

**Text 16 : M. Eliade : excerpt from phenomenology of religion (36 p.).**

**Contents**

1. Agricultural rites (1). .....	1
2. Agricultural rites (2). .....	3
3. Agricultural rites (female roles).....	5
4. Agricultural rites (sacrifices). .....	7
5. Agricultural rites (polynuclear). .....	9
6. Agricultural rickets (human sacrifices). .....	11
7. Agricultural rites (rebirth).....	13
8. Agricultural rides (final rides). .....	15
9. Agricultural rites II (engagement of the dead). .....	17
10. Agricultural rites II (funerary and agricultural deities). .....	19
11. Agricultural rites II (sexual rites).....	21
12. Agricultural rites II (orgies).....	23
13. Agricultural rites II (mental revolution). .....	25
14. Profane duration! Sacred time. .....	27
15. Profane duration/ sacred time: a list. .....	29
16. Profane duration/holy time (perpetual beginning).....	31
17. Profane duration/holy time (religion, magic, myth, legend). .....	33
18. Profane duration/holy time ( characters/decay and recovery). .....	35

**1. Agricultural rites (1).**

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 285v. (*Rites agraires*).- Eliade begins his exposition with the general proposition that, within traditional (mean: premodern) cultures, agricultural activities are - broadly speaking - essentially rites, i.e. sacred acts.

**Reasons.**

The object worked by the farmer is "the body of Mother Earth."

**As an aside**, even now - so in South America - peasants worship the Earth Mother while tilling the earth. To begin with, the lands are "property," understand: life and work, of the spirits who inhabit the earth.

**As an aside**, these beings are far from always happy for humans to touch and subdue their domain. The earth, especially as the sphere in which Mother Earth is situated, is often at the same time the domain of the ancestors under a multitude of perspectives. The growth forces proper to plants e.g. are "sacred": they are activated through the mediation of the one who works the earth, not only as useful elements of existence but also as essentially "consecrated. This is one aspect of what religious scientists call "dynamism," i.e. the fact that every force - certainly the force of all that lives - is an expression of reality which is

essentially - what ancient Greeks called - "dunamis," life force. So much for the synchronic aspect.

***Reasons.***

Since time immemorial, man has been situated within the rhythms of the cosmos, especially those of the earth. Thus - already practical, but especially sacred - certain times prove to be favorable or unfavorable for agricultural activities. It was once said that religions stand or fall with their calendars that determine which activities are or are not appropriate for which periods. This is certainly the case in agriculture. So much for the diachronic aspect.

***Consequence.-*** Since ancient times, the farmer enters into a system - however simple - of ceremonies, small- and large-scale, which do justice to the synchronic and diachronic reasons so briefly enumerated. These ceremonial acts are a very clear "hierophany," i.e. the display of the sacred (in this case: of the sacred in agriculture).-

***Eliade.-*** "For primitive man, agriculture - like any other essential activity - is not simply a profane (understand: non-sacred) technique. Agriculture is concerned with life and he aims at the astonishing increase of this life, present and in the grains, in the for, in the rain and in the nature spirits of the plants. Therefore agriculture is first and foremost a set of rites" (o.c., 285). This is how Steller summarizes ritual for a moment.

***Eliade*** places a striking emphasis on the periodic.

**1.** The farmer is engaged in spatially ordained areas such as the fertile soils, the forces of growth in the seeds, in the buds, in the flowers.

**2.** His labor is governed by the seasons of the year. Such entanglement in cyclic rhythms explains a number of ceremonies related to the expulsion of "the old year" (understand: the year gone by) and the summoning of "the new year" (understand: the year rising from the life forces in creation). It also explains, among other things, the "expulsion" (conjunction) of all that is evil (in the sacred or, as it is also expressed, "occult" sense) and the rebirth of forces. Such ceremonies are found just about everywhere and are connected with agricultural activities.

***Optimism as well as pessimism.***

Dealing - especially after centuries - with the synchronic and diachronic aspects of agriculture creates a certain optimism: a winter is never the end for nothing because, thanks to the cosmically fixed order of the seasons, it is invariably followed by spring, the general rebirth that nature shows in new and diverse forms of life. Everything decays into dust to rise again from it. Yet the seasons differ: one succeeds, the other fails. This creates e.g. famines that make the radical finality of succeeding - even with the help of rites - very clearly experienced. However optimistic the farmer usually is - he must, if not there is no more existence - , he carries within him the awareness of failures of all kinds.

## 2. Agricultural rites (2).

*Bibl. st.: M. Eliade, Traité d'histoire des religions, Paris, 1953, 285/314 (L'agriculture et les cultes de la fertilité).-*

We dwell very extensively on all portions of the chapter given its far-reaching significance, if only because in order to survive and live, man develops arable farming (and animal husbandry) as one of the most important steps in the cultural evolution.

**Khond** (Kond, Kandha, Kondhia, Kodulu, - Kuwinga, Kondho).

The Khond are a people (one million) in India (Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh) who traditionally practiced hunting and fishing but also arable farming and animal husbandry. They practiced human sacrifice until the English abolished it.- O.c., 295s., reflects Eliade.- We give this in front because it represents a basic insight and highlights the whole agricultural religion.

The Meriah, a class, provided the victims. The ever-volunteer victim, called "Meriah," was a member of that class. The Meriah lived rather happily for long years. They were considered "ordained," married other victims and received a piece of land as a dowry. Ten to 12 days before the human sacrifice, they cut off their hair. The earth goddess, Tari Pennu (Bera Pennu), apparently demanded the sacrifice, which took place either periodically or exceptionally.

The entire population came to the ceremony because it served the welfare and prosperity of all mankind. An indescribable orgy followed.

According to records, it is common in agricultural celebrations.-- In procession, people led the Meriah from the village to the sacrificial site, usually situated in a forest where wood had never been cut. There the Meriah was consecrated, i.e. rubbed with melted butter and curcuma and decorated with flowers. According to Eliade, the Meriah made the deity visible and tangible because the villagers crowded to touch it. To music they danced around it. Turning to "the earth," they cried, "God, we bring you this sacrifice. Give us good harvests, good seasons, good health". To the Meriah they cried, "We bought you and did not seize you by force. Now we offer you according to custom in such a way that no sin can be imputed to us".

The orgy was suspended in the evening to be continued the following morning until noon: again, one gathers around the sacrifice. Follows the killing in many ways: one administers opium and binds the victim and breaks the bones; one strangles it or cuts it into pieces or burns it and so on.

Decisively, all present, all villages that delegate people, are given pieces of the body that are carried as hastily as possible to all villages to be buried - ritually - in the fields. Other pieces - especially the head and bones - are ashed. The ashes are scattered over the fields to ensure a good harvest. When the British banned this, they replaced the Meriah with certain animals (bucks, buffaloes).

**Remark.** - Eliade mentions a similar custom among the Aztecs in Mexico. As soon as

the corn germinated, one "sought the corn god," i.e. a shoot. One brought her into the dwelling and offered her gifts (edibles) as if she represented him visibly and tangibly.- Then follows a whole rite that we skip. Notices that young girls were sacrificed.

Among the American Pawnees, among others, the body of a slaughtered girl was cut into pieces and buried in the fields.- Among some African tribes, they bury the pieces of the victim in the furrows.

**Remark.** - Note how the magic formula "Do ut des" ("I give so that you give") applies again and again: one gives something in order to receive something in return.

**Remark.** - What is striking is that, if one places such practices in its broader framework, fertility deities are at the same time war deities and deities of the dead (ancestors), even if this is not always expressed clearly and plainly.

