of Hermes Charidotes in Samos also becomes understandable: from the 'cave' (the underworld) he leads the goddesses of the blossoming-beautiful blessing of the earth to present it as a gift to earthly humanity. People live thanks to this deception and worship the 'divine' (demonic) deceiver by cunningly robbing their fellow men of goods during the celebration! Those fellow men could thus see the god visibly present at work in his worshippers! Pandora, who bestowed deceptive gifts upon humans, and Hermes are closely related figures.

Hermes was worshipped in Pellene as 'dolios', the deceiver. He deceives people by luring them to death. He deceives deities and divine beings (let us think of the Erinyes) by stealing life from the underworld.

The mystery.

Kristensen states: "The believers (of that time) acknowledged and accepted the ambiguity of the mystery of the earth god. Humanly speaking, our life is a deception. But that means only that we deceive ourselves when we think that life is nothing other than life." (Oc, 122ff.).

That (that interpretation of life on earth that Kristensen apparently adheres to) is the reason why he dwells on the similarity between Hermes as deceiver and Hermes as thief.

Note - With this, we measure the very large distance between ancient, pre-classical paganism, with its fundamentally tragic return of the same (good turns into evil and vice versa, life turns into death and vice versa, sickness turns into health and vice versa), and the Biblical concept of life that speaks of an 'eternal' covenant and an 'eternal' life, in which covenant and life are not susceptible to turning into the opposite (or "harmony of opposites").

12.5.5. From the mind dismayed .

Library: R. Airault, *Fous de l'Inde (Délires d'occidentaux et sentiment océanique)*, Paris, 2000.

Airault, a French psychiatrist (active in India for years), identifies two degrees of "being mentally distraught":

1. the shock that India generates in a first phase;
2. The showdown with India in later stages.

The first phase befalls every traveler upon arrival: even if one expected it, one loses contact with the real world to a certain extent, resulting in various signs such as anxiety, panic attacks, bewilderment, and depression.

A few weeks later, severe psychiatric problems manifest themselves. A brief phase of feeling strange accompanied by disturbed moods ushers them in. This is followed by depersonalization (loss of one's own personality), strange (usually mystical) thoughts, and a vague sense of no longer being able to escape it.

Peculiar: once one is back in one's own country, one usually retains a “good memory” of it and often has only one desire: “Back to India”!

Behold what the author calls “the Indian syndrome”. He sees similarities with the “ Stendhal syndrome ” (1783/1842; novelist), who undergoes an experience during a journey in Italy that he describes as 'sentimental' but which resembles the Indian syndrome. This Stendhalian syndrome persists to this day, as is evident from G. Magherini , **Le syndrome de Stendhal (Du voyage dans les villes) * d'art*), Paris, 1990.

In cities like Florence, for example, artistic tourists in particular are overcome by psychiatric symptoms while enjoying famous Italian paintings or sculptures, to such an extent that they require medical care.

Airault also sees similarities with what happens to Japanese tourists—since the late 1980s—in France, especially in Paris.

H. Ota , *Voyages et déplacements pathologiques des Japonais vers la France* , in: *Nervure* 6 (1988), describes as a Japanese psychiatrist affiliated with the Japanese embassy in Paris the “ maladie mentale”, the mental illness, that Japanese people contract during their stay.

After a few 'honeymoon weeks,' the symptoms emerge: suicide attempts, criminal outbursts, attacks, deep depression, depression with a mystical bent, morbid eroticism , delusions of persecution. Note well: Ota observes that this usually occurs in young people under thirty and almost always without a psychiatric history . They are difficult to treat and do not want to return to their homeland.

As Airault , oc, 14, says, cities in the Holy Land also give rise to similar phenomena : travelers—pilgrims—are overtaken in Jerusalem by states in which they imagine themselves to be Adam or Moses or Jesus or Mary—including a mystical mission.

Note - According to Airault , a peculiarity in India is that the Indian

syndrome usually sets in at the end of the tourist season, i.e. during April and May.

Note - The explanation provided by Freud's concept of "oceanic floating" posits that the affected individuals regress into the fusion of the baby with its mother as an ocean of well-being. Airault presents this as a subtitle. It is certainly possible. The question arises, however, whether this alone makes the entire syndrome understandable. The 'charged' places, the 'mystical' aspects presuppose more than mere psychoanalytic 'oceanism'.

Note - St. Zweig, *Amok*, Paris, 1998, is cited: “*This country eats away at your soul* (...).

After a sort of honeymoon period, you soon run out of strength (...). It lasts only as long as the energy brought from Europe is active. (...). Sooner or later, everyone suffers the death blow: some drink, others take opium, still others think of only one thing, pounding on it, and become brutal. In any case, everyone succumbs to their madness.”

If that is correct, then the “psychiatric symptoms” are the manifestation of a dynamic problem, namely a severe loss of vitality. But then they only become fully clear if one approaches them occultly.

12.6. Occult practices (1)

12.6.1. Ouija board and approaches.

Library st.: G. Govinda, *Ouija Book*, London, 1981-2. -

The author, an experienced occultist, warns of surprises awaiting those who try out, for example, a Ouija board without sufficient foreknowledge.

Barbara's experience .

On a late winter evening at a ranch in Connecticut, Barbara, a friend, ventures to the Ouija board. Barbara suggested starting without any preconceived notions. “However, I was surprised when the pointer began to swing violently around the board. (...). At the first word, 'fire', Barbara's face turned white. At the next, 'death', her hands began to tremble. When the pointer then settled on the numbers and began to reveal digits, she suddenly stopped and stammered: “I knew it. I knew it would turn out this way.”

