

EC-6.2.0 Introduction to hiëro-analysis. 1984/1985

Webmaster's Preface.

If we search the Internet for the meaning of the term 'hiëro-analysis' in a search engine, it fails to answer.

If we ask ChatGPT : “What does ‘hiëro-analysis’ mean?”, we get the following answer: “Hiëro-analysis” is a term that can be used in various contexts, but generally refers to the analysis of sacred or religious texts, symbols, and rituals. The word comes from the Greek “hiëros” (ἱερός) meaning “sacred,” and “analysis” indicating the systematic investigation or study of a subject. In a broader sense, hiëros-analysis can thus refer to:

1. Religious Studies: The systematic study of sacred texts, such as the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas, etc.
2. Symbolism: The interpretation of religious symbols and their meaning within different cultures and religions.
3. Rituals and Ceremonies: The analysis of religious rituals and their role within a faith community.

The term is not often used and may also have a different, more specific meaning in specific academic or spiritual contexts.

So much for ChatGPT's response.

However, what has been explained above is already contained in either hiërography, the description of religious phenomena, and/or in hiëro -logy, the logical understanding of the sacred, and/or finally in hiëro-sophy, the expression of a value judgment about such phenomena. We thus remain within the realm of experience for all.

However, if we go over the table of contents of the courses in hiero-analysis (5.5. and 6.2.) and delve deeper into this reading, it appears that the emphasis is on experiencing “phenomena” that require a certain sensitivity, even a clear perception, in the paranormal sense of the word.

Just as our eyes allow us to 'see' a reality, a close hiëro-analysis on that paranormal level can allow us to 'see' the effects of a dynamical conception of 'the sacred'. Just about all cultures around the globe have and had a focus on this. Our Western civilization, which went through the age of enlightenment, keeps its attention mainly on the more material side of reality.

Referring to text 22 on this site “The salt of the earth,” the salt of religion has lost a great deal of its power in our time. In the immortal words of G.F. Hegel (1770/1831), our world is like a church from which the most sacred things have disappeared. That this deprives us of a particularly large part of reality may be seen in the reading of these courses. Course 5.5. dates from the academic year 1981/1982, course 6.2. from 1984/1985. Quite a few of the themes cited here are found in course 9.5, Elements of Philosophy of Religion and in course 10.4, Introduction to New Age. Course 10.11,

“Man as Immortal Soul,” also contains some related themes. These latter courses are easier to read because they were broken up into smaller, independent chapters. However, those who read between the lines will notice that the two courses on hiëro-analysis (5.5. and 6.2.) reveal some occult, more hidden aspects. It seems to us that the compiler wrote here more “from the heart,” that he wanted to communicate to us his own insights and experiences after a long search. And this with hardly any reservations. Perhaps the somewhat compact style and the fact that not every student could handle this occult view of religion led to later courses - course 10.11 dates from 1997/1998 - being written in a more comprehensible style.

A full cycle at HIVO, the Higher Institute of Education, lasted three years. In 2000, the HIVO in Antwerp ceased to exist. On this website we have the luxury of having several cycles, and thus several courses covering the same theme. These courses were updated and supplemented each time in a subsequent cycle. As already reported elsewhere, the book 'De Homo Religiosus, Religion as an Experiential Force' attempts to provide a modest introductory synthesis of the most important aspects of religion. However, nothing beats the original texts which are much more accurately written and more accurately reflect the many nuances.

The Webmaster

EC-6.2.0 Introduction to hiëro -analysis. 1984/1985 (120 p.)

Let us first give the contents (p. 3 and 4) and then go on to explain them in greater detail (p. 5 to 12). One will find that the whole subject is not so simple, and that here and there some prior knowledge seems desirable.

It seems to us that every one, who claims to be active in the religious field, must nevertheless be familiar in some minimal way with the “metaphysical world,” the world of outer nature and supernature, the world that pays attention to fine material beings and energies.