### 3. Agricultural rites (female roles).

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 224/229 (*Glèbe et femme/ La femme et l'agriculture/ Femme et sillon*), 286s. (*Femme, sexualité, agriculture*).

The parallel between woman and farmland is one of the striking traits of traditional agricultural societies: as mother's womb stands to fertilization, so does soil stand to tillage. Thus the plow or spade is signified as phallus. In the background the hierogamy, understand: the sacred marriage between the (male) Heaven (god) and the (female) Earth (goddess) that are visibly and tangibly present in arable farming as a rite. This is the cosmic-polytheistic dimension.

#### ***The female role.***

Eliade cites A.V. Rantasalo, *Der Ackerbau im Volksaberglauben der Finnen und Esten mit entsprechenden Gebräuchen der Germanen verglichen*, 1-5, Sortavala, Helsinki, 1919/1925.

Among the Finns, women bring the seeds to the fields in a menstrual shirt, the shoe of a prostitute, the stocking of a bastard. Thus - says Eliade - the fertility of the seeds is enhanced - what is also called "dynamization" - by the material contact - what is called "contact magic" - by women characterized by a strong eroticism.

***As an aside***, beets sown by a woman taste sweet; beets sown by a man taste bitter! Peasant women sprinkle the furrows with the milk from her breasts before sowing time. Eliade sees a threefold reason for this: the "sympathetic" (mean: nature-related) action of the fertilized woman, the mother, on the soils; the transformation of a barren earth into a fertile field; - the sacrifice in honor of the dead (ancestors).

***In passing***: among Estonians, young girls bring the linseed to the fields; among Swedes, flax is sown only by women; among Germans, women - especially married and pregnant women - sow the seeds.

#### ***Ritual nudity.***

In Finland and Estonia, the magician acts naked in exorcising occult evils (casts of fate, other ailments). In Estonia, farmers plow and harrow naked for the purpose of a "good harvest." In Finland and Estonia, people sometimes sow whole and naked at night, praying, "Lord, I am naked! Bless my flax!". There was a custom in East Prussia: peas were sown by a naked woman. - By comparison, women in India during a drought pull the plow whole and naked.

**Water rite.**- The first land work of the season is sanctified by a rather widespread custom: one sprinkles the plow with water. Whereby this rite represents not only rain magic but also sperm magic. In Finland, Estonia and also in Germany such sprinkling is very frequent. In comparison, a text from Hindu literature says that just as the sperm stream fertilizes the woman, so the rain makes the earth fertile.

**Decision.**

Eliade, o.c., 287.- "Of course, if woman exerts such an influence on plants, then with all the more reason hierogamy and the collective orgy will have the most favorable effects on the fertility of plants." - To this we return.- Here we draw attention only to the sexual magic which, in a plurality of forms, plays a not accidental but essential role in the beyond-biblical agricultural world.

**Polytheism.**

The earthly woman represents the Earth Mother, the earthly man the God of fertility.- According to a prevailing historical evolutionary scheme, archaic 'telluric' (also 'chthonic') higher beings (ancestors, deities, nature spirits, associated with 'tellus' (Lat.) or 'chthon' (Gr.), earth) would first be worshipped. Once agriculture is there, "agricultural" higher beings are worshipped (not necessarily supplanting the former): "Throughout the appearances of the Great Agricultural Goddesses, one can recognize the presence of 'the Ruleress of the soil,' Mother Earth." O.c., 228. The Earth Mother does simplify while the later goddesses are more complicated regarding her roles in agriculture ...

#### **4. Agricultural rites (sacrifices).**

**Bibl.st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 287s. (*Offrandes agraires*).

That farming, within traditional cultures, is a rite is also evident in the labor itself.- Like any religious act, ritual purity at its beginning is a duty. Both at the beginning of sowing time and that of harvest, the farmer must wash (take a bath), put on a new shirt and so on. The series of deeds at the beginning of sowing and at that of harvesting is precisely the same. Which is not a coincidence because those times are highlights of farming as a sacred drama.

##### ***Offerings.***

In the same premise, for example, the first grains of wheat are not entrusted to the earth but are thrown outside as a sacrifice in honor of the higher beings who control the growth and ripening process, such as the dead (ancestors) or the "Corn Goddess" or the winds (understood as sacred factors). In the same premise, the first ears of wheat are left in the field for the Mother of Wheat, the "Three Virgins," the angels (whoever these may be), the birds et al.

##### ***Offerings.***

Animal sacrifices are the same at the beginning of sowing time as at the beginning of harvesting. Thus, among the Finns and Germans, one sacrifices ewes, lambs, cats, dogs etc.

##### ***Destinations and purposes.***

The goal, of course, is "a very good harvest." But it is not that simple!

1. A multitude of factors are involved in seeding and harvesting as could already become clear above.

2. That same course is situated within a multitude of cultures.

3. Especially that course is interpreted in very different ways, so different that even contradictions occur. It is clear, for example, that a pre-Christian peasant interprets the same method of sacrifice differently than a baptized person.

##### ***Dynamism.***

The belief in a sacred life force - "dunamis" (Gr.) - thoroughly determines destiny and purpose. Indeed, in the harvest, that life force is present either in the impersonal sense or in the personal (happening personified) sense.

Sometimes that life force or "power" is treated in a way that makes it difficult to know whether the rite intends the preservation of an impersonal power or the veneration of a personally conceived "power. Such is the case with the very widespread custom of not harvesting the last ears.

Either they are intended for "the spirit of the neighbor's house" or for "those who dwell under the earth" (understand: the dead) or, as Finns, Estonians and Swedes express it, for "the horses of Othin" or, as Germans put it, for "die gute Frau" (the Good Lady), "die arme Frau" (the Poor Lady), "das Waldfräulein" (the Forest Girl) - according to *W. Mannhardt, Wald- und Feldkulte*, 1-11, Berlin, 1875/1977-1 - or for the Corn Bride or "die Holzfrau" - according to *J. Frazer (Spirits of the Corn)* -.

**Remark.** - According to *Jan de Vries, Contributions to the Study of Othin Especially in its Relation to Agricultural Practices in Modern Popular Lore*, Helsinki, 1931, the sense of this refusal lies in the concern not to exhaust the life force of the harvest. This is also evident in not picking the last fruit from a tree, in leaving a few wool threads unshaven on the ewes' backs or, as among Finns and Estonians, when one does not completely empty the corn box. Or still: when farmers, after emptying a well, sprinkle it with drops of water "to keep it from drying out." What one lets go (ears of corn, e.g.), preserves the life force (in the soil and in the plants). The axiom reads: "The life force allows itself to be exhausted but never completely because it recovers itself as inexhaustible." According to de Vries, the ritual not fully exploiting was later interpreted as a tribute to the higher beings involved in the agricultural process (including with their life forces).

**Opm.** - Whether this was already the case in the earliest agricultural rites, it can be assumed, given the feeling (the sensitivity) that even the most primitive mankind possessed. - In any case: dynamism is decisive in this respect.



## 5. Agricultural rites (polynuclear).

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 290/293 (Personnifications mythiques).

Occult power is worshipped but preferably in "persons," who Eliade calls "mythical," i.e., who act within the framework of a "myth," i.e., a sacred, indeed, power-bearing story. In this regard, one notices a great variety regarding roles that lock into names. Among Englishmen and Germans the Mother of Wheat, the Great Mother, the Aarmother, the Old prostitute are power-bearing, among Slavs the Old Lady or the Old Man,-among Arabs the Harvest Mother, the Old Man, among Bulgarians, Serbs, Russians the "Djedo" (Old Man), the Beard (of Elias, Jesus, St. Nicholas, among others). They are venerated as present in the last sheaf of wheat.

