

## **Content**

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## **1. Occult and occultism.**

### *1.A. Paranormal phenomena.*

Perhaps the best place to start is from the so-called paranormal phenomena. Something can be 'normal' (which appears as ordinary to the average person of this globe; a much better definition of 'normal' does not exist!), but it can also be abnormal (with the pathological as conceptual content) and paranormal (with the unusual (but therefore not pathological) element as conceptual content). An appreciation is introduced into the paranormal domain by the conceptual pairing "katanormal" (kata: downward) and "ananormal" (ana: upward): when awareness (degree of consciousness), mastery and morality - or any one of these three e.g., decline, one speaks of katanormal; in the opposite case one speaks of ananormal. Thus, possession is catanormal because of the decline of three aspects mentioned above, but shamanism is ananormal, however similar these two phenomena may be to superficial observers.

One can classify paranormal phenomena into paragnostical such as telepathy and clairvoyance, because these involve knowledge (// gnosis) and into parergical such as ghostly phenomena (think Wilsele or Baal!) or teleplasma(ta), because these involve workfulness (// ergon). One can also speak of ESP (// extra-sensory perception, extrasensory perception; (// telesthesia: aisthesis = perception) and PK (// psychokinesis, movement on a 'psychic' (understand: paranormal) basis: (// telekinesis: kinesis = movement), where, as in the previous jargon, ESP and PK are attributed to a factor PSI (// psi function, i.e. psychic ability in the psyché). We prefer - with e.g. H. van Praag et al - the terms "parapsychic" and "paraphysical" because apparently there are phenomena which cannot be reduced to a psi-function (= paranormal ability of the human psyché) and yet happen. But to this we must immediately note - as, incidentally, with the previous professional terms - that the two cannot be kept completely apart (though they are konneks, yet they are not identical).

Something like an envoûtement is first of all psychological. One applies e.g. mental concentration on someone in order to force him into his will; in the process parapsychical phenomena also occur (e.g. the enslaved person becomes ill). So here is both a parapsychic and a parapsychical aspect and also an intersubjective aspect (proceeding between two subjects). The latter is also present in the paranormal writing practiced by spiritualists: actually one co-writes with another spirit (another subject).

Parapsychic phenomena are e.g. telepathy (one experiences the inner life of another at a distance (tele-) as if it were one's own), clairvoyance (television called tele- and visio, i.e. seeing), the latter whether or not accompanied by the use of objects (photograph, map-laying e.g.: object-related clairvoyance), prophecy (e.g. having a prophetic dream). Parapsychical phenomena are e.g. ghostly phenomena (rain of stones, flying objects = kinetic phenomena; knocking sounds via tables, chairs, keyboards, statues, busts, soles of feet, etc. = acoustic phenomena), apports (an object or person suddenly becomes invisible (dematerialization), removes itself or approaches, suddenly becomes visible again and is there or somewhere (rematerialization) (this while walls, doors, closed windows are permeable); levitation (the opposite of gravitation); magnetism (healing magnetism, writing magnetism: in the latter, the "writer" feels a magnetic groove or opening e.d. e.g. on e.g. a yes-no board (oui-jabord) or a sheet of paper). These are so-called telekinetic phenomena.

There are also teleplastic phenomena (tele-; plasma = making): material existing objects change (stigmata), material non-existent realities are created (materialization and dematerialization (weakening), such as e.g. 'masses' coming out of one's body, luminous masses also or flame writing; also phantoms (phantoms) and doppelgangers ('angels' one used to say also, as in *Acts 12:15*), i.e. 'masses' in human form (bilocation: bis+location, being in two places at once).

A note: such phenomena are easily labeled among the people as miraculous (= dynamical aspect in the history of religion) or even mantic (oracular, i.e. revelatory), especially if the social context for it is favorable; which proves how close paranormal phenomena are to religion; after all, religion is always based on a miraculous and an oracular (oraculum: divine speech) foundation.

**Bibliogr.-** Robert Tocquet, *Les pouvoirs secrets de l'homme*, Paris, Les Productions de Paris, Coll. 'J'ai lu', A 273, 1963; by the same author: *Les mystères du surnaturel*, id., A 275, 1963 ; both interesting because proposer includes the deception each time.

-Yvonne Castellan, *La métapsychique*, Paris, PUF, 1955 (brief historical review).

- Renée Haynes, *The Hidden Springs (An Inquiry into Extra-sensory Perception)*, London, Hollis and Carter, 1961 (very thorough and engaging, including pp. 198ff. on Prosper Lambertini (1675/1758), later Pope Benedict XIV).

-Dr.m.ed. Albert Freiherr von Schrenck-Notzing, *Grundfragen der Parapsychologie*, Herausg. Dr. Gerda Walther, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1962 (especially volume 3, Spukphänomene, is fascinating and revelatory).

This from a great mass of books and booklets, solid or otherwise !

### **IB. Related phenomena .**

The border area includes two areas :

- unpretentious, cloistered phenomena;
- pretensions, namely, representing individual philosophies of life or social ideologies, both of which may or may not be founded on philosophical-theological foundations or formulated in a doctrine (= teaching).

(a). Isolated phenomena: pendulum and dowsing; mesmerism (healing magnetism); suggestion (auto- and hetero-suggestion; hypnosis, among others); somnambulism (sleepwalking: the lunationist e.g. walks sleep-dreaming on the rooftops in the full moon); psychedelism (ancient India already knew the soma, a drug with biochemical action; // LSD - swallowing). Knowledge of suggestion (influencing oneself (auto-) or another (hetero-) via representation) is definitely necessary for all those who engage in occult or paranormal phenomena.

See e.g. Dr., Berthold Stokvis, *Psychologie der suggestie en autosuggestie* (A signification-psychological exposition for psychologists and physicians with an introduction on signification and modern concept criticism by Prof. Dr. G. Mannoury), Lochem, De Tijdstroom, 1947;

also: C. Baudouin, *Suggestion et autosuggestion (Etude psychologique et pédagogique d'après les résultats de la nouvelle Ecole de Nancy)*, Neuchatel/ Paris, Delachaux et Niestlé, s.d. (on "suggestion spontanée, réfléchie et provoquée").

Also: *E.R. Hilgard and J.R. Hilgard, Hypnotic Susceptibility, New York/ Chicago/ Burlingame, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965* (nature, characteristic phenomena, individual variety, parameters and theory of hypnosis).

Besides suggestion, conjuring must be known - preferably as thoroughly as possible by those who engage in occultism or paranormality, respectively; - this in order to expose deception (which is always the first task of critical occultism or critical paranormality interest

**(b)1. *More pretentious*** are human knowledge in the form of characterology (frenology, chiromancy, graphologies) and depth psychologies of all kinds (Freud on the upside; and then all the rest): a knowledge of these too is required (cf. animistic interpretation; cf. *infra*).