It is striking that in the pagan religions, the ‘holy’ man or the ‘holy’ woman, the magician or ‘witch’ and the sorcerer or sorceress always possess - and must possess - psychic gifts if he or she is to be accepted by his or her community and if results are to be achieved. This stands in sharp contrast to the training of religious in the Western world, where the training is primarily an intellectual one, and where a certain sensitivity to the religious, in the paranormal sense of the word, is scarcely addressed. As cited elsewhere, this has its historical reasons. Refer, for example, to text 46 “Godforsaken,” which deals with this subject in greater depth. A “religion” that limits itself to nature, to what is only sensually perceptible, misses the essential and can hardly call itself truly religious in a dynamic way.

Contents:

Preface : the lemmatic-analytical method 1/8

Hiëro-graphy, hiëro -logy, hiëro -sophy 1/2

The reductive method, hypothesis, experiment, test. 2/7

1.-- The sacred as a lemma 8/12

1.1. The Objective Holiness Phenomena. 10

1. 2. The subjective holiness phenomena. 11

2.-- The analysis of the sacred

2.1. The four moments of Christianity.

a. the regulative model.

Predestination, entry, continuation, transcendent 14/18

b. the applicative model or applications.

Verification: Augustine 14/15

Steuco 15/16

F. Von Hügel 17/18

Note : religionism / biblicism

2.2. The cosmos-system of the archaic community: analysis 19/31

a. the regulative model.

Model of the 3 floors 19

b. Applications

archaic, mosaic and Christian model 20/23

2.3. Three main types of the sacred 32/106

Nathan Söderblom 32

William Ernest Hocking 32

2.3.1. Animism 34/70

a. Three applicative models

The Greek goddess Afrodite 35/36

An elohim, the witch of Endor 36/39

Jesus' hell-raising 39/42

b. The regulatory model

2.3.1.1. animatism 43

2.3.1.2. Incarnation belief 43/44

2.3.1.3. Fetishism 44/46

2.3.1.4. Possession 46/48

2.3.1.5. Thigh belief 49/55

Genius, Iuno, 49

Exchange of soul matter 52

2.3.1.6. Supreme spirit belief 55

exchange of soul matter 56

Dual afterword.

Manaism / totemism 57

The phenomenon of mediumship 58

Note : Eve and the serpent, 66/68

Jesus' ascension 68/70

2.3.2. Dynamism 70/88

a. The regulative model:

1. Relationship with animism 70

2.1. Manaism (Codrington) 71/72

2.2. Magism 72/73

2.3. Multiple materiality 73

2.4. Reichenbach's odic doctrine 74

2.5. Fertility religion 75

2.6. Tabooism (avoidance religion) 76/78

b. Applicative models 78/88

(i) mana 78

male mana 78/83

female mana 83/86

Note: Manaic nudity. 86

Note: the ratio 'fascinus / vestalannes' 87

(ii) overview of the mana types 88

2.3.3. The causal belief 89/106

Religion versus magic 88/89

Structure of magic 90

a. Naturism 91 :9/45

Regulative model 91

Applicative model : the water nymph 91/92

b. Causation 92

nature spirits / demonism 92/93

law of conservation of mana 94/95

creation of a vengeance demon 95/98

incantation (exorcism) of the vengeance demon 95/98

Söderbloms' 'Urheber' (causer) 103/106

Note : the religion of god(s)

2.4.-- Demonism as a religious main problem.

106/120

a. The dual impotence 111/113

b. Deuteronomy 18: 9/12 113/118 c. Satan versus the Trinity 119/120

EC-6.2.0 Introduction to hiëro-analysis. 1984/1985

Contents + notes:

Preface : the lemmatic-analytical method 1/8

This method, which dates from the Ancient Greek thinker Plato (-427/-347), starts from the assumption that there is such a thing as the sacred, and through a number of experiments and tests of those experiments tries to define “the sacred” more precisely.

A further elaboration of this Platonic method is the so-called 'reductive method' which will be explained further in a moment.

1.-- The sacred as a lemma 9/13

Hiëro-graphy, hierology, hiëro-sophy

One can, as a first step, list and describe the religious facts (-graphy), then arrange them (-logy). Afterwards, one can judge them according to truth and value (-sophy). In the latter case, one exceeds actual observations.

