

IX.

How did we arrive at gods in animal, human, or mixed shape?

“In a historical perspective, the aniconic representation, the ‘non-image’ might prove to come first. In favor of this, and despite the fact that research in this field cannot by any means be considered to be complete, we can adduce not only early primitive pictorial forms, but also the observation that in high religions, too, the iconic representation of the founder is generally preceded by a symbolic representation.”³⁸⁷

Blood sacrifice frees the members of the collective of their helpless anger and empowers the community to turn its efforts once more to solving practical problems. Yet it also brings new problems with it - namely the corpses of those killed and the guilt feelings provoked by their killing. Processes for the unloading of guilt - so called “comedies of innocence” - already accompany the ritual, in order to lighten the ensuing burden. The animal had given its consent by nodding its head, the knife is declared to be guilty and is condemned, or the executioner drops the ax and runs away.³⁸⁸ Still, the involvement in the murder is not eliminated just for that. In the solution to both of these problems - handling of the corpse and evacuation of guilt - mankind finds to a particular form of religion: the worship of god-statues in the shape of humans, animals or of monsters.

The founders of cults, who are psychologically so perceptive - through their liberating stagings they become heros and good shepherds to humanity - often act themselves as “sacred executioners,”³⁸⁹ as the priests are euphemistically called. They put to death before the community living beings in order to heal the people from their trauma, that is, to make possible for them the evacuation of dammed up, and therefore inwardly raging, anger. The balance of the emotional liberation remains quite precarious. But the remedy is a strong one and is therefore associated with a dangerous side-effect, the fear of retribution. Its treatment starts immediately after the healing execution.

A lot has already been achieved for the benefit of the community if it was not directly involved in the killing. A great measure of guilt has then been taken from it by the priest. Therefore it finds itself indebted to him and treats him with feelings of awe which establish a feeling of distance. When this awe is expressed through marks of respect and the bringing of material gifts, the decisive step towards a priestly aristocracy, and eventually to human high culture, is achieved. The Mesopotamian En

³⁸⁷ G. Lanczkowski, «Bilder I», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, vol. VI, 1980, p. 515 f.

³⁸⁸ Cf. K. Meuli, «Griechische Opferbräuche» (1946), in: Idem, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by T. Geizer, Bd. II, Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1975, p. 995f. und 1005-1010.

³⁸⁹ About this notion, cf. H. Maccoby, *The Sacred Executioner: Human Sacrifice and the Legacy of Guilt*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1982, Titel u. S. 21.

or Lugal was a king and in the same time a sacrificial priest,³⁹⁰ and the same was true of the Mycenaean Basileus.³⁹¹ The prediction of the next catastrophe by means of early astronomy in the form of oracles becomes another duty of the priests, of elemental importance. The organization of drainage work finally becomes the third major duty of these heroes. With all three together, kingship is born.

Neither deceit nor violence lead at the beginning of the Bronze Age to the dominance of humans over other humans. Such popular representations about the priest kings and their communities were adopted only because the significance of sacrifice had not been rightly examined. A few thoughtful scholars remained suspicious about this point. "To speak here of conquered or oppressed classes of the people is much too self-assured an explanation, which moreover has no basis in the history of the region in question [Mesopotamia]."³⁹² The legitimation of the priests dwelled in their healing potency over a truly stricken collective. This legitimation becomes undone when, at the beginning of the Iron Age, catastrophes come to a halt and the strong remedies are no longer needed. That there occurs a break between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, even evolutionarily educated sacrifice scholars have well made out, but were not able to figure out in what it consisted: "One must draw the consequence - I believe - that in the early Iron Age something happened with the cults in western Asia Minor."³⁹³ The beginning struggle against sacrifices occurring in the so-called "axial age,"³⁹⁴ often referred to but not understood in its origins, will occupy us more.

Contrarily to what happens to the community, nobody relieves the sacrificial priests from guilt for their bloody actions. Therefore, complicated rituals of expiation must be developed for them. Self-torture and self-mutilation appear like the most effective of these. These mysterious practices represent a penance for the monstrosity of the sacred and never expiated act. Among them, punishment in the sexual sphere once more appear prominent. Even today's catholic priest, who administers the flesh and blood of the Lord, holds onto a piece of this radical self-punishment through his celibacy. His antecedents were much more radical. Before the eyes of their people, the priest-kings of the Maya have heavily bleeding mutilations at the level of the lips,

³⁹⁰ Cf. P. Charvat, «Early Ur», in: *Archiv Orientalni*, vol. 47, 1979, p. 18.

³⁹¹ Cf. W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 94, 158

³⁹² A. L. Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia*, revised edition completed by E. Reiner, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977, p. 96.

³⁹³ Bergquist, B., «Bronze Age Sacrificial Koine in the Eastern Mediterranean», in: J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference Organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leu-ven from the 17th to 20th of April 1991*, Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters & Department Orientalistiek Leuven, 1993, p. 41.

³⁹⁴ See K. Jaspers, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*, München: Piper, 1949, p. 15-106.

tongue and genitalia³⁹⁵ inflicted upon them. The priests of Syrian Venus-Cybele³⁹⁶ and of the Aztec Quetzalcoatl³⁹⁷ go all the way to self-castration.