**(b)2.** Doctrinal, worldview and/or ideological, philosophical-theological underpinnings are the so-called neo-sacralisms, which fall into three broad categories:

***(Far -) Oriental:***

**(1)** yoga -systems of all kinds, as well as theo- and, to a lesser extent, anthroposophy (H. Blavatsky, A. Besant; R. Steiner made a Central European variant of it) come from the Indian cultural milieu (Hinduism, Buddhism);

**(2)** zen (Buddhism) comes from the same angle, but Chinese-Japanese interpreted.

Roughly outlined, the difference between Hinduism and Buddhism is that the Hindu accepts the Atman-Brahman (// soul-deity) unity, while the Buddhist puts them in parentheses because he thinks more secularly (emphasizes this world more than the 'other'). In both, reincarnation (reincarnation) plays a central role, as well as the sowing-harvesting law, which revolves around covetous action that begets 'karma' (sinful result in the 'self' or soul) and has after-effects in the afterlife (in the reincarnated existence if necessary);

**(3)** universism, i.e. world-human harmony on the basis of 'tao' ('daode'), the 'way', i.e. the way one realizes the harmony, with yin (shadow side of a valley, female receiving and fertile aspect) and yang (sun shining side of a valley, male fertilizing aspect) as alternants, comes from China, especially in the so-called sinistic form (one thinks of the I Tjing or Chinese oracle book ) and taoist form (tao in the sense of yin -aspect mystically experienced). sinistic form (one thinks of the I Ching or Chinese oracle book ) and the Taoist form (tao in the sense of yin -aspect mystically experienced).

***(Near) Oriental:***

- astrology, dating from the Sumerians, comes from Mesopotamia (horoscopy, astroanalysis with astral mythology as distant background).

- gnosis, dualistic, if necessary monistic, which wants to be knowledge that is unity with the deity and, through that unity, unity with and understanding of the world and the universe and the soul, comes from the Hellenistic world.

- Biblical: Jesuitism (the Jesus revival or Jesus resurrection) in many forms; (Neo-) Pentecostalism (= Pentecostal Christianity, with its charismatic slant; (Neo-) Eschatology (end-time expectation among Jesuists, Pentecostal Christians and other groups: one expects the return of Jesus as imminent) come from the Judeo-Christian tradition of the Bible.

In addition to these Asian-religious ("Eastern") neo-sacralisms and the biblically inspired ones, there is a third group, the esoteric-occult ones.

Spiritism, all kinds of magic and mysticism, Satanism, all kinds of "secret societies" (so-called "mysteries," to use the Greek word) can be situated here. In a sense, here we have occultism in its purest form.

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- Faul Misraki, *L'expérience de l' après-vie*, Paris, Laffont, 1974 (after a chapter on survival after death, this book offers a text in which the story of a contact with a deceased person through medial writing is recorded (not automatically) ('le rapport de Julien'); followed by a critical study in which the psychanalytic, the psychiatric ('second personality', 'split consciousness'), the parapsychological (telepathy among the living), the spiritualist hypothesis are discussed; short bibliography).

- Carl A. Wickland, *Thirty Years Among the Dead*, London, Spiritualist Press, 1924 (first ed., 1971 (fascinating account of a physician who, in collaboration with his medially gifted wife, healed bound and possessed people for thirty years: things like "unconscious mind," autosuggestion and personality split seem to him to be out of the question).

- Jacques Lantier, *Le spiritisme*, Paris, Culture, Art, Loisirs, 1971 (good review).

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- *A.M. Weigl, Schutzengel - Erlebnisse, Altötting, St. Grignionhaus, 1972* (child and adult experiences; cooperation with angels).

- *Helene Möller, Einsamer Weg zu Gott (Autobiographie), Liestal (Schweiz) Affolter, 1960* (detailed account of a contact with the Archangel Raphael).

Behold a small selection from a huge pile of weeks and works on the main neo-sacralisms of the present. Quoted are those in my own hands (at least the main ones!). The list alone suggests how complicated the subject is. A somewhat summarizing work is *J.W. Jongedijk, uingen, Zomer en Keunings, s.d.*, in which Quakers, Salvationists, Moral Rearmamentists, Free Catholics, Christian Unionists, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Sufis, Spiritists, etc. are discussed with exposition and discussion.

**Note.-** On the hotly debated subject of reincarnation see a solid work: *Joan Grant/Denys Klsey, Many Lifetimes, London, Gollancz, 1972* (fourth edition), which features a medical psychiatrist who worked with his medially gifted wife on a reincarnational basis: cases are resolved after conscious- psychological, depth-psychological, hypnotic data are exhausted and only a "harking back" to a previous existence with a traumatic experience remains.



### ***Character terms.***

Medium" means:

- (1) physical science: material reality through which energy, matter or information travels (e.g., light rays through glass (rainbow colors of the spectrum));
- (2) hermeneutic (interpretive): the way of seeing and evaluating data (e.g., seeing the world through the medium of materialism.
- (3) anthropological: person type that acts as a mediator between two worlds ('this' and 'that' world e.g.) and does so by virtue of certain characteristics (medially gifted; mediumistic; mediumism, etc.).

**'Occult'** means 'hidden,' 'not (too) visible!'

This can be meant real (= matterly): the "other" world with its processes, persons, energies escapes the sense-reason approach that grasps the data of "this" world.

'Occult' can also have a social (= compassionate) meaning: a 'secret' society withdraws from fellow human beings (esoterism), obscures itself and is 'occult' in that sense. - The business sense and the fellow human sense go together easily because occult pursuits are not (very) tolerated by established society. In this sense, occultism (i.e. engaging with the other world through socially occult ways) is always 'counterculture' .

The occult can be both medial and non-medial. Indeed, there are occult pursuits that proceed without a medium: e.g., when a person directly explores, influences the other (occult, in the real sense) world.

One does not confuse 'occult', resp. 'medial', with 'spiritist! Spiritism consists in seeing the "other" (occult) world as populated with spiritual beings, "intelligences," with personhood, "spirits" (// spiritus), especially spirits of deceased people, "souls," who make themselves felt or reveal themselves through mediums.

### ***The concept pairing 'animism/ spiritism'.***

The problem is the following. - There is, on the one hand, telepathy and clairvoyance and, on the other hand, telekinesis and teleplasticity. These occur together e.g. in the compound cases of ghostly phenomena (which are thus more than knocking sounds or hardly anything more). So e.g. when of two boys of 13 and 14 years of age one is placed away by "fetching," it happens that the other immediately "knows" ("sees") where he is and how he is. Well, these parapsychic and/or paraphysical phenomena, if need be, are accompanied by ASC (Altered State of Consciousness, change of consciousness) and this is in the form of so-called personality splitting: at first glance, it looks as if one or both of the boys are exhibiting a different, second - hitherto little or unnoticeable - personality ("They become very different"). "It is as if they have become someone else": think of someone who is bedding down (he becomes different!); think of someone who is settling into a stage role (he 'identifies' with his role".

