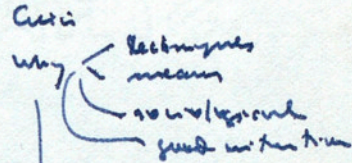


Man as a Ritual Being

I - The Starting Point

A Practical Problem Concern



Consensus: For the sake of itself of
 unknown justice & metaphysics...
 back to the human roots

II - The Central Point

A Theological Problem
and Anthropological

- 1) Ritual - phenomenology
- 2) anthropology: the ritual - symbolic expression of Man's being total
- 3) Theology: The God within - The Sun Dance -
 The deity of the dead

III - The Final Point

A Christian Attitude

- 1) The Mystery ← The Sacred - elements
 - 2) The Disclosure
 - 3)
- sanctifying Christian life in
 the outro phase
 (not mere miracle)

Man as a Ritual Being

R. Panikkar

I- The Starting Point: A Pastoral Concern

The churches as places of christian ritual are not precisely flourishing; the desorientation in matters of Liturgy after Vatican II is patent almost everywhere, splendid exceptions notwithstanding. New rites are not so easy to create. The new religions emerging ~~xxxx~~ everywhere find also difficult to give cultic expression to their beliefs and for this very reason many of them have a rather ephemeral life. Sociologists will teach us all the details of the crisis of rituals and ultimately of symbols of contemporary Man.

The pastoral concern for those who care about the christian tradition is understandable.

About the diagnostic there is not much diversity of opinions. Some may find a fresh air of liberation in getting rid of a ritualistic-ridden mentality, others may feel the loss of the old ^{and} profound liturgies, but most of the experts in the field will agree that our present age is going through a deep symbolical and ritual crisis - for good or for ill (bad).

The problem starts with the next step whether we call it therapy or constructive analysis

For reasons easily detectable (immediacy of the problem, lack of preparation on more fundamental issues, or time or interest) the proposals within the

There ^{is} is a point in which the most different specialists seem to converge. ~~At the more~~ present day western contemporary Man suffers a crisis of rituals and ultimately of symbols.

There is hardly any symbol with universal meaning for western Man today. 'God' has become partisan, 'Nation' debatable, 'Democracy' suspicious, 'Goodness' relative, 'Beauty' subjective, 'Truth' unreachible, and the

like. No wonder that the rituals by which such symbols are lived and reenacted are also on the drift and ^{little} less wonder also that within the main stream of the christian churches

the crisis of the liturgical celebration is deeper ^{has a cause} than ~~the~~ ^{is} ~~caused by~~ mere desorientation because ~~the~~ the official prayerbooks

are being reformed or Vatican II has let the ^{multisecular} walls of contention fall apart. Also the ^{so-called} new religions, ~~forms of~~ ^{it} be of christian or non-christian origin, find extremely difficult

to give cultic expressions to their beliefs and this seems to be a reason for the ephemeral life-span of many of such movements. ^{One cannot live out of a naked ideation for a long time.} ^{Man needs the re-enactment in space and time of those} ^{concrete}

The interpretation of this fact may certainly vary. ^{it} which helps us to

Some may find a liberation ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ getting rid of a ritualistic mentality. Others may fear that the baby is thrown away with the bathwater, some may advocate a going back to the roots of tradition and others going ahead unhampered by the weight of the past.

For those with immediate ^{religious} contact with the life of the people the problem becomes a serious pastoral concern. Now, precisely because of this immediacy the directions generally

taken, ^{be to} ~~those toward~~ ~~xx~~ the left as well ~~as those leaning~~ ^{or to} ~~toward~~ the right, tend to be mere ^{positive or negative} reactions regarding a

rather superficial status quo. And so we have a series of well-intentioned reforms, changes, improvements and the like but generally speaking within a ^{not} ~~an~~ sufficiently wide and deep

frame work. The ^{question} ~~problem~~ is not one of letting things work better

Thinks about his own situation, ^{all} ^{the more} he seems desoriented as for the meaning of his life and ~~the~~ ^{of his own} civilization. At the end of this process there is

'Capitalism' is a bad word and 'socialism' not a better one,

temptational insight. Man cannot live without rites.

so as to allow for an awareness of the ^{central} ~~problem~~.

Once upon a time there was a Man. Unlike 'primitive' Man he had lived for millennia and could not look towards the future any longer. He still remembered the fiascos of all kinds of ideas of progress and humanisms of all sorts. Several world wars had upset him, all the gadgets of the human skill begun to be boring and repetitious. **And all the achievements of the human spirit had not solved the most elementary human** irretrievably lost. **Not only he was too conscious that it** could not come back. It was also that if it could come he ~~did~~ **needs.** not want it to come. He set his mind at work and began to think:

He began to think everything including all thinkable things. He could ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ demonstrate the existence of God and could equally invalidate all proofs; he could think life as meaningful but could equally find arguments in favor of its meaninglessness. He could imagine that technology could solve all the problems and could by the same token show that technology is the greatest curse of Man's existence. He began to surmise that what is called freedom and democracy are nothing but expressions of the human impotence of finding truth so that anything will do provided we do not push to the extreme consequences.

We may suspect that the cause of this state of affairs is due to the impoverishment of life due to the high price that western civilization has had to pay for the stupendous achievements of ^{its} reasoning reason. Man has become ^{mere} reason and reason ^{has become mere} rationality. ^{Now,} But more than ^{qualify and explain} refine these heavy

statements, ^{ing} and continue on the critique of modernity, we may try another direction, ^{which} taking into account criticisms and constructive essays ^{we} would like to integrate the different fields of the western disciplines and the variegated spheres of the other world civilizations, without ignoring those of the primordial religions ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~.

I ^{may have} ^{presume} apologize for the overcondensed presentation and ^{assume} that ~~the reader is not a newcomer in this field~~

the following articles of this issue will spell out what here remains in statu nascendi.

Perhaps orthodoxies of all kinds have replaced the more encompassing orthodoxy, or more poiesis and activities have thrown away the delicate balance between action and contemplation, the material and the spiritual, the human and the divine.

in a harmonic
vision, whole

II- The Central Point: A Theanthropological Problem

In order to introduce our central subject we shall try to begin with a ^{brief description} ~~small phenomenology~~ of ^{what} ~~ritual~~ continue with an ^{philosophical} ~~anthropological~~ reflection and end with a ~~theological~~ consideration, ^{in the light of the religious experience of Man, on the meaning of the liturgical action.}

1. Phenomenology of Ritual

Any ritual is an act or event.

The human being is seen to perform a series of acts. ~~There is a~~ certain ^{continuity} ~~harmony~~ ^w between the subjective aim of ~~the~~ ^{an} act and ~~the~~ ^{its} objective goal. Man wants food and there he goes cooking, or hunting or cultivating the earth. ^{But} ~~There are~~ ^{also} some acts in which the ^{external} observer does not see such congruity between the act and the aim. ~~There seems to be a gap which is there for~~ ^{sees} the observer ~~but which does not seem to be there~~ ^{in the same way} for the performer of the ritual. The observer sees ~~people~~ eating a meal not just because they ~~are~~ hungry or want ~~to~~ to enjoy the good food, but because they want to get the energy of the God or to destroy the evil force of the foe, or to express a communality which is only detectable because any stranger will not be admitted to such a meal. ^{The observer sees} People ^{ing} dance not just because ~~there~~ is music and desire to let the body become also music, ^{but} but detects a superior pattern to the music or the dance itself, ^{surmises} ~~discovers~~ as it were, a certain transcendent aim not immediately ^{is} ~~given~~ ^{apparent} if one is not within the particular context in which that act is done. The insider ^{assumes, or rather believes} ~~takes for granted~~, in a way that the observer does not, that the prayer will bring rain, the song will appease the divinity, the blessing will forgive sins, the sacred meal will confer grace and so on. ^{The believer is well aware that there is a}

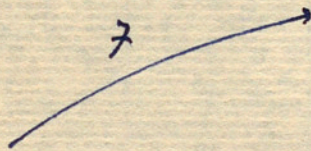
certainly

Point of all

(from 6)

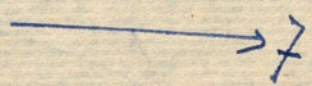
The ritual does not belong to the realm of mere thought, it is not a doctrine or an ideal entity, it does not appertain to the domain of the logos. It belongs rather to the ~~λογος~~ a realm of the ~~λογος~~ gesture, of the external and ~~λογος~~ corporeal manifestation. A good intention or a beautiful thought are not rituals. The ritual belongs to the domain of the incarnation, of the visible, temporal and spatial. A foot-ball game or a bull-fight can be a ritual, ~~to write or to read a book~~ can hardly be one.

→ 6

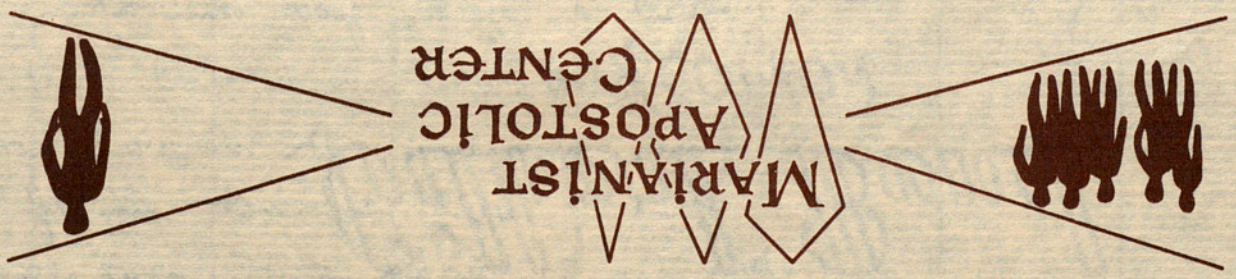


Because of this first phenomenological approach we have been using the words aim and (objective) goal, but we should not immediately think that the ritual has a very peculiar goal-orientation. It is not a causal one as in most of the other acts we do. If I want an apple I go to the tree, the neighbour or the market. If I want a son I shall try with a woman, but if I perform the ritual sacrifice for obtaining a son it is not in substitution of the biological causal laws. To convert the special goal-orientation of the ritual into a causal one is what constitutes the essence of magic. The magical act does not fail if well performed and if I properly join the puppet in the right place and

the right manner the Man whom it intend will automatically
 be struck by the corresponding ailments. Magic works
 causally outside the physical or merely psychical realm.
 Ritual does not. The fact that there is a mixture of
 planes, that the food is supposed to give me spiritual
 strength or the prayer be vouchsafed has a combilient
 ambiguity and a (abamco spread) of possibilities
 which belong to the very nature of ritual. The ritual
 intends the Transendent in a Transidental way.



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rupture of planes between the empirical act and its invisible or transcendent target, but ~~it~~ he is also convinced that there is no other way for him, in that particular context, to reach that goal than through the act he is performing. → 6,1

6,2 →

In sum, ritual appears to be an act by which man expresses, reaches, conveys, intends, effects something which otherwise would remain void. ^{For this reason repetition is a characteristic of ritual. Not so much because it re-enacts a primordial act happened 'in illo tempore', but mainly because no single act can ~~attain~~ fully reach the transcendent: you pray again, you renew your vows, you worship for a second time, you eat, dance, sing and meditate again and again following a more or less flexible pattern which seems to be conditioned by the very goal of the act and not by your aim.} → 7,1

overleaf

overleaf

which

³¹ in terms of the yajurvedic word *uśa*, the realm of the ritual, is not the object of the senses, or the concepts of the mind, ^{or} the intuitions of the intellect, but the realm of the *avyakta*, the unmanifest, the invisible, the transcendent.

or the image of the will

"As he would see the unseeable" says the Epistle to the Hebrews ~~speaking~~ speaking of the greatest prophet of the ~~Israel~~ Jewish Covenant.