Regarding castration, one might also raise the question to what extent they also represent the playing out and repetition of something. When, in an anthropomorphizing fashion, the result of a cosmic collision is perceived as the loss of a tail, caused by another celestial object, this loss could find entrance into “burning of the world” scenarios. Iasion, according to ancient traditions the star-husband and/or son of Cybele,³⁹⁸ meets his end through a cosmic lightning [delivered by Zeus³⁹⁹] during sexual intercourse.⁴⁰⁰ In this collision, according to the perspective of the observers, the focus may have been put sometimes on the tail, sometimes on the head. In the latter case, some “abstruse customs”⁴⁰¹ classified by scholarship, like self-beheadings found reproduced in Indian cave-temples, may become explainable.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁵ See L. Schele, M. E. Miller, *The Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art*, Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1986.

³⁹⁶ See p. ex. W. Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*, Berkeley et al.: University of California Press, 1979, p. 104ff.

³⁹⁷ See A. Taladoire, *Les terrains de jeu de balle*, Mexico City: Mission archéologique et ethnologique française au Mexique, 1981, p. 542.

³⁹⁸ Cf. in detail regarding this deity M. Hörig, *Dea Syria: Studien zur religiösen Tradition der Fruchtbarkeitsgöttin in Vorderasien*, Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker sowie Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 1979; R. A. Oden Jr., *Studies in Lucian's Dea Syria*, Missoula/Montana: Scholars Press for Harvard Semitic Museum, 1971.

³⁹⁹ *Odyssey* 5: 128.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. H. v. Geisau, «Iasion», in: *Der Kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike in fünf Bänden* (1975), München: dtv, 1979, vol. 2, Sp. 1321.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. M. M. Rind, *Menschenopfer: Vom Kult der Grausamkeit*, Regensburg: Universitätsverlag Regensburg, 1996, p. 20.

⁴⁰² Cf. P. Vogel, «Opfer durch Selbstenthauptung, dargestellt in indischen Höhlentempeln», in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies [London]*, vol. 6, 1931.

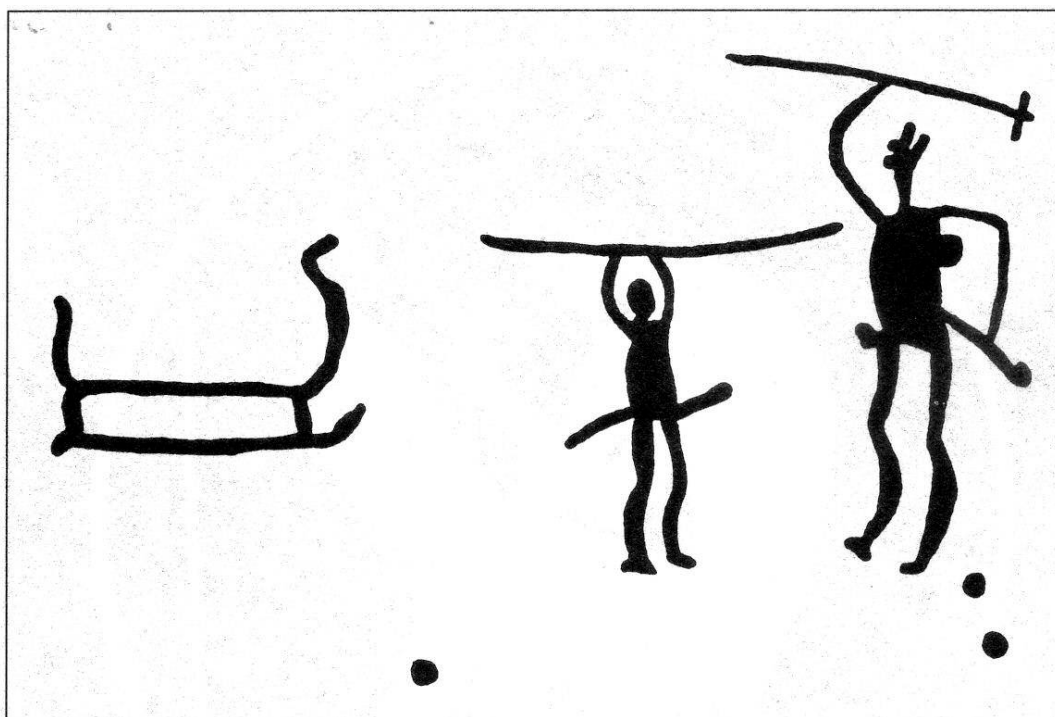


Ill. 15: A sculptor finishing a Hermes statue as a column with a head, erect phallos and pointed beard.⁴⁰³

The interpretation of ritual castration scenes as a replay of the loss of a cosmic tail presumes of course that castration is preexisting as a human act. The impulse to castrate and the fear of castration exist well beyond the context of natural catastrophes. They must precede them in order for celestial apparitions to be seen as such. A good understanding of the composition of mythic material cannot be achieved without knowledge of sexual aggression and psychic projection. A caricature of psychoanalytical processes is reached when very real events of natural history are presented to be purely sensory-emotional representations - as we have seen in the

⁴⁰³ Adapted from C. Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (1982), London: British Museum Press, 1989, p. 53.

explanation of Flood legends out of the urge to urinate.⁴⁰⁴



*Phallic celestial fighters*⁴⁰⁵

Ill. 16:

There is no dearth in representations of phallicly battling celestial gods. Whether the astrophysical supposition that Mercury may have been once a satellite of Venus who - through burning, or “dying” was separated from her - could fit a scenario of cosmic castration, is a question we will merely raise here.⁴⁰⁶ At Carthage, the goddess Tanit is clearly designated as “the Face of B’l[Baal]”⁴⁰⁷ which until now could not be understood: “In whatever way this denomination may have come about - it is plausible that an extremely strong relation between B’L [Baal] and Tnt [anit] was

⁴⁰⁴ Cf. typically G. Roheim, «The Flood Myth as Vesical Dream» (1952), in: A. Dundes (Hg.), *The Flood Myth*, Berkeley et al: University of California Press, 1988, p. 151 ff.