- The animist (who attributes everything to the "anima" or one's own (deep) soul) sees this as a split of consciousness (one and the same consciousness developing more than one personality, but limited to one person).

The spiritualist (who attributes at least some of it to spirits) sees this as the shining through of a new and different consciousness, peculiar to another person, i.e., one or more spirits.

**Note: Do** not confuse this paranormal and/or occult jargon with that of the historians of religion, who use the word "animism" (or even broader animatism) to indicate that the oldest civilizations believed in the soul as a separate spirit within and outside the body. I.e., there animism amounts to "spiritualism" (understood as belief in spirits) !

One did not underestimate the stakes: there is only a slight difference between revelatory spiritism, which accepts religious texts coming through mediums from spirits as "revelations," on the one hand, and, on the other, a prophetic religion such as that of Zarathustra (Persia), of Akhenaten (Egypt) or of Abraham and Moses (Israel), which accept revelations through "prophets" as coming from Ahura-Mazda, Aton or Yahweh.

The contemporary parapsychologist-animist will regard such medial texts as coming from the un(der)conscious soul of the prophet, nothing more! The spiritualist - and more broadly: the one who accepts persons from the other world: souls, pure spirits such as demons and angels, a personal god (theistic religion) - will attribute the same medial texts, of course not unquestioningly, but as a matter of principle, to extraterrestrial persons who reveal themselves, through the un(der)conscious soul and to a certain extent colored and influenced by it. The orackuleus (= mantic) or revelatory aspect of religion is intimately related to the position taken regarding "animism/spiritism.

Now there are several motivations and/or motives for being animistic (psychological, depth psychological, purely parapsychological in the sense of metapsychic). The two most notable are:

(i) accept as explanations of processes only impersonal factors; which scientists, especially natural scientists, like to do (the more a-personal their universe turns out to be, the more plausible it seems to them!)- out of a kind of "scientism," that is.

(ii) assume as metaphysical (i.e., supersensory) factors only an a-personal primordial ground that explains everything at once; which is what the religions above the Hindu Kush Mountains (Afghanistan) like to do who posit an eternal world law as a universe explanation (the more "negative" the theology (insofar as there is any), the more plausible it seems to them!). In both cases, a personal being, situated in the other world, seems unlikely: such a mentality is, of course, difficult to be revelatory-spiritual or revelatory-religious. The "ego" or "alter ego" respectively is the big problem, occult or otherwise.

The same slight difference between revelational spiritualism, on the one hand, and, on the other, belief in angels and devils exhibits the same motivations and drives.

Already on 29.06.1973 and 15.11.1972, Pope Paul VI emphatically declared that the traditionally faithful Catholic does know "evil" as a deep and very extensive factor at work in the universe; that, further, he ascribes to the morally evil character of earthly mankind its own and irreducible function; but that the devil (Satan and his cronies):

- 1/ a real, existing
- 2/ extensive and
- 3/ personal reality is.

A so-called devil-free Catholicism on a secular-theological basis is thus out of the question. A similar theme is expressed in books such as *The Exorcist* (P. Blatty): phenomena such as the inner word (= prompting but paranormally clear) of the devil, as the pact with him (acting together with a demon on the basis of an agreement), as bondage and possession (the utterly catanormal seizure by a satanic spirit) are, on closer inspection and without the a-personal bias, about which above, not purely animistic to be explained.

## **2. Occult and religious.**

Point of departure is the so-called 'two-world hypothesis': it is assumed, both among occultists and religious (at least in the traditional sense, i.e. before secularization), that there are two worlds, 'this' world, attainable through the ordinary senses and the reason that proceeds on that sensual data, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the 'other' world, attainable with the paranormal senses (clairvoyance, clairaudience b.v.) and the transcendental consciousness ('transcendental' in the sense of what transcends both the senses and every finite reality) and reason proceeding on that basis.

Watch carefully: both worlds are understood rationally, but at one time it is a reason (ratio) that accepts only sensory data (with an attached transcendental consciousness, if one, that is, accepts such a thing!), at another time it is the same reason but one that also accepts paranormal data together with the attached transcendental consciousness. Here there is not necessarily (flight into) "irrationalism," as hasty scientists and materialists imagine. If occultism and religion (at least in the traditional and neo-sacred sense) have in common the concept of the "other world," they do not necessarily have in common the concept of the "sacred. Without something sacred, there is no religion. What is 'holy' ? Is holy all that is serious. And this is threefold:

(1) in the objective sense: that which, for the sake of its own reality, commands reverence and inspires seriousness;

(2) in the moral-subjective sense: that which behaves conscientiously (and thus commands reverence); e.g., God is holy; the "saints" are, because their authority is conscientious;

(3) that which is consecrated, i.e. by convention "holy" and demands reverence (holy oil; a sanctuary, etc.). The first (objectively ontological) holiness stands or falls with an order(ning) in the universe: conscientious behavior consists precisely in doing justice to the serious order(ning) of the universe; God is the first to take that order(ning) seriously and respect it in his behavior; he is therefore behaviorally holy in the 'first' sense; but as the foundation of the inviolable order(ning) of the universe, he is objectively (by his own reality) holy in the 'fundamental' sense.

Well, the hidden, other-worldly, occult is not necessarily "holy": satanic spirits, for example, are other-worldly but (behaviorally) unholy! Mental influence can be practiced both in the form of black magic (evil) and white magic (morally high-minded) - this was already taught to us by the magicians of the Medes and, later, by the Persians -: mental influence is 'neutral'; it can be taken areligiously, even anti-religiously! One thinks of what in Hellenistic times was called 'goëtie' (// lowly) and 'theürgie' (highly). On the other hand, the other world, because of its key role in our existence, is objectively serious to a high degree and, because of its hiddenness, intriguing, indeed threatening and, thus, serious: one cannot completely dissociate the sacred from the other-worldly (understood in the objective sense).

**Conclusion:** religion, which is essentially reverence for and consideration of the sacred, is always not far from occultism, which is essentially involvement with the other-worldly. Occultism, mediality, mysticism, magic, - they cannot in fact be separated from religion, however distinct they may be from it.