Several minutes passed before she spoke again: she had kept that fear to herself for many years. (...). Finally, she said that twenty years ago she had dreamed of a fire in which her brother had met his death. Two days later he

died in a fire (...). She had become convinced that other relatives might also be facing a tragic death . In the same expectation, she had just placed her hand on the clock hand.” (Oc, 19f.).

The author's point of view

First of all, the Ouija board transmits all possible messages. Secondly, assume that those messages are answers to questions. Before we ask where the answers come from, we must question ourselves regarding the motives or drives—in the form of expectations, for example—that lead us to the Ouija board. For those approximations are the questions we ask, whether we like it or not. These manifest themselves in the movements of the pointer. Consequently, the clearer one sees one's own approximations, the faster one will be able to distinguish the distortions in the messages from the truths within them.

Model.

Barbara's approach to the totality of paranormal phenomena contributed to her unfortunate experience.

Original.

Likewise, our approaches are reflected in the answers of, for example, a Ouija board. Therefore, examine your presuppositions regarding yourself, your ability to handle what you can and cannot handle in life, good and evil. “Nothing is without importance. All your presuppositions and beliefs will become clearer when you try out the Ouija board.” (Oc, 21).

Application .

The author states that, had Barbara wished to question the board further, she might well have discovered—at least that was the author's strong suspicion—that the message concerning fire and death was not a literal prediction but merely a guaranteed means of attracting attention. According to Govinda , the board draws our attention to the hidden preconceptions we introduce when we try it out. “If we interpret the board in this way beforehand, and thus pay attention to our approaches and subject them to scrutiny, then we may well be startled by the messages, but in doing so learn and master the whole.” (Ibid.).

Note - We can agree with what the author says, indeed, extend it, as she indeed does, to all other paranormal sources of information such as reading coffee grounds, consulting a crystal ball, card reading, seeking out clairvoyants, etc.

Note - At the end of her work, the author devotes a chapter to moving beyond the Ouija board. The title reads: “ *Leaving the Ouija Board Behind*”

Some know almost immediately what the board will communicate. Others take weeks, months, or years. In any case, the board is merely a foundation that—so it states— is preferably abandoned as quickly as possible in favor of direct inspiration alone. We say “direct inspiration alone” because simultaneously with the external communication, there is always some inner and more direct inspiration at work, but which becomes perceptible in some earlier than in others.

Note - Naturally, a new question then arises: “If that comes from within myself - in the form of insights or ‘inner word’ - does it then come from ‘my unconscious’ or from a source of information that, although existing independently of me, draws upon my unconscious?”

12.6.2. Fragments from history. -

In *the Oracle's In Origins* (oc, 94/104) we highlight some aspects that shed some light on the extent of board and table communication .

***Paleophythagorean method* .**

The older Pythagoreans (-500/-300) practiced intellectual societies with frequent assemblies or 'circles'. Symbols were engraved on a stone slab. A small table on wheels moved towards the symbols. It is not clear from the accounts whether the participants in a circle around the slab touched the table with their fingers as is done today. In any case, the phenomenon was taken very seriously by the privileged few around the slab, who expected predictions or cosmic knowledge from it.

Since the days of Pythagoreanism , “the speaking table” was discovered in numerous forms and forgotten again. However, accessibility has increased. A Pythagorean group, like other groups of consecrated people or thinkers, was a very select group.

With the rise of Christianity came the official end of “such a kind of magic,” but it lived on in secret.

China.

In 1843, a French explorer returned from China, where the use of a type of planchette was so common that every household participated. A table or a

level floor was evenly sprinkled with fine bran or flour. Two people facing each other held a small basket to which a reed or chopstick was attached so that its end touched the table or the floor. Those present then summoned spirits while keeping the basket moving. The dragging reed or stick deciphered signs, figures, or messages.

Planchette .

Although the Chinese method remained limited to that country, the planchette could have evolved logically and naturally from table - rapping . Some researchers even subscribe to this theory regarding the origin of the planchette.

Around 1850, table knocking was commonplace among those spiritualists. They are convinced that the dead continue to live and may possibly come into contact with the living.

Table knocking

Table banging has a long and unclear history. It certainly dates back to the Mongols of the 13th century. A group of people sits in a circle around a small table. They hold their palms above the table while their little fingers touch the little fingers to the left and right of the other participants to create an uninterrupted, energy-charged 'circulation'. Spirits are summoned, and soon the table rises, wholly or partially, as a sign of the spirits' presence. The table legs touching the floor make a knocking sound that forms the basis of communication: one knock means 'no', two 'yes'. And so on.

One step further .

A pencil is attached to a small table no matter what. Paper is placed underneath it.

Note - In French monasteries for men and women, “the blackboard” was used to such an extent that a pastoral letter from the Bishop of Paris in 1856 prohibited the practice. However, tourists, for example from other countries, observed that it continued in secret!

Note - The reason Christianity banned the practice is that communicating with “the unconscious” or “the spirits” does not proceed without—sometimes severe—problems that may occasionally go so far as to affect those involved mentally as well. Not to mention religious and conscience issues.

St. Paul spoke — *Galatians 4:9, Colossians 2:8ff.* —of “the elements of the world” that can be anything but Christian and that apparently strongly

influence the world. Also through communication with “the unconscious” or “the spirits”.

Christendom, however, did not always take Christianity so seriously in this regard, as is evident from the history of morals. The 'elements' (understand: ruling beings and forces) of this world pretend to be “dear deceased” or 'scholars' or whatever else, and deceive naive people and, above all, rob them of their life forces. For the latter are frequently the sole target of “the unconscious” or “the spirits,” who lack life forces and seek to feed on those whom they unwittingly summon.