⁴⁰⁵ Adapted from rockpaintings from Vitlycke in westswedish Bohuslän (maybe Bronze Age).

⁴⁰⁶ See C. Bloss, *Planeten, Götter, Katastrophen: Das neue Bild vom kosmischen Chaos*, Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 1991, p. 61 and T. Van Flandern, R. S. Harrington, «A Dynamical Investigation of the Conjecture that Mercury is an Escaped Satellite of Venus», in: *Icarus*, vol. 28, 1976, p. 435 ff. About collisions of Mercury cf. also A. G. W. Cameron et al., «The Strange Density of Mercury: Theoretical Considerations», in: F. Vilas et al. (ed.), *Mercury*, Tucson/ AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1988, p. 692ff. As well as G. R. Stewart, «A Violent Birth of Mercury?», in: *Nature*, vol. 335, 1988, p. 496f.

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. W. Huss, *Die Karthager* (1990), München: Beck, 1994², p. 367.

meant to be expressed through it.”⁴⁰⁸

Undisputed remains the existence of the *phalloi* carried in cultic processions. If one doesn't want to limit interpretations to the replaying of panic defense erections described above, one cannot bypass stories about the youthful god and staff-carrier Hermes. He is offered in sacrifice in the shape of a ram, the sacralization of which is achieved through castration just like the one of the buck of Dionysos.⁴⁰⁹ The statues of Hermes - which at the beginning were no more than square columns with a man's head - are furnished with erect *phalloi*.⁴¹⁰ Still in Roman times, men who in cultic actions represented the god Attis were exposed to a sacrificial death through castration.⁴¹¹ Was this a replay of a cosmic tail loss?

The Late Cretan period already brings us pictures of a youthful, celestial staff-bearer. The loss of his *phallos* belongs to the scene, which evokes the worshipping or lamenting of Osiris⁴¹² dismembered by Isis⁴¹³ in Ancient Egypt.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. W. HCSS, *Die Karthager* (1990), München: Beck, 1994², p. 367.

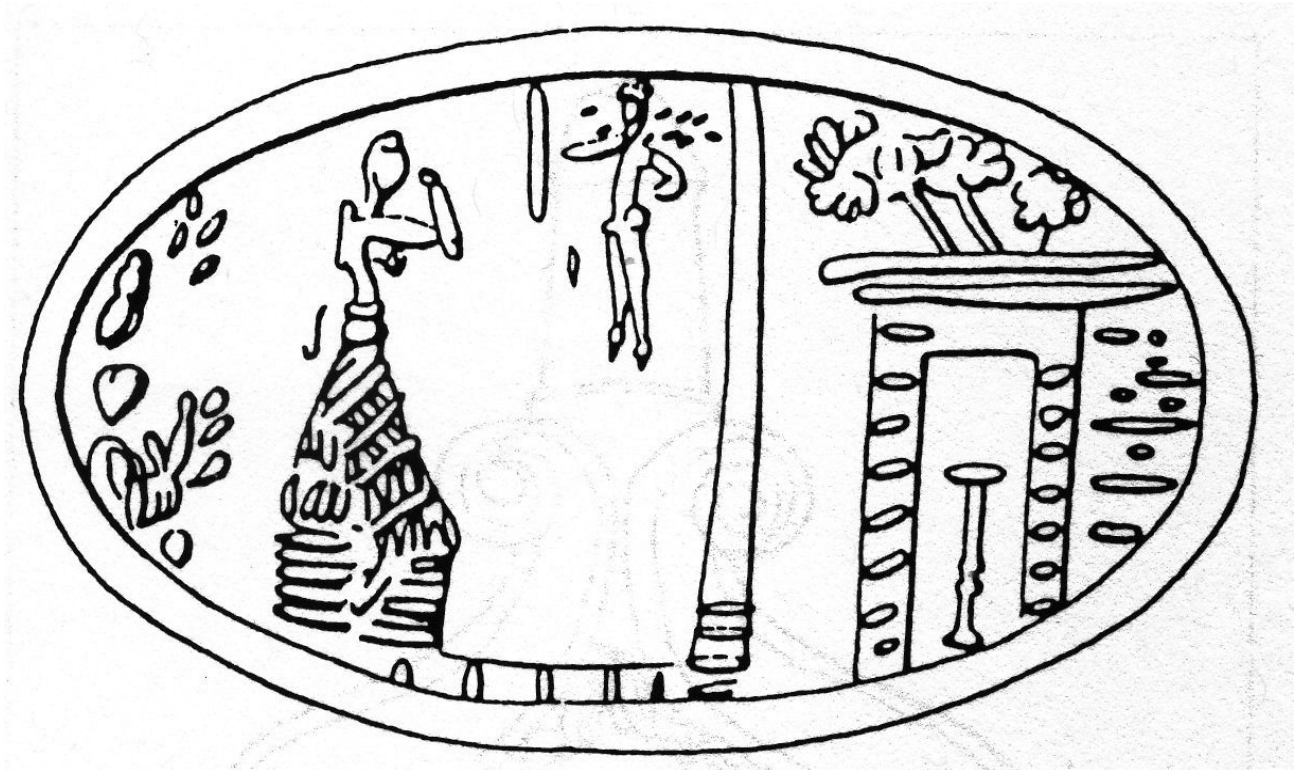
⁴⁰⁹ See W. Burkert, *Homo Necans: Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972, p. 81.

⁴¹⁰ See W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 244 ff.