- Of course, as already mentioned in passing, religion is here taken either in the traditional (i.e. sacred) or neo-sacred sense. Indeed, there are three main types of religion: traditional, secular and neo-sacred. Secular religion has gone through a process of secularization. Secularization can be understood threefold:

(a) factual (real): one desecrates (desacralizes) reality insofar as it is really or spuriously sacred (the nihilist desecrates not only the hypocritical, but also the real!); who, e.g., understands "Boss in one's own belly" as eroticism and sexuality have nothing to do with high seriousness; desecrates like a nihilist. Something else, of course, is to regard provisional 'holiness' (long-standing taboos, as one now likes to say) as non-existent: one thinks of past scruples that now make no sense.

(b) Sociological secularization: one gives to the layman what used to belong to the clergy (laicization), e.g. church goods are secularized.

(c) Theological secularization: God puts at the disposal of (thereby "emancipated" and "empowered") man this world, yes, creation, which of course counted as God's property (and thus not released).

- But secularization has a second aspect: the other world is discounted as non-existent (that is the radical degree) or, at least, it is put in parentheses as unimportant (yes, harmful) (that is the weaker degree).

The radical degree can be seen e.g. in ancient Greece in sophistry, the less radical in Aristotelianism, while Platonism takes the other world seriously both as existing and as important.

This threefold position also occurs with us: the Marxist and Humanist regard the other world as non-existent and, of course, unimportant; the secular theologian regards it as (perhaps) existing but, in any case, unimportant, so that "religion," in his language, takes on a pejorative meaning; the occultist regards the other world as important.

- Secularized religion (secular faith) thus relies, on the one hand, on desecration (real, certainly to the minimum degree social (a- and anti-clericalism); theological) and, on the other hand, on secularization as 'Verdiesseitigung'. Old religion did not do that: it was 'sacred' in the sense that it put both the other world and the sacred (in the triple sense) at the center. Neo-sacred religion ties in with ancient, traditional religion (historical principle), but it has passed through secularization, so that it is no longer traditional - but neo-sacred.

Thus e.g. she accepts the business desecration of false holiness; also the social desecration (declerikalization); also the theological (empowerment and emancipation of modern man). But she rejects the desecration of the truly holy (nihilism); also the desecration understood as Verdiesseitigung, as one-sided or, certainly, utter attention to "this" world.

- Well, earthliness (Verdiesseitigung) most certainly, but not necessarily nihilism are incompatible with occultism: the Satanist (cf. Anton Szandor La Vey and his Church of Satan at Los Angeles, 1966) is otherworldly, but, fundamentally, nihilist! Nevertheless, occultism, on average, is paranormal, mystical, magically oriented and thus more or less religious.

**Bibliogr. note.** - Regarding secularization, resp. desacralization concerning religion, especially Christian religion, cf:

*P.L. Berger, Het hemels baldakijn*, Utrecht, Ambo, 1969 (rather sociological);

*Dr. Sperna Weiland, Orientation (New Ways in Theology)* an attempt, to make inspiration speak for people for whom traditional representations of faith have become unclear, or have disappeared altogether), Baarn, Wereldvenster, 1966 (first dr.);

-id., *Continuing orientation (New paths in theology. a.o. on :Paul van Buren, Harvey Cox, Dorothee Solle, Richard Shaull, J.B. Metz, J. Moltmann and the encounter with (neo-)Marxism)*, Baarn, Wereldvenster, 1971 (both of the latter works are like the "bible" of secular theologians !).

id., *Het einde van de religie* (Verder op het spoor van Bonhöffer), Baarn, wereldvenster, 1970 (more systematic).

Both authors are Protestants and liberal, not orthodox (or orthodox):the Bible is subjected to free examination in a secular sense. Protestantism is incidentally, strongly secular from the outset: people like Locke (rational-secular), Schleiermacher (romantic-secular) and von Harnack (modernist-secular} have formulated classical-liberal secularism in several variants (Locke: from faith to reason; Schleiermacher: from salvation to the ideal; von Harnack: from the Bible to science); others like Barth (neo-orthodox-secular: back to original orthodoxy but within secular perspective), Bonhöffer (post-Christian- secular: the non-religious interpretation of the Bible), Hamilton, Altizer, Keen (radical "theology" of the "death of God"), Moltmann (political theology) have advocated a more existential (and twentieth-century) form of secular Christianity. Our Catholic secular theologians usually translate such Protestant secular insights into a "Catholic" language.

-With regard to demythologization (i.e. the elimination of mythology in religion, cf: *Jan de Vries, Forschungsgeschichte der Mythologie*, München/ Freiburg, K. Alber, 1961; the application of demythologization to the "kerugma" (message) of the New Testament is dealt with in *Kerygma und Mythos (Ein theologisch Gespräch)*, I, Hamburg-Bergstedt, Reich, 1967 (= fifth dr.; first: 1948). Central here is Rud. Bultmann: "The worldview of the New Testament is a mythical worldview. The world passes for put together in three levels: in the middle the earth, above it the heavens, below it the underworld. Heaven is God's dwelling and that of the angels; hell is in the underworld as a place of torture; but the earth is not earthly; it is the working sphere of supernal and extraterrestrial powers." Behold Bultmann's conception of "myth" in the Gospel. "To the mythic worldview corresponds the presentation of salvation history: the end times have now come and so God sends his pre-existent Son who in death and resurrection initiates the end times."

Bultmann's problem: how can modern man, secular as he thinks because of science and empowerment, still make a "sense" of such a thing? One can measure the effect of such a demythologizing adaptation on the gospels by reference to a book such as *R.A.A. Mourits et al., Evangelie zonder masker*, Tielt, Lannoo, 1971 (thirty contributions that pull off the time-honored sacred 'mask' of the gospels). The difference with orthodox and with neo-sacred gospel interpretation is only exposed when one compares this work with something like *A. Ory, Romphaia (Mary in the Light of Functional Exegesis)*, Marquain, Hovine, 1973 (It should be noted that 'functional' exegesis (= text interpretation) would already be so well represented with 'neo-sacred' exegesis; for that is what it actually is).

- Myth' is one aspect of the archaic (= ancient) wisdom of the primitives which is both gnomic (proverbial) and mythical. Myth is story and it is about an exemplary divine act situated 'in principio' (in the beginning, i.e. in the origin, both diachronic (= in the beginning of the history of the world, humanity and the universe and repeated over and over again since then) and synchronical (= continually present, 'eternal' source from which universe, world and humanity originate)), act which is situated in a world- and philosophical context and which is sacramentally represented and depicted by the story itself.

Without an understanding of holiness and otherworldliness, myth is meaningless. It is therefore central to religion and occultism. She is also the great problem of it; for, since ancient Greek philosophy, "rationality" (understand: the persistence of reason (= ratio, logos) on the basis of sensory experience (i.e. sensualist rationalism!)) the dominant of our thinking and life: the Euhemerists reduce the mythical data to merely human (the specifically mythical is 'nothing'); the allegorists translate the myth either natural-cosmic (the myth offers us personifications of natural forces (= naturism) or psychic-human (the myth is a projection (= throwing outward, externalizing) of soul aspects); m.in other words, they see in it symbolizations of 'something else' (the specifically mythic is something 'allusive'). But of the 'actual irreducibly mythical' nothing or not much remains in these two cases.