The reductive method : hypothesis, experiment, test. (p. 9 to p.13)

The last step, the value judgment in hiëro-sophy, may give a final result, but it says nothing about the process, about the actual procedure, about the structure of the process that led to this value judgment. To put it another way, how was our hypothesis, the lemma that sacred facts can show themselves, investigated further. One does not here start deductively from one or more established “propositions” whose consequences one investigates, as plane geometry does. No, the method is rather reversed, we look for evidence, clues that can strengthen (verification), possibly weaken (falsification) our hypothesis. In other words : the lemma undergoes an analysis. This is essentially how any scientific research works.

We find such a lemmatic-analytical method described in the Bible, in the Gospel of Matthew, 2:1/12. This deals with the three “wise men,” magicians or “psychics” who came to visit the newly born Jesus in his manger. They were guided on their quest by “the star of Bethlehem,” which eventually remained above the manger. La Bible de Jerusalem, Paris, 1978,1416, n.m

¹, *says that the star was “un astre miraculeux,” a miraculous celestial body, “of which it would be futile to seek a ‘natural’ or scientific explanation. In other words, “seeing” this celestial body required a clairvoyant, psychic view. With this, it is also clear that the search for the sacred transcends the strictly scientific realm.*

'Hard' science limits itself to the classical senses and, of course, finds nothing beyond this sense. It is extremely sound and valuable but limits itself to a part of total reality; to that which is only sensually perceptible. By extension, it has many devices at its disposal that make what is not directly perceptible, in one way or another, nevertheless sensible. Her domain does not cover the whole of what is ontologically real. Its domain concerns “only” a subset of all that “is. Real science is aware of this. An ideological form of science does not respect its limits. It generalizes and asserts that what applies to its part of reality also applies to the whole. If science argues that the paranormal has no scientific recognition, it is right. However, if it states that it therefore

does not exist, it is making statements outside its field and making an ontological or metaphysical error.

For example, everyone immediately notices the faulty reasoning in the claim : “Antarctica does not exist because I have never been there. But not everyone sees through the similar error in the reasoning 'paranormal experiences do not exist, because I have never had any'.

True religion may have psychological, sociological and traditional aspects, but at its deepest core it involves a dynamic paranormal experience. Whoever rejects that is, in the sense given to religion here in these pages, not religious. Such a person leads a rather secular life in a predominantly material world and hardly has any sense of a higher reality.

Return to the story of the three wise men. It further illustrates the reasoning the three magi make in response to the unusual - paranormal - guidance they continue to encounter. They are also warned so they can escape the wrath of King Herod who wants to kill the baby Jesus. Mary and Joseph are also guided in their escape from this murderous king. “Dieu ne manifeste pas extérieurement sa puissance, et cependant il dirige les évènements,” we read in the Bible. God reveals what actually takes place and what is of decisive significance, in the form of a night dream, a nocturnal sight or an inspiration, however, in such a way that only “initiates,” only those who live with him in intimate friendship, gain insight into it. The rest of mankind rather passively “undergoes” what is happening in the background, but is hardly aware anymore of the immense scope of God's guidance and of his so necessary life force.

The text which further explains the course of the Gospel story in this course describes in a strictly logical manner and in all its aspects the structure of the reductive analysis of this experiment. This structure immediately provides us with a model for many similar experiences of “the sacred” (see p. 2 to p. 8).

Religiously speaking, one can distinguish a differential of types of people, starting from the religious man over the indifferent to the anti-religious man. Furthermore, there are rather “objective holiness phenomena,” such as the existence of the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary and the many saints. But there are also “subjective signs” of holiness. The latter can only be accepted with caution as lemmas, as assumptions that 'the sacred' effectively exists. (9/10)

The American psychologist W. James (1842/1910) states in his book: 'The Varieties of Religious Experience' in his discussion of the Greek gods : "On the question of the origin of the Greek gods, we cannot, here, go into. But the whole series of our examples brings us, approximately, to the following conclusion: it is as if, in human consciousness, the sensation lives of something real,--a sense of something, which is really available,--a representation of something which objectively exists."