12.6.3. Lotworp based on reliance on an egregore .

Bible st. : L. Bernard d' ignis , *Traité pratique du désenvoûtement et du contre-envoûtement* , Rennes, 2002, 81ss. (*L'envoûtement par évocation*). -

A magician can activate his own malevolent energies to cast a lot. But he can also resort to the 'summoning' of an egregore . The author defines this term as “a kind of spirit-gifted entity that preys on a large number of persons, to whom it assures its daily nourishment of life force ” .

Application . - All major religions rely to a certain extent on an egregore .

Note - This may be true for all non-Christian religions, but it does not apply to the Biblical religion, since—where it is real—it draws its life force from the Holy Trinity. This does not prevent what is called “the communion of saints” from making its contribution.

Summons .

The author defines them as “a directing of well-defined life forces specific to an egregore thanks to conscious or unconscious worship”.

Specifically:

I wish to cast lots on someone; I know an egregore who specializes in evil casts, or at least lends himself to casting lots on occasion. I do what is necessary to establish contact and, above all, to win his favor. Indeed, there are types of egregores : some specialize in doing good, others in doing evil; still others in doing good now and evil at the next.

An invocation can only be established at a place that reveals strong 'telluric' (i.e., rising from the earth) life forces, at astrological (i.e., connected

with the energies and entities of celestial bodies) moments such as the phases of the moon, the sun, or the planets. One sees that the invoker secures themselves beneath their feet (telluric) and above their head (astrological). The invoker takes into account the cosmic beings, energies, and moments. He/she situates themselves in space and time.

A summons is performed above all by a group specialized for that purpose.
- The author specifies. That type of magic is rather suitable for important international groups. But political parties, for example, also practice it. -

“We thereby enter into a kind of occult war which, although silent, is certainly very violent. Faced with such an attack, the target has virtually no chance of survival” (oc, 82).

The author sees only one way out, namely an intervention characteristic of what he calls “high magic,” a type of magic possessing highly specialized knowledge.

the probability that the ordinary man who is not a well-known politician, a leading figure of a multinational corporation, or a star from the entertainment world will become a target to be non-existent. He immediately and indirectly indicates the targets of egregorical throws of lot.

Money

If the energies released by such an intervention are a hundred or a thousand times more powerful, the one who calls upon them will pay very large sums.

A private egregore .

It is feasible to establish a completely new egregore oneself, which, however, is fed energetically by a group specially formed and trained for that purpose. “The advantage of this technique is that ‘an occult machine’ created in this way is programmed from the outset with a view to very defined purposes” (ibid.).

Note - It is immediately clear that this involves considerable cumbersome work, considering what is already required by the simple summoning.

Note - Oc, 170/174 (*La haute théurgie*). - ' Theurgy ' comes from the ancient Greek ' theos ' (higher being, deity) and ' ergia ' (action). The theurge appeals to high entities which the author calls 'guardian angels' but in a non-

Christian sense for - so he says - these include the thirty-six 'rulers' whom one invokes with the effect of “enormous forces” which compel them to - sic - act well (which entails that they do both good and evil). Working with them entails a complete spiritual formation.

Note - The name ' theurgy ' has existed since late antiquity. It is a very risky undertaking because, since the high entities invoked are androgynous, there is a possibility that the one invoking will become subjected himself.

12.6.4. Magic figurines in a medieval context

Library st.: A. de Rochas , *L'envoûtement* , SECLE, sd ., 26/29.

Colonel de Rochas (1837/1914), once a brilliant student at the Ecole The Polytechnic of the French Army sets out in this small work some insights that can shed light on the mechanism of the lot (' envoûtement '), especially on the role of the magic figurine. French has a set of terms to refer to the magic figurine: dagyde , épargne , figurine , manie, poupée , voute , vols.

Definition.

A wax figurine, if made suitable for magical purposes, is a magic figurine.
- The text that follows is a rewriting of what the Rochas derives from tradition. He offers a paradigm, an application that suggests the general understanding.

The magistrate E. Falgairolle published **Un envoûtement en Gévaudan l'année 1347** in Nîmes in 1892. Gévaudan refers to the region around Mende, the capital of the department of Lozère . Falgairolle relied on the minutes of a trial in 1347.

Pépin , a priest of the diocese of Clermont, is accused of witchcraft and of casting lots on the bishop of Mende, in which he made use of a magic figurine – de Rochas cites an excerpt regarding this .

On November 24, Pépin is questioned by the commissioner of the ecclesiastical court in Mende. To begin with, he confesses that he possessed a ' grimoire ', a book of magic, which he had copied at a castle near Perpignan, the capital of the Pyrénées Orientales (French Catalonia). Four years ago, he stayed in Langeac where he, along with others, possessed the “philosopher's stone” (in French “ pierre”) . philosophale ”, “ fontaine d'or”, “ bois de vie ”).

Incidentally : the philosopher's stone is a (powdered) substance used by alchemists to transform base metals into gold; it is also the name for the skill

of finding such matter. That matter served to subdue spirits. – Therein lies a part of the magical context in which the priest operated.

The magic figurine.

Pépin acquires unused wax and takes it to Vedrines to the local physician. He stays there for six weeks. The day came when he personally kneaded the wax with warm water, without any other additive, into a figurine. During the creation, he held the magic book before his eyes. He spoke the necessary words.

He had not baptized the figurine (a common part of such effigy magic). However, he had “spoken a few words” while making the figurine.

The question was asked whether the bishop would suffer the harm done to the statuette, for example by removing a member from it. Pépin confirmed this. He answered in the affirmative the question of whether the bishop would die as a result of cutting off a member of the statuette. He even claimed that only he himself could prevent death in that case.

Inscriptions .