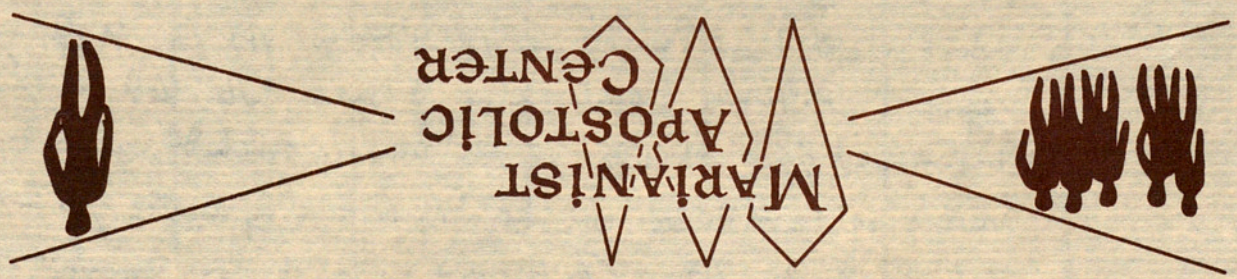
if there is only what meets the eye, will he will or ^{or discern} see the intellect, ^(the invisible intellects in archaic) if I can say whatever the boundaries of I want reality are limited to the field of ~~by the~~ tools we have to ^{even if} then there is no place for ritual in human life, ^{at least} only as a provisional forerunner for what is still unknown, unexplored, not yet chartered by our reason. Ritual ~~is~~ may be then tolerated as the 'pre-scientific' attitude of the 'unenlightened', as the soothing 'religiosity' attitude for our ignorance, as the pre-step of knowledge, (This be) called science or gnosis.

overleaf →

And yet the ritual act never succeeds either in fulfilling completely the goal: it points out, it ~~in~~ ~~manifest~~ suggests, ^{marks} lets surmise, it foreshadows, ~~or conceals as much as it reveals~~ it ~~dictates~~ ~~by~~ discovers by covering again. In a word, the target ^{disappears} remains always transcendent. The ritual act sets ^{out} upon to climb the mountain, ~~whose~~ ^{whose peaks} have already become visible, but it never sets the foot upon the summit; it leads the people, like Moses, to the Promised Land, but does not enter.

→ overleaf

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2 →

The 'once and for all' of some special rituals like those of initiation, marriage and burial ^{is} are not a denial of what we are saying. First of all these acts are supposed to transcend time and space ~~be contemporary with any given moment in time~~ lead us to the other shore from which there is no return. Marriages are ~~performed~~ ^{closed} ^{made} in heaven, says a Hindu saying, but celebrated on earth. Initiation breaks something which cannot be put together again; innocence is lost.

It is the same ^{as} of the Gospel saying: what God has joined ~~as~~ together, let no man put it asunder. Burial is perhaps the clearest example. We ~~do~~ ^{can} not repeat it. Time has elapsed.

Yet, secondly, as long as we live in space ⁺ in time a ritual is needed to maintain that link alive and in force. One can lose brahminhood and marriage can break. The rituals can crystallize in a rule of conduct or in the nuptial chamber and they maintain alive the link with transcendence. Each ^{authentic} commemoration is a kind of re-enactment. The anniversary of a coronation or a consecration or a wedding or an ordination, ^{or} a vow is more than just the celebration of an act ^{of the past}, it strengthens ^{also} the present.

→ 7

exact
quote

Phenomenology can certainly go into the details of the different rites and complete the picture just given, but it cannot say much more nor can it venture any philosophical interpretation. This we may try it now.

Philosophy

2. Anthropology of the Ritual Symbol

Ritualism is the great enemy of ritual ~~is ritualism~~, understanding by the ^{former} ~~latter~~ the degeneration of the ^{latter} ~~former~~. Ritualism is the continuation of the externals of the rite without the internal faith, the inertia of the rubrics without the enlivening power of the nigrics, the empty shell, the ^{habit of} sticking to a ^{determined} ~~symbolic~~ action once it has lost its symbolic power. In other terms ~~the~~ ritualism enters once we persist ^{doing} in a certain rite in spite of the fact that meanwhile we may have found another more direct way of expressing what until ^{then} ~~we~~ could only find its ^{adequate} expression in the ^{in question} ~~adequate~~ ritual. A ritual candle to Santa Barbara, legitimate as it still may be from other view-points, can no longer replace the protecting effect of a lightning-rod.

We have spoken of a ritual as a symbolic act, i.e. as an act which has a special (symbolic) power by which it symbolizes 'that' which otherwise would ^{not} be symbolized. Now, a symbol, in difference with a sign, is not an epistemic signal, a quid pro quo, according to acknowledged convention. A symbol is the ^{revelation} ~~very symbol~~ of 'that' ^{itself} which ^{only} in the symbol is disclosed. The symbol is always the symbol of the symbolized, which ^{only} in the symbol - qua symbol - appears. Our body ~~is~~ not our (whole) being, and yet it is the symbol of what we are, so that outside the body we cannot speak of ourselves as we are. It is in and through the symbol that we encounter the symbolized, (~~precisely in the symbol~~). → overleaf

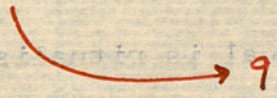
an act which ~~is~~ leads beyond the immediate goal of the concrete action itself; the ritual function of the rite leads beyond the soothing effect of the oil. In other words, ritual is

non even a mere part of it

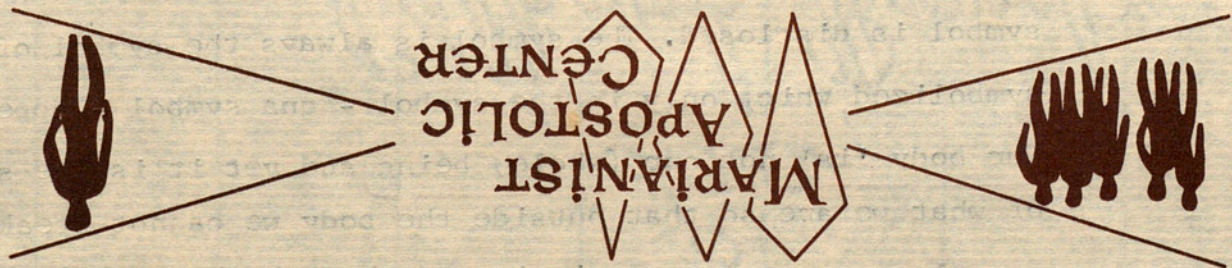
accumulated

and yet we should not confuse both. I meet you in and
through your body and yet my encounter with you cannot
be reduced to a mere corporal meeting: The body is
always more.

understand



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overleaf →

For this very reason

Further, the symbol resides neither in the object alone (over there) nor in the subject alone (over here), it is neither merely objective nor purely subjective. The symbol is constitutively a relation and it is symbol only for those for which it ^{is} ^{relates} ^{and who} ^{will} ^{do it} ~~is~~ ^{in as much as it} ~~symbol~~. This is why a symbol ^{which} ^{needs to be} ^{interpreted} ^{is} ^{no longer} ^{symbol}. ^{Symbol} ^{would} ^{be} ^{that} ^{by} ^{means} ^{of} ^{which} ^{we} ^{interpret} ^{the} ^{former} ^{(by} ^{this} ^{very} ^{fact} ^{already} ^{obsolete}) ^{symbol}. Once the different symbolic acts of the Mass, for instance, no longer reveal to the people what they intend to disclose, they have ~~ceased~~ ^{ceased} to be living symbols. This should not ^{be} ^{interpreted} ^{however} in an individualistic way. The symbols have a power ~~xxxxxxx~~ which ^{by} ^{far} ^{transcends} the understanding and acceptance of the individual. It may very well be that the individual is carried away by the very 'spell' of the ritual which he does not fully ^{apprehend} ~~understand~~, but which still is alive in the environment where he lives.

overleaf ←
overleaf ←

~~To be sure, As a matter of fact,~~ ^{to be sure,} ~~one does not understand~~ ^{grasp} symbols; one is open to them, one finds them meaningful or conducive ~~xxx~~ to what they are symbolizing. Ultimately, one believes in symbols.

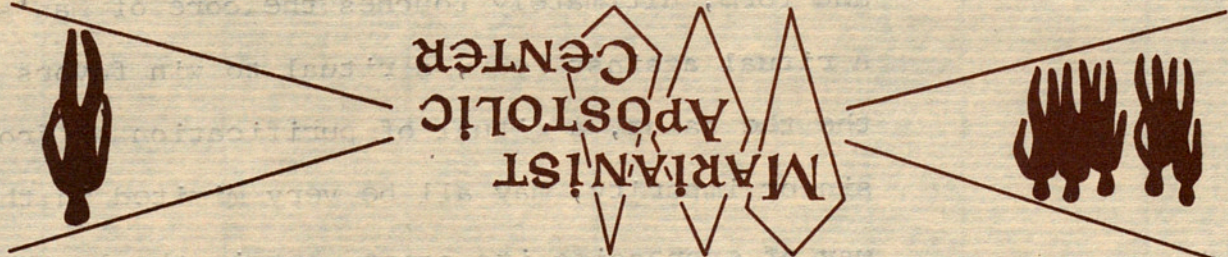
For this reason also ^{as well} any authentic ritual in spite of the fact that it may simply strike ^{strike only} ~~be~~ a very ^{particular} ~~concrete~~ aspect of human life and be limited in scope and form, ultimately touches the ^{very} core of Man's being. A ritual against fear, a ritual to win favors from ~~a~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ saint, a ritual of purification ~~of~~ from some sin or impurity, may all be very ^{very} limited in the way of expressing its scope, but in the ^{last} ^{analysis}

overleaf

we have said that a symbol ^{will} not ^{summe} suffer to be
inter-preted, i.e. to be dependent on an inter-medary,
a go-between that explains to us the meaning
of the symbol. strictly speaking

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they all refer, ~~to~~ through one particular aspect of human life, to the ^{central} mystery of the real which transcends us and about which we cannot have ^{over} any control. ^{no} No amount of rationalization can help me to get rid of my fear ^{since} once this has penetrated into my skin; the favor I am asking from a saint is not so much triggered by my desire of the particular favor as by the urge of ^{to} completing my being; the sin I want to get rid of tends to my own total and final purification, etc. In other words, any authentic ritual always ^{finally} ~~ultimately~~ expresses the ultimate urge of Man's total being. Or, in the words of a famous Upanishad: it is not for the sake of the husband or the wife or sons or wealth or even ^{for the sake of} the world ~~and~~ or the Gods that all these things are dear, but for the sake of the âtman. Authentic ritual is always adhyâtmic, it refers to the ultimate mystery of existence.

3. Theology of the Ritual Action

We have been saying that in and through ritual Man steps toward transcendence, in what ever sense we may intellectually interpret ^{it} ~~transcendence~~. This seems to be an important and ^{highly} for our times relevant question.

~~Since many centuries in the West, and perhaps we ~~kk~~ could ~~kk~~ consider the epoch of the ~~proofs~~ ^{of} for the existence of God ~~xxxxxxThomax~~ around the XIII century as a significant date for the beginning of the change between the symbolic power of the action ~~to~~ and the image to the intellectual power of reason and of the idea. In order to reach the transcendent~~

Man cannot live without a respite towards ^{shaking himself out} something which he is not yet, he cannot support ^{collect} the pondus vitae without an elan which brings him to overcome the burden of a mere temporal existence ^{with} by the hope of reaching, in one way or another, the transtemporal, be it postponed in a future, hidden in an enlightenment or hopped ^{for} in a heaven. Man is an animal which strives for an always ever more, be it in the vertical or horizontal direction, in time, space or beyond ^{carries} their framework, by means of spiritual disciplines, art, politics, science or whatever. ~~Now~~ A more traditional way of putting it is to speak of the desire for God, or the urge ~~is~~ for happiness, or the striving for salvation, liberation or ~~wholeness~~ wholeness, ^{inbuilt in the very heart of Man.}

Now, the first period of most civilizations seem^s to have linked this thirst for transcendence, as we may well word it, with an action, with a holy action, perhaps with the sacrifice, and in any case with ^a set of rituals by which the human being fulfils the sense of his life and reaches the 'salvation' he is desiring^s. It is the karmakhandas of the vedic religion, the sacrificia^l cults of most ^{traditions} religions, the liturgy as understood in the first centuries of christian history and as still defined by the first of the constitutions of Vatican II: the Church is for the sake of the Liturgy ^{the liturgy is here} there and the liturgy is what brings about the salvation of Man and of the entire universe.

Yet, there seems to be a second, ~~rather~~ rather kairological than chronological period, in most of the human traditions, in which the sacred actions are ~~interiorized~~ ^{desire} interiorized and the ~~important~~ act becomes the act of the spirit, the intention, etc. ~~There~~ There is a famous passage in the Vedas in which Yajñavalkya is asked with ~~what~~ ^{what} would he perform the life-giving sacrifice if the prescribed matter were or not available, with milk, he answers, with grass, water, etc., if what he proposes as a substitute were also impossible to obtain. If there were nothing at all, he finally answers, I would still be able to perform the sacrifice without anything, in pure faith. Neither Jerusalem nor Garizim,...