⁴¹¹ Tertullian (2. Jh. u. Z.), *Apologeticum* 15, 4; cf. In detail K. M. Coleman, «Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Reenactments», in: *Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 130, 1990.

⁴¹² In other places, the dismembered's name is Attis, Dionysos, Hadad, Tammuz etc.

⁴¹³ «In the process of anthropomorphization of forces, she was given the form of a sitting woman holding a child in her lap; this motive became ultimately the model for the figures of the Madonnas.» Cf. W. Helck, «Isis», in: *Der Kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike in fünf Bänden* (1975), München: dtv, 1979, vol. 2, Sp. 1463.



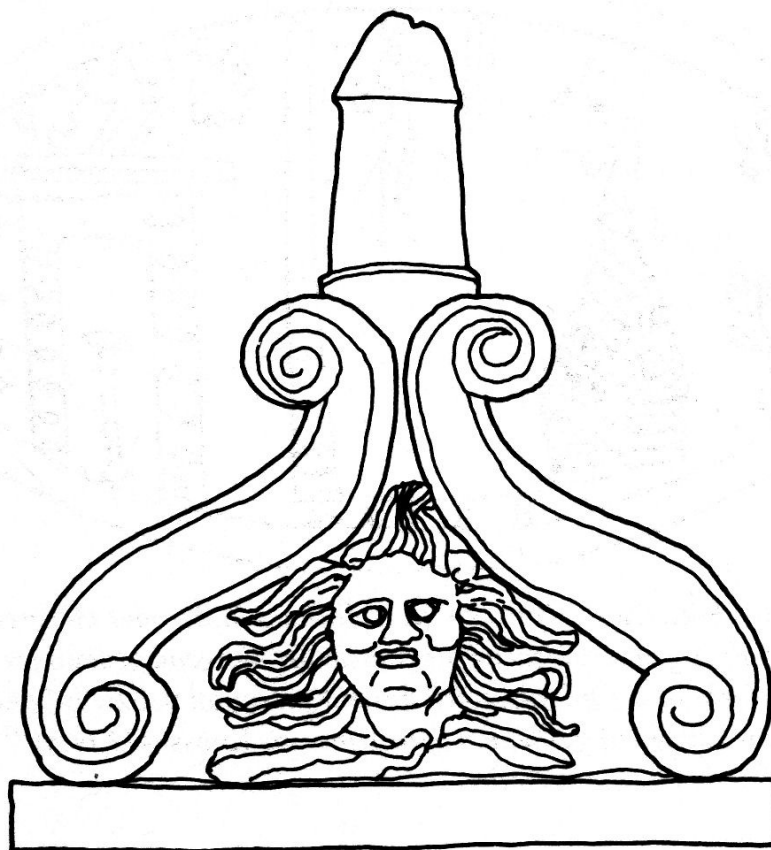
Ill. 17: Woman or goddess in front of youthful staff-bearing Hermes god, whose position can be interpreted as floating, or hanging and whose death, possibly sacrifice, is implemented through castration. (Adapted from a scene on a gold seal-ring from Knossos/Crete).⁴¹⁴

Much later, even the lamentation of Christ seems to have elements of this scene returning. But in his case - according to a story reported only by the apocalyptic John - his "side" is pierced open in a strange, possibly displaced manner: "One of the soldiers opened up his side with a spear, and blood and water flowed out."⁴¹⁵ What is maybe the oldest representation of a crucifix in Christianity shows, as it happens, "the Crucified sitting on a seat with his legs splayed apart, his twisted arms bound on the beam of a T-cross."⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁴ Cf. H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte. Vierter Band: Bronzezeit. Dritter Teilband. Tafeln*, München: Beck, 1980, panel 204, Nr. 18.

⁴¹⁵ *Gospel of John* 19: 34.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. R. Hausserr, «Kruzifixus», in: E. Kirschbaum (Hg.), *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, Rom et al.: Herder, 1970, vol. 2, Sp. 683.



Ill. 18: Antique grave urn lid with a representation of the devastating, yet in the end subdued celestial goddess Gorgo (Medusa, Hera⁴¹⁷), crowned with a phallos (Roman Museum of Assisi;⁴¹⁸ redrawn by S. Bollenhagen).

⁴¹⁷ See p. ex. W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 171. The oldest representations of Hera are Gorgons, just as the original, i. e. Cretan Zeus is a child-god born in the cave on Mt Ida and dying at Knossos, engaged in a fatal battle with his progenitrix Hera; cf. also the corresponding child representations for the Dionysius variant of the child-god in R. Merkelbach, *Die Hirten des Dionysos: Die Dionysos-Mysterien der römischen Kaiserzeit und der bukolische Roman des Longus*, Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1988, Abbildungen 1, 10f., 30, 43-48, 81, 83, 88; cf. also B. Peiser, «The Divine Child in Ancient Greek Athletics», in: *The Sports Historian. The Journal of the British Society of Sports History*, Nr. 15, Mai 1995, p. 3 ff.

⁴¹⁸ Cf. F. Annibali, *Guida al museo civico di Assisi e agli scavi archeologici della città*, Assisi: Editrice Minerva, 1995, p. 20.