### ***Harmony of opposites.***

Sometimes one pays great tribute to human representatives of "power" in the harvest. Sometimes, however, one mocks them. "This dichotomy seems to spring from the dual role played by the one who mows the last of the ears: if identified with the 'spirit' or 'power' of agriculture, he is celebrated; if, however, considered her slayer, he is treated with hostility and put to death."(O.c., 292).

Thus, in several Germanic countries, it is said that the person who strikes the last flail stroke at threshing has "struck the Old Man" or "seized the Old Man." He must, laughed at and mocked, carry a straw doll into the middle of the village or in the other case he must throw the straw doll unnoticed in the field of the neighbor who is still threshing corn.

In Germany, the person who mowed the last sheaf, or the girl who tied the last sheaf of wheat, is tied to that sheaf and escorted with great pomp to the village where they are served the finest dishes of a feast.- Here one clearly feels the opposing interpretations. It is very likely that, when the custom was introduced, that interpretation rested on sensing the true value of the life force in the sheaf and does not simply represent a whimsical impression. In the latter case, it is really about what has been called since the ancient Greeks "harmony of opposites" (understand: the fact that the same something can turn into its opposite).

***One more thing*** - The Bulgarians call the last sheaf "the Corn Queen." They put them on a woman's shirt, carry them throughout the village and throw them into the river to secure the rain that the next harvest will need. In a second interpretation, they burn them and scatter the ashes on the fields to increase their fertility (dynamite).

***Mischief figures.***- Among Scots, the last sheaf is called "Cailleach" (Old Lady). Every person involved tries not to have to mow it. Reason: he would in that case be liable to starvation because it is believed that he will be obliged to feed an imaginary old woman until the next harvest.

Norwegians believe in the "skurekail," the harvester, who lives in the fields unnoticed throughout the year and feeds on the owner's wheat. It is caught in the last sheaf. From that one makes a doll with the appearance of a human being. Another interpretation says that that doll is thrown in the field of a neighbor who is still harvesting, with the result that it will

have to feed the skurekail throughout the year.

**Remark.** - Whether such figures of doom are merely imaginary is highly questionable because it happens more than once that sensitives or seers do "feel" or "see" such beings as finely materially present.

***Baba.***

In Poland, the one who ties the last sheaf is called "Baba" (Grandfather). One wraps him with the straw from that sheaf so that only the head remains visible. On the last cart, one accompanies Baba to the farm where the whole family sprinkles him with water. The whole following year the person in question bears the name "Baba. In Carinthia, the person who ties the last handles of corn is wrapped in that straw and thrown into the water.

***Conclusion.***

Behold some samples in the collection of interpretations of the first or especially the last sheaves. Rightly, the impression is that diversity includes contradiction.

## 6. *Agricultural rickets (human sacrifices).*

*Bibl. st.: M. Eliade, Traité d'histoire des religions, Paris, 1953, 293/296.-.*

Two customs are very widespread, namely sprinkling the representative of the plant power with water and throwing it into the water, burning the straw doll and scattering the ashes on the fields. They have a precise sense and belong to a scenario that is still preserved pristine in some regions and reveals something deeper.

In Sweden, if a strange woman gets too close to the labor, she is bound with straw and called "Wheatwoman. In Vendée, the farmer's wife plays this role: she is wrapped in straw and driven under the threshing machine; she is then taken from among the ears being threshed while the farmer's wife is thrown in the air on a blanket as if she herself were the wheat to be winnowed.

### *Eliade:*

The identification of the wheat power and the human representative is complete: the peasant woman undergoes the whole drama of the wheat whose life force is piled up in the last sheaf. With the course of these rites, one wants the last sheaf to be reborn.

### *Death threats.*

In many other regions of Europe, the stranger who approaches too closely to the harvest field or threshing floor is threatened with death. Elsewhere, one bites the fingertips, brings the sickle to the neck. In Germany, the stranger is bound by the harvesters and forced to pay a fine. In the process one sings a song that speaks clear language. In Pomerania, for example, it is: "The men are ready. The scythes are crooked. The corn is big and small. Mowing away the man is the task!". Around Stettin one sings: "We are going to strike down the visitor - With our bare swords - With which we shear the fields and meadows".

### *Myth.*

An ancient Greek myth relates.- Lityerses, a bastard of King Midas, was notorious for reason of his fabulous appetite and the temper with which he harvested his corn. Any stranger who happened to pass by his field was welcomed to a feasting and then led to his field and obliged to harvest with him. It became a showdown. If the stranger was defeated, Lityerses bound him in a bundle, cut off his head with the scythe and threw his body on the field.-until Heracles challenged Lityerses, made it and threw the body into the Meander.

One sees the similarity to what was explained above. A supposition: Lityerses did the same with his victims.-This Phrygian myth may be a witness remnant of the Phrygians' custom, centuries before, viz. to offer human sacrifice at harvest time. By the way: according to some indications, it frequently happened this way in other regions of the eastern Mediterranean.

Reference is made here to the section on human sacrifice among the Khond and the Aztecs.

*Opm.* - G. Welter, *Les croyances et leurs survivances (précis de paléopsychologie)*, 1960, 86/88, dwells on sacrificial magic. Its essence - says the author - consists in "sacrificing" a part in order to save the whole. Thus the first bundle of corn to 'save' the entire harvest, a lamb to secure the livestock, a newborn to preserve the clan. Each time the victim testifies to a beginning or a restart that is birth, youth, introduction of something new.-

Human sacrifice seems to be the rule as soon as homo sapiens appears! The goals are:

1. fertility (among the Bene-Israel, the firstborn is sacrificed,-a custom abolished by Abraham and replaced by the sacrifice of an animal at God's command);

2. plant wealth (widely practiced in ancient Mexico, where at the conquista a Spanish soldier counted 136,000 skulls piled up in an Aztec temple);

3. foundation (in India as recently as 1952, a boy was beheaded in order to anoint with his blood the new altar in the temple of Shiva (Shiva); among ancient Slavs, "dietinets" (quicksilver) meant both the fortress and the young man sacrificed in its construction);

4. ex-voto (Jefte in the Bible returns from war as a victor and victimizes his daughter to fulfill a vow);

5. death worship (the widow of the man who died is sacrificed);

6. deification (a person becomes god or goddess after victimization among Indians).

## 7. Agricultural rites (rebirth).

*Bibl. st.: M. Eliade, Traité d'histoire des religions, Paris, 1953, 296ss. (Sacrifice et régénération).-*

It is about the basic meaning of sacrifice. According to Eliade - who returns to it again and again - it is determined by the archaic notion that the life forces must be regularly revived. That aspect of Eliade's theory is irrefutable, though. But he situates that rebirth within the creation myth: as he says, o.c., 298, each new year is a new creation of "time." This "time" is the time of "the beginning" of creation, a time that is actually eternally present and thus can be re-presented in a rite. As it was "in the beginning," so it is again and again in the rite that makes that beginning tangibly present.

### *Primal sacrifice.*

An application of this is the myth which tells that in the beginning a primeval giant was violently killed so that from the pieces of his body the universe (the worlds, the plants e.g. which the farmers cultivate and consume) was "created. Man who is sacrificed in the human sacrifice represents the sacrificed primordial being - a primordial giant - today: out of his body - particularly his blood e.g. - the harvest is created, as in the beginning.- If necessary, man is replaced by an animal or some other substitute but the event itself remains the same.