The process is very complex and we cannot even attempt to summarize it. We may point, however, to a single example in the evolution of the western christian world. We could date it around the XIII century when the proofs for the existence of God were beginning to be considered 'proofs' instead of mere efforts at intelligibility. We refer to the change that took place in the middle of the scholastic period between the symbolic power of the action and the image, and the intellectual power of reason and of the idea. Until the change to 'literacy' what brings salvation and happiness is the active participation in the symbolic and liturgical power of the ritual, embodied in ^{what} active participation and in the power of the images. Afterwards what really puts us in contact with the transcendent is the power of the mind, the light of reason, the idea which can soar until the heights of the divine.

Or we may link it with the discovery of a ^{the} penitential mass a little later.

Even^o God's existence can be proved, Fact which implies that the basis of the intellectual proof, ultimately our intellect, is not only capable of reaching the transcendent, but ⁱⁿ a way, more powerful that the transcendent itself, for it becomes the basis of ~~xxx~~ the proof, ~~of its own existence~~. Certainly the scholastics knew well the distinction quoad se and quoad nos, but nevertheless the fact remains that the organ for the transcendence is the intellect and not the praxis, the action, the ritual. No wonder that pandiss, intellectuals and 'enlightened' souls^s would soon ^{begin to} consider religious ~~as~~ praxis matter for the uneducated masses, whereas those who know do not need to perform the sacrifice, to go to Mass, ^{or} ~~to~~ belong to any institutionalized religion. At its best the religious practices are ^{at best} substitutes for the real knowledge, I repeat, be it called sacred gnosis or secular science. Here begins the crisis of the ritual. It ^{degrades} passes to a second order of importance. Was ^{it} not even written in John, that eternal life is to know Him? Was not the christian revolution ^{with intent} a reaction against the 'elements of this world'? Was not the protestant reform ^{not itself} a powerful reminder that 'sola fide' are we saved? Has not ~~xxx~~ been serious talk in ~~xxx~~ contemporary western ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ theological milieux about 'religionless christianity'? Should we now go back to primitive religiousness?

very

much as

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It is at this level that we should insert some pertinent reflections about the nature and the function of the ritual. We may begin with a negative critique of modern intellectualism and proceed with a more positive defense of the place of ritual.

After the collapse of the so-called german idealism and the shattering ^{Wys's} experiences of western mankind with the last ~~and other~~ wars, in spite of the highest rang given to rationality, it is not too difficult to voice the philosophical statement that the very concept or idea of transcendence is a contradiction in terms: it denies what it affirms. If transcendence is a concept, at least in as much as I conceived it, it is not beyond my power of conception, i.e. it ^{is} not transcendent. The realm of the transcendent may be beyond the reach of my ^{hand} ~~mind~~ or my body or perhaps my will, but certainly not beyond the power of my mind, which speaks of it and claims it has a concept, an idea of it. We may make all the fine distinctions we like between essence and existence and the like, but the fact remains that as long as we claim to have an idea of transcendence this very idea destroys the transcendence, at least on the noetic plane.

And thus we have prepared our ground for the defense of ritual. I should not be misunderstood. I am not advocating a return to an irretrievably lost innocence and saying that we have again to dance ^{up} to trance, to sing in sanskrit or latin or to go back to what for us could not but appear as superstitions. I spoke at the beginning of a new innocence, and not of an artificial effort at ^{to recovering} ~~catching up~~ the first one. The tree of the science of good and evil has set its rods ubiquously in the human soil and cannot be eradicated without destroying ourselves. Even more, as the Kathopanishad will say: that tree has ~~its roots in heaven~~ ^{us with the learning}

its roots in heaven and yields its fruits on earth.
 It is upside-down.
 This is not only our human condition but the very structure of the entire reality. The felix culpa of the Easter-morning liturgy is more than a mere wishful thinking post factum, it is the declaration that what went on in Golgotha and goes on in us is more than a mere accident of reality, but an adventure in which the three worlds are involved.

What I am suggesting is the new discovery of the central place and function of the ritual ~~as~~ as the total human activity by means of which Man may reach the transcendent, ^{discover} the meaning of life and collaborate ⁱⁿ to the construction, reconstruction, redemption or new-creation of the world. Ritual is not an escapism ~~from~~ ⁱⁿ the form of celebration from the otherwise more painful but exceedingly more serious human affairs of work, or whatever. True liturgy is not a balm or medicine for Man's ailments, or a beautiful psychological device for letting an outlet ^{for} drain all our violences, ^{explains} frustrations and unfulfilled desires. It may very well be that rituals perform this function and that without the re-instating of the traditional sacrifice, humankind may go mad and ^{number one} kill each other for the lack of a ritual institutionalizing creativity, violence, and the need of self-affirmation, ^{and} sense of uniqueness, ^{is so} ^{the}. All this may very well be true and, in fact, modern Man begins to discover that the ~~so-called~~ primordial religions were not so primitive with their rituals and celebrations. But, I repeat, all this is only secondary in the sense that it is the result of the very nature and function of the ritual.

very nature and function of the ritual. A manipulated ritual, performed because of its ^{have from} good sociological or psychological effects, would become both inauthentic and ineffective.

The function of the ritual is not to keep Man busy doing something harmless, or even useful, when ~~xxxxxx~~ there is nothing better to do. It is not something accidental in Man's life. No restoration of ritual can be achieved if we ~~xxx~~ lose sight of the central claim of ritual in shaping Man's life and ~~xx~~ even ^{into} the direction ^{ing the destiny} of the entire cosmos. Lokasamgraha, the maintenance of the world, is a classical expression of indi(na) spirituality since the ~~xx~~ Gîtâ. Ritual is neither rubrics, i.e. ceremonials, nor nigrics, i.e. ideas, important as these two constituents are, but anthropogenesis, or rather cosmo- ^{with the world} theandrogenesis, the collaboration of Man, ^{and the Gods} ~~in our~~ case ~~to~~ the sustenance of the entire reality. Man has to reshape himself, and, in ^{some} a way, the entire reality, by that integral action in which all his potencies are engaged. Ritual is the orthopraxis by means of which Man collaborates ⁱⁿ to the continuation of the whole of reality. Anything short of this not only minimizes ritual but puts it already ⁱⁿ on the wrong place and distorts its real meaning. 'Cosmic Liturgy' is not ^{originally} a modern original ~~expression~~ ^{phrase} but an old and traditional expression of the Fathers of the Church. You do not build a cathedral ^{or a temple} for a private and secondary spiritual amusement of a selected few, you do it because each holy shrine is the entire universe and the action performed therein has to do with the running of the whole cosmos: it is the place where the Gods,

Men and the rest of the world meet in order ~~to~~ ^{they must in order} that each may do what is supposed to perform so that reality does not sink into chaos and nothingness. Each temple is the constituent parliament of the entire reality for discussing and passing the laws that will govern the real. Perhaps the ~~state~~ ^{state} of affairs of the world looms ^{dark} ^{by} ^{due to} because of the absenteeism of so many. And here the Gods alone are as powerless as Men ^{alone are} without the collaboration of the divine and the participation of Matter. The reconstruction of the body of the divine is a commonplace in indian spirituality, as much as the edification of the Body of Christ in scriptural christianity - until God be all in all. 'The Sacrifice is Man' says The ~~Shatapathabrahmana~~ ^{Shatapathabrahmana} centuries before the sacrificial statement of Pilate: ecce homo!

The old liturgies were not ^{there} for the solace of Man or for relax^{ation} so that he could ~~then~~ ^{attain} work better, but just the other way round; work was done for the building of the cathedral, life was lived for the celebration of ~~the~~ Creation and ⁱⁿ praise for the Creator. Liturgy is not ~~the place~~ ^{the place} where an appendix ^{to} Man's life, like the churches of christian Europe were not in ^{some} ~~an~~ corner of obscure angle of the city. If we have a crisis it is not a crisis of techniques of worship or means of celebration, but a crisis of life itself. If the altar is not the center of the world, there is little scope for liturgical renewal.

in the House of
God and the People

of secular rituals and that modern society is also full of ritual performances. And in fact nothing stands in the way that modern western society is equally ritualized as archaic cultures.

Second, I have not said that any love-relationship or any medical service is a ritual, but only those which somewhat transcend the private usefulness or pleasure and intend a collaboration to the welfare of the world. A blessing sincere blessing of a meal can convert a bio-physiological act into a real symbol of community, fellowship and communion.

~~The consequences are not that of diluting the meaning of ritual, but of~~
 If this is true, I am not diluting the meaning of ritual, but expanding it or perhaps regaining the insight that whatever you do, do it for the glory of a God who is part and parcel of the destination

15 →

By saying this I may be enlarging the notion of ritual into other human activities, which normally are not considered rituals, like service of all types, medical, political, intellectual, ~~etc.~~ and the like, love relationships also of all kinds, parental, of spouses, friends and so on. All these activities also sustain the world and fulfil the description of ritual. And in point of fact I would include all of them as possible examples of rituals.

Two remarks are here pertinent. First, we are so accustomed at seeing only sacred rituals and studying them in part or remote cultures, that we are taken aback when considering the possibility

III - The Final Point: A Christian P.H. Undell

Until very recently ~~and still today in many places~~ the christian religious life — and this is ritual — did look and still it looks in many places, like an interlocking and peculiar combination of old and new.

Old: christians still ~~do a series~~ are supposed to perform a series of rather anachronical ^{etc} acts: some days of fast, a prayer at meals, songs and congregation once a week, ritual water for initiation, oil for the sick and especially the re-enactment of a bloody sacrifice although in an incoherent manner, eating and drinking from the risen body of their Founder. They bow down on their knees before statues and monuments, they kiss the hands of their priests, put incense and candles before holy pictures, their ministers used to dress in a uniform more than thousand years old — and hold processions, venerate holy places, go on pilgrimages, make their own vows, ~~and so forth~~ keep their own calendar, and so forth and so on.

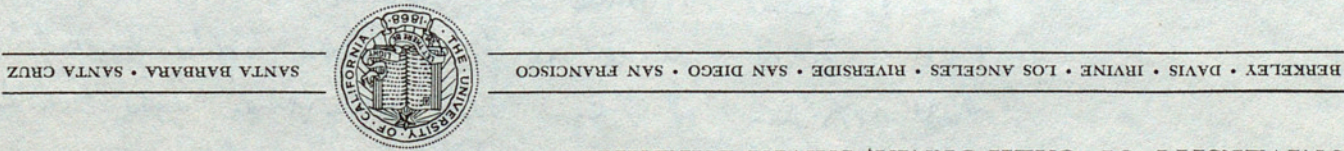
from their own political parties or groups

New: christian men schools, are present in all activities of political, educational, scientific, and financial and industrial life; they drink, smoke and dress like the others, do not seem to have a special moral code of their own, have made ^{such} no wise and sophisticated distinction of their own doctrines ^{over the years} and practices that their god is hardly distinctive, ^{any more} the so-called sacrifice does not look like one, their sacraments

seem merely social ceremonies, ~~and~~ their meetings, without disciplina arcani, open to everybody, and their dealings ^{generally} (those of honorable law-abiding citizens. They may stand for peace, but pay the taxes for weapons, they may protest against divorce, abortion, ^{or} euthanasia, but within a short period of time they have practically abandoned all kind ^{now} of resistance and accept the trends of times like any other of their contemporaries.

No wonder that there is life ^{and} leisure, but also disenchantment and worry, ~~but~~ within the christian community and if we take the largest ~~of~~ ^{them} and perhaps more compact of them, the Roman Catholics we may find those trends ^{exacerbated} up to the point of ~~exacerbation~~ exasperation [exasperation]. How to live a sacred vocation in a profane world?

~~A few sketchy hints regarding ritual~~
 It would be irresponsible to attempt to tackle now in an article this formidable problem. I may ~~to~~ limit myself to a few sketchy hints regarding ritual.



1. Ritual is not primarily pedagogical or doctrinal but symbolical.

The discussion on ritual should not get stuck ~~at~~ in ^{the mind of} intellectual interpretations. Any ritual, as a symbolic act, is polysemous, and although we are entitled to dig out the ~~the~~ ~~doctrinal~~ philosophical assumptions of any given rite, the life of the rite and its function for the people have only a very loose connection with the intellectual underpinnings. The theological diagrams on transubstantiation for instance have ^{little or} no bearing on the actual ~~fact~~ ^{act} of the performance of the Eucharist. This latter has an existential reality and function which is not totally dependent on ^{absolute} the theological hypothesis ^{attempts} which tries to make it intelligible. The rituals have a life of their own.

2. Rituals cannot be created and if manipulated they degenerate

Every ritual has its own ontology, an internal cohesion and structure that makes it equally independent ^{impervious to} from any heteronomous imposition and from ^{irrespective of} any autonomous eclosion. Every ritual has roots in the history of Man; every ritual is an expression of ^{archaic} something which belongs to the human race. We may ^{of course} give ^{at} a theological or a mythical or mystical explanation. It comes to the same. Whether

handed down by a God or God's envoy or product of the deepest archetypes of the unconscious, every authentic ritual transcends the whims of the individual and equally resists the dictations of any foreign God: it has an ontology of its own.