*Ill. 19: Terra cotta from ancient Babylonian Nippur, which is interpreted as the final scene of a sacred marriage in which the goddess floats over the severed genitals of her celestial beloved. Sredrawn by S. Bollenhagen.*⁴¹⁹

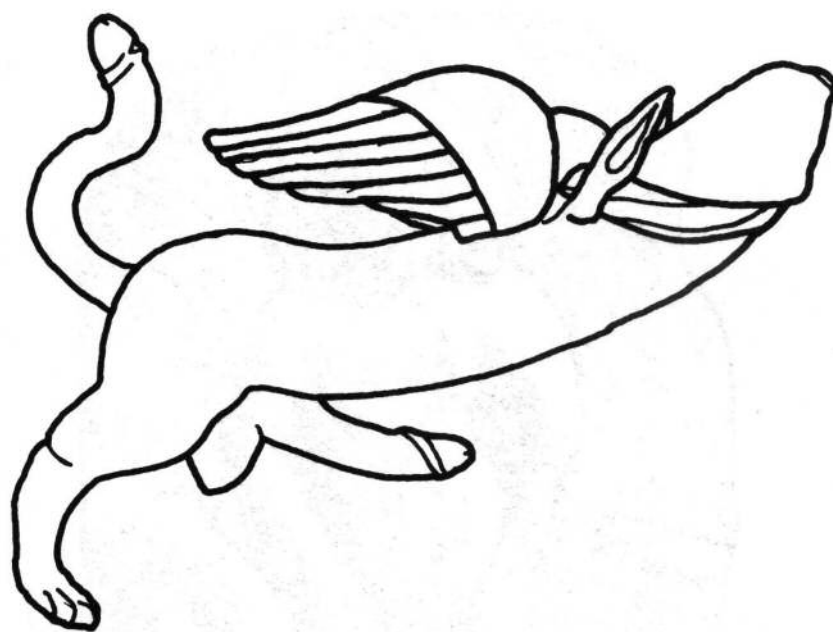
The stabbing with the spear in the Gospel of John could represent an attempt to invest Jesus with the dignity of the old Yahweh=Mercury, about which it is said in Deutero-Zachariah: “And they [the inhabitants of Jerusalem] will see [the Lord], whom they have pierced, and they will bewail him, as one laments over an only child, and will be distressed for his sake, as one is distressed over a first-born.”⁴²⁰ Here are already assembled all the elements of worship, and eventual reconciliation or lamenting of the sacrificed god-actor. Emphatically, “the Lord” is equated with another star-deity, for which the very same “piercing through” ritual is carried on: “At this time there will be a great lament in Jerusalem, like the one that was raised about Hadad-Rimmon in the

⁴¹⁹ After D. E. McCown, R. C. Haines, D. P. Hansen, *Nippur I: Temple of Enlil, Scribal Quarter, and Soundings*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967, panel 137, Nr. 6.

⁴²⁰ *Zechariah* 12: 10.

plain of Megiddo.”⁴²¹ Hadad is considered to be a variant of Baal,⁴²² who as Melkart⁴²³ represents again a Mercury godhead.

Were castrations and piercing through performed not only on goat-bucks and rams, but also on the male impersonators of dying savior gods? Do religious lamentation scenes bewail the loss of a celestial tail, which was originally reenacted on male beings and only later through symbols?



Ill. 20: A late antiquity winged Hermes/Mercury in - also caricatural - reduction of winged phallos, which as a good luck talisman preserved the memory of cosmic deliverance or the end of cosmic misfortune through the celestial castration of the bringer of salvation (Bronze from Trier, 1st cent. AD; redrawn by S. Bollenhagen).⁴²⁴

⁴²¹ Zechariah 12: 11.

⁴²² Cf. W. G. Lambert, «Trees, Snakes and Gods in Ancient Syria and Anatolia», in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 48, 1985, p. 435 ff.

⁴²³ Cf. G. W. Ahlström, *The History of Ancient Palestine from the Palaeolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest*, ed. by D. Edelman, mit einem Beitrag von G. O. Rollefson, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993, p. 586.

⁴²⁴ Cf. C. Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (1982), London: British Museum Press, 1989, p. 69.

It is not easy to decide, but we will discuss the matter again later, when addressing sacred marriage (see also Ill. 29). It is remarkable though, that in ancient tomb decorations a fearsome godhead is often represented, ornated with a *phallos*-trophy. Also the winged *phallos* seems to be nothing more than a Hermes variant, who is readily shown with a winged helmet, or winged shoes. Again, a celestial tail-loss could have been interpreted as a blissful deliverance.

Let's return to the handling of the corpses of the victims. The elaboration of the guilt feelings born of the active aggression of the sacrifice - the sacred awe - is by no means limited to the penance of the priests, upon whom falls the main burden. Richer in consequences, from the standpoint of the history of religion, were the rituals of reconciliation or of lamentation over the corpses of the humans or animals who had lost their lives in the guise of ornate and masked impersonators of gods.



Ill. 21: Sacrifice of a god impersonator among the Andean Antis-Indians. The already half decomposed earlier victim is hanging like a statue on a hill in some kind of wooden temple or skull scaffolding according to the in the manner of Tzompantli (see also ill. 25) - for ritual reconciliation.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁵ 1723 etching adapted from J. Campbell, *Historical Atlas of World Mythology. Volume II Part 1: The Sacrifice*, New York et al.: Harper & Row, 1988, p. 42.