While creating it, he had written the names of “the angels of the Lord’s Dominations ” on the chest. He made the figurine on a Friday. The angel of that day is Anhoël . He had written his name on the chest along with six other angel names. On the forehead, he wrote the name of the bishop. “All this to apply the laws of expertise in the matter. ”

In secret, he inserted the figurine into an opening in the wall of the upper floor of the tower of the castle of Arzence . It was only supposed to 'work' during the month of January. He had done all this under pressure from the Lord of Apcher , who wanted to get rid of the bishop.

During the interrogations, he confessed that he had encountered magic books on his travels—especially in Toledo and Cordoba. One of them was by the King of Mallorca, well-versed in magic, entitled * *De naturalibus**, a work that the monarch himself had handed to him. In such works, one learns to make magic figurines and is told that if people and animals step on them, they die, and that if they are merely touched, they are dangerous. It was, moreover, his first figurine: he was merely a beginner.

Declaration . -

Pépin could not provide a genuine explanation. Therefore, Rochas turns to

Paracelsus (1493/1541) in his work **De ente*. spirituum* . — Apparently, the notorious occultist posits a traditional threefold structure — thus De Rochas : the immortal soul; the material body; and the 'spirit'. De Rochas translates this as “agent nerveux ”, the cause associated with the nervous system. We prefer to translate this as “(occult) life force”. This is present throughout the entire body — all parts included — and serves to spread the will of the soul throughout the whole body. — This is now clarified by excerpts from Paracelsus ' work.

Definition .

The 'spirit' as Paracelsus describes it controls all parts of the visible and tangible body. Thus, for example, that spirit has hands and feet “like you” (as Paracelsus wittily puts it). If you are wounded, it is not your body that sustains the injury, but your spirit, even though the injury manifests itself visibly and tangibly in your body. That 'stigma' (understand: mysterious symptom) is caused by your spirit. If your spirit is in such a bad state that your body is in a bad state, then heal that spirit and your body will become healthy. If your spirit is 'killed', then it kills you.

Note - 'Spirit' apparently means what in other occult terminology is called the “etheric soul-body,” which indeed constitutes the life force of the biological body as an intermediate term between the immaterial soul, its “astral soul-body” on the one hand, and the biological body on the other.

Soul, angel, devil and spirit .

Spirit is a 'power' through which the whole body can be afflicted so that it is, for example, susceptible to all kinds of diseases. In this, neither the devil himself nor any of his influences (inspirations, for example) is the cause, “for the devil is not a spirit” (*De Ente* iv). Nor is an angel a spirit. Spirit is that which is active in the living 'body' which is our thought, without any matter. That which survives at our death is the soul. (Ibid.).

Mind and diseases.

The mind causes diseases in two ways.

1. Influenced by naturally given antipathy or other evil-favoring things, spirits work against one another outside of human will.

2. Through our ideas, senses, and will, we make minds sick. In that case, it is we who seek to do harm. A firmly determined attitude of will is the mother of the spirit that causes evil. (*The Ente* v).

Throw of lots.

It is feasible for my spirit to pierce or wound someone else with my dagger, and indeed without the aid of the body. In that case, my intense desire is the cause. Someone who wishes to harm himself can—because the throw of fate depends on the spirit—inflict upon himself the evil he wishes upon himself. It is also feasible for me, by virtue of my will, to capture the spirit of my opponent in an image and thus transform him into a deform or limping at will by means of wax.

Thus it happens that, by virtue of throws of lot, images are defaced with diseases such as feverish states, epilepsy, apoplexies (understand: severe hemorrhages in an organ), and the like, provided, at least, that these were prepared in the proper manner. (*The Ente* viii).

Suppose a battle between one spirit and another spirit. - If a wax figurine is covered with earth and stones, then the person who is its target is restless and tormented, specifically where the stones were piled up. He feels liberated when the figurine sees the light of day. If one breaks a leg of it, for example, the person intended by it suffers a fracture. The same applies to stabs and other wounds inflicted upon the figurine. (*De ente* vii).

Suppose one paints an image of someone on a wall. If it resembles the person intended, then it is certain that all the blows and injuries inflicted upon the painted object will reach the target.

The reason. – Through the will and mind of the one who paints, the mind of the target penetrates the image.

Consequence: whatever harm you demand that befall that man, he shall suffer it provided only that you inflict the same harm upon his image. This is because your spirit has fixed the spirit of the target in the image so that he is subject to you. (*De ente* ix).

12.6.5. Similarity and coherence.

S. de Guaita , Le temple de Satan, Paris, 1891, is cited.

1. **Similarity.**

The more similar the figurine, the greater the chance that the toss of the lot will succeed. In this way, all sacraments—baptism, confirmation, anointing of the sick—that the target can receive will be 'administered'. Drops of the ointment or pieces of a consecrated host reinforce this.

2. **Cohesion**

Nail fragments, a tooth, and hairs from the target are incorporated. The likeness is covered with a piece of cloth that was worn by the target for a long time.

The photo as a model .

de Rochas studied the relationship between a magnetized plate and the photographic plate of those days. According to *J. Lermine , L'envoûteur* , in: *Cosmos* 1892, the following occurs.

Between the body in front of the lens and the sensitive plate, a stream of particles arises that spring from the matter of the subject. The chemical process captures these particles. An unbreakable connection is created between the seemingly lifeless image and the living person. It is as if countless tiny fibers connect the two.

Consequence .

If the image is struck or torn, it affects the person photographed, who understands nothing of it: he suffers, complains, dies without knowing why.

Shadows .

According to a witness, H. de Balzac (1799/1850) is said to have asserted that every body in nature consists of series of shadows in endless layers, stacked one upon the other, in all directions from which a body can be viewed. Every photograph captures one of those layers, extracts it, and appropriates it. The result: with every photograph, the subject loses one of those shadows that nevertheless constitute a part of his being.