3 - Rituals may emerge ^{when} the circumstances are favorable

If rituals are the integrative and particular ways by which man deals with transcendence, the emerging of a new rite is the response to a new call from the beyond — or so felt (we are not spinning theories). ^{it is a product of natural processes} To a new opening from the mystery, or towards the mystery, new ways of dealing with the concrete ^{human} situation may emerge as ritual actions. Generally speaking these rituals emerge as correction and modifications of old ones.

Thanksgiving, for instance, may be said to be a fundamental human attitude. Man feels the need to respond with gratitude to the experience of the gratuitously given and discovers that the ~~given~~ immediate giver is not the ultimate gift, so that he opens up to the beyond. Now this thankfulness may



take as many forms as we discover means to express it — and we only genuinely express ^{ourselves} as a response to what has im-pressed us. It all depends how open and vulnerable we are to such impressions, and how ~~creative~~ ^{we are} free and creative ^{we are} in our expressions.

4- to reject a ritual because we cannot ^{comprehend} understand it
meaning is as inadequate as to keep it because we comprehend
understand it

The realm of the ritual is the new innocence of the living myth in which we live. To mistake a ritual for a rational manifestation of the sacred is to belittle the nature of man and to distort the nature of the sacred. A non-spontaneous ritual is a non-sincere act devoid of all power. To greet a friend by wishing him a good day or many happy returns can be a ritual if 'el buen dia nos de Dios' is an act embodying all my sincere congratulations, which I myself am not able to spell it out except by ~~the~~ ritual greeting. I neither understand nor not understand what I am doing. I know that I am greeting a friend and that friendship is unfathomable.

5. To understand a ritual means to consciously stand under its spell

We say consciously, which implies freely, but we do not say willingly ^{in order to avoid} in the sense of forcing ourselves, ^{with ourselves,} to accept a ritual. I am not advocating for blind submission to tradition, nor for superficial rebellion against it either. Our relation with a living ritual is something given and freely accepted, but not something which we can control at will. This would begin the beginning of magic. Western scientific civilization is not accustomed to treat such existentials and often we lack not only method ^{of explanation} of ~~expression~~ but also means of expression. I accept a ritual ^{do} not because I can explain it. In this case I'd better keep to the doctrine. In this case ritual would be an imperfect form of expressing something which with concepts ^{more precisely} would then be better expressed. We have already insisted that ritual is not an ersatz for concepts. But I accept a ritual not just because it has been handed down or ^{has} always been done so, but because I sense its spell, I share in its dynamism, and this obviously can be done not just ^{by} sitting and thinking about it, but ^{only by} taking part in the dance, in the prayer, in the action. You have to see the film if you want to react to it. Current epistemology ^{can't} does not help for the understanding ^{of} a rite: one has to experience it. ^{Real, experiential} You have to be there ^{freely & totally} ^{present} ^{as a participant} ^{observer} ^{in the ritual} to be there ^{at all}.

7 - The necessary sacredness of any ritual should not be at the expense of its regularity

Living rituals have always been down to earth and close to human life. Rituals are not merely profane activities, but they were generally very secular ones, as the secular celebrations accompanying them still show. Rituals

are generally public, festive and integrated in the life of the people. The Christian liturgy is properly celebrated on a Sunday as a holy day.

The profanation of daily private masses was an example of degeneration.

The great challenge today is to convert the sacred bread in real bread, and the liturgical peace in human peace, to worship God in a loving God, and the Christian praying community in a true and vibrant human fellowship. It is dangerous to celebrate the Eucharist. I may find in the Town Hall or in the ghetto or taking part in the many processions in honor of Justice, Peace, Non-discrimination, Tolerance, Food, Simplicity so many saints called

In sum: Man is a ritual being in as much as it is in and through ritual ~~the~~ — and not by his reason or will or body alone — that he reaches the supreme goal of his existence: to be God or to be fully Man, or to be so pure that he becomes sheer Nothingness, or to be happy, saved, free, --- This ritual is certainly action, praxis, karma, involvement and ~~commitment~~ ^{ethics} commitment,

but it is an orthopraxis ~~impulsed by~~ ^{impulsed by} devotion, love, surrender, bhakti, ~~hope~~ and impregnated with knowledge, awareness, jñāna, wisdom. Marginal rituals and peripheral cults are equally inadequate as scientific ~~ideas~~ ideas or romantic ideals. Worship in the sense of ~~the~~ adoration, latria had this peculiarity only that its object has become an ideal. The in the imagination of many

metallatria we are looking ~~for~~ for cannot leave aside the very search for it. ~~The ritual for our times that we are trying to find out comes~~ The exploration for a ritual for our times ~~concerns~~ ^{concerns} our own search in a ritual ~~of ritual~~ ritual ~~secular man~~ ^{secular man} — which does not mean profane, but ~~modern~~ ^{modern} ~~saved~~ ^{saved} man — has in the celebration of time An intriguing task for secular man and a challenge for those who believe that is time itself — the temporal reality — that has to be redeemed. ie. secular

RP.

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MAN AS A RITUAL BEING

R. Panikkar

Prologue: A Fable Without A Moral

I. The Starting Point:

A Human Impasse Pastoral Concern

II. The Central Point:

A Theanthropological Problem Cosmotheandria

1. Phenomenology of Ritual
2. Philosophy of the Ritual Symbol
3. Theology of Ritual Action

III. The Final Point:

A Christian Attitude
Seven Sutras

#

MAN AS A RITUAL BEING

R. Panikkar

Prologue:

A Fable Without A Moral

Once upon a time there was a Man. Unlike "primitive" Man, this Man had lived ^{consciously} for millenia. He had ^{outlined} his history, and ^{had} all the data and niches ^{of} in the world at his disposal, but he seemed to have no ^{hope} future. He could not bear to look toward the future any longer. He remembered too well. He remembered the fiasco of all kinds of "progress", and the failure of every sort of "humanism" to free ~~men~~ Men from their own inhumanity. ~~Several world wars~~ ^{Wars, revolutions and violence,} had upset him, but resolved nothing. All the sophisticated gadgets of human ingenuity had long since become boring and repetitious. And all the exalted achievements of the human spirit had not managed to fulfill even the most elementary ^{victims of} human needs. ~~And if he was~~ ^{perhaps} educated and well-fed, millions were ~~suffering~~ ^{victims of} injustice and ~~starving~~ ^{starving}. The Man felt troubled, uncertain — a future for him seemed unlikely. ^{bearable,} his present he found quite uninhabitable, and his past he knew to be lost to him, irretrievably. He was only too conscious that he could not bring back the past, but he also knew that if he could bring it all back he would not want to live there either. ~~So the Man set his mind to work.~~ ^{He had} ~~He began to think about everything;~~ ^{constructed an entire world-view, which some would call ~~philosophy~~ ideology.} he thought all thinkable things. He could demonstrate the existence of God and could equally invalidate every proof; he could think of life as meaningful, but he could equally find arguments in favor of its meaninglessness. He could imagine technology solving all his problems, and he could by the same token show technology to be the greatest blight ever to afflict human existence. He began to surmise that what ~~is~~ ^{are} called

but a
good
example

perhaps

and found
the impoten-
cy of
reason.
necessity
and at
the same
time the

freedom and democracy are nothing but expressions of the human ^{dispari} ~~im~~
~~potence~~ to find truth. His head grew tired, and his thinking aimless.
 He ^{began to fear} ~~supposed~~ that one thing might do as well as another, provided we
 never examine the extreme consequences of anything. ~~Soon enough he~~ ^{Then, exhausted,}
~~fell asleep, or died, or was annihilated by forces beyond his control.~~
~~Nobody remarked his passing. It was as if nothing had happened.~~
^{And yet something}

look for an icon, to

began to

ring, to dance, ^{even} to gesticulate, and even something like an inarticulate prayer than.

went up

I. The Starting Point:

A Human Impasse *Partial Consciousness*

The more contemporary western Man thinks about his own situation ~~X~~ the more he seems disoriented as to the meaning of his life and his civilization. At the end of this process there is an acute crisis of rituals, which is ultimately a crisis of symbols. This is a point ^{on} ~~about~~ which even the most divergent specialists seem to converge.

Are there today ~~any~~ ^{modern} symbols which remain intact for western Man? Where does one turn for universal ^{symbols} ~~meaning~~ nowadays? 'God' has become partisan, 'Nation' debatable, 'Democracy' suspicious, 'Power' ambivalent, ^{grows} 'Progress' suspect, 'Goodness' relative, 'Beauty' subjective and 'Truth' unattainable; 'Capitalism' is a bad word, and 'Socialism', not a better word, and so forth and so on. No wonder that the rituals by which such symbols are lived and re-enacted are also adrift, and equally little wonder that within the mainstream of christian churches the crisis of liturgical celebration hints at a much deeper cause than mere confusion following on the reform of some official prayerbooks, or the decision of Vatican II to let the multiseular walls of contention fall away. And the so-called new religions as well, whether of christian or non-christian origin, find it extremely

difficult to give cultic expression to their beliefs, which may in fact be one reason for the ephemeral life-span of many such movements. One cannot live out of ^{purely intellectual} ~~a naked~~ intuitions for very long. Man needs ^{particular incarnations} ~~the concrete re-enactment~~ in space and time of his tempiternal insights. Man cannot live without rites. ^{has become [truth] in communion with a greater reality}

why is it hard?

longs to associating his body and his neighbors, now and here, into a communion with a greater reality. → (overleaf)

Interpretations of this fact may certainly vary. Some may see in it a liberation which helps us rid ourselves of an overly ritualistic mentality, yet others may fear that the baby is being thrown out with the bathwater. Some may advocate a return to the roots of tradition, while still others would rush forward unhampered by the burden of the past.

For those in immediate contact with the religious life of the people, the problem becomes a serious pastoral concern. But precisely because of this ^{immediate urgency} ~~immediacy~~ the directions generally taken, be they to the left or to the right, tend merely to be positive or negative reactions to a rather superficially assessed status quo. And so we get a series of well-intentioned reforms, changes, improvements and the like, but generally speaking not within a framework wide enough, or deep enough, to allow for an awareness of the central problem. The issue at stake here ^{one} ~~This~~ is not simply a matter of making things work better, or of trying harder so that we might get the "expected" results. Rather, the entire problem must be subjected to a more fundamental reflection. ^{we need} Or, in plain christian terms, a more profound metanoia, a radical conversion from our man-made and history-laden routines to a new beginning. The ~~spontaneous~~ ^{fundamental} character of such an attempt is patent; it involves listening -- i.e. being obedient -- to the Spirit, who constantly makes new all things. In other words, the solution does not lie in finding new techniques, or in being "creative" according

see non-rational

in which the human is not stifled, but blended with the cosmic and the divine.

→ 3,1
3,1

(etymological
scholar not understanding)

Or, as the Rāmāyana will recall from an older tradition, the demons are called asuras because they refused to spouse Varuṇī the deity of liquor, and the Gods are called suras, because they accepted wine as the gift of communalibility.

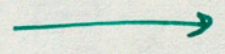
(surā)

In a word, Man

The Gods are happy beings and invite Men to their celebrations.
The demons are sad ones!

3

→ The larger reality of the universe in which Man
 is not alone; ~~for he is not the only being.~~ In
 traditional religious language, ~~if~~ such a
 conversion ~~is~~ implies a critical but
 confident ~~opening~~ or obedience to



Grammar?

to our own models of creativity, but ^{in getting ready for} ~~of~~ conquering a new innocence which may ~~again~~ permit us to celebrate life — which is ^{constant} ~~always~~ a new life — ^{rather than} ~~and not~~ just ~~continue~~ dragging out our existences, learning, working, resting, struggling a little, enjoying a little, and feeling bound to repeat ourselves again and again with decreasing enthusiasm.