The immediate intention engages in that cosmogonic (the origin of the universe concerning) framework but fixes itself in the life force that e.g. plants make possible.-

### *The uncertainty of life.*

Eliade explains the need for a rite because man, especially traditional man, lives in the uncertainty of the necessary and sufficient nature of the life forces of e.g. his plants. The sun seems to set definitively with the winter solstice; the moon seems to disappear after the last quarter; the plants in autumn die. The latter is particularly convincing in natural disasters that cause the plants (as well as animals and people) to die of hunger.

The uncertainty also feeds on another aspect: the beings (deities, dead, nature spirits) of whom the soil and the plants are the occult property, see with sorrow that man takes possession of them. This all the more since by consuming, man exhausts the life forces.

### *First offerings.*

Primeval sacrifices serve as a way out of these uncertainties of all kinds. Their purpose is to reconcile the occult beings and "energize" the life forces of plants. And this at the beginning of the new season. Thus, the farmer commits rebirth.- Among Kaffirs and Zulus in South Africa - after the celebrations of the New Year - in the king's kraal the great dance takes place: on a new fire lit by magicians they prepare all kinds of fruits and in new pots that are used just this once. Then the king lets everyone enjoy this brew, i.e. the firstfruits.

Among the Creek (Indians), the firstfruits sacrifice coincides with the "cleansing," meaning: the expulsion of all sins and ills. All lights are extinguished; the weathermen light a new fire by friction. Everyone thereby cleanses himself by an eight-day fast, by vomitives etc.m . Only when the season is thus reborn may one consume the grains that are harvested

Among Aztecs, they ritually expel the old season along with all ills and sins. With this

goes the sacrifice in honor of the corn goddess. This is elaborated in warrior parades, imitation of battles etc.m .

**Aspects.-** Eliade summarizes the most particular aspects of the firstfruits offering.-.

**1.** Cosmogonic framework: presentment of the beginning of the creation of things.

**2.1.** Dangers that pose problems in consuming the new harvest results: depletion of life forces; discontentment of occult possessors of lands and plants.

**2.2.** Cleansing the community by exorcism - "conjunction" - of sins and ills. Which is one aspect of warding off dangers.

**2.3.** Ritual consecration of the firstlings. Which is a second aspect of warding off dangers.

**Results:**

rebirth or rebirth of primeval times in the rites that make those times present, source of all life forces.

## 8. Agricultural rites (final rites).

*Bibl. st.: M. Eliade, Traité d'histoire des religions, Paris, 1953, 298s. (Rituels finals).*

The basic idea that governs a complete arable rite is that of a closed-loop loop ("cycle"). The whole year is not a succession of seasons but a cyclical event. This involves a renewal of the life force of the earth, of the plants and of all that lives from both; in the form of a beginning that is finished at the end. The end still belongs to the beginning as its final unfolding.- Steller gives some details on this.

### *Harvesting rites.*

Finns victimize a lamb born within the year itself at the beginning of the harvest. One lets the blood flow on the ground. The entrails are donated as a "toll to the bear," to "the field-keeper." Understand: the mysterious being who represents, yes, controls the life force of the field. The meat is roasted together and eaten in the field.- Among Estonians there is a place in the field called "the well of sacrifice": there every year they placed the firstlings of the new harvest.

### *Harvesting rites.*

That harvesting is a rite is further evidenced by what follows.-The first three sheaves are harvested in silence. Estonians, Germans and Swedes drop the first ears on the ground. A custom very widespread. Its recipients are "Othin's horses," "the forest lady's cow," "the rats," "the seven daughters of the barns," "the fairy of the forest" etc.m . Note: again, names for the creatures that help determine the life force of the harvest. Thus "the rats" must be understood as the description of well-defined beings.

### *The rites in overtaking.*

One threw over the left shoulder a handful of grains while saying, "These grains are for the rats."

*As an aside*, the left shoulder means that the ritual gesture was for the dead.

Germans were in the habit of pulverizing the first hay stalks that arrived in the barn saying, "It is the food of the dead."

In Sweden, people carry wine and bread into the barns to obtain the favor of the spirit of the house. When threshing, one reserves a few ears of wheat in honor of the spirit of the threshing floor. Finns state that the purpose of this offering is to make the wheat grow in the coming year.

Finns have another tradition: the sheaf that is not threshed is destined for the earth spirit ('maanhaltia'). Elsewhere, people are convinced that the earth spirit ("talonhaltia") comes to thresh the three sheaves left behind on the night of Easter. One calls those abandoned sheaves "the sheaves of spirits."

Swedes do not thresh the last sheaf but leave it in the field until the next harvest "that the year may be plentiful."

*Eliade.* - It is suspected that many such offerings were for the dead. It is certain that harvesting and death worship are closely associated.

### *Cyclical.*

One noted the perfect similarity of the offerings at the beginning of sowing time, of the harvest, of threshing or of storing in the barns. The cycle closes with the collective celebration of the harvest in autumn: it includes a supper, dances and sacrifices in honor of spirits of all kinds. This completes the arable year.

### *Deaths.*

Winter celebrations - according to Eliade - become understandable if one puts forward the intimate connection between fertility rites and death celebrations: the dead who protect grains sown in the earth also control - as living in the earth - the harvest that is piled up in the barns and constitutes the food of the living in the course of winter.

### *Orgiastic.*

Cyclical rebirth, of course, also includes numerous orgiastic rites - note: rites, not debaucheries - in part because the dead, in the absence of life force in their world, want to join in celebrating these rites in order to feed on them and immediately benefit the life force of the living and their harvests.

According to Eliade, the basic pattern is the primal order that "in the beginning" nourished creation. Through an orgy, the peasants today establish that primal order in such a way that the primordial time can again play the nourishing role.-But this aspect is explained separately.



## 9. Agricultural Rites II (Involvement of the Dead).

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 299ss ... -

This second part of the exposition can be summarized in what Eliade says, o.c., 300: "The connection between the ancestors, the harvests and the erotic life is so close that the funerary, agrarian and genesic worship flow into each other and this up to and including their complete fusion." - 'Genesic' means "as to reproduction."

1. The dead just like the seeds are "buried" in the earth. The chthonic life space is accessible only to both realities.

2. Agriculture is pre-eminently a fertility technique such that life not only sustains itself but evolves. Ancestors are particularly attracted to that mystery.

**Consequence:** they approach the living in their agricultural activities but especially in those moments of it that involve abundance and orgy. - "The souls of the dead thirst for all drill-full organic reality, for every extravagance of organic life, because such vital indulgence compensates for the poverty of their being and plunges them into a heady stream of possibilities and germs." (O.c., 300).

**Opm.** - Something of this still lives on in some carnivals.

### ***The communal banquet.***

The feast shows all the traits of such boundary shifting. Thus it is understood that at that time the feast took place at the tombs themselves so that the ancestors would feast on the surplus of life force that was so close at hand.

In India, beans were the offerings of choice for the dead, but they were at the same time denoted as an aphrodisiac. In China, the marriage bed was in the darkest corner of the home: seeds were kept there, just above the graves. In Northern Europe, the yule feast was at once celebration of the dead and vital experience: at Christmas the lavish festivities took place that often included wedding celebration and grave care.

### ***Wedding.***

In Sweden, the woman keeps a piece of the wedding cake in her dowry case to take with her when she dies. In northern Europe, in China, women are buried in her wedding garment.

### ***The interests of the living.***

As long as the grains remain "buried," they are subject to the legal order of the dead. This means that Mother Earth or the Great Fertility Goddess controls the fate of the seeds in the same way as that of the dead. The dead appear to be so much like the living that the farmer turns to them so that they give their blessing and e.g. help underpin the labor.