Note - Models are never the original itself, yet in this case they approximate what clairvoyance approximates seeing.

Note - Instead of a wax figurine, one can use other things according to the Guaita . - Such as a toad. One gives the animal the name of the target. For the rest, one applies the same rites as those used to work with a wax figurine. One ties the live toad with previously acquired hair (preferably from the target). One spits on it and buries it under the threshold of the target, or at least where the target must pass daily.

In South America, this method is applied in the belief that the target will die as if suffocated, as if the surrounding air suddenly froze and engulfed it, just as the earth engulfs the unfortunate animal.

Incidentally: missionaries, for example , establish that method.

Note - The “flying angel”. - Instead of a figurine or a toad, a hypnotized person is used. The subtle body is made to leave the biological body and directed—with a command, of course—at the target.

1. The expelled subtle body penetrates the target and—the order—stops the heartbeat so that it suffocates.

2. The subtle body is endowed with toxins in a subtle state, penetrates the target and – the instruction – poisons it. – Afterwards, the subtle body of the hypnotized person is made to re-enter and awakens him from his 'sleep'. –

Note - The flying angel can also be the soul of a deceased person, which is thus summoned and manipulated, as stated above, from a living person.

Note - This shows what 'black' magic is capable of. If the Rochas 's booklet has any use, it is this: to open our eyes to what our modern and postmodern contemporaries do not see, indeed, do not even want to see.

12.7. Occult practices (2)

12.7.1. Nocturnal erotic-magical visits.

One of the most controversial beings, yet repeatedly established by those in a position to know, is called ' incubi ' (male visitors) and ' succubi ' (female visitors) in Latin . These visits are invariably erotic-magical visits, whether or not accompanied by occult conceptions . - A word on that.

Basic *insight*

An Italian theology professor from the 17th century, *Sinistrari d' Ameno* , says the following in his work on ' demonicity '. The devil—whatever he may understand by that—has two ways of having sexual intercourse with humans:

1. With magicians and sorceresses he commits such act only after a solemn profession of faith whereby one surrenders oneself to demonic possession;

2. people, men and women, totally averse to such consent. - Sinistrari adds: “It is an established fact that every now and then children are born who are big, strong, brave, beautiful, and wicked.” (*F. Boutet, dir ., Dict. des sciences occultes* , Paris, 1976-2, 182s.).

Succuben .

According to *C. Rager, Dict. des fées et du peuple invisible dans l' occident*

païen , Turnhout, 2003, 883s. (Succube), is a succube – literally 'underlying one' – a female demon who has sexual intercourse with a man at night.

Medieval texts testify : noblemen, for example, saw very beautiful women entering their rooms with sexual intentions through closed doors and windows.

Incubate

According to the same dictionary, oc, 489 (Incube), an incube —literally ' overbearer' — is a demon that engages in sexual intercourse with women at night. In medieval texts, such beings are designated by a multitude of terms: *ducus* , *faunus* , *ficarius* , *homo silvestris* , *larva* , *pilosus* , *satyrus* , *silenus* , *sylvanus* . These are Latin terms that emphasize an aspect. For example, sexually needy (*ficarius* , *satyrus*) , nature spirit (*faunus*), forest dweller (*homo silvestris* , *sylvanus*), nocturnal black magician (*larva*).

The dictionary states that among the ancient Romans these figures were spirits from nature (understand: in its occult dimension), but which over time—under pagan and especially Christian influences that linked eroticism with demonism—were labeled as 'demons' or 'devils'.

Merlin the Wizard.

The dictionary mentioned views Merlin the Wizard as a 'child' of that kind of sexual union, as he is described as the son of a woman and an incubus . - o. c . , 648/653 (*Merlin l'Enchanteur*), gives a long explanation of which we reproduce a part.

Merlin's mother—according to the Breton romances—was very beautiful but refused to marry, convinced that if she lay in bed with a man, she would die. In a text dating from 1215/1230, it is stated that she eventually goes to bed with a stranger after he has convinced her that she will enjoy his body but never see him. They become the parents of a child who is unpredictable and depraved. Satan hopes to make him his servant but fails: his mother feels remorse and, in her repentance, delivers Merlin from the demon. Yet—according to the text—Merlin retains something of the bestiality of the nocturnal visitor (he is so hairy at birth that his mother is frightened by it), of the omnipresence, of the shape-shifting ability, and the knowledge of the past inherent in the one on top. —From God, he receives gifts such as wisdom and prophecy from childhood.—In other words: Merlin remains a double-edged being.

Note - The fact that “nocturnal lustful visitors” have been mentioned time

and again since ancient times, as well as the fact that experienced occultists—albeit somewhat vain inventions that banish them—interpret such things as possible, should give us pause for thought. The fact is that people living today in our modern and postmodern world, whose reliability cannot be questioned, report nocturnal visits. Specifically, of “a luminous figure, female, with a beautiful body of mist or fog” who preferably appears at night. With the result that the wife rises, as it were, exhausted. That exhaustion then exposes the aspect of 'larva', a draining ghost.

12.7.2. Vampirism.

Library st. : C. Rager, *Dict. Des fées et du peuple invisible dans l'occident païen*, Turnhout, 2003, 933/ 939 (Vampire (Mort-Vivant)). –

The exposition is long. We bring the essential to the fore because the essential is relatively easy to grasp.

Definition.

sustain themselves in the other world – sucks the blood of the living.” That is pretty much the core. This is valid because all experiences with vampires contain it.

Note well: the term 'blood' must be understood as 'blood soul', or better yet, 'blood soul substance', present in the biological blood, specifically as the basis of successful life on Earth and in the other world. That is the stakes.