As, after the sacred act - provided they were not hung on a tree or a pole to begin with in Absalom-fashion⁴²⁶ - the corpses are reduced to a heap of flesh and bones lying on the ground, they must be subjected to a particular process of reconstruction, so that the reconciliatory gestures can be performed before them. Herodotus tells us about the bull, which in the Egyptian Isis sacrifice is beheaded as a representation of the dismembered Osiris: "Then the left-over trunk is filled with purified bread, honey, dried raisins, figs, incense and the rest of the fuming substances, then set alight and a great quantity of oil is thrown into the fire... While the fire is burning, all those present beat upon themselves, and when there has been enough of the beating and the lamentation, they prepare a meal from the leftovers pieces of the sacrificial beast."⁴²⁷

The murdered victims can also be brought, with the help of supports, into prominent display, that is, elevated. Technically, this "elevation" means that parts of the corpses, or the whole bodies are either hung up or are affixed to poles, trees and so on, with cords and nails, in such a way that they cannot collapse under their own weight. These elevated corpses of animals or humans are - temporarily, or durably under their horror masks - the first statues of the gods. They consist - roughly said - of fresh meat and are set to decompose rapidly. Still, they are statues of the gods, for the corpses stem from living beings which represented not themselves but cosmic natural forces. This is how they set themselves apart from common mortals who, already in the late Stone Age, were sometimes represented as tomb statues, as memorials for posterity, like today's photographs displayed on tombstones.

The contraption for the elevation of the victim can even be itself alive. For instance, in the Aztec cult of Chicomecoatl (literally "seven serpents") a girl, who was put to death as the impersonator of the goddess, is flailed. Her skin is then wrapped around a priest who, dressed up in this covering weighing several kilograms, repeats the dance of Chicomecatl and in so doing allows the community to take leave with befitting dignity and in sacred awe from the impersonator of the goddess.⁴²⁸

In Mesoamerica, European scholars were still able to witness the practice of a steady supply of fresh statues, but it was not understood by them. (Ill. 21). Once more,

⁴²⁶ The tales of dangerous and ultimately falling hairy stars can become during the processes of anthropomorphization stories of maidens who hang themselves by means of their hair in wild forests. They can also be transformed into stories about youths endowed with extraordinary hair: "For there was in all of Israel no man as beautiful as Absalom, and when his hair was shorn - which happened every two years, for it weighed on him too much, so that it had to be shorn - the hair of his head weighed two hundred shekels of the King's weight (2. *Samuel* 14: 25f.). The cosmological myth of Tammuz/Attis/ Baal/Osiris etc. als a background for the stories about Absalom (2. *Samuel* 13-19) has long been pointed out: «And Absalom encountered David's men and was riding on a mule. And as the mule passed under a great oak with thick branches, his head was caught in the branches and remained hanging between heaven and earth» (2. *Samuel* 18: 9). Cf. p. ex. A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*, 4. Fully new edition, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1930, p. 526f.

⁴²⁷ Herodotus, *Histories* II: 40.

⁴²⁸ Cf. J. Dickie, E. M. Pye, «Religious Dress and Vestments», in: *The New Encyclopedia Britannica: Macropedia*, Bd. 26, Chicago et al.: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1991, p. 830.

it remained incomprehensible to the scholars that the natives - in this case the Andean tribe of the Antis Indians - “admitted their victims into the ranks of their gods.”⁴²⁹ The Europeanized representation which is at our disposal stems from Bernard Picart and can be found in an ethnological collection of the 18th Century.⁴³⁰

One can well see how the new victim is put to death on a pole. Men, women and children take part in the flesh and blood of the impersonator of the godhead, by rubbing themselves with pieces cut from his body. The previous victim is in a separate hut on a hill - a one-piece Tzompantli (see ill. 17) - where it is hanged high for reconciliatory worship as well as for the lamentation, until such time when it must make place for the next impersonation of the godhead.

⁴²⁹ Cf. J. Campbell, *Historical Atlas of World Mythology. Volume II Part 1: The Sacrifice*, New York et al.: Harper & Row, 1988, p. 42.

⁴³⁰ B. Picart, *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Various Nations of the Known World* (1723ff.), London: Claude Du Bosc, 1733-1739, 7 volumes.



Ill. 22 Medieval so-called tree-cross (Scherenberg-psalter, Srasbourg, around 1260).⁴³¹ This early crucifix representation keeps the memory of ancient victim elevation through fixation of the corpse with nails. Interesting, too, is the imaging of the head crown. It shows a cross-nimbus of a celestial fire, which was carried by ancient sun-godheads, ancient Persian Great Kings, and Roman God-Caesars and was adopted in the 4th century by the Christians. The nimbus⁴³² points to the fact that here is not merely a human - the carpenter Jesus - hanging, but a youth who represents a celestial deity.

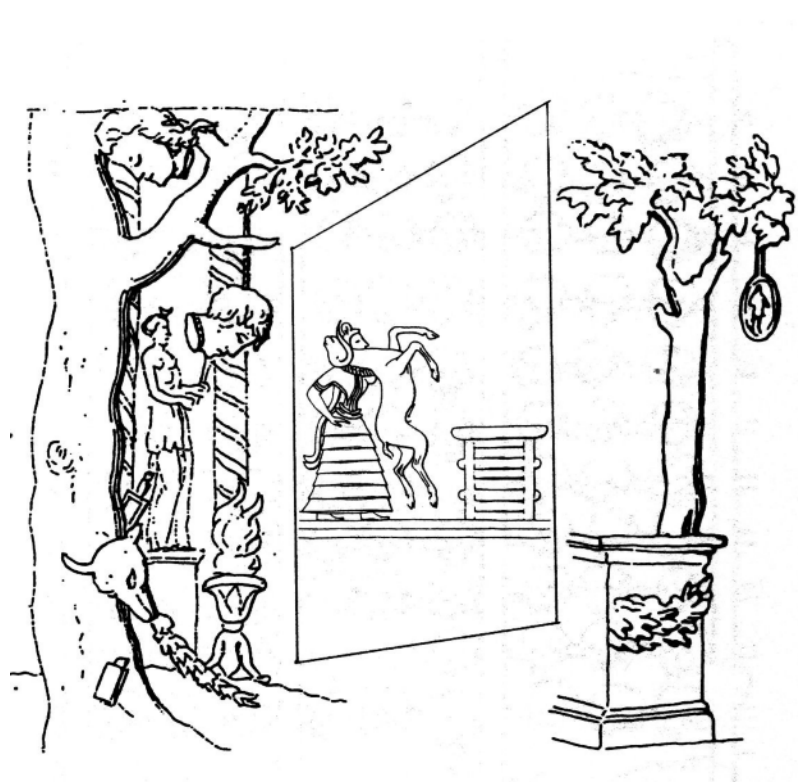
⁴³¹ Adapted from S. Selbmann, *Der Baum: Symbol und Schicksal des Menschen*, Karlsruhe: Badische Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe, 1984, p. 24.