None other than Hippocrates states that the spirits of the dead cause seeds to germinate and grow: the "winds" - understand: the souls of the dead - give life to plants and to all things. In Arabia, the last sheaf ("the Ancient One") is harvested by the possessor of the land, placed

in a grave and buried with prayers asking that "the wheat rise from death to life."

In the Bambara, one pours water on the head of the corpse one is going to cover with earth, while praying, "That the winds that blow from north to south, from west to east, favor us. Gives us rain. Gives that we may experience an abundant harvest".

In Finland people bury dead bones (collected from the cemetery to be returned after the harvest) in the ground during the sowing season. If the farmers do not have them, they make do with cemetery earth, or they take soil from road crossings where the dead once passed. In Germany, it was customary to take soil from the grave of a recently buried person or the straw on which someone died and spread it on the field with the seeds.

**Remark.** - We can already tentatively conclude that agriculture as a rite did exist since ancient times but that it involves thoroughly pre-Biblical life-force, drawn primarily from ritual sexuality. The Bible calls that "flesh," substandard life force, and replaces it with "spirit," God's essential life force.

## 10. Agricultural rites II (funerary and agricultural deities).

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 301ss ... -

The term "deities" actually includes what are usually called "deities," but also nature-spirits, even deified ancestors.-General thesis: usually a fertility deity becomes funereal.

Durga in India is revered in many local worship services. She is essentially the ruler of agricultural fertility but also becomes the ruler of the dead. In Rome, Feronia is called "dea agrorum sive inferorum" ("goddess of the fields and of the underworld"). In Greece they kept both the dead and grains in terra cotta pots: to the rulers of the underworld they offered candles as they did to the fertility deities.

### ***The party period.***

In ancient India, the commemoration of the dead fell in full harvest time; It was at the same time the main celebration of fertility. In northern and central Europe it was the same: Sept. 29 - Feast of St. Michael - was the date of death and fertility celebration.

### ***Collapse.***

The fertility rites become sacrificial celebrations in honor of the dead: those who live "under the earth" help influence the harvest and are thus favored. Thus, the grains thrown - in tribute to "the rats" - over the left shoulder are for them. - The "Old Ones," whom peasants revere as the ruler(s) of the fertility powers, understand: life forces, over time take on the appearance of "ancestors": one wants to reconcile them - for they are not always well disposed -, "nourish" them in the form of the celebrations and the surplus life forces they contain, in such a way that they help protect and multiply the harvests.

Very clear is this among the Germanic peoples.

Odhin is ruler of the dead, head of "the furious hunt" of souls who cannot find rest. Over time, he becomes the ruler revered in a multitude of agricultural rites.

At the Feast of Joel, the Feast of the Dead, on the Christian day of Christmas, the last sheaf of the past harvest is brought out to make an image of a man or a woman.-

### ***Curious:***

one also made of it the image of a rooster, a goat or some other animal. To which Eliade, o.c., 302: "The fact that the animal forms in which the life force of plants shows itself are the same as those shown by the souls of the dead is significant." The intermingling of funerary and agrarian worship is such a fact that one - Eliade means scholars first of all - can no longer decide whether a "spirit" that shows itself in theriomorphic (mean: animal) fashion represents the souls of those who passed away, or the life force of telluric-plant nature.

**Remark.** - 'Telluric' - from 'tellus' (Lt.), earth - means "that which is related to the earth.

**Remark.** - The fact that souls of the dead show themselves as animals implies that within such religion there are souls that have remained in the animal stage - behavioral type, mode of disguise. The orgiastic nature of fertility and death celebrations explains this in part. One thinks of the Indian temples with their images depicting sexual activities in which animals

also play a role.

The synthesis of agrarian and funerary worship becomes total - according to Eliade - during the second millennium BC, although its clear, definitive form is likely to be of later date.

Religion historically of great importance because what are called "the mysteries" - the religions that contact the realm of the dead in the form of initiation in a limited, yes, closed circle - arise from them.- The confluence began in northern Europe and in China as early as prehistoric times.

### *Joelfest.*

Joel is the pathetic moment: around the living, the dead - intermingling with the fertility deities - gather ! Joel is the celebration of the announcement of the resurrection (not in the Biblical sense, of course) of the season, i.e. spring, from the death of winter. Souls of the dead are attracted to all that begins as a year begins. Here with the exuberant celebration begins the explosion of new cosmic-biological life.

## 11. Agricultural rites II (sexual rites).

*Bibl. st.:* M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 303/ 305 (*Sexualité et fécondité agraire*).-

### ***Main Theorem***

the life force of plants is represented today by a bundle of corn or a tree on the one hand and by a human couple on the other hand, with the effect of dynamizing the life force of plants, animals, men (women), celebrated, by the community. The rite, as one can see, is bursting with "dynamism"!

### ***A first stage is seen in China.***

Believing that their act empowered the rebirth of the cosmos, young men and women committed unions in mystical unity with the omnipresent germinal forces in the fields in the spring to obtain rain.-A maximum number of engaged couples in the fields was desired.

A second stage envisioned the role of weemen and wewomen. Eliade provides models that are more fully developed.

The Ewe in Africa as they approach the decisive moment of field work - when the barley begins to sprout - take precautions against disaster. They commit ritual orgies. A considerable number of young girls are offered to the Python (a deity in animal form) as brides. This hierogamy (consecrated marriage) is performed in the temple of the Python because his "representatives" (mean: those who present him visibly and tangibly), the wemen, become one with the girls. This "consecrated prostitution" continues for a time in the enclosure of the sanctuary. According to tradition, such sexual behavior serves "to secure the fertility of the soil and animals."-

***Remark.*** - Western scholars use the term "sacred prostitution" but this is misplaced because in the West it is understood to mean "disengaged extra-marital sexual intercourse in a more or less institutionalized form. In fact, for the Ewe it is the core of their religion! This is quite different from "prostitution"!

Central African male Pipilen sleep far from their husbands for four nights to sharpen the sexual desire they need the night before sowing begins, while some couples are sexually active at the very moment of sowing. In some regions of Java, husband and wife commit unification in the field when the rice is in bloom.

### ***Eroticism and fertility.***

In northern and central Europe, the wedding was often performed in the field starting from the consecrated tree ("maj").- In Ukraine, on the feast of S. George, young couples rolled into the furrows of the newly consecrated field.

In Russia, it was the priest who rolled over the furrows, and did so by women. Eliade sees in the latter more than plant ordination: he sees in it hierogamy, the primordial union of Heaven with Earth.

Elsewhere, the rite was reduced to the ritual dance of a couple adorned with ears of corn. It was also reduced to the allusive marriage of the "corn bride" to her "corn groom."

Such remarried marriages were often surrounded by much artistry. In Silesia, for example, couples were escorted from the field to the village by the entire population on a decorated bridal carriage.

Up to there some samples.

***Eliade's reflections.***

***Given:*** the seeds.

***Requested:*** the successful germination (up to full harvest).

***Solution:*** dynamization of the seeds through the deployment of human sexuality and preferably this in its unleashed - therefore not yet immoral - degree so that the life force naturally inherent in sexuality, in its orgiastic degree, overflows into the life force of the seeds.

"Such coherence between forms and activities of life was once one of the most essential discoveries of archaic man. He magically made this coherence fruitful according to this method: "What is accomplished in common gives better results." The fertility of the woman favors the fertility of the fields, but the abundance of the plants in turn helps to receive the woman." - Eliade adds the role of the ancestors (which we have already discussed).