Which does not prevent demythologization from being a real problem even for those who think and live religiously or occultly: when one hears occultists and religious believers busy, one wonders "what is the part of symbol and fantasy in what they claim and do?" If one reads a whole current literature on occultism and neo-sacralisms, one shakes bet head about so much "mythology" in the style of Hesiod (if only then it was as solid as Hesiod did!). Critical occultism cannot possibly ignore the question of demythologization.

-Only that the answer is not entirely possible outside of every occult and neo-sacral experience (and its rational processing). Something that our sensualist-minded demythologizers like a Bultmann do not seem to suspect! They know only one type of rationality, i.e., the sense-based. That an occult substructure, a neo-sacral substructure of rationality is possible, does not seem to occur to them. It is that substructure or substantiation question that gets the first-rate role.

For the (primitive) religions, see *P.W. Schmidt, Origine et évolution de la religion (Les théories et les faits)*, Paris, Grasset, 1931 (this little book still does it, even if it needs improvement).

-*P. Schebesta, Origin of religion (results of prehistoric and ethnographic research)*, Tiel, Lannoo, 1962;

-*Dr. P. van Baaren, Maze of the gods (Introduction to comparative religious science)*, Amsterdam, Querido, 1960: without an understanding of the history of religion, I do not see how one can clearly grasp the relationship "occultism (magic, mysticism)/ religion.

Regarding the ancient culture stage:

-*E.R. Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley/ Los Angeles, Un. of California Press, 1966 (very solid; philological).

-*R. Flacelière, Devins et oracles grecs*, PUF, Paris, 1965.

-*K.H.E.de Jong, De magie bij de Grieken en de Romeinen*, Haarlem, De Erven F. Bohn, 1948 (naive belief; disbelief; reversal; new belief; philosophically founded belief: these are the stages the ancient Greek-Rom. world went through with regard to magic; pp. 129/151 give excerpts from the famous 'papyri magici');

-*G.C.J. Daniëls, Religious-historical study of Herodotus*, Antwerp/Nijmegen, 1946 (H.' views on miracles and (omens) signs as a guide to understanding history; the hermeneutics or art and science of interpretation of oracles is especially fascinating).

- Regarding the crisis of metaphysics (i.e., the elimination of metaphysics as a method of knowledge from our (religious) worldview):

-*M. Heidegger, Was ist Metaphysik?*, Frankfurt a.M., Vittorio Klostermann, 1949 (existential-phenomenological and fundamental-ontological);

- *Max Müller, Crise de la métaphysique*, DDB, 1953 (Heideggerian influenced); most thoroughly, in my view, still remains

- *Dr. Otto Willmann, Geschichte des Idealismus. 3 Bde*, Braunschweig, Vieweg, 1907ff; also thoroughly:

- *Karl-Otto Apel, ed., Charles S. Peirce, Schriften I (Zur Entstehung des Pragmatismus*, Frankfurt a.M., Suhrkamp, 1967; *id., Schriften II (Vom Pragmatismus zum Pragmatizismus)*, *id.*, 1970.

Why does the (crisis of) metaphysics come up here? Because, after the crisis of myth, it is part of desacralization, resp. secularization! Its starting point is what the Greeks called "sophia," i.e., insight into reality that is mystical, rational and ethical:



(a) mystical: God contact, contact with the supersensory world is the foundation;  
(b) rational: understanding and articulating the structure of things is the second aspect;

(c) conscientiousness about the consequences inherent in the mystical and the rational aspect is the third aspect. The mystical aspect is either distorted or abandoned by monism (assuming only one type of reality, especially regarding the monotheistic basis of wisdom), by (sensualist) rationalism. The rational aspect is obscured by empiricism, sensualism and materialism (they do not or not sufficiently adopt transcendental principles). The ethical aspect is abolished by autonomism (man as meaning not heteronomous but autonomous, which is most purely implemented in nihilism). Metaphysics always exposes a trinity:

- (a) An insight of nature (what the Antiquaries called *fusikè*);
- (b) a structural understanding (what the ancients called *dialektikè* (or also *logikè*);
- (c) an insight of origin (what the ancients called *theologikè*).

The first - *fusikè* - was developed by the Ionian sages but in tandem with the third - *theologikè* -: they mistook the primal ground of nature for material, living, divine;

The second was put forward by the Pythagoreans (*mathèmatikè*), by Parmenides (and the Eleates) and by Plato (*dialektikè*), by Aristotle (*analutikè*): mathematical structures (Pythagoras), ideas (Plato), "forms" (Aristotle) expose the order(s) of nature to the mind;

The third was elaborated by the Ionians, by Parmenides (the One), by Plato (who creates the word "theologia"), by Aristotle (who calls the "first philosophy" a "*theologikè*") (with Aristotle united with an insight of nature, representing the first aspect). Metaphysics seeks explanation of reality, i.e. sufficient reason or ground; - what C.S. Peirce calls abduction in distinction from de- and induction. But then sufficient reason not positively common but transcendent and extrasensory. Here we have it again! The so-called 'principles' (= *principia*, *archai*) or causes (= *aitia(i)*, *causae*) are to be situated in another, preferably supersensible, divine world. Which brings us into religion and occultism! The supersensible is threefold: the ideas (concepts that make up the structure of reality (// *mathèmatikè*, *dialektikè*, *analutikè* or *logikè*), the deity (// *theologike*), the general (= transcendental) 'being' (// *ontologikè*). which elicited Heidegger's use of the word 'onto-theo-logic' (and which is correctly rendered because of it)! Something with which modern secular man, of course, can do nothing or not much!

**Note - Regarding** the relationship 'Occultism/ religion' see:

- J.B. Rhine, *Le nouveau monde de l' esprit*, Paris, Adrien - Maisonneuve, 1955, pp. 222/244;
- O.W.C. van Willigen van der Veen, *Parapsychology and its significance for Christian faith*, Leiden, Stafleu, 1947 (inl. by Tenhaeff);
- Rev. H. Bax, *Faith by Experience*, Delft, Gaade, 1955 (does Kantian);
- Jean Prieur, *Les témoins de l'invisible*, Paris, Fayard, 1972 (inl. By Gabriel Marcel; "Christian" (= Christian but on an occult basis).