The scholastics used to like to quote ^{an} ~~that~~ old saying from the Proverbs that the Lord does everything for his own sake, much as traditional indian masters liked to emphasize that Yoga is not for the sake of Man, but vice-versa. Perhaps all ~~the~~ humanisms have begun to exhaust their potentialities. We may suspect that ~~the cause of this~~ state of affairs ^{is} ~~lies in~~ the high price western civilization ^{is paying} ~~has had~~ ~~to pay~~ for the stupendous achievements of its ^{rationing facilities} ~~reasoning~~ reason. We have ^{neglected} ~~abandoned~~ our human roots and our lives are the poorer for it.

could we not understand

Modern western

Man has ^{epitomized his being with} ~~become~~ ⁱⁿ (mere reason, and reason ^{with in} mere rationality. It could perhaps be said that orthodoxies of all kinds have replaced the more encompassing orthopraxis, or ^{that} (mere poiesis and ^{all} ~~one~~ sort ~~of~~ another have thrown ^{off} ~~out~~ the delicate balance between action and contemplation, the material and the spiritual, the human and the divine. ^{4, 1} Now, rather than qualifying and explaining these heavy pronouncements by ~~con-~~tinuing the critique of modernity, we may be permitted to try another tack. Taking into account all ~~the~~ criticisms and constructive essays, ^{we shall} ~~it will be our~~ attempt here to integrate and harmonize the different fields represented by ~~the~~ western disciplines, as well as the variegated spheres of ~~the~~ other ~~world~~ civilizations, without ignoring the contributions of the primordial religions. I should perhaps apologize for the over-condensed presentation, ^{which} ~~and~~ presume ~~that~~ the other articles of this issue will spell out what here remains in statu nascendi.

which is the process

would like to

4 → I repeat that there is no question of
 going back and replacing the modern anthropo-
 centrisms with ~~an obsolete~~ ^{ancient} Theocentrisms
 since these ~~which~~ become impossible the moment that
 we ^{recognize} ~~are aware~~ that all has to be filtered ^{through} ~~by~~
 our human categories. → 4

II. The Central Point:

A Theanthropological Problem

Cosmotheandria

In order to introduce our central subject we shall begin with a ~~brief~~ description of what ritual looks like, continue with a ~~philosophical~~ reflection on the power of ritual symbolism, and end with a consideration ^{of} the meaning of liturgical action in the light of the religious experience of Man.

1. Phenomenology of Ritual

Any ritual is first of all an act or event. The ritual does not belong to the realm of mere thought, it is not a doctrine or an ideal entity, it does not appertain ^{exclusively} ~~exclusively~~ to the domain of the logos. It belongs rather to the realm of ~~the~~ gesture, of ~~the~~ external and corporeal manifestation. A good intention or a beautiful thought ~~are~~ ^{is} not rituals. ~~The~~ Ritual belongs to the domain of the incarnation, of the visible, ^{the} temporal and ^{the} spatial. A football game or a bullfight can be a ritual, but to write or to read a book can hardly be one (except perhaps, when it is part of a much larger communal act — like ^{that of} genuine Academia).

The human being is seen to perform many sorts of acts. There is usually a certain continuity between the subjective aim of an act and its objective goal. Man wants food and so ~~off~~ ^{sets about} he goes cooking, or hunting, or cultivating the earth. But there are also some acts in which an external observer can discern no such congruity between the act and the ^{rather} aim. The observer ^{discovers} ~~observes~~ a gap, a hiatus, which is not seen in the same way by those performing the ritual. The observer sees people eating a meal not just because they are hungry or want to enjoy the good food, but because they wish to obtain the energy of the God, or to destroy the evil force of a foe, or to express a

moved to

immediate goal of the

communality which is only detectable because no stranger will be admitted to such a meal. The observer ^{discovers} ~~sees~~ people dancing not just because there is music and a desire to let the body also become music; he detects a superior pattern to the music or the dance itself, and surmises, as it were, a certain transcendent aim not immediately apparent if one does not stand within the particular context in which that act is performed. The insider assumes or rather believes, in a way that the observer does not, that the prayer ^{may} ~~will~~ bring rain, the song ^{with} ~~(~~ appease the divinity, the blessing ^{with} ~~(~~ forgive sins, the sacred meal confer grace, and so on. The believer is certainly aware that there is a rupture of planes between the empirical act and its invisible or transcendent target, but he is also convinced that there is no other way for him, in that particular context, to reach that goal than through the act he is performing.

^{In} This first, phenomenological, approach we are ~~taking~~ requires using the words (subjective) aim and (objective) goal, but we should add immediately that the ritual has a very peculiar goal-orientation. It is not a causal aim, as in most of the other acts we perform. If I want an apple I go to the tree, ^{my} the neighbor or the market. If I want a son I shall ~~try~~ ^{to beset one} with a woman, but if I perform the asvamedha sacrifice for obtaining a son, it is not to substitute this rite for ^{agricultural or} biological causality. To convert the special goal-orientation of the ritual into a causal one is what constitutes the essence of magic. The magical act does not fail if well performed; if I stick the pin properly into the ^{doll} puppet, in the right place and the right manner, the ^{forward} man, whom I intend, will automatically be struck by the corresponding ailments. Magic works causally outside the physical or merely psychical realm. Ritual does not. The fact that there is a rupture of planes, that

pray for food or if I

the act is directed I intend

is supposed to

the food is supposed to give me spiritual strength, or the prayer to be vouchsafed, presents a constitutive ambiguity and a ~~range~~^{spectrum} of possibilities which belong to the very nature of ritual. The ritual intends the transcendent in a transcendental way; it intends alaukika upāya, *to get at the non-mundane, as Sāyaṇa says in his classical commentary on the Vedas.* *Black paper*

In sum, ritual appears to be an act by which Man expresses, reaches, conveys, intends, effects something which otherwise would remain void. And yet neither does the ritual act ever completely succeed in reaching the goal: it points out, it suggests, hints, foreshadows... it discovers by covering again. In so many words, the target always remains transcendent. The ritual act sets out to climb the mountain whose peaks have already become visible, but it never sets foot on the summit; like Moses it leads the people to the Promised Land, but does not enter. → 7, 1

Taboo transformation - stand in presence
But this is more than ritual

For this reason repetition is a characteristic of ritual. Not so much ^{or only} because it re-enacts a primordial act which happened 'in illo tempore', but mainly because no single act can fully reach the transcendent: you pray again, you renew your vows, you worship for a second time, you eat, dance, sing and meditate again and again following a more or less flexible pattern which seems to be conditioned by the very goal of the act and not by your own aims.

The 'once and for all' of some special rituals — those of initiation, marriage and burial for example — is not a denial of what we are saying. First of all these acts are supposed to transcend time, and thus to lead us to that other shore from which there is no return. *But the shore is not yet the hinterland.* Initiation breaks something which cannot be put together again; innocence is lost. Marriages are made in heaven, says a hindu ^{proverb} saying, but celebrated on earth, which is the same as the Gospel saying: What God has joined together, let no Man put asunder. Burial is perhaps the clearest example. We cannot repeat it. Time has elapsed.

Yet, secondly, as long as we live in time and space, a ritual is needed to keep that link with the transcendent alive and in force. A 'twice-born' is ^{for ever and more} ~~is~~ ^{The nuptial bond supposed to be permanent, and yet} one can lose brahminhood, and marriages can break. ~~The Rituals can~~ ^{are precisely needed to sustain} crystallize in a rule of conduct or in the nuptial chamber and thus they maintain our living link with transcendence. Every authentic commemoration is a kind of re-enactment. ^{The anniversary of a coronation, or a constitution, (of a victory, (of a vow, or) an ordination, is more than just the celebration of an act locked up in the past. It also fortifies and vitalizes the present.} ^{The celebration) The confirmation) The actualization of}

not clear develop. of Eloye.

^{commemoration} ~~celebration~~ of an act locked up in the past. It also fortifies and vitalizes the present. ^{If I don't live like a brahmin, behave like a spouse or act as a priest the entire fact may be superseded by an ontological factor.}

The realm of the ritual, to put it in terms of the upanishadic world-view, is not ^{an} ~~the~~ ^{realm} ~~objects~~ of the senses, or the ^{mind's} ~~concepts~~ of the mind, or the ~~images, of the will's~~ but the realm of the ~~avyakta~~, the unmanifest, the invisible, the transcendent. ^{For he endured, as seeing him} 'As he would see the ^{that is invisible} unseeable', ^{describes} ~~says~~ the Epistle to the Hebrews ^{speaking of} the greatest prophet of the Jewish Covenant.

? 'that is invisible'

If there is only what meets the eye, ^{or what the will} ~~wills~~ the will, or ^{what} ~~is~~ discerned by the intellect, then there is no place for ritual in human life, ^{except perhaps} ~~even if only~~ as a provisional forerunner for what is still unknown, unexplored, not yet charted and chartered by our reason. Ritual ~~and is often nowadays merely~~ may then be tolerated as the "pre-scientific" attitude of the "unenlightened", as the soothing "religious" balm for our ignorance, or as the faltering first step toward knowledge, whether this is called science or gnosis.

Phenomenology can certainly go into the details of the different rites and complete the picture just given, but it cannot say much more nor can it venture any philosophical interpretation. This we may ^{to do} try now.

2. Philosophy of the Ritual Symbol

Ritualism is the great enemy of ritual. ^{we may understand} by the former the degeneration of the latter. Ritualism is the mere continuation of the ~~ext~~ternals of the rite without the internal faith, the inertia of the rubrics without the enlivening power of the nigrics, the empty shell, the habit of sticking to a determined action once it has lost its symbolic power. In other terms, ritualism enters once we persist in doing a certain rite in spite of the fact that we have meanwhile found another more direct way of expressing what until then could only find its adequate expression ^{through} ~~in~~ the ritual in question. A ritual candle to Santa Barbara, legitimate as it may still be from ^{some} ~~other~~ viewpoints, can no longer replace the protective effect^s of a lightning rod.

We have spoken of ~~the~~ ritual as an act which leads beyond the immediate goal of the ^{isolated} ~~concrete~~ action itself: the ritual unction of the sick leads beyond the soothing effect of the oil. In other words, ritual is a symbolic act, i.e. an act which has a special (symbolic) power by which it symbolizes 'that' which otherwise would not — or could not — be symbolized. Now a symbol, in contrast to a sign, is not an epistemic signal, a quid pro quo, according to acknowledged convention. A symbol is the revelation of 'that' which is disclosed only in the symbol. The symbol is always the symbol of the symbolized, which appears — qua symbol — only in the symbol. Our body is not our (whole) being, nor even a mere part of it, and yet it is the symbol of what we are, so that outside the body we cannot speak of ourselves as we are. It is in and through the symbol that we encounter the symbolized, and yet we should not confuse or confound the two. I meet you in and through your body, and yet my encounter with you cannot be reduced to a mere corporeal meeting: the body is your symbol.

For this very reason, the symbol resides neither in the object alone (over there) nor in the subject alone (over here), it is neither merely objective nor purely subjective. The symbol is constitutively a relation; it is symbol only for those ~~whom~~ ^{whose sake} and for whom ~~it relates~~ ^{is symbol}, and who thereby relate to it directly. This is why a symbol which needs to be interpreted — and precisely insofar as it needs to be interpreted — is no longer symbol. The true symbol would be that by means of which we interpret the former (and by this very fact already obsolete) symbol. Once the various symbolic acts of the Mass, for instance, no longer reveal to the people what they ^{are} intend to disclose, they have ceased to be living symbols. This should not however be understood in an individualistic way. Symbols have a power which transcends by far the understanding and acceptance of the individual. It may very well be that the individual is carried away by the 'spell' of ~~the~~ ^a ritual which he does not fully apprehend, but which is still alive in the environment where he lives. To be sure, we have said that a symbol will not bear being inter-preted, i.e. being dependent on an inter-mediary, a go-between that explains to us the meaning of the symbol. Strictly speaking, one does not grasp symbols; rather one ^{oneself in} is open to them, one finds ^{so that it is by participating that they make sense} (them) meaningful or conducive ^{become} to what they are symbolizing. Ultimately, one believes in symbols. ^{in them} ^{the understanding of}

The symbol like the salt is good, but if it loses its symbolic power like the salt its saltiness, how you will reason it?

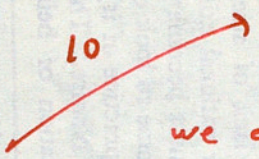
P. Hebbel's

A symbol is a mediator, not an intermediary.

^{10,1}
~~For this reason as well,~~ any authentic ritual — in spite of the fact that it may strike only a very particular aspect of human life and be limited in scope and form — ultimately touches the very core of Man's being. A ritual against fear, a ritual to win the favor of a saint, a ritual of purification from some sin or impurity, may all be very limited in the way they express their scope, but in the final analysis they all refer, through one particular aspect of human life, to the central mystery of the real... which transcends us and over which

→ 10,1

10



This does not mean either that we cannot be in a position ^{either} to ~~learn~~ ^{'learn'} or to make anew ~~or~~ again the symbolic experience which opens us up to the power of the symbol. An interpreted symbol is not a symbol, but through a certain interpretation it may be brought ~~again~~ into a contact with a symbol if that mediation succeeds in touching the core of my being.