⁴³² Cf. in detail M. Collinet-Guerin, *Histoire du nimbe des origines aux temps modernes*, Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1961.



Ill. 23: Column flanked by lions from the Mycenaean Late Bronze Age on a gold seal-ring (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford).⁴³³ On top of the column - which can also be seen as a pole or a cross - two heads of animals are hanging. The whole ensemble is considered mysterious. The same applies to the well-known sacredness of columns. The author interprets the heads as those of sacrificed animals who represented ritually the forces of cosmic nature, that is, were as animals themselves of a religious significance. The lamentation and begging for forgiveness as well as the reconciliatory gestures for the aggressive murder are executed in front of the elevated corpses. In this process, we arrive at what can be considered religious worship. It is directed at freshly butchered statues and only in this regard is it different from the acts of worshiping in front of artificial statues, which come to the fore when slaying sacrifices become rarer or are given up. The worshiper cannot escape a feeling of sacred awe in front of the columns, which for this reason remain religiously significant, even when no sacrificial corpses are affixed on them. In Christianity for instance, this awe is perpetuated in front of crosses which do not display a corpse of Christ.

⁴³³ After H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte. Vierter Band: Bronzezeit. Dritter Teilband. Tafeln*, München: Beck, 1980, panel 205, Nr. 17.



Ill. 24: left: sacrificial tree of Diana on Tauris (drawing from a relief).⁴³⁴

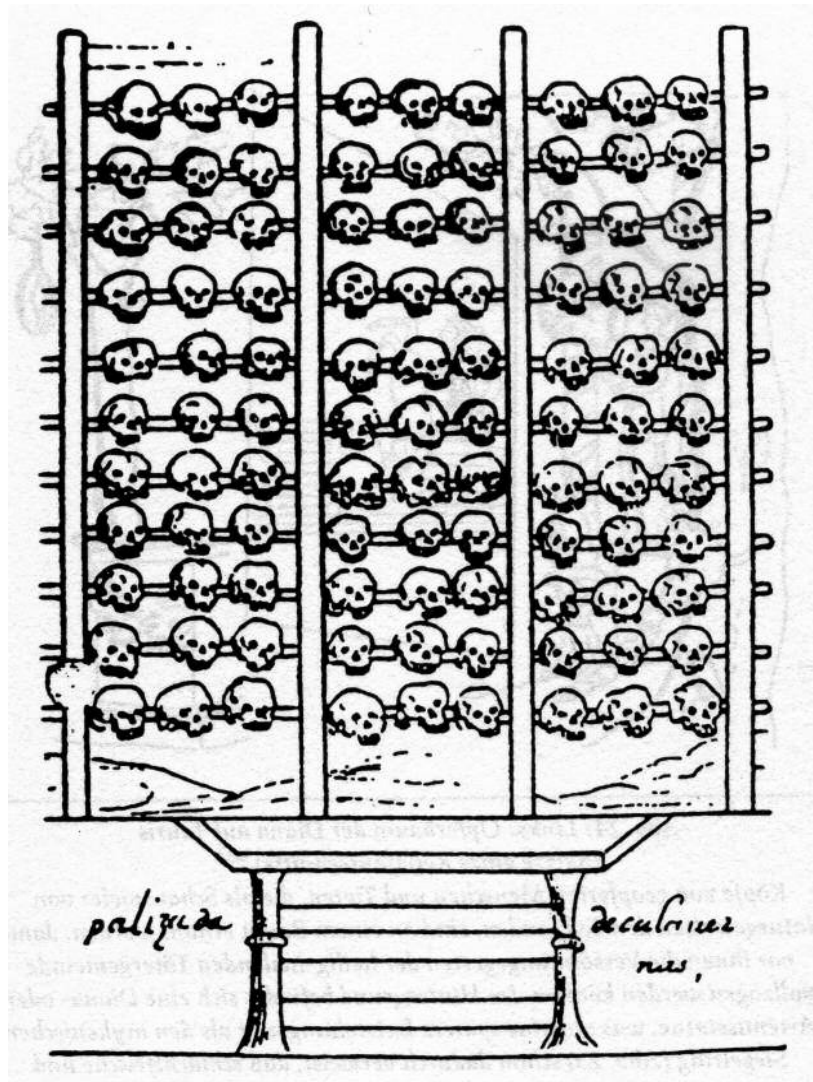
Heads of sacrificed humans and animals who were killed as impersonators of forces of nature have been elevated on a tree, so that in front of them reconciliatory gestures of the sacredly-healing community of the killers can be carried out. In the background, there is a Diana- or Artemis statue, which points to a later origin as the Mycenaean seal-ring (Ill. 23) through the fact that freshly butchered as well as stone images of gods now exist side by side. The sword to the left of the statue may indicate a female executioner of the blood act.⁴³⁵ Compare also the altar scene reconstituted through joining in the middle two similar Minoan seal-rings.⁴³⁶ Right: Oscillum (plaquette with a human representation) from the Jupiter sacrifice on Mons Albanus (ca. 20km to the southwest of Rome): many writers of antiquity held the little figures to be more recent substitutes of the human sacrifices performed in more primitive times."⁴³⁷

⁴³⁴ Cf. C. Bötticher, *Der Baumkult der Hellenen*, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1856, panel 31.