Anyone even minimally versed in Ancient Greek philosophy knows that the Greeks were a thoroughly religious people. Refer for example to the writer Homer and his two epic poems: Iliad and Odyssey. The latter work is about the years of wandering at sea of Odysseus, king of Ithaca, after taking part in the Trojan War. In this Odysseus is engaged in an unending battle with the elements of the sea, with the many inhabitants of the underworld, spirits and gods, who either assist him in his journey or oppose him. From this it is clear that he was clairvoyant, at that time a requirement for a king so that he could guide his people through the many dangers of existence.

Emphasize also the duplicity of the inhabitants of that other world. The gods dictated laws to the Greeks, but violated them themselves. Greek folk man was perfectly aware of this contradiction but they submitted to the will of these fickle gods. After all, they were far more powerful than mortals. One had learned to live with what was called "the harmony of opposites. The apostle Paul speaks in this context of "the elements of the world," elements that one must put first in order to understand the world as it actually is, with all its shortcomings and miscalculations. In sharp contrast to many pagan religions, this ambiguity does not show itself with the God of the Bible. The latter adheres strictly to His precepts and His commandments, and likewise expects believers to live a life of ethical excellence. (12/13) .

2.-- The analysis of the sacred

2.1. The four moments of Christianity.

*The German Catholic educator O. Willmann (1839/1920), in his *Geschichte des Idealismus*² , outlines the essence of Christianity as a "history of salvation" or as "sacred history" as it used to be called. He mentions the four great moments of it. First, there is a 'history' that precedes and prepares for the coming of Jesus, followed by the entry of 'salvation' into 'time' with the birth and public life of Jesus, its continual continuation, and finally the continuation of that same 'salvation' in the supra-temporal sphere."*

Salvation history is first and foremost the history of nurture. God raises up with a view to the future. In addition to sacred history, there is also profane history as we all know it. Both evolve, the visible and the invisible have points of contact. Thus when Yahweh addresses the word to the people in concrete historical situations through his prophets. "Thus speaks Yahweh" then reads the explanation. This is how Yahweh makes history and leads it. This is how salvation history is created in a very strict sense. Yahweh creates all of reality, including man, and gives him far-reaching autonomy.

Through wrong choices, man moves away from God and His life force, upon which God sends a helper: His son Jesus, born of the virgin Mary. The Bible recounts that Jesus suffered, was crucified and buried. Immediately after, He “descended into hell” and rose after three days. Later He ascended into heaven. Afterwards, on Pentecost, God sends the Holy Spirit. Finally, Jesus will return in glory at the end of time to judge the world. Behold the great tangents of sacred history with profane.

While a person lives through the profane evolution and simply lives his life, he also evolves in a sacred way at the same time. This can be constructive or deconstructive, depending on the ethical qualities he realizes or neglects in life. We have a view of our profane way of life, but little or no view of our sacred evolution. St. Augustine, says that in the background our profane history always has a sacred dimension. For him, all human doings are virtually meaningless if they do not engage in sacred history.

The content of this sacred history may be thought of very broadly. Thus it is clear that its beginnings can already be found in many pagan peoples. They are a valid stage in the search for truth and already possess valuable fragments of it in their sacred stories and mythologies. Thus Eastern sacred wisdom already finds many elements that are further developed e.g. in Ancient Greek philosophy. We refer, for example, to Plato's theory of ideas, where ideas are conceived, not as subjective thought contents as the modern West will later do, but as objective realities in a higher world. They are a perfect impetus to a better understanding of God's creative thoughts, which in turn are the direct impetus for all that exists as reality in the cosmos. A “perenni philosophia,” an “eternal philosophy” runs like a thread throughout history and finds its fullness in the redemptive work of Jesus.

For Darwin, the theory of evolution was an accidental event. The Russian thinker Solovief argues that it is a conscious evolution in which the pre-existing ideas of God through a long earthly evolution are realized more and more in the more and more. Ultimately, man is thus led to a kind of deification. One notices that the idea of reincarnation is never far away here.

In conclusion, we conclude that we have a visible and tangible “secular” history, and that there is likewise a “transcendent” history, which transcends this earth with its visible and tangible realities. 14/18

St. Augustine (354/430), the thinker Agostino Steuco (+1550) and Friedrich von Hügel (1795/1870), among others, testify to such an evolution (p. 17/18).