A tradition, difficult to verify, holds that vampires are primarily men with a preference for the blood-souls of—preferably young—women, while women would prefer the blood-souls of men.

Ancient .

The author notes that an epic dating from the third millennium BC in Chaldea recounts how the goddess Ishtar threatens to call upon the dead to 'devour' the living. The term 'devour' means “steal the life force”. The concept of 'life force' is the key concept.

Reason : even in the world of the dead, the law applies which states that whoever possesses no life force is in a miserable state. - In antiquity, Egypt, Greece, and Rome likewise knew an analogous phenomenon. For the Greeks, one need only think, for example, of lamia or the empusa .

Unspoiled corpse .

One of the afterlife characteristics of the fact that the buried person is a vampire consists in the discovery that his corpse does not decay in the grave. In Archaic Greece, it was customary to exhume the buried to determine whether or not they were decaying.

Distinguish.

one confuse 'werewolf' with 'vampire'. Both prey on life force, yet the werewolf is a living being—preferably at night—whereas the vampire is invariably a deceased being. Another similarity is that, when the werewolf dies, he possibly becomes a vampire, and that a vampire may occasionally assume the form of a wolf.

Ethically speaking, both types of people are substandard: conscience is their weak side. Something they clearly display in life and after their death. This also explains why they do not possess the necessary and sufficiently good vitality.

Legends .

Legends and myths portray vampirism in a frequently veiled form, such as in the following vampire story from Poland.

A child-vampire in the guise of a small, pale ghost with closed eyes haunts cemeteries. If a horse comes near, the child jumps onto the horse and bites the animal's neck until the blood is exposed. If the horse is being ridden, there is only one way out for its rider: to jump off, seize his dagger, make the sign of the cross in the earth with it while shouting at the little monster to vanish. Whereupon it, in turn, enters the earth along the dagger . – The method of combat should not be taken literally: the description suggests that one must employ a method of an unusual nature. Nothing more.

Appearances .

If the vampire is seen—with the biological eyes or with the spirit—then he or she appears to assume forms. Including that of a (big) cat. Which has been established to this day.

Harmony of opposites .

The author mentions the Slovenian Kresnik, who is sometimes referred to as a 'good' vampire. An ancestral figure with vampiric characteristics defends the community against vampires from elsewhere, who are described as man-eaters and instigators of foul weather. The Kresnik fights in the other world against the witches who have 'stolen' the grain or wine luck—meaning: the life

force that provides fertility to cornfields and vineyards—for the benefit of other communities .

Conclusion - Whoever wishes to understand the phenomenon of 'vampirism' must prioritize the central role of the life force with regard to happiness.

12.7.3. Lycanthropy (werewolfism).

Library st.: C. Rager, *Dict. des fées et du peuple invisible dans l'occident* , Turnhout, 2003, 580/586 (*Loup-Garou*). -

' Lycanthropy ' means “being a werewolf”. And 'werewolf' is a metonymy, because 'werewolf' stands for ' werecat ', 'werelion', 'weretiger', etc. Which we will now briefly explain, starting with an incident that is still occurring today.

Model. - C. Petronius (20/66) relates in his novel of manners *Satiricon* : the young Niceros was marching with a soldier one night and suddenly sees him transform into a wolf and flee, emitting wild cries.

Definition . - The medieval interpretation reads: “If a person demonstrates the ability - preferably exercised at night - to leave his biological body and assume the form of an animal, then he/she is a werewolf.” -

The Romantics specify: what leaves the body is the 'double' (in animal form), i.e., a subtle image of the human being entering it. It is also called a 'shadow' or 'phantom' .

Incidentally: apparently, that out-of-body experience often occurs without the person in question realizing it.

Features .

Certain phenomena allow us to determine whether lycanthropy is a fact. For instance, someone who has left the body as a werewolf 'dreamed' that he/she ate hares, rabbits, or cats. In the morning, he/she leaves behind a scent of sexually aroused animals in the room where he/she slept that night. A werewolf is often beautiful as a man, or especially as a woman, and is therefore attractive to the opposite sex, who—unaware—succumb to this, find that they become severely exhausted by it: one is dealing with a ' Lorelei '. Which reveals the true nature of lycanthropy : treacherous theft of life force and, at the same time, of happiness.

Ethical

The behavioral characteristics of the werewolf and the vampire are virtually the same, because both types of human beings lack a thorough conscience and therefore good life force.

Materialization

If a subtle body—e.g. the out-of-body spirit of a werewolf—suddenly or gradually becomes a biological body, then this demonstrates 'materialization'.

A story in the French Limousin makes you feel this way.

A gentleman had a witch as a wife. One day, he goes hunting when a large she-wolf throws herself at him, but he manages to chop off one of her paws. He stores it in his hunting bag. Upon returning home, he discovers that the paw is a beautiful, white hand. And what else does he notice? His wife hides her arm without a hand in her cloak! He then realizes that she leaves the body at night in materialized form.

One can dismiss this as 'fiction'. And that is likely the case in many instances. But that type of far-fetched is so universal that the question arises: "Could that not actually be based on truth?"

Credible—though rare—people vouch for its truth. Stories regarding the manner in which one can neutralize such—sometimes perceived as very harmful—out-of-body experiences correspond to this.

One of them has been portrayed in an American film and is titled "Silver Bullet". It appears that such a materialized out-of-body experience becomes harmless after being shot with a silver bullet.

'Stories'.