### **On the relationship 'ethics / religion / mysticism / magic'.**

"Gräbner's view that in a primitive society everything is connected with everything else is true, but the reverse is also true: already in a primitive culture far-reaching separation and specialization occur. Religion, magic, mysticism and hubris are found in every religion." (*H.F. Jans, ed., Ethnographic Encyclopedia, Zeist (De Haan)/ Ghent (Daphne), 1962, p. 32*) 'Hubris' (= boundary crossing of moral - legal nature) here stands for the (negative form of) ethics. This is, in a sense, the broadest: all justice done in conscience to what imposes itself as duty or ideal. Yet, before desacralization, resp. secularization, ethics was religiously- magically-mystically based. Only modern "autonomous," yes, nihilistic man knows "pure" (= nothing but) morality, religiously understood. So that archaic-sacred and neo-sacred morality is religion-based.

- Religion is to adopt towards the other world and/or the sacred an attitude of reverence (re-spectus instead of de-spectus, in Latin), of attention (re-ligere instead of neg-ligere, in Latin) (it is the morality towards Jenseits and holiness).

- Magic is in the face of Jenseits and holiness an attitude of mastery, asserting oneself, acting (magic, // maha (great, impressive, powerful), // mag-nus (Latin), // power); this by no means necessarily implies lack of reverence and conscience, for ability and power can be exercised very reverently (religiously) and conscientiously (ethically). One thinks of the white magic of Medes and Persians, of the theurgy of Hellenistic theosophists, as distinguished from black magic and goetry (which are hubris).

- mysticism is "mu-ein" (// mu-stikè, mu-stèrion), introspection and modesty that initiates into the other world and the sacred. This too can be true and false mysticism (mysticism) (conscientiousness or hubris). One goes but e.g.:

- A. Poulain, *Des grâces d'oraison (Traité de théologie mystique)*, Paris, 1901, 4 on the grâces "exdèiques" (révélation et visions) after: the "distinction of spirits" is an ancient theme.

- See also Dr. Joh. Verweyen, *Die Probleme des Mediumismus*, Stuttgart, Enke, 1928, S. 71ff. (*Mediumnismus und Magie*); also S. 13ff:

"Mediumismus, als allgemeiner Okkultismus wie als Sonderform des Spiritismus, gehört, als Teilerscheinung einer geistigen Strömung der Gegenwart an, auf die die worte wie Mystik und Mystizismus hinweisen." ("Mediumismus, als allgemeiner Okkultismus wie als Sonderform des Spiritismus, gehört, als Teilerscheinung einer geistigen Strömung der Gegenwart an, auf die die worte wie Mystik und Mystizismus hinweisen." ), (S. 13). Here the word "mysticism" is evidently taken broadly. Verweyen 185ff deals with the Biblical tradition's rejection of occultism (*Isaiah 8:19; Deut. 18:9/14; 1 Sam 28* (Witch of Endor), etc.).

Ancient Christianity, the Middle Ages, Protestantism (very emphatically) follow the same negative attitude. To this we reply the following:

**(a)1.** anyone who checks the facts even a little objectively soon finds that there is good and evil in occultism and neo-sacralism;

**(a)2.** "Religious science merits disapproval of using the term magic in an unfavorable sense, since in primitive and ancient religions magic comes into conflict with the gods only exceptionally." *H.F. Jans, Ethnographic Enc., p. 33/34*);

**(b)** Here, then, the time-honored rule applies: "Whoever, for serious valid reasons, thinks he may depart from the Biblical and ecclesiastical directives may do so in so far as he does not call the Bible and the Church into question in principle or compromise them in practice. This does not mean that the directive of the Holy Office in Rome of 24.04.1917 (prohibition to attend spiritist meetings) must be disregarded (The Exorcist, all those who know objectively what risks spiritism entails, especially for young people, are there to urge great caution).

Or that the Holy Office's prohibition, confirmed by Pope Benedict XV, of becoming a member of the (modern) Theosophical Society or of reading its books, is of no avail: it already requires serious insight to see clearly, as a Catholic, into the metaphysics of Theosophy! Which does not mean that, since the Second Vatican Council, there has not been a change, of course, regarding "prohibitions" of the Church. And, although it is a fact that the Protestant rejection of 'religion' (in Karl Barth's sense) and 'occultism,' is a consequence of the ('nature' pessimism of the Protestant reformers (human 'nature,' certainly in religious and occult matters, is a deeply fallen (// hereditary) nature; as proof the pagan religions and esoterisms! - pessimism to which the Catholic Church has never subscribed, by the way), yet there is truth in it: the a- and immoral in man is deep (in his un(der)conscious soul) and demonism and satanism are always possible, indeed likely, somewhere in the background in all-too-human religions and occultisms.

### 3. Superstition.

See P. Bauer, *Horoskop und Talisman (Die Mächte des heutigen Aberglaubens und die Macht des Glaubens)*, Stuttgart, Quell, 1963. This is of the best I have found on the subject. Faith, unbelief, superstition wrestle for modern man: thus begins this book which is well documented and covers just about the entire occult domain.

Verweyen, *Die Probleme des Mediumismus*, Stuttgart, 1928, S. 80ff, says that superstition, understandably speaking, has two contents:

(a) by lack of a sense of reality mistaking something for real that is only appearance (Sein/ Schein);

(b) by the same defect expect something from something (an operation e.g.) that it cannot perform. If the mere concept is ready, its application is all the more difficult. Why? Because the word "reality" is ambiguous: what today is called "utopia" is tomorrow sometimes "reality"! Applied here: what the religious, the mystical, the occultist experiences and manipulates as 'reality,' that the (sensualistically minded) rationalist labels as 'delusion' and unreality. So that what is superstition to some is experience and agingsevidence to others!

The Renaissance in its secularism, the Aufklärung even more harbor a sensualism, a "belief" in the five senses which, for the religiously or mystically or occultly minded man is really "superstition. Why? So that these secularist currents - which have exerted such profound influence on our Western culture - proceed, if not theoretically, at least practically, as if the five senses were the sole and all-encompassing contact form of reality. That "latius hos," that transgression of the real possibilities of the senses (that is precisely sensualism!) is the great, mostly unconscious, superstition of our dominant culture. This also thoroughly changes the periodization of cultural history.

(a) The "enlightened" mind (XVIIIth century) considers religion, mysticism, occultism (magic in particular and spirit belief etc.) as low stages of development, as obsolete and atavistic ("archaic," "mythical," etc.) phenomena: a "progressing" humanity of "esprits forts" evolves into irreligion, demystification, magic-lessness, etc.

(b) The neo-sacralist sees in religion, mysticism, occultism a basic form, an "archetype" (// Jung), a "depth structure" (// Chomsky), a "perennity" (Otto Willmann, // Steuco, Leibniz) present in alle cultures and stages of culture in varying forms, types, surface structures, temporal phenomena, given up to poly-interpretability: there is at most primitive, ancient, mid-century, modern religion, mysticism, occultism; there is Asian, Western, etc. sacredness.