2.2. The cosmos system of the archaic community: analysis 19/31

This section explains how in an archaic community “the sacred” could be experienced locally and gave rise to then erecting a sanctuary there. Some analogous models from the Bible are also shown (see pp. 19 to 31). Even in our time we still know this, think for example of some places where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared.

| | |
|---|-------|
| Model of the 3 levels | 19 |
| Applications: archaic, mosaic and Christian model | 20/31 |

2.3. Three main types of the sacred 32/106

Next, the main types of the sacred are explained : animism (2.3.1.) as the belief in and experience of life and life force from the other world, dynamism (2.3.2.) as the belief in forces emanating from such beings, and finally causal belief (2.3.3.). In the latter, it is shown, that religion as a force action of entities, from the other world, does indeed “cause something” in this world.

2.3.1. Animism 34/70

As an illustration of this animism, we learn that a simple Greek peasant describes how he mantically, clairvoyantly, 'sees' the Greek goddess Aphrodite, the Bible tells us how the witch of Endor contacts a deceased prophet in the underworld (1 Sam 28:3/25), and of course there is also the force-acting of Jesus at his hellish, resurrection and ascension (p. 34 to 42).

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|---|-------|
| Applications : the Greek goddess Afrodite | 35/36 |
| An elohim, the witch of Endor | 36/39 |
| Jesus' ascension to hell | 39/42 |

The belief that subtle spirits, invisible to ordinary people, can nevertheless make themselves known and influence or even control us, leads us to distinguish a number of models or categories. Nevertheless, such a classification is not simple, not to say quite complicated, and remains open to discussion. After all, there is a multiplicity of spirits, soul-substances and soul-forces. The Bible mentions, for example, apparitions, dream visions, out of body experiences, pagan gods, a guardian angel, demons and devils....

*J. Poortman, dealt with the theme at length in his four-volume work : *Ochêma; History and Meaning of Hylic Pluralism*. The term *ochêma* stands for “fine material vehicle. Just as a human soul animates the biological body and brings it to life, a subtle being likewise needs a subtle material vehicle. Because there are different kinds of fine-material beings, and some are less fine-material than others, this leads to a multitude of kinds of 'fine' matter. That 'finess' knows gradations. In other words, there are differences in specific gravity. 'Hulè' is the Ancient Greek word for dust, 'pluralism' refers to a plurality. The term “hylic pluralism” then refers to a multiplicity of types of fine dust. In his voluminous work, Poortman gives an overview of the many views that various cultures have had on that fine substance throughout history. From this it may be seen that the topic is quite complicated. Leaving religion as the believing folk man experiences it, and inquiring about its magical side, religion becomes far from simple. The classification below is limited to a few notable types.*

Models: 2.3.1.1. Animatism

43

Animatism holds that everything that exists, even a stone, nevertheless possesses life and life force in an unspoken way.

2.3.1.2. Incarnation belief

43/44

Generally speaking, the incarnation belief holds that a spirit “dwells” in a plant, animal or human being. One can distinguish four categories here.

2.3.1.3. Fetishism

44/46

One can define it as “an object in which, thanks to a magical operation, life force is accumulated”. Only a magically competent person can make a true fetish. See, among other things, chapter 7.5. in the book “religion as an experiential power operation,” on this site. Course 5.5, Introduction to Hieroanalysis (II B, The Encounter with the Sacred in the Fetish (p. 138/157) also explains this theme.

2.3.1.4. Possession

46/48

In possession, man is controlled by a spirit or spirits, so that one is no longer oneself but becomes a willing tool of that spirit or spirits. We refer also to the book “Religion as Experiential Force” : Fetishism (7.5.), Macumba (3.3.2.) the film “The entity” (9.5.3.) and Incantations (13.3.2.).

2.3.1.5. Thrive beliefs

49/55

'Thrive' means 'to grow.' Every man and woman possesses a thigh spirit that strengthens the life force. Occultly, a woman's thighs are strongly charged with power. Between her thighs, in childbirth, a child is born. Hence the connection between “thigh” and “thrive. Our ancestors chose their words very correctly and in function of delicate life force.