⁴³⁵ Cf. also O. Dickinson, *The Aegean Bronze Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 265 as well as N. Marinatos, «Role and Sex Division in Ritual Scenes of Aegean Art», in *Journal of Prehistoric Religion*, vol. 1, 1987, p. 23ff.

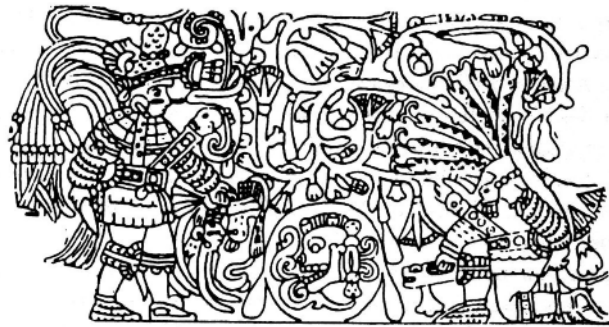
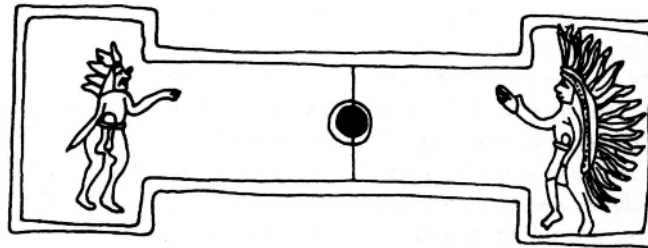
⁴³⁶ Cf. Bergquist, B., «Bronze Age Sacrificial *Koine* in the Eastern Mediterranean», in: J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference Organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to 20th of April 1991*, Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters & Department Orientalistik Leuven, 1993, p. 24.

⁴³⁷ After H. H. Scullard, *Römische Feste: Kalender und Kult* (1981), Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1985, p. 176 (Ill. p. 177).



Ill. 25: An Aztec Tzompantli (skull-scaffold bzw "mass-crucifix").⁴³⁸ The Aztecs - like others cultures - elevated the skulls of their victims having impersonated celestial object, in order to lament them, honor them and reconcile them. The killed humans become stars on the firmament, because in the ritual they have represented a "dying" cosmic body (see also ill. 21 and ill; 26).

⁴³⁸ Illustration from Pater Durans *Historia de las Indias de Nueva Espana e Islas de la Tierra Firme*; adapted by N. Davis, *Human Sacrifice in History and Today*, London und Basingstoke: Nacmillan, 1981, p. 223.



Ill; 26: Above: Toltec duel of ball-players with star-rayed feather headdresses.⁴³⁹
 Below: two ritual ball-playing captains in comet-costumes; the one to the left is holding the severed head of the one from the right (Chichen Itza, great Ball-playing square field).⁴⁴⁰

The theory of the god-image as a petrification or solidification by other means of a freshly executed god-actor becomes also easily understandable when examining the Christ icone. The “elevated Son of Man”⁴⁴¹ does not merely represent the corpse of the civilian Jesus, the professional carpenter. What is here attached to a pole with a

⁴³⁹ Adapted from A. Taladoire, *Les terrains de jeu de balle*, Mexico City: Mission archéologique et ethnologique française au Mexique, 1981, panel 15.

⁴⁴⁰ Adapted from A. Ruz, *Chichen Itza*, Mexico D. F.: Institute Nacional de Antropologia e Historia, 1981, p. 18.

⁴⁴¹ *Gospel of John* 3: 14.

transverse beam, is the becoming-flesh (*incarnatio*) of something else. This Jew from Roman times is to represent a youthful godhead, who through his - celestially ordained or provoked - death redeems the Earth, eventually preserving it from future cosmic calamities.

With the crown of thorns,⁴⁴² we come across the star-mask again, which we know from Mesopotamian sacrifice (see Ill. 5) as well as from Mesoamerica (see Ill. 26 above).⁴⁴³ The cosmic attribute does not seem in any way far-fetched, for the final revelation at the end of the New Testament uncovers expressly the godhead in its cosmic aspect as the great one of the old gods: "I, Jesus, have sent my angels to bear witness to this in your communities. I am the root and the race of David, the *brightly shining Morningstar*."⁴⁴⁴

We shall see in the final chapter that yet more attributes of a cosmic object belong to the Morningstar-godhead Jesus: "From his mouth sprang a sword, so that he slew with it the peoples."⁴⁴⁵ In the terrestrial repetition of the cosmic drama, again and again a sword- or tail star, must oppose itself to its equivalent.

So long as, following their decomposition, newly slaughtered statues continue to be furnished, durable god images can be dispensed with altogether. For almost the whole duration of the Bronze Age of the Mycenaean sacrificial kingship, which is competent for the execution of rituals,⁴⁴⁶ none are to be substantiated.⁴⁴⁷ As it ends - at the transition to the Iron Age therefore, which is by now means separated from the Bronze Age by a dark age⁴⁴⁸ - durable god-statues are found for the first time

⁴⁴² The Gospels present the crown of thorns by no means as an instrument of torture. Much more