## 12. Agricultural Rites II (orgies).

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 305s. (*Fonction rituelle de l'orgie*).-

Lyrical, steller expresses himself! Premise: the ever-present primal beginning: Heaven and Earth in a sex act in the degree of intoxication create all things, including the seasons and life therein. The orgy, understand: sexuality in a degree that pushes all limits, is of this "généralement," generally speaking - puts Eliade in perspective - the visible and tangible ritual presentment: "To the unification of the divine couple, on earth, the general genetic (*note*: procreation concerning) frenzy must answer" (o.c., 305).

### *Samples.*

During the hierogamy (wij marriage) in the month of May at the Oraon of the Sun God with the Earth Goddess, the wij husband publicly commits sexual intercourse with his wife as the dedication of an indescribable orgy. On some islands west of New Guinea and north of Australia - Leti, Sarmata and others - the same orgies take place at the beginning of the rainy season.-

### *Eliade's comment:*

"Men can do no better than imitate the divine couple, especially if the prosperity of the entire world - especially the fate of the plant and animal kingdom - depends on it. Indulgences play a precisely determined and salvific role in the essential course of the sacred. They break the gaps between man, society, nature and deities. They help power, life, germs pass from one level to another, from one area of reality to another. What no longer had its own life force saturates itself; what existed piecemeal disintegrates, becomes reabsorbed into unity. ( ... ). The orgy brings the sacred life-force into circulation. The cosmic moments of crisis or the times of abundance in particular serve as the reason for unleashing an orgy." (O.c., 305).

### *Samples.*

The Kana - Indians in Brazil - excite the reproductive forces of the earth, animals and humans through a phallic dance representing the act of conception. This is followed by a collective orgy.

***In passing:*** according to Eliade, traces of phallic allusions can be discovered even in European agrarian rites: the "Old" - the consecrated sheaf is sometimes worked out in the form of a phallus. The last sheaf is called "the Slut" or it is given the form of a black head with red lips (the colors of the female sex organ in magic).

Eliade here recalls archaic plant rites with their excesses. So the Floralia (April 27) among the ancient Romans during which processions of naked young people paraded in the streets. So the Lupercalia during which young men touched women to make them fertile.

### *Holi.*

This is the main field festival in India.- Holi showed all the traits of the sacred orgy. "All morality is set aside because the stakes are much more serious than respect for norms and customs. The stakes are: the uninterrupted flow of life." Thus stated the proposer. Crowds of men, including children, walk the streets singing, shouting, and sprinkling each other with

holi powder and red water.

*As an aside*, red is the vital and genetic color par excellence. When one meets or notices women behind curtains, tradition demands that one treat them with the coarsest obscenities and insults. To which Eliade notes that lewd insults have a recognized magical value that continues to be recognized even in evolved cultures: one thinks of the Greek thesmophores.

*Opm.* - Not surprising that even Eliade cites the immoral excesses in field festivals in northern and central Europe as condemned by a number of ecclesiastical councils! Thus the Council of Auxerre in 590.



### **13. Agricultural Rites II (mental revolution).**

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 306/ 309 (*Orgie et réintégration. Mystique agraire et sotériologie*).

What steller provides there are reflections. Yet we mention them because they represent a sound view on the matter. Seeds, if they germinate in the ground and become a harvest, lose their individuality which thereby becomes "something else." Similarly, people, if they throw themselves into an orgy, lose their individuality. By experiencing the primordial order, man allows himself to be re-absorbed into "a bio-cosmic unity," even if this unity means a regression of life as a person into that of the seed.

But the same orgy involves rebirth into a new life. And in this sense. For the time being, man thereby descends into nocturnal-formless disorder in order to be reborn with increased life force into the ready-formed order.

#### ***The orgy***

like immersion in water (whatever that "water" may visibly and tangibly represent today) - lowers creation to a lower mode of being but also immediately recreates it.- This is mythical: in "the beginning" an orderly creation arises from the primordial order.- And immediately we situate ourselves in the cyclic course of that creation: again and again the acquired is dismantled somewhere so that again and again - ritually, orgiastic - it must be rebuilt, reborn. This is what - at least archaic-mythic - the cosmos as a course looks like.- Whereby Eliade admits that "the monstrous forms (of orgies) are degenerations of this fundamental intuition" (o.c., 307) which the cyclic interpretation of the cosmos is in fact.

#### ***Soteriological.***

'Soterio.logia' is the bringing up of 'sotèria' (Gr.), salvation.

Field mysticism, i.e., the belief that field cultivation in the ground is a sacred - call it "occult" - task, is both orgiastic and non-orgiastic redemptive mysticism. Eliade: "The vegetable life which through its seeming attenuation (the burying of seeds) causes itself to be reborn, is at once a paragon and a hope: the same can happen to the dead and to the souls of men" (o.c., 308). In other words, what happens to arable life happens to earthly life without more.

#### ***This includes what follows.***

The process of sacred agriculture is not a given: the rebirth is brought about by magical acts involving the Great Goddess (of agriculture), women, erotic energies, - not without the cooperation of the whole cosmos (rain, warmth, etc.), - also thanks to the ritual presentation of the mythical primordial time (i.e. primordial order/creation). The farmer's own effort is the decisive aspect. Decisiveness is essential!

**Remark.** - Eliade refers to the ancient mysteries.-He sees the impetus for this in the agrarian mysticism. Indeed, the ancient mysteries preserved traces of agricultural ceremonies. These were elaborated into initiatory religions-a "mystery" essentially includes an initiatory method-after a long period of arable mysticism. At the heart of these is the cyclical rebirth of the plant kingdom. This scheme led - millennia before - to the life-similarity of seed and man and to the mystical idea that the whole human being - not just the arable man - is reborn through death to a new, an afterlife.

***Meaning of agriculture, particularly arable farming.***

It is usually said that with agriculture the fate of mankind changed radically as abundant food was made available and astonishing population growth was made possible. But according to Eliade - there is apparently another meaning involved, - with definitive after-effects: the "theory" developed by arable man! Theory that was explained in the chapter we are finishing with the many aspects of it. One reads all the previous pages to grasp its richness. In other words, the mental evolution that akkebouwende man went through and bequeathed to us is, according to Eliade, just as significant as food abundance and population growth.

#### 14. Profane duration! Sacred time.

*Bibl. st.:* M. Eliade; *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953,332/349 (*Le temps et le mythe de l'éternel recommencement*).

##### **Difficulty.**

Eliade notes that the subject is "one of the most difficult" within the framework of the phenomenology of the sacred.

**Basic distinctions.-** There is the profane duration and there is sacred time. The profane duration is different in modern man than in the primitive.

**1.1.** Time can be part of the cosmic rhythms. For example, within lunar religions a certain phase is "sacred", the bearer of special life force in such a way that it gives rise to celebration and thus creates "sacred time".

Immediately "periodic" ("cyclic") time appears here as the profane duration of the moon shows regular returns of the same and thus gives rise to repeated sacred time in lunar religions.

**1.2.** The time may be the duration insofar as it is devoted to a celebration.- Thus the table prayer in practicing families, though in itself a profane duration, is sanctified by the family prayer. This is then for the members "a consecrated moment," mean: sacred or ritual time, during which one withdraws briefly from the profane duration in order to take in the life force released by that modesty. In the truly Christian family, that energy springs from prayer to the Holy Trinity, which - once prayerfully contacted - becomes the source of life force.

**2.** Time - in Eliade's interpretation - can be mythical in the strict sense insofar as he describes a "duration" that occurred at the beginning of creation and was filled (sanctified) by some tonal act.

**Opm.** - Even the Bible still preserved that mythical time in the creation story that sees us God in six working days and one day of rest in the beginning bringing about the ordered world. On that, at least, the Bible rests the division of the seven-day week with six working days and one day of rest, as God suggested "in the beginning." The biblical week thus becomes a duration that loses its profane character: the biblical man actually never lives wholly in the mere profane duration but in time 1.2. (duration spent on celebration - sanctification - spent).