Because ritual is a symbolic act



10

cf. Halvoni

we exercise no control whatsoever. No degree of rationalization can help me rid myself of my fear, or my awe, once this has penetrated ^{my being} and gotten under my skin; the favor I am asking of a saint is not so much triggered by my desire for that particular favor as by the urge to complete my own being; the sin I want to get rid of is really whatever keeps me from my own total and final purification, and so on. In other words, any authentic ritual always finally expresses the ultimate urge of Man's total being. Or, in the words of a famous Upanishad: it is not for the sake of the husband or the wife, or sons, or wealth, or even for the sake of the world or the Gods that all these things are dear, but for the sake of the Ātman. Authentic ritual is always adhyātmic, it refers to the ultimate mystery of existence, ^{without excluding or despising} ~~the~~ ^{the} intermediary steps of ~~the~~ penultimate things.

3. Theology of → Ritual Action

We have been saying that in and through ritual Man steps toward transcendence, in whatever sense we may ~~intellectually~~ ^{intelligently} interpret it. This seems to be an important and highly relevant question for our times.

Man cannot live without stretching himself out towards what he is not yet; he cannot support the pondus vitae without an élan which ^{helps} ~~allows~~ him to overcome the burden of a mere temporal existence with the hope of reaching, in one way or another, the trans-temporal, be it postponed ^{to} in a future, hidden in an enlightenment or hoped for ^{the} in a heaven. Man is ~~this~~ ^{the} animal which strives ~~always~~ ^{more} for and ever, more, be it in the vertical or the horizontal direction, in time and space or beyond their confines, by means of spiritual disciplines, art, politics, science or whatever. A more traditional way of putting this is to speak of the desire for God, or the urge for

redundant

happiness, or the striving for salvation, liberation or wholeness, inbuilt in the very heart of Man.

Now ^{at} the earliest stage of ^{al} most every civilization, this thirst for transcendence, as we may call it, seems to have been linked with an action, with a holy action, perhaps with ~~the~~ sacrifice, in any case with a set of rituals by which the human being can fulfill his life and ^{attain} ~~reach~~ the 'salvation' he desires. It is the karmakāṇḍa of the vedic religion, the sacrificial cults of most traditions, the liturgy as understood in the first centuries of christian history and as still defined today by the first of the constitutions of Vatican II: the Church ~~exists~~ ^{exists} for the sake of the liturgy that lives in her, ^{for} ~~and~~ the liturgy ~~is what brings about~~ ^{aims precisely at} the salvation of Man and of the entire universe. → 12, 2

It could be misinterpreted if liturgy is ritualistic

12,1)

Yet there seems to be a second, rather kairological than chronological, ^{moment} ~~period~~ in most human traditions, in which the sacred actions are ^{so} (interiorized ^{that} ~~and~~ the decisive act becomes the act of the ^{mind} ~~spirit~~, the intention, etc. There is a famous passage in the Vedas in which Yājñavalkya is asked with what he would perform the life-giving sacrifice if the prescribed materials were not available. With milk, he answers, or with grass, or water, etc., if whatever he ^{first} ~~proposed~~ as a substitute were also impossible to obtain. And if there were nothing at all, he finally answers, I would still be able to perform the sacrifice without anything, in pure faith. Neither ⁱⁿ Jerusalem nor in Garizim....

The process is very complex and we cannot ~~even attempt~~ to summarize it. We may however point to a single example in the evolution of the western christian world. We could date it around the ^{13th} ~~XIII~~ century, when the ^{explanations} ~~proofs~~ for the existence of God were beginning to be considered ^{proofs} instead of mere efforts at intelligibility. Or we

karmakāṇḍa

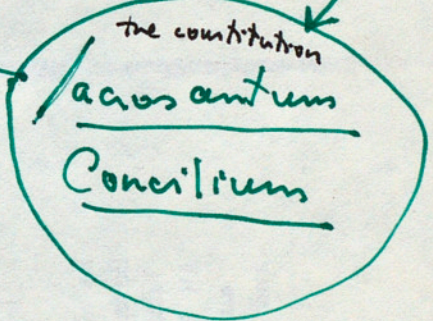
cf. E. H. ...

*ambiguity
became
intention
in first
state*

12

That this leitourgia, popular work,
 activity of the people, public action
 cannot ~~be identified~~ ~~not~~ be identified with
 a handful of 'sacred' performers
 should be ~~account taken for granted~~
 evident at least ^{for} those who ~~read that~~
~~first contribution in the logs~~
~~the Lumen gentium~~ in the context
 of all the other ^{documents}
~~texts, specially~~
~~Lumen gentium~~
~~and~~ Gardium et
~~oper~~ et and Nostra aetate.

of the same Council.



→ 12

~~may~~ want to link it with the discovery of the printing press a little later. We refer to the change ^{over} that took place ^{by the end} ~~in the middle~~ of the scholastic period ^{from} ~~between~~ the symbolic power of ~~the~~ action and the image, ^{to} ~~and~~ the intellectual power of reason and ~~the~~ idea. Until the change to 'literacy', what ^{was believed to} brings salvation and happiness ^{was} is the active participation in the symbolic ~~and~~ liturgical power of the ritual, embodied in that ~~very~~ participation and in the power of ~~the~~ images. ^{Now the change} Afterwards, what ~~really~~ puts us in contact with the transcendent is the power of the mind, the light of reason, the idea which can soar up to the heights of the divine. Even God's existence can be proven, a fact which implies that the basis of the intellectual proof, ultimately our intellect, is not only capable of reaching the transcendent, but in a way ^{is} more powerful than the transcendent itself, ^{since} ~~for~~ it becomes the very basis ^{for} proving ~~the~~ latter. Certainly the scholastics knew very well the distinction between quoad se and quoad nos, but the fact nevertheless remains that the organ for transcendence is the intellect and not the praxis, action, ritual. No wonder that pandits, intellectuals ^{'educated' people} and ^{'unenlightened' souls} would soon begin to consider religious praxis merely a matter for the uneducated masses, whereas those who know ~~to~~ not need perform the sacrifice, or go to Mass, or belong to any institutionalized religion. For this mentality, religious practices are at best substitutes for the ^{real know-} ~~real know-~~ ledge, whether — I repeat — it is ^{called} ~~known as~~ sacred gnosis or secular science. And here the crisis of the ritual begins. It drops to a second order of importance. It can all be ^{scientifically} ~~very nicely~~ documented: was it not written even in John that eternal life is to know Him? Was the christian revolution not in fact a reaction against the 'elements of this world'? Was the protestant reform not also a powerful reminder that 'sola fide' we are saved? Has there not been serious talk in contemporary western theological milieux about "religionless" christianity? ^{So what do we do?} ~~Should we not~~ go back to primitive religiousness instead?

in the communal life,

is believed to

13

So, ~~that~~ ^{then} am I ~~defending?~~ pleading

That we should go back to primitive
religionism and again worship trees,
rivers and stones? Am I ~~pleading~~ ^{pleading}
in favor of astrology and polytheism?

I am neither for the 'tonal'
nor for the 'magical'. ~~I am~~ We are reflecting
on the nature of ritual and I venture
that

~~merely~~ ~~merely~~ one-sided reactions
in favor of rationality or irrationality
do not solve the problem, not only ^{primary} ^{or secondary}
because of the partiality of extreme
positions, but because precisely the
question of ritual escapes this dialectical

presentation. Dialectics ~~may be~~ belong to the realm
of the logos, but ritual does not. So the

proper approach to ritual cannot be
exclusively dialectical — unless
we assume that the nature of the entire reality
is dialectical, which is an unwarranted
extrapolation to say the least
whatever their ^{nature of reality} may be, —→ 14

Am I despising reason and
praying for the return
of Dionysos?

and to the
logos alone,

13,1 → it is at this level that we should insert ~~some pertinent~~ *our* reflections about the nature and ~~the~~ function of ritual. We may begin with a negative critique of modern intellectualism and then proceed with a more positive defense of ritual.

After the collapse of so-called german idealism, and western ~~Man's~~ shattering experience of the last two world wars, (in spite of the highest rank being given to rationality) it is not too difficult to voice the philosophical statement that the very concept or idea of transcendence is a contradiction in terms: it denies what it affirms. If transcendence is a concept, then at least insofar as I conceive it, it is not beyond my power of conception, i.e. it is not transcendent. The realm of the transcendent may be beyond the reach of my hand or my body or perhaps my will, but certainly not beyond the power of my mind, which speaks of it and claims to have a concept, an idea of it. We may make all the fine distinctions we like between essence and existence and the like, but the fact remains that as long as we claim to have an idea of transcendence, this very idea destroys that transcendence, at least on the noetic plane.

14,1 ←

And thus we have prepared our ground for the defense of ritual. I should not be misunderstood. I am not advocating a return to an irretrievably lost innocence, or saying that we have ~~again~~ to dance ourselves into a trance, to sing in sanskrit or ^t latin, or go back to what — for us — could not but appear as superstitions. I spoke at the beginning of a new innocence, not of an artificial effort to recoup the first one. The tree of the science of good and evil has set its roots ubiquitously in our human soil, and cannot be eradicated without destroying us in the bargain. Even more, as the Katha Upanishad will say: that tree ^{it} has its roots in heaven and yields its fruits on earth. ~~It is~~ *it is* upside-down, This is not only our human condition, but the very structure

14

human
 (reason has no saving power, that mere
 rationality cannot de facto solve the
 human problems. Or, theologians assuming that
 transcendence ~~stands for~~ a higher instance ^{of this situation}
 in that it can ^{the} contribute to a liberation ^{of} the
 human being from his entanglement, we could
 equally ^{maintain} affirm that

→ 14

of Helmer

of the entire reality. The felix culpa of the Easter ~~morning~~ liturgy is much more than mere wishful thinking post factum, it is the declaration that what went on on Golgotha and goes on in us ^{today} is more than a mere accident of reality. ^{It is} ~~it~~ an adventure in which all the three worlds are intimately involved. ~~The same could we say if we were to speak about the vedic sacrifice for instance.~~

Secure
in
7 or 8 days
by love
and beauty

What I am suggesting is ^a ~~the~~ new discovery of the central place and function of ritual as ^{an integrative} ~~that total~~ human activity by means of which Man may ^{walk toward} ~~reach~~ (the transcendent, discover the ^{value} ~~meaning~~ of life and collaborate in the construction, reconstruction, redemption or re-creation of the world. Ritual is not escapism, in the guise of celebration, from the otherwise more painful but exceedingly more "serious" human affairs of work, business, or whatever. True liturgy is ^{primarily} ~~not~~ a balm or medicine for ^{what ails} ~~Man's ailments~~, nor a beautiful psychological outlet for draining all our violent tendencies, frustrations and unfulfilled desires. It may very well be that rituals perform this function and that without ^a ~~re~~-instatement of ~~the~~ traditional sacrifices humans may go totally mad and murder one another in the absence of

Helmer

~~such~~ a ritual, institutionalizing this creativity, violence, need for self-affirmation, sense of uniqueness, and so forth. All this may very well be quite true and, in fact, modern Man is now beginning to discover that the primordial religions were not so very primitive with their incessant rituals and celebrations. But, I repeat, all this is only secondary. It is but the result of the very nature and function of ritual. A manipulated ritual, performed because of its beneficial sociological or psychological effects, would be both inauthentic and ineffective.

Ritual
was the
way to imbi-
lize
the humanum
and
canalize the
urges of
Man.

151

The function of ritual is not to keep Man busy doing something harmless, or even useful, when there is nothing better to do. It is not something accidental or incidental in human life. No restoration of ritual can be achieved if we lose sight of the central claim of

152

15 →

that By saying this I may be exploding a closed and narrow conception of rite ~~is quite possible~~ and I shall return to this at the end of this section.