When examining what is written about werewolfism, one is struck by the boundless multitude of variations regarding details of all kinds. Take, for instance, the so-called characteristics by which one can recognize a werewolf, possibly from birth. For instance, a child showing the beginnings of a tail is said to be a werewolf; likewise, a child who, once weaned, is breastfed again; and so too, the seventh of seven sons. One simply does not believe these 'characteristics'. They belong to the mythical-legendary euphemism of reality. However, these 'characteristics' do serve to draw attention to the possibility that someone might acquire such 'characteristics' in their mind once they are confronted with a potential werewolf: it is as if an entity, in that mythical-

legendary manner, prompts: “Beware! It is a werewolf!” One should not believe naively, but bear in mind that such 'fictions' set one on the path to the truth.

12.7.4. The white lady (stop- woman).

Library st..

-- D. Audinot , *Les lieux de l'au-delà (Guide des fantômes, dames blanches et auto stoppeuses évanescences en France, Belgique et Suisse)*, Agnières, 1999; -

-- C. Rager, *Dict. des fées et du peuple invisible dans l'occident païen* , Turnhout, 2003, 227/233 (Dames blanches).

Model. - The Hohenzollerns in Germany are the descendants of Tassillon , Count of Zollern (+800), a branch of which constituted the royal and imperial dynasty of Prussia and Germany. Like many other houses in Germany, the Hohenzollerns had their own familial “White Lady ,” a female apparition dressed in a white robe. Characteristic of the Hohenzollern version was that, although she appeared in white, she wore black gloves and was masked. She appeared at midnight to announce the death of the head of the family or of a grand-ranking official.

Her first appearance dates back to 1486 at the castle of Plassenburg near Bayreuth. In 1812, she appeared to Napoleon in Bayreuth. She then appeared again in 1840, 1850, and 1888. The last German Emperor, Wilhelm II , mocked her, but following her appearance, he nevertheless had his residences in Potsdam and Berlin reinforced.

Definition . - A phantom “post mortem ” (after the death of the woman whose phantom it is) that is in materializes to one degree or another as white matter (becomes coarse matter), is a white woman .

Character . - According to Rager , oc, 227, most white women are 'benevolent' but 'unpredictable', indeed, feared. This suggests that they are usually ethically questionable and radiate a life force that is substandard and eager for that of the living.

Tied to thunderstorms.

Audinot , oc, 126s., mentions: Craponne-sur-Arzon (Haute-Loire) has the ruins of a castle on the south side of a mountain. The east side of the ruins reveals a rock formation that the people of the region call “la Chaise à la Dame” (a kind of seat in the rock). During nocturnal thunderstorms, a beautiful luminous, misty female figure sits within it. If someone encounters her in

material form and asks her for directions, she shows him. Helping lost travelers seems to be her primary concern.

As is the case with many white women , she speaks weeping and lamenting. No one knows the reason for it, but it is suspected that the rubble of the castle has something to do with it .

Incidentally: all the caves in the vicinity of “the seat” exhibit fairies and related phenomena. – What Audinot observes is that white women often appear during thunderstorms “with their electromagnetic force fields” (according to the author, who has the impression that they need energy (for that reason) to show themselves). –

Note The term 'nature religions' refers very explicitly to the connection between sacred phenomena and certain natural forces. Which leads Audinot to suggest that the White Lady of Craponne-sur-Arzon is some kind of pre-Christian nature entity.

A woman asking for a lift

Near Perpignan, in the Les Abricotiers district , between Perpignan and Canet on the Mediterranean coast, in a bend, a bus stop lady appeared several times .

Saturday, October 20, 1981, around 10:30 PM, MS van Canet is driving home. Suddenly, in the light of his car, he sees the silhouette of a beautiful young woman waving. At that hour and that place, something normal. MS stops: “Where are you driving?” he asks. “To Perpignan.” “Get in.” She takes a seat beside him. He looks at her closely: taciturn, between thirty and forty, wearing a headscarf, a white vest, and a sweater. Ballet shoes on her feet.

Suddenly, just before the turn at Les Abricotiers , she says kindly and softly: “Careful! There is a very dangerous turn here.” MS slows down. He looks beside him: the seat is empty! He is horrified, returns only to see nothing! He reports this to the gendarmerie: they knew about it! Dozens of fatal accidents had long occurred at precisely that spot. Audinot mentions countless such 'appearances' that all bear some resemblance to one another.

Statements.

Of course, one can dismiss all this as imagination, for example. It strikes Audinot that the modern-rationalist 'explanations' fall short of the facts. He ultimately adheres to this: “a post- mortem presence with complete but

transient materialization of a soul unaware of its real situation (oc, 39).

12.7.5. Angry Dead .

Bible st. : *E. Jobbé-Duval, Les morts malfaisants (Larvae , Lemures)*, Paris, 1924-1, Chambéry 2000-2.

The author was a professor of law at the University of Paris. He delved into what the ancient Romans thought regarding the dead who appeared sinister to the living. We present the essentials, for this remains relevant today for those concerned with occultism.

Roman religion of the dead.

Among the ancient Romans, the veneration of the dead was motivated primarily by fear, and only secondarily by the desire to appease them. For the dead live on after death, albeit in a diminished degree, but truly. Those who had died an abnormal death were particularly feared.

Terms.

1. Manes. - This word designates all the dead without distinction.

2.1. Lemures . - This word means the evil dead.

2.2. Larvae . - This is synonymous with lemures . - The term “umbra errans” (umbra exerrans) meant “phantom of death that wanders” and is practically synonymous with larva , contrasting with “ quiescens anima” (soul that finds rest). In principle, larvae were eternally restless creatures that could be seen sailing past in the wind. - As a frightening word for children, the evil dead were called ' maniae '.

Other evil spirits .

Larvae are not ' striges '. These are evil spirits that appear as nocturnal birds (owls, for example). They were feared primarily as bloodsuckers (vampires). They were the favorite spirits of black magic, just like the larvae.