**Remark.** - The Christian religion took over the Jewish week but what serves as its foundation as a paragon event - apart from the creation week of God - is the Holy or Great Week from the Monday before Easter to Easter Sunday. Indeed, the holiest time within Christianity includes, clearly according to the Gospels in liturgical interpretation, the holy time from Monday to Wednesday as an introduction to the four-day redemptive act of Maundy Thursday (institution of the holy time of the Eucharist), Good Friday (crucifixion sacrifice/glorification of Jesus), Silent Saturday (descent into hell), Easter Sunday (bodily resurrection of Jesus).

For the traditionally believing Christian, the profane weekly time is sanctified by the creation week and the re-creation week. Thus seen, he is the "time" companion of God as creator and of God in Jesus as recreator. Thus seen, all that is duration is filled with sacred time in two layers and with two life forces, the Old Testament and the New Testament.

***Hierophanic time.***

Eliade called consecrated time "hierophany," i.e. the showing - "appearing" - of "hierron," something sacred. Duration filled with a rite is immediately hierophanic.

Thus any moment or strip of the profane duration can become hierophany: it is enough that a cratophany, a hierophany or a theophany occurs for a duration to be sanctified. -

***Eliade's terms deserve explanation.***

'Kratophany' emphasizes the sacred as manifesting itself in a powerful fact ('kratos' (Gr.), power). Our traditional language in this case will speak of "miracle," "miracle.

The burial place where Jesus arose on Easter Sunday is such a kratophanic place: it attracts again and again pilgrims who want to visit "such place" so that it becomes a place of pilgrimage. It is for believers as if the power in which Jesus arose there still hangs there and that the moment in which that power worked shows itself as accessible there again and again.- "Theophany" is "God(theos) as appearing. In that term the emphasis is not on the sacred in general or on the sacred power but on the deity.

## 15. Profane duration/ sacred time: a list.

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 333ss .

**Sample.-** L. Lévy-Bruhl (1857/1939) is quoted in his *Le surnaturel et la nature dans la mentalité primitive*. The Dajak distinguish five types of sacred time - "we time" - and under more than one point of view. It is about Sunday.

**1. Sunrise** - Favorable to start an operation. Thus, children born at that time are "happy."

**Remark.** - 'Fortunate' here means "possessing the necessary and sufficient life force to succeed in all of life - unless a chance, i.e., a factor foreign to that life, affects that life force. Unlucky to go hunting or fishing or to embark on a journey at that time.-

**Remark.** - Reason: there is no necessary and sufficient life force available for such purposes at that time. It is immediately apparent that dynamism (belief in life force) is essential to understanding those statements. 'Favorable' then is "what dynamizes," and 'unfavorable' is "what does not (sufficiently) dynamize."

**2. About nine o'clock in the morning.**

Unfavorable, because whoever embarks on something then, fails. Favorable, because whoever sets out on the road then, need not fear highwaymen.-

**Opm.** - Which implies that highwaymen lack the necessary life force at that time!

**3. Noon.-** Very auspicious time.

**4. Three o'clock in the afternoon.-** Favorable for the battle. Favorable for the enemies, hunters and fishermen. Unfavorable for the travelers.

**5. Sunset.-** Favorable in the course of a short time.

Such value judgments are found in all religions and magics ...

What is striking is that there is an objective life force, already existing before all value judgments, available or not available. In other words: a sacred time (with its available energy) is present and thus active in phases during the course of profane duration.

**Explanation.-** What is responsible for that prior existence? What controls the duration such that it exhibits between profane durations and sacred times?

Experience shows that those who practice black magic, for example, that is, who use the life force they possess to undermine the life force of another person, are "working" at specific times, "at work" (as they say). For the victim it is then sacred time in an unfavorable sense. To then undertake something or be engaged in something becomes "pernicious," unfavorable.

Might not the "hierophanic" - so Eliade calls them - list of the Dajak have such an origin? Once long ago a great chief was dealt with by rock-hard black magic,-so much so that it became a life-and-death struggle . not only for the chief himself but for his entire people - which lasted for years and became a regular pattern. This is "hierophanically" entirely possible.

Of course, upbringing e.g. also plays a role in this domain: every Dajak is imprinted from childhood with the above list of favorable and unfavorable. Also a dose of credulity - moderns call it "suggestion" (which so far has remained a hardly exact-experimentable concept) - must not be eliminated: it is not the first time that black magic convinces its victim by magical methods of persuasion that e.g. it is doomed to die and thus that it has fallen into an unfavorable time.

***Eliade then does submit explanations.***

Thus the day as a product of our solar system in the above list reflects the phases of the day (cosmic statement). But it is not seen that these phases directly create favor or unfavor: they are simply phases of objective duration without sanctifying value. Thus the religious life of the group that has long introduced sacred times. But one does not get very far with that. The first question is: "What exactly created favor and unfavor within the list of the Dajak?". Eliade remains too theoretically vague in this regard.

## 16. Profane duration/holy time (perpetual beginning).

*Bibl. st.:* M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 333ss .

Before turning to Eliade's text, we reflect on a prayer that defines Christianity to its deepest essence: "Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning and now and always and throughout the ages."

'Glory' means "essence life force insofar as it bears strong radiance - 'luster'." Only the three strictly divine - "supreme" persons possess that glorious life force. Well, the prayer asserts that it is indeed the Christian's conviction as a Christian that it is so, that in other words, what is of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit in essence, rightfully belongs to them and to them alone.

The second part expresses that the objective fact just expressed is so "in the beginning" and now and always and "throughout the ages of ages." In other words, the profane duration - however long it lasts - is filled up with both the fact and the prayer formula that affirms the fact. Thereby the hierophanic time, seemingly divided into short times (beginning/now/centuries of ages), is in fact one and the same power-laden present tense. This is further underscored by the interposed "and always," which is not as redundant as it seems because it expresses the coherence throughout the fragmented short times of the one sacred time.

More so - "As it was in the beginning" is a typical origin mythical rest where 'beginning' means both "spreading over the rest of the times, because inexhaustible life force" and "beginning in the duration". Beginning is both first member of the whole set of times and summary of the whole set of times!

THAT be kept before our eyes by way of introduction

*Social origin.*- Eliade rightly opposes e.g. M. Mauss (1872/1950) who claims that sacred times are a product of society.

### 1. Lunar religion.

Mauss et al. note that the rhythms and repetitions found in the lunar phases differ from those found in the rites. The objective calendar of cosmic phenomenon differs from the hierophanic calendar that celebrates cosmic phenomenon.

To which Eliade replies: the celebrations do not concern the natural phenomenon, the phases of the moon, but its sacred meaning (in short, the "favor" that emanates from the moon and its phases).

## ***2. Field religion.***

The study of the field religions abundantly shows that the calendar announcing spring differs from the calendar of liturgical field ceremonies.

To which Eliade replies: what the peasants celebrate in their spring rites as 'favor', i.e. as a life force which develops through and as a result of the objective cosmic event of spring, is related to it - as in the case of the moon phases - but transcends the natural event: the rebirth which "life" (the basic concept of religion) shows with and in spring, is the actual object of the celebration. The actual object in other words is not cosmic but hierophanic!

### ***The many parts of the one total time.***

This brings Eliade to the actual subject, namely the myth and its "eternal restart." He expresses this as follows: the many divisions of lunar celebrations or field rites, while seemingly unrelated to one another, are in fact "solidary" or "contiguous" among themselves. - He clarifies this on the basis of the Eucharist.