→ 15

ritual to shape Man's life and even to ^{help} direct the destiny of the entire cosmos. Lokas^mgraha, the main^tenance of the world, has been a classical expression of indian spirituality since the Gîtâ. Ritual is neither rubrics, i.e. ceremonials, nor nigrics, i.e. ideas, important as these two constituents are, but anthropogenesis, or rather cosmotheandrogenesis, the collaboration of Man^x with the World and the Gods, in the ^{genesis and} sustenance of the entire reality. Man has to reshape himself and, in a way, the entire reality^x by that integral action in which all his potencies are engaged. Ritual is the orthopraxis by means of which Man collaborates in the continuation of the whole of reality. Anything short of this not only minimizes ritual but puts it already in the wrong place and distorts its real meaning. 'Cosmic Liturgy' is not originally a modern phrase, but a venerable and traditional expression of the Fathers of the Church. You do not build a cathedral or a temple for the private and secondary amusement of a select few. You do it because each holy shrine is the entire universe and the action performed therein has to do with the running of the whole cosmos: it is the place where ~~the~~ Gods, Men and the rest of the World meet in order that each may do what they must ^{so that} ~~in order~~ that reality does ~~not~~ sink into chaos and nothingness. Each temple is the constituent parliament of the entire reality, the place for passing and discussing the laws that will govern the real. Perhaps the state of affairs ⁱⁿ of the world looms ~~so~~ darkly nowadays due to the absenteeism of so many in the House of God and the People. Here the Gods alone are as powerless as Men alone are without the collaboration of the divine and the participation of Matter. The reconstruction of the body of the divine is a commonplace of indian spirituality, as is the edification of the Body of Christ in scriptural christianity -- until God be all in all. 'The Sacrifice is Man', says the Shatapathabrâhmana, centuries before the sacrificial pronouncement of Pilate: ecce homo!

not
self
evident
more
explanation

2 2

The old liturgies were not there for the solace of Man or for ^{his} relaxation, so that he could afterwards work better, but just the other way round; work was done for the building of the cathedral, life was lived for the celebration of Creation and in praise of the Creator. Liturgy is not an appendix to Man's life, just as the churches of christian Europe were not ~~hidden away in some obscure~~ ^{built at random in any available} corner of the city. If we face a crisis today it is not a crisis of techniques of worship or means of celebration, but a crisis of life itself. If the altar is not the center of the world, there is little scope for liturgical renewal.

If we seek to orient our lives as ritual beings, we may ask the amer~~ican~~ ^{Indian} tradition what it intends with its Sun-Dance; or ^{ask} the indian theology what it ~~says~~ ^{says} when speaking of lilā, the entire creation as a play of — and for — the Lord. ~~We~~ ^{ask} may ~~interrogate~~ ^{interrogate} the christian tradition when it centers in the Eucharist, ^{what} the entire purport of christian life and cosmic existence. ~~We~~ ^{is} may ponder the buddhist enlightenment for the sake of ~~all~~ the three worlds or we may even reflect on socialist Man concentrating all private and public efforts ~~on~~ ^{on} the building of a more humane society. ^{17, 1}

We should not of course blind ourselves to the dangers of rampant priestcraft, superstition, fatalism, totalitarianism and dictatorship — of all kinds. ~~But~~ ^{however,} the signs of our times seem to be crying out, that without an integration of human life, an individual and collective schizophrenia may overwhelm and kill the human race. The problem of ritual should be faced at this level. All the rest minimizes the question and reduces ritual to ritualistic amusements.

17 →

might have arrogated

Or again, to be dangerously specific, we ~~may~~ ^{ask} economists and politicians at Bretton Woods in July of 1944, ~~at the~~ ^{in those} agonizing moments in which the outcome of ~~the~~ World War II

was already visible and responsible people were beginning to face ^{the question of} ~~not just~~ how to win a battle but ^{of} how to reconstruct a world, ~~we need to read the creation of such~~ ^{and set about creating} secular agencies

as the International Monetary Fund, ~~or~~ ^{for the purpose of} the World Bank, or the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade which made possible ^{temporary} the recovery of the greatest part of the world economy, ~~at~~

And ~~from this~~ ^{our problem} ~~in order to discover that it~~ ^{we might} ~~(all were was)~~ part of a great secular ritual, ^{given} ~~impulsed~~ still by the reaction ^{to} ~~triggered~~ by the total profanation of humankind in favor of a single race intended by the nazi ideology.

By saying this, as remarked, I may be enlarging the notion of rite ~~into~~ ^{include} ~~other~~ human activities, which ~~normally~~ ^{are} in the western world, ~~were~~ ^{were normally} or ~~are~~ not considered rituals, ^{such as} ~~like~~ services of all types (medical, political, intellectual, etc.), ~~and~~ love relationships of all kinds (parental, spousal, of friendship, etc.), and so on. All these activities may also contribute to the sustenance of the world and fulfil the description given of rite. And in point of fact I submit that we should include ~~all of them~~ ^{such secular actions} (as possible ~~examples~~ ritual activities.

Three remarks are here pertinent. First, in order to know what a thing is or simply the meaning of a word, we may proceed a priori by our understanding of the meaning by our usual standards. In this case I am certainly extrapolating, ^{But} ~~or~~ we can ~~proceed~~ ^{proceed} also a posteriori by analyzing ^{the implication of} ~~what is the function that~~ a thing does or ~~a word implies~~ so as to be able to win an ~~cross-cultural~~ understanding of it, ~~so that it may be~~ applicable also outside my cultural province

~~rewrite~~

?

style

artistic creations in all fields,

When using the word ritual to cover all those above-mentioned activities.

and my particular dialect. In this case I may be justified in calling 'ritual' many a secular activity performed with the sacred conviction that it performs the same function that the old rituals were ~~doing~~. I am not ^{affirming} ~~saying~~ that any secular activity is already a ritual. I am saying that the secular is not opposed to the sacred (as is the profane) and that ~~and that~~ ritual, ~~xx~~ because ^{it is} (a human existential, ~~it~~ varies with the human process. *historians of religion, anthropologists and other scholars*

Second, ^{we} are so accustomed ^{to} at seeing ~~only~~ sacred rituals and studying them ^{only} (in past or remote cultures, that we are taken aback when considering the possibility of secular rituals and ^{of} that modern society ^{being} is full of ritual performances. This does not mean that any ^{modern} ritual is good, ^{just} as it does not mean ~~either~~ ^{ancient} that any ~~old~~ rite is acceptable. Perhaps the vertical transcendence that the ~~former~~ ^{latter} tend to ~~over-emphasize~~ ^{over-emphasize} may be corrected and complemented by the horizontal transcendence that the former tend to over-stress.

Third, I ^{am} ~~have~~ not diluting the meaning of ritual, but ^{covering} ~~regaining~~ the insight ^{that}, ~~what~~ whatever we do, we do it for the glory of God, in traditional parlance, that whatever we undertake we do it for ^{something} more than ourselves and that we recognize the presence of the mystery in all human activities. Not every love relationship, or any medical service, is automatically a rite - nothing is a rite automatically - , but only those actions which somewhat transcend the intention of private usefulness or egoistic pleasure and intend a collaboration ^{for} ~~to~~ the welfare of the world. A sincere blessing of a meal can convert a biosociological act into a real symbol of community, fellowship and communion. *Both the stonemason and the masterbuilder were constructing the Cologne Cathedral - according to the well-known anecdote.*

on each work of art

17,2

III. The Final Point:

A Christian Attitude

Until very recently, christian religious life — and this is ritual — did look, and still looks in many places, like an intriguing and peculiar combination of old and new.

Old: christians ~~are supposed to~~ perform a series of rather anachronistic acts: some days of fasting, a prayer at meals, songs and congregation once a week, ritual water for initiation, oil for the sick, and especially the re-enactment of a bloody sacrifice, though in an incruent manner, eating and drinking from the risen body of their Founder. They go down on their knees before statues and monstrances, they kiss the hands of their priests, place incense and candles before holy pictures, dress their ministers in a uniform more than a thousand years old, hold processions, venerate holy places, go on pilgrimage, make their own vows, keep their own calendar, form their own religious fraternities or groups, and so forth and so on.

New: christians ~~run schools~~, are present in all activities of political, educational, scientific, financial and industrial life; they drink, smoke and dress like the others, do not seem to have a special moral code of their own, have made such fine and sophisticated distinctions in their own doctrines and practices over the years that their God is hardly distinctive anymore; their so-called sacrifice does not look like one, their sacraments seem merely social get-togethers; their meetings without disciplina arcani, open to everybody, and their dealings generally those of honorable law-abiding citizens. They may stand for peace, but they pay the taxes for weapons; they may protest against divorce, abortion or euthanasia, but within a short time they tend to practically abandon all their resistance and accept the trend

perform

catachronic
anachronistic
ous
coming together

H

Christians
holy objects and

believe in
sacred moun-
tains,
icons and
spirits

formulate
prayers for any possible
human activity

not only

but they become
leaders fully engaged in
merely
temporal
goals

I don't
quite
understand
this
Change
Held
@ night
The
Project
will

for excellence and now they are the ^{genuine} liberals against the 'sin of socialism', although very soon ~~they~~ socialists are going to ~~be~~ considered good christians... ~~maybe again~~

the only

of the times like any of their contemporaries; they were the anti-liberals

No wonder that there is life and tension, but also disorientation and crisis, within the christian community. If we take the largest and most compact group of them, the Roman Catholics, we may find these traits exacerbated to the point of exasperation. ~~How live a sacred vocation in a profane world?~~ → 19, 1

19,2

It would be irresponsible to attempt now to tackle these formidable problems in a mere article. I shall limit myself to a few sketchy hints regarding ritual.

Seven outtras

1. Ritual is not primarily pedagogical or doctrinal but symbolical

No discussion of ritual should get stuck in the mire of intellectual interpretations. Any ritual, as a symbolic act, is polysemous through and through. Although we are entitled to dig out the philosophical assumptions of any given rite, the life of the ~~at~~ rite and its function for the people have only a very loose connection with its intellectual underpinnings. ~~The~~ theological discussions on transubstantiation for instance have little ~~or~~ bearing on the actual cultic performance of the Eucharist. This latter has an existential reality and function which is not totally dependent on whatever theological hypothesis attempts to make it intelligible. Rituals have a life of their own. They produce knowledge rather

We cannot discuss ~~merely~~ theoretically about them.

than being the product, as ^{divus} Thomas pointed out. ~~The same~~

→ 19,3

19,3

2. Rituals cannot be created, and if manipulated they degenerate

Every ritual has its own ontology, an internal cohesion and structure that makes it impervious to any heteronomous impositions,

19

Certainly that many of the mentioned

~~tensions~~ ~~paradoxes~~ are due to the spirit of the times: when slavery and child-labor ^{were} accepted, christians accepted it; when sex-discrimination and wars were matter-of-fact, christians ^{also went} ~~were~~ ~~equally~~ ^{along with it;} children of their times, when ~~the~~ religion took ~~of~~ anetic or monastic forms, christians followed the same pattern, etc. And yet, ^{with delay} ^{in advance of} ^{to} ~~in respect~~ ~~with~~ other groups or ~~advancing~~ ~~from~~, christians have always felt

prophets and saints have not failed to spur christians toward the uncompromising pursuit of higher priorities.

Certainly, ~~that~~ true is a historical reason for ~~those~~ tensions. Christians are, like everybody else, children of their times: when

the tension of not being of this world and yet of being in it. Now, if this idea is thought through ~~to~~ ^{it} to the very end ~~it~~ will likely produce the "muero porque no muero" of some mystic or a declared schizophrenic only tamed by stopping to be ~~some~~ ~~logically~~ ~~consequent~~ ~~consistent~~.

live a sacred vocation in a ~~profane~~ ~~world~~ ?

^{How to} ~~The word of Ritual~~ is here the answer. The ritual is ~~in this~~ performed in this world and ^{with all} ~~the~~ ^{worldly} ingredients and yet it is not of this world. It is a kind of response ^{to} ~~and~~ ^{reaction from} ~~participation~~ in a higher instance, ⁱⁿ ~~whatever~~ ^{however} ~~sense~~ it may be interpreted.

a transcendent realm, calling, destiny, vision or

→ 19,2 →

19.1

relatively

Though much more 19.2

My point here is ~~as~~ ^{relatively} simple to formulate ~~is~~ difficult to carry ~~it~~ out. It touches the very ~~an~~ centrality ~~of~~ and importance of ritual in the life of a living tradition. ^{is} Not so much doctrinal orthodoxy ~~is here~~ ^{issue} the answer. In a pluralistic world, ^{as} ~~but~~ ritual orthopraxis. Christians - and mutatis mutandis, this applies to humankind in general - should no longer seek their ^{or even} unity in a monolithic doctrinal block, in a common opinion regarding fundamental things, because, ~~the~~ to begin with, the first problem ^{lies} in deciding what is fundamental and what is not. In other terms, ^{neither} the christian fact is ~~not~~ necessarily an ideology, The christian ^{unity} ~~identity~~ is rather a ritual one.