Jupiter, Iuno,

49

The Romans spoke of a “genius” or “Jupiter” in a man, and an “Iuno” in a woman. Every child conceived in the mother's womb was related to these two supreme beings, and this occult kinship still exists today. One could render the terms 'genius' and 'iuno' as male and female thigh spirit, respectively, controlling thriving. Translated to Christianity, one could say that every man has his “adam,” and every woman has her “eva.

Nahualism, exchange of soul-substance 52

A second kind of kinship of a human being with a spirit involves “nahualism. The book “Religion as Experiential Force” brings up the topic in Chapter 10. See also text 44, “Dis net die oortjies van die seekoei” p. 39.

2.3.1.6. Supreme spirit belief 55

A supreme spirit has nothing to do with the Biblical supreme being, Yahweh, but is a spirit with a special function. Soul-matter of the supreme spirit can e.g. be magically exchanged with a human being. If the supreme spirit is of animal nature, this can lead to rather gruesome results that strike us Westerners as implausible. Nevertheless, the facts established in many pagan religions do not lie. As mentioned, religion at the magical level is far from simple and sometimes more truly frightening.

Refer also to course 9.5.1., samples 20 to 29 where animism and the structure of the soul are discussed (see p. 105 to p. 152.).

2.3.2. Dynamism 70/88

Dynamism is the second main feature of religion. Every serious religion deals with fine material forces that cause something in the fine substance, forces that have their repercussions in the material world. Animism is not conceivable without dynamism, dynamism is not conceivable without animism. In other words : fine-material entities are always carriers of forces, and forces are always accompanied by fine-material beings. All non-Biblical cultures were (and are) familiar with this. They independently gave it different names, but essentially it involves the same connection between energies and subtle beings. Successively highlighted are:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| a. model | 70/78 |
| 1. Connection with animism | 70 |
| 2.1. Manaism (Codrington) | 71/72 |
| 2.2. Magism | 72/73 |
| 2.3. Multiple materiality | 73 |
| 2.4. Reichenbach's odic doctrine | 74 |
| 2.5. Fertility religion | 75 |
| 2.6. Tabooism (avoidance belief) | 76/78 |
| b. applications | 78/88 |
| 1. male mana | 78/83 |
| 2. female mana | 83/84 |
| 3. gender power | 84/86 |

In this connection we refer, among others, to Course 10.4., Introduction to New Age p.73 and to Clara Gallini, La danse de l'argia³ where it is recounted how the folk man in Sardinia managed to remedy the 'possession' in a man, caused by a spider's bite, by ritual nudity.

| | |
|--|---------|
| Note: the relation 'fascinus / vestalinnen' | 87 |
| (ii) overview of the manatypes | 88 |
| | |
| 2.3.3. <i>The causal belief</i> 88/106 | |
| a. Naturism | |
| Religion versus magic | 88/89 |
| Structure of magic | 90 |
| Model and application: the nymph | 91/92 |
| b. Causation | 92 |
| nature spirits/demonism | 92/93 |
| law of conservation of mana | 94/95 |
| creation of a vengeance demon | 95/102 |
| <i>See also the book: the Homo Religiosus, 7.4.1. : a vengeance demon and the course</i> | |
| 5.5. <i>Introduction to Hiero-analysis p. 145ff.)</i> | |
| Söderbloms' 'Urheber' (causer) | 103/106 |
| Note : the religion of god(s). | |
| | |
| 2.4.-- <i>Demonism as a religious main problem.</i> | 106/120 |
| a. The dual impotence | 111/113 |
| b. Deuteronomy 18: 9/12 113/118 c. Satan versus the Trinity | 119/120 |

¹ La Bible de Jérusalem, Paris, 1978,1416, n.m

² Willmann O., Geschichte des Idealismus, 3 Bde, Braunschweig, 1907-2, II, 9.

³ Clara Gallini, La danse de l'argia (Fête èt guérison en Sardaigne), Lagrasse, 1988 (// La ballerina variopinta).