Hecate , originally a Greek goddess , was the queen of larvae as a moon goddess at home in the underworld. She leads the larvae on the wind, followed by her fierce dogs.

Abnormal deaths .

The larvae were to be found among the class of those who died abnormally. We will list them briefly: people who were buried non-ritually, who died by mutilation, people who were not buried, who drowned, people killed in their rest, who died prematurely (children, mothers during childbirth), who were killed violently, people who were tortured; the dead who were denied a funeral,

suicides, the hanged, those who perished in accidents, those killed in action, people killed by lightning...

Location

The larvae were the enemies of the other dead, whom they despised and tormented. The proximity of graves and pyres was considered "to be avoided" due to the presence of larvae that spied on the other dead to torment them.

Location

The souls finding rest were venerated both publicly and privately during the 'feralia' and the 'parentalia' (celebrations). - Larvae were considered "to be excluded".

Magical role.

Defixio . - This black magic rite had a target - someone one wished to strike - that was 'bound' (deflxio) while an evil spirit (larva, striga) was forced to carry out this work. The name of the target was written on a lead plate (" tabella , defixionis ") which was rolled up or folded (which was often pierced with a nail). -

A formula accompanied this, such as: "May the cruel Necessitas (*note*: the goddess Necessity) always go before you, who bears the gigantic nails and torture clamps in her bronze hand".

Incidentally: " tabellae " defixionis " is frequently translated as "magical tables". Also: one should not confuse the 'clinging' (defixio) with the ordinary curse without the mentioned substructure.

Necromancy.

This ritual consists of subduing the spirit of the angry dead so that it answers questions or even performs black magic tasks. This was all the more successful if one had the corpse of the deceased at one's disposal.

Entities that protect

In such rites, appeal was made to the life force of Hecate , whom is invoked, for example, at graves. Hermes chthonios (Hermes as an underworld god) was also frequently invoked, specifically as identical with Hermes trismegistos (the thrice-highest Hermes), a later interpretation of the classical Greek god Hermes.

Behold some insight into what ancient Romans thought about the evil

dead and what unscrupulous magic did with those dangerous beings. We repeat: whoever performs occult work—e.g., treating illnesses, miscalculations of all kinds, helping to resolve fears—would do well to take into account this—what is now called— 'psycho -genealogy' of the Romans.

12.7.6. Witch persecution .

Library st.: *P.-E. Buss, Les archives du Château de Neuchâtel on the livré of the secret of the victims of the Inquisition , in: Le Temps (Geneva) 01.11.03, 15. -*

The article refers to some results of the research that J.-D. Morerod , medievalist and professor at the Université de Neuchâtel , conducted together with his students in the archives of a castle.

The Inquisition began its investigations between Neuchâtel and Grenoble between 1400 and 1450. It left behind an image of the witch that encompasses a “broom, a crooked nose, and magic potions.”

Morerod was largely able to uncover the truth thanks to a very valuable treasure. Rodolphe de Hochberg , Count of Neuchâtel , between 1450 and 1500, wanted to ascertain which phases the investigation of the domini went through. He received the French translation of all documents in the file.

Methods .

The Dominicans arrived in a village. They attended mass or performed in a public place to incite the population to denounce. Suspicious behavior was meticulously recorded. If multiple denunciations concerned the same person, this set the merciless machine in motion, often resulting in the flames of the stake.

Confessions .

Time and again the accused confess: “Yes, I participated in the Sab Bat. Yes, I saw the devil. We committed fornication and returned on our flying brooms.” Morerod : “During the interrogations, you were quartered or threatened with it. Under those conditions, I too would eventually have confessed.”

The typical defendant .

Morerod mainly wanted to know what type was being sought.

1. Those who practiced fortune-telling or acted as healers were the first target. “Often it was those who knew ‘the secret’, such as those still exist in

the region today.” Thus Morerod .

For example, Rolin Borguygnon from Cormondrèche . He appears in many witness statements as a sort of fortune teller. When questioned, he confessed to part of the alleged facts: “Yes, my knowledge is demonic. Yes, Satan taught it to me.” But he emphatically denied having participated in any Sabbath whatsoever.

2. Other cases fall outside the type just mentioned. Such an influential man—a former mayor of Neuchâtel —was condemned to the stake because the authorities in Neuchâtel wanted to get rid of him. He is first on the list! Perhaps his confessions as a 'sorcerer', as in the case of many victims of the Inquisition, were extracted under torture.

Evolution.

In the second half of the 14th century, ecclesiastical judges sought to bring the accused back into the church: if a person under judgment appeared salvageable , he escaped the stake. The situation changed in the 15th century: the Inquisition became stricter; confessions or not, the accused were burned at the stake. That concludes some information regarding the witch hunt.

Let us pause for a moment to consider what a witch actually is .

C. Savage , **Sorcières** , Paris, 2000, 8, summarizes: “The witch invariably appeared as a character with an often malevolent 'power' (*note*: occult life force), which evolved over time. She flew on a broom (*note*: which means that she moved outside her physical body in an out-of-body state), assumed the form of an animal (*note*: in an out-of-body state, the ability to adopt a form at will is normal), performed 'journeys' in the mind (*note*: this refers to the movements as if in an out-of-body state). She visited the dead (*note*: an ability that shamans, for example, also possess), cast lots (*note*: this is the exercise of malevolent power), healed diseases”.

We have provided the necessary explanation in parentheses so that a true image of the female witch in Savage 's book comes to mind—an image that breaks with the prevailing caricature. This does not mean that the witch—the object of the Inquisition—is thereby acquitted of guilt: Savage 's book defends her on principle. Which, from a Biblical standpoint, is not possible without serious reservations. That the inquisitors themselves exhibit demonic traits is, thanks to the accounts, beyond the slightest doubt.