19.4

to begin with, the first problem

JUST AS
like christian revelation is not basically propositional.

an existential one experienced in some ritual actions more than in a series of ideas. Christian

(the logos is promised after man is expelled from Paradise)

not with the logos, but in the realm of the spirit

They ^{react positively to} acknowledge a set of symbols as central ^{being} to their lives and perform the cosmotheandric liturgy around the central figure of Christ, ^{they} re-enacting ~~in khaxkaxkax~~ the mystery of ^{existence} life, death and new life, ~~they find~~ in the Eucharist - if we do not fall now in doctrinal ^{speculations} or verbal quagmires - as the central act of their ^{lines} existence. That the Church makes the Eucharist and the Eucharist the Church is an old traditional formulation of this ^{state of affairs} insight. ^{central issue day} But the problem is ^{commit} not in discussing ~~its~~ possible interpretations but ⁱⁿ carrying ~~it~~ on what ^{the christian} this symbol symbolizes ^{we could speak of} the intersection between the vertical and the horizontal factors of life, represented in the Cross.

Certainly, I am assuming that the logos is not all that there is in human life. Or, in overcondensed theological jargon, I ~~would~~ suspect that most of the ^{'Theology' of the} last millenium of christian history ^{has fallen into} ~~is faulty of~~ the cryptoheresy of subordinationism: the Spirit has been subordinated to the Logos, the Word has taken the upperhand (language, reason, intelligibility) and overshadowed the Spirit ^{'gesture', 'life', 'experience'} (gesture, life, ~~silence~~). I would ^{HAS OVERSHADOWED} add, ^{experience} if I were not obliged to say it. The new innocence is in the realm of the spirit — and yet we should not separate The Trinity. 19

19

The symbolic experience, in ~~contrast to~~ ~~contradistinction with the~~ conceptual understanding, with an om or an amen, a darshan or an 'attendance' may have enough. The trouble begins when we want to know and we repressed ^{are} ~~are~~ ^{not} ~~are~~ allowed ^{to} ~~are~~ without an opportunity to learn. ^{Even if} (The old innocence ^{were} ~~may be~~ better, ~~but~~) the movement is inevitable and it would be immoral to prevent it.

repressed

→ 19

may be ~~nourished~~
nourished and filled

... the symbolic experience, in contrast to conceptual understanding, with an om or an amen, a darshan or an 'attendance' may have enough. The trouble begins when we want to know and we repressed are not allowed to are without an opportunity to learn. Even if (The old innocence were may be better, but) the movement is inevitable and it would be immoral to prevent it.

and independent of any autonomous eclosion. Every ~~R~~ ritual has roots in the archaic ^{pre} history of Man; ^{the rite} every ritual is an expression of something which belongs to the human race. We may of course give it a theological or ~~my~~ mythical or mystical explanation. It comes to the same. Whether ^{it is} handed down by a God or God's envoy, or ^{by} a product of the deepest archetypes of the unconscious, every authentic ritual transcends the whims of the individual and equally resists the dictates of a ~~foreign~~ God: it has an ontology of its own. You may no longer drink the Soma or eat the Body of Christ, but you cannot so easily abolish all ritual meals.

3. Rituals emerge when ^{a propitious constellation of} the circumstances are favorable ^{appear}

If rituals are the integrative ~~and particular~~ ways ~~by~~ which Man ^{takes towards} ~~deals with~~ transcendence, the emerging of a new rite in response to a new call from the beyond — or so it is felt (we are not spinning theories) — is a perfectly natural process. To a new opening from the Mystery, or towards ~~the~~ Mystery, new ^{forms} ways of dealing with the concrete human situation may emerge as ritual actions. Generally speaking these rituals emerge as corrections and modifications of old ones.

Thanksgiving, for instance, may be said to be a fundamental human attitude. Man feels the need to respond with gratitude to the experience of the gratuitously given and discovers that the immediate given is not the ultimate gift, so that he opens up to the beyond. Now this thankfulness may take as many forms as we discover means ^{of} ~~to~~ expression ~~it~~ — and we only genuinely express ourselves in response to what has im-pressed ⁵ ~~us~~. It all depends ^{on} how open and vulnerable we are to such impressions, and how free and ^{genuine} ~~creative~~ we are in our expressions.

20,1

20,1

H.
because a new goal appears or

20,2

20

The origin of the Eucharist offers a clear paradigm. Christ did not plan anything. He wanted to celebrate what he foresaw would be his last paschal meal with his disciples; he was cornered into death, he had no other issue and having loved his 'friends' up to the 'end' he completed the Jewish commemoration of thanksgiving for liberation and community ~~with~~ with the sacrifice of his own life really symbolized in the breaking and eating of the bread and sharing of the wine.

—————> 21

2012

4. To reject a ritual because we cannot comprehend its meaning is as inadequate as to keep it because we do comprehend it

gates to the (one opened only by)

The realm of ritual is (the ~~new~~ innocence of the living myth

in which we live. To mistake a ritual for a rational manifestation of the sacred is to belittle the nature of Man and distort the nature of the sacred. A ~~non-spontaneous~~ ritual is ~~a non-sincere act devoid of intellectual content; it is not the putting into scene, a script, but the performance of all power.~~ To greet a friend by wishing him a good day or many happy returns can be a ritual if 'el buen dia nos de Dios' is an act embodying all my sincere congratulations, which I myself am not able to spell out except in the ritual greeting. I neither understand nor ~~do not understand~~ what I am doing. I know that I am greeting a friend and that friendship is unfathomable. The ritual is prior to its interpretation: "Am Anfang war die Tat." → 21,1

a set of actions from which a 'script' can be derived, though many follow a certain pattern laid down in a previous act

The way performance will

which might be recorded in a script some rubrics.

5. To understand a ritual means to (consciously stand under its spell

21,1

We say consciously, which implies freely, but we do not say willingly in order to avoid the ~~sense~~ ^{compulsion} of willing ourselves, forcing ourselves, to accept a ritual. I am advocating neither blind submission to tradition nor ~~superficial~~ ^{immature} rebellion against it. Our relation with a living ritual is something given and freely accepted, but not something we can control at will. ~~This~~ ^{The latter} would be the beginning of magic.

Western scientific civilization is not accustomed to dealing with such 'existentials', and we often lack not only methods of ~~explanation~~ ^{clarification} but also means of expression. ~~I do not accept a ritual because I can explain it.~~

In such a case I'd better keep to the doctrine. In such a case ritual would be an imperfect way to express something which would be more properly expressed with concepts. We have already insisted that ritual is not an ersatz for concepts.

21

A ritual ~~to~~ make sense, although it does not have necessarily ~~one~~ a (~~single~~) meaning. It has a purport, puts us in one direction and we believe & sense it, but no rite can be exhaustively comprehended without being destroyed, ~~and thus~~ ~~made obsolete~~. If a ritual we could get at the meaning of a ritual, that meaning would be more powerful than the ritual and make the ritual obsolete. The upanishadic sage who knows, ~~is~~ no longer perform the lightening ~~(?)~~ the sacrificial fire. This is the danger of all gnostic spiritualism, against which tant and the Resurrection of the Flesh are bold correctives. If the Flesh rises again there must be rituals in the new earth as the Book of Revelations reveals.

If we could explain a ritual we would explain it away.

There are no sacraments in heaven

^{We}
 I accept a ritual not just because it ~~has been handed down~~
~~or~~ has always been ~~done~~ so, but rather because ^{transmitted} I sense its spell. ^{we} We
 share in its dynamism. This obviously cannot be done by just sitting
 around and thinking about it, but only by taking part in the dance, in
 the prayer, in the action. ^{we} You have to see a film if ^{we} you want to react
 to it. ^{Pure logical} ~~Our current~~ epistemology cannot help us understand a rite: ^{we} you
 have to experience it. Indeed, ^{we} you have ~~(to really be~~ there — freely
 and totally present, with an open heart and an open mind — for the
 ritual to be really there for ^{us} you at all.

#

R. Panikkar
 Santa Barbara
 January, 1977

This does ~~AMANA~~ not mean at all irrationalism
 or sheer voluntarism. It means the recognition
 that the intellect is not everything that there
 is, not even in us. ~~and~~ It entails, further,
 the ~~conscious~~ awareness of the very foundation
 of our intellect, the skambha ^{or support} ~~on which~~ on which our own
 understanding rests, the under ~~ground~~ ^{ground} upon which we stand.

transmission

6. Tradition means the ritual handing down of human values through space and time

(to chose among the 3)

6. Without ritual a people, civilization or ~~any~~ religion cannot subsist along time and space for ritual at is the very ~~any~~ core of tradition.

6. Without ritual there is no living tradition

What makes a tradition tradition is not the continuity of ideas, which change, ~~and~~ sometimes substantially, but the ritual transmission from generation to generation, ~~and~~ from ~~one~~ place to ^{place} ~~another~~, of the values, treasures, secrets, myths, mystery, ... of that particular tradition.

(from trans-dare)

Tradition is precisely the 'tradere' the handing down of that which is ~~any~~ bigger than ourselves, that which transcends us and which we alone cannot manipulate or exhaust, and thus we pass it on. Without ritual a people, civilization or religion cannot subsist; it cannot have that continuity which implies more than either physical contiguity or intellectual agreement. No monarchy, no republic, no corporation and no family can continue in space and time withot some act which ~~makexxxxxxxx~~ re-enacts the transmission of power, life or myth. A point in case is the apostolic succession in the christian church. There has to be ^{something like} water, prayer, laying on of hands, fire and Holy Spirit in order that the continuity is established. Either Esau or Jacob ^{has} ~~have~~ to receive the blessing if Israel ^{is} ~~has~~ to survive. We may discuss ~~about~~ the essence of ~~any~~ the priesthood or the meaning of being a christian, but only by a ritual act can such realities be transmitted. Is modern education, when it ^{really purports to} ~~really trans-~~ ^{pass on and increase} ~~really trans-~~

The ideas, data and skills of a particular civilization,

~~is culture~~ not a form of ritual? ^{Genuine} ~~The~~ Transmission of culture is a ritual act, and not only an intellectual exercise.

7. The necessary sacredness of any ritual ~~should~~ not need to be at the expense of its secularity

Living rituals have always been down-to-earth and close to human life. Rituals are not merely profane activities, but they are generally very secular ones as the celebrations accompanying them still show. Rituals are generally public, festive and integrated in the daily life of the people. Marriage is a feast, ^{and} burial ^{often} a banquet, ordination and baptism ^{are} public celebrations. The christian liturgy is properly celebrated within the frame of the ^{whole} Sunday as a holy day. The proliferation of daily private Masses was an example of ~~degeneration~~. *The neglect of the secular and sociological aspects of ritual.*

The great challenge today is to convert the sacred bread ^{to} real bread, the liturgical peace ^{to} political peace, the worship of ~~God in~~ the Creator ^{to} reverence for the Creation, the christian praying community ^{to} an authentic human fellowship. It is risky to celebrate the Eucharist. We may ^{have to} leave it ^{unfinished,} ~~half done~~ having gone first to give back to the poor what belongs to them, or we may end ^{up} in the Town Hall or in prison or in the ^h gett~~o~~ or taking part in the many processions in honor of some saint called Justice, Peace, Non-discrimination, Tolerance, Food, Simplicity ^{or} Mary.

The Blessed Sacrament; ... ○

* * *

To a significant degree

In sum: Man is a ritual being in as much as it is, in and through ritual - and not by his reason or will or body alone - that he reaches the ^{ultimate} ~~supreme~~ goal of his existence: to be ^{come} God, or to be fully Man, or to be so pure that he becomes sheer Nothingness, or simply to be happy, saved, free, ...

This Ritual is certainly action, praxis, karma, ~~karax~~ ^{demanding} ~~implying~~ involvement and commitment, but it is an orthopraxis ^{impelled} ~~impulsed~~ by devotion, love, surrender, bhakti, and impregnated with knowledge, awareness, jñāna, wisdom. Marginal rituals and peripheral cults, are ~~equally~~ ^{just as} inadequate as scientific ideas or romantic ideals, Worship in the sense of adoration, latria, had this ⁱⁿ ~~pretension~~ ^{interpretation} only, that in the ~~imagination~~ ~~of~~ ~~many~~ and ~~the~~ practice of many, its aim, ~~has degenerated into an object and thus become an idol.~~

The metallatria we are looking for, ~~cannot leave aside~~ the very search for ^{such a primordial ritual} ~~it~~. The exploration for a ritual for our time converts our own search ^{to} a ritual time. This may appear as an intriguing task for secular Man and ^{as} a challenge for those who believe that it is time itself - the temporal, i.e. secular reality - that has to be redeemed: ἔσχατον ἵσμεν
τὸν καιρὸν.
X Z

R. P.
February 1922

has to reintegrate all the broken pieces of ~~the~~ our crumbling universe, ^{including} ~~with~~ ~~itself~~ even

if they lose contact with the center,
if they lose contact with the wider reality.
of a wholistic act
was directed to a separate and manipulable entity, ^{and become} ~~becoming~~
then another object among many ^{other} ~~degenerate~~ ~~into~~ idolatry.