**Bibl.-** Reference should be made to: *K. Leese, Recht und Grenzen der natürlichen Religion*, Zürich, Morgarten, 1954 (a great and thorough rush against so-called "natural" (versta: "rational") religion as we know it from the stoa to the Aufklärung, in the name of a Mystik der vitalen Mächte' in the wake of Herder (1771/1776: Bückeburgerzeit),

- *Schleiermacher (1799:Reden Über die Religion, // romantic theology with its historical revelation, its individuality, its contemplation, its feeling etc., but very vitalistically interpreted);*

- *Theodore Roszak, Opkomst van een tegencultuur (Bespiegelingen over de technocratische maatschappij en haar jeugdige bestrijders)*, Amsterdam, Meulenhoff, 1971(= first dr.), especially 7 (The Myth of Objective Consciousness), but all the chapters from 4 (Journey to the East: Allen Ginsberg and Alan Watts), 5 (The counterfeit -infinity: psychedelic experience), 6 (Exploring Utopia: Paul Goodman), 8 (Eyes of flesh, eyes of fire: science (flesh)/ shamanism (fire));

*H. Van Praag, Telepathy and telekinesis (Parapsychology and Paraphysics)*, Baarn, Meulenhoff, 1973 (and subsequent volumes);

*A. Koestler, Les racines du hasard*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1972; *Sheila Ostrander, Lynn Schroeder, Parapsychological discoveries behind the iron curtain*, Haarlem, Gottmer, 1972;

*H. Cohen, Psychology as Science Fiction* (New findings on dreams, meditation, hypnosis, LSD), *Meppel, Boom, 1971*(the so-called ASC psychology).

A response (very partial and, of course, politically-theologically based: *Politics or Mysticism?* in *Journal of Theology, DDB (Emmaus)*, 1973. Parallel on counterculture is *C.A. Reich, Flowers in Concrete (The Greening of America)*. How the Revolution of Youth is Trying to Make America Livable), Bloemendaal, Nelissen, 1971 (the pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial era; consciousness I, II, III; clearly parallel to Roszak) .

#### **4. Initiation.**

The ordination aspect is essential. In-'wide'-ing, entering into the 'consecrated' (sacred) domain. Initiation, initiation.

(a) Cognitive: one learns about the sacred and the other world through contact.

(b) Social: one is accepted into a group that possesses tradition and initiates it (usually in degrees and through rituals). The social is the best framework for the cognitive type of initiation, given the danger and impecuniousness of the neophyte. One thinks of the mystery religions of antiquity, of the initiatory secret societies (e.g. Amorc-Rose Crossers).

- What seems fundamental is the following: since the sacred and the other world are not too clear realities, which are complicated in the process, pluralism as a reaction to them is natural and inevitable. That which Peirce (and in his wake, but differently, less logically, William James et al; the so-called pragmatists) saw so keenly: the over-determinacy (i.e. composite, complex nature) and the plurality (i.e. the possibility of interpreting in more than one sense: man is a "signifier" or interpreter!) among other things of religious, mystical and occult things brings with it "faith.

What is belief? That is moving in that not too clear domain starting from hypotheses (e.g. one assumes in ghost phenomena that an unclean, lower spirit is at work ... without seeing it in a direct psychic way) and looking at the result of the agitation one applies in it (e.g., ghostly phenomena usually fall silent when one applies devil's spells and interpellates the spirit regarding its own condition and ghosts). In other words, what Kierkegaard says of God, i.e., that the "leap" of faith and not modern philosophical or scientific reason that is merely sensualistically underpinned, provides access to his existence and being, that is true, mutatis mutandis, of entire occult, mystical and religious realms as well.

Since the Sibylle, according to Herakleitos of Ephesus, "oute legei" (does not expressly and fully pronounce) "oute kruptei" (does not totally conceal), "alla sèmainei" (but gives a sign,-between 'legein' and 'kruptein', so, according to evidentness), therefore, only the stake of a faith, which can be utterly different from naïveté, casually stated, is the cognitive (= knowing) and/or agitating ((in)working) access to what it says in the oracle. Well, that between-evidence of the oracle can be established as the general character of religious, mystical and occult matters.

- This implies that a highly individual decision is always at the beginning, the middle and the end: by 'believing' (in the sense mentioned above) one separates oneself from the average European intelligentsia with all its consequences. Kierkegaard too puts 'the individual' (as opposed to the species (// Hegel)) at the center of God belief. Occultism is an all-individual decision, which man must accomplish alone and not as a follower.

- This belief can be reduced but not removed by psychic giftedness, namely by development (spontaneous or evoked) of medial gifts. One is then "medium," "sensible," sensitive. For the medial man, occultity is, of course, diminished, but, given the over-determinedness (complexity, indeterminacy) of the other world and the sacred, substantially hiddenness continues to dominate and, thus, 'faith' is the rule. Faith remains imperative for that which even the sensitive man does not see either! Especially the critical occultist realizes this very well (which the naive occultist often forgets!).

- *H. Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled*, talks about the couple "mediumship/ adept-ship" where medium acts as passive tool (// catanormal), while adept acts as active, self-controlling mediator or explorer and agitator (ananormal). This can be clarified if, e.g., we equate trance (= rapture) with impassivity (as e.g., in the medial inner word advocated by *Helene Möller, Einsamer Weg zu Gott, Liestal, Wegwart*, (Switzerland), 1960; see also *Gab. Bossis, He and I*, Bilthoven, Nelissen, 1959; *Jakob Lorber's oeuvre*, LorberVerlag, Bietigheim (Württemberg); even *Thomas a Kempis, The Imitation of Christ*, III:2/3) compare.

In particular, the inner word (H. Möller) includes the following sequence (order):

(a) One invokes a higher spirit (Raphael);

(b) while summoning (i.e., appealing to him whether he wants to reveal himself), one keeps the hand writing ready: at some point one senses a magnetic field that concentrates in the tip of the writing utensil and does so as a groove that has the form of letters, words, sentences, texts (= composition phase);

(c) after a while one realizes that while writing magnetically together one has the thoughts (thought contents) in one's mind by inspiration (= inspiration phase), which come onto the paper;

(d) after another time, one can listen: between the ears, in the head as it were, one then hears a soft voice (similar to the speaking we practice inwardly when, for ourselves, we speak to ourselves silently, e.g. when we formulate a mathematical problem inwardly) that clearly comes from a being other than ourselves (conversational phase);

(e) after another time, one realizes that the one who co-writes, who inwardly appeals to and inspires, also acts in us and around us: one realizes that events, persons and the encounter with them, books, etc. occur or come into our reach and that according to a "striking coincidence" that fits the circumstances a little too well; that is the guidance emanating from the spirit; but . this spirit may, if need be, be a satanic spirit speaking purely to you or shifting its inspirations between those of a good angel or spirit or exerting a psychic hold on you; then one is faced with the problem of distinguishing between spirits, - a very tricky and difficult problem which often requires years and the greatest caution and mastery (to say nothing of prayer and God-contact) (= cooperation or opposition phase).