### ***The Christian Eucharist as a sample.***

The moment when for the first time Jesus changes bread and wine (natural phenomena) substantially into his body and blood (hierophanic phenomena), is in itself a first secluded holy time (the primordial time actually of the Eucharist).

All subsequent Masses that repeatedly present that first transubstantiation may appear to be secluded sacred times in themselves, but in fact they are the bubbling life force of the first or primal transubstantiation at the Last Supper that spreads endlessly in objective duration.

Both expires - that of the profane duration and that of the rite repeatedly resumed - are two distinguishable expires.- Compare with what we said about the Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!



## 17. Profane duration/holy time (religion, magic, myth, legend).

*Bibl. st.* : M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 3~5 ... -

"What is true for the time of Christian worship is equally true for all the times that religion, magic, myth, legend (and folklore) show up" (o.c., 335). In particular: a ritual does not limit itself to repeating the previous one (which is itself the repetition of an archetype (versta: primal image)), it is adjacent and continues it, periodically or not.

### *Magic herb.*

Among other things, the picking of magic herbs is accomplished at the cut of what Eliade calls "critical moments" that however ultra-short make the profane duration favorable, such as the midnight of St. John's. "For a few seconds, as in the case of e.g. the fern, "the heavens open," as popular belief puts it: the magic herbs then acquire exceptional life forces and the one who plucks them can become invulnerable, invisible, etc." (ibid.).

Such seconds recur at the same time every year (periodicity).- Insofar as they are a sanctified - or rather sanctifying - time, they connect to each other in the course of the centuries. In fact, they make up a single encompassing we-time, notwithstanding that, spread over the profane duration, they are not visibly and tangibly contiguous.

### *Lot.*

In the legends of cities, castles, monasteries, sunken churches, a curse is a curse of fate that, once committed, keeps repeating itself. So e.g. all years, all seven years, all nine years.

Citing Hubert and Mauss, Eliade says: "On the well-defined date, the city rises, the bells ring (*note*: of the sunken church), the castle woman comes out, the treasure chambers open, the guards fall asleep. But at that moment the curse dies out and everything becomes silent.

Such periodic destiny repeats are sufficient, so to speak, to show that the same dates revive the same facts."

Behold a sample in the language of legends. That language includes:

(favorable or unfavorable) primordial (mythical basis) **1**,

**2.** repetitions of that primordial fact (periodicity), which together make up one encompassing sacred (favorable or unfavorable) time.

### *Eternal presence.*

In religion, magic, - myth, legend, - folklore, it is about a we time that is made present again and again for an indefinite time, about a kind of "eternally present present present." The language of all rituals (which command and prescribe rites) involves the term "now," "present. The duration experienced by the remembered or repeated (favorable or unfavorable) event is put present as if it were still there.

"The suffering, death and resurrection of Christ are not merely commemorated in the course of Holy Week: they then happen so before the eyes of the faithful. And a true Christian must feel himself the contemporary of these transhistorical (mean: going beyond the profane framework of historiography) events, since the theophanic time, once repeated, is made present before him." Thus Steller, o.c., 336;

***The herbalist.***

She says at her departure, "We are going to pick herbs to put them on the Lord's wounds." Thereby she becomes the contemporary of the wounded Jesus and provokes the favor that emanates from his wounds.

Or she pretends that her plants grow at the foot of the cross. Juister: at the foot of the Lord's cross grow plants; she does nothing but pluck them as still there.

It is told that the healer meets Mary or other saints; that Mary is informed of one's illness and indicates the cure. Thus the cited *Ch. Pavelescu, Cercetari asupra magiei la Románii din Muntii Apuseni*, Bucarest, 1945, 156,-a compatriot of Eliade.

***Conclusion.-*** The sacred in all its realms - religion, magic,- myth, legend, folklore - invariably exhibits one and the same structure as evidenced by what has just been said.-

***Opm.*** - Whether the first best herbalist just has direct contact with the plants at the foot of the cross like a Christian convinced, is a question that must be asked, since direct contact with the sacred also depends on mental beliefs.

## 18. Profane duration/holy time ( characters/decay and recovery).

**Bibl. st.:** M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1953, 337s .

The eternally present, spread over a basically endless series of "presences," involves the imitation of a deity, ancestor, cultural hero (understand: one who enriched the existing culture with a definitive achievement; one also says "cultural heroes").

So those who do Mass as priests inevitably enter into the person and especially the auspicious role of Jesus who recited the first Mass and immediately "instituted," i.e. left it for endless repetition.

### ***New Guinea.***

**Given:** a myth tells of the tonal deeds of the seafaring leader Aori;

**Application.-** A seafaring leader sets out to sea. He wants to resemble Aori by dressing like Aori, coloring the countenance black like Aori, establishing in the hair a "love" similar to that which Aori stripped from the head of Iviri. As Aori, he dances on the deck and opens the arms as Aori opened his wings. In this way he creates with Aori's sacred time a sacred coherence such that Aori's time is present.

### ***New Guinea.***

**Given:** Kivavia is a mythical toon - lucky - fisherman.

**Application:** a fisherman who goes fishing with his arrow pretends to be Kivavia himself. He does not beg Kivavia: he identifies with him! Eliade's comment: either he becomes the fishing hero himself in a mythical way or he merely becomes his contemporary in a mythical way in which the Melanesian contacts Kivavia's present. Such a thing transcends profane duration and is sacred time. It is as if the profane duration weakens in sacred time.

### ***It is enough to know the myth to understand life.***

Eliade quotes this maxim from van der Leeuw.

Every traditional, non secularized culture - in whatever stage of culture it is in - wants above all to realize the mythical primordial time as primordial favor in rites and ritualization (dynamization) of "the (profane) life." With Marcel Mauss, one can say that religious things that take place in the profane duration, logically considered, take place in eternity. 'Eternity' in Mauss' parlance stands for "mythical primordial time."

**Remark.** - O.c., 336, Eliade writes a phrase: "All life forces, though they were divine, attenuate and are lost as soon as they are active within the framework of profane duration." The constant need to resume rites, periodic and non-periodic, has its reason in that exhaustion.

Eliade situates here, o.c., 340, the rebirth of time. The past time wants to be phased out in order to create a new time. This is seen in the New Year's rites. These include:

1. cleansing, confession of sin, exorcism of demons, elimination of evil outside the village et al,
2. extinction of fire and relighting of fire,
3. masked processions (the masks represent the dead), solemn reception of the dead with dinner meals and such, re-direction of the dead at the end (to a stream, the sea etc.),
4. battles between hostile groups,
5. extravagances of all kinds (saturnalia, carnivalesque parades, unconscionables, orgies).

**Remark.** - One who has made a very serious contribution here is *W.B. Kristensen, Collected Contributions to Knowledge of Ancient Religions*, Amsterdam, 1947, especially o.c., 231/290 (*Cycle and Totality*).

Both concepts run into each other: for there is "totality," i.e. harmony (intermingling/interchange) of opposites (salvation/disaster; ethical good/ethical evil) such that, if one of the opposites is there, the other is already in the process of reducing it and vice versa. Which leads to periodicity.

Kristensen's account is a comprehensive illumination of what actually happens to sacred time: it is called upon but to lead immediately thereafter to exhaustion already.-This is what anyone with sufficient sacred experience observes again and again. That is what makes one return again and again to rites of winding down the previous and building up the next - call it "rebirth of sacred time."

Not even the holy time that the sacraments of the Catholic Church repeatedly create escapes this. Certainly not when in the midst of the postmodern crisis the traditional belief in a holy time - that of Christ's action - is weakening.