Be that as it may, this inner-voice method (for a method it is: many people around the globe have experienced it (spontaneously or provoked)) has the great advantage of not being an actual ASC (change of consciousness o.g. leaving the day-to-day awareness one has of oneself and things). The clear critical mind can work to its fullest extent and the substance on which it works, its texts, substantially amenable to control (truth-criterion: they are true or false; well-being-criterion: they work edifying and

ameliorating (// ananormal); one does find oneself with them; which then means that one possesses a good, God-favoring guardian spirit).

**Bib.-** Besides H.Möller 's works see: *G.C.J. Daniëls, Religieushistorische studie over Herodotus*, Antwerp(Standaard) / Nijmegen (Dekker), 1946 (very instructive for the analysis of transmitted texts, resembling oracles).

One had been asked to speak on: Occultism, a new religion? You see, it is a very complicated question that requires a nuanced answer. If that answer is to be culturally and historically sound, only then does it become fascinating but also complicated. We wanted to outline many aspects. We wanted to answer the question of literature by bibliography. Note that the literature given is far from complete - I wonder who would know the entire literature on the subject; even an équipe would have a hard time! -, but it is serious.

The emergence - in America, in Europe, elsewhere - of neo-sacralisms galore, especially among intellectuals and the young, is creating a serious problem for the churches, for scientific circles (in each case different): the classic pastoral caregiver, the humanistic counselor, the physical therapist, the doctor, the psychiatrist, the lawyer, yes, who all of them? are confronted with a counterculture (Roszak, Reich). Without insight, all these people - one adds the parents whose daughter one day says "I am not the first time on earth" (reincarnation) or whose son says "I have been doing spiritualism for a while now" or who are confronted with psychedelic problems, all these people will react incorrectly!

Especially with the neo-positivist and Marxist intellectuals the blow will be hard, for with their habitual self-confident aggressiveness with which they play 'esprit fort' and make a strong case for dismissing everything as nonsense, infantilism, schwärmerei, schizophrenia, ideology, alienation - what invective prose is not still at their disposal? - off, they will, in the long run, especially if they want to be intellectually and objectively confronted with the phenomena themselves (= auto-implicative, being personally involved in them themselves; // self-involvement), get stuck.

For the most striking thing about that kind of people is the intellectual flight from the phenomena themselves: ask them anything - discussion about it, reading about it or whatever - but do not ask them to confront themselves with 'den Sachen selbst' (// Husserl). At a distance, yes (what they call 'objective', 'behavioral', etc.), but not directly and personally confronted with it! This flight will become difficult in a series of cases. It is that self-involvement that is the big key regarding occultism: how far does one risk it regarding acquaintance, information, not indirectly, remotely, but directly, personally? One avoids, flees; the other investigates. Yes, free inquiry can now be found in neo-sacralism. Those who have carried the banner of free inquiry since long, mostly shun it! (17.05.74)



*Note of a historico-philosophical nature.*

The founder of the modern conception of history is G.B. Vico (1668/1744), court historian in Naples. He is a Christian neo-platonist in the full XVIII century. History obeys a sequence: theocratic, aristocratic (= heroic) and democratic (civilizational) epoch. Already Herodotus noted that the ancient Egyptians had distinguished a period of gods, heroes and men as the order of history. And Vico thus switches right M.T. Varro's (116/27 aCn) order: obscure, fabled and historical time. Well, Vico is convinced that there is "corso e ricorso," cyclical order: just as Greco-Roman Antiquity went through those three stages, so will Western Europe go through them. Comte (the positivist) adopts the triple order (mutatis mutandis), Spengler its cyclical nature. Our secular theologies also adopt this.

The question is whether that sequence perfectly represents antiquity. We believe it does not!

(1) The history of antique thought shows us, after the Voorsocratiek, the Classical with its Attic (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle: synthesis) and also with its Hellenistic-Roman phase (in which skepticism (Sextus the empiricist e.g.) and eclecticism (Seneca e.g.) dominate and in which the secularism of the Voorsocratic Sophistry is fully established. Similarly, K. De Jong, *The Magic among the Greeks and Romans*, 1948 (see supra) notes the order "naive faith, unbelief" with regard to magic. So far, this is consistent with Vico's threefold scheme.

(2) Its ancient mental history clearly shows a turning point (around 250 pCn): skepticism, resp. eclecticism are counterbalanced by either dualistic (Neo-Pythagoreans, Hermeticists, Pythagorean Platonicians, Jewish Alexandrians (Philo the Jew), Gnosticism and Manicheism) or monistic (Neo-Platonism: Plotinus, Jamblichus, Proklus, Aedesius, Maximus, Julianus) theosophies.

Similarly, De Jong notes the sequence "reversion, new faith, philosophically based faith" (concerning magic)! This means that, after the demythologizing and metaphysical-critical period and as a counterweight, a remythologization and new metaphysics emerge. That was ancient neo-sacralism! Well, why shouldn't the "corso e ricorso" be seen in our cultural cycle even now? "To aberrations of late antiquity the occultism of today can recall (...) The spirit had been removed from creation; here and in spiritualism it returns as a ghost and the theurgy of late antiquity is renewed." Thus O. Willmann, *Die wichtigsten philosophischen Fachausdrücke in historischer Anordnung, Kempten/ Munich, Kösel, 1909*, S. 114.

Willmann was so astute and at the same time well informed that he saw the corso but also the ricorso in the XIX the century! One knows that antique Christianity also emerged in that turnaround and as a counterweight (Like the Eastern mystery religions): would the same occur now and, thus, a new rise of Christianity be at the door ? There was corso: why not ricorso, also in this ? Neo-sacralism clearly contains a Christian component that distances itself both from secularism and from Eastern religious or occult neo-sacralisms and from the official Church (one does not stand in

opposition to it; one stands outside of it, but one wants to adhere to it). Would therein, however obscurely and hesitantly, dawn the riches of Christianity? If Christianity really is what it says of itself, it should come out like this.

After the Middle Ages came two waves of secularization: the Renaissance (Galilei's mechanics!) and the Enlightenment (Locke) which turned it into a totalitarian concept of culture (autonomous man shedding the "origin" (ontotheologically understood: God as Supreme Being, source of all finite being) and the "ideas" (antique-logical understood: preconceived structures)): Is now the turning point there?

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(06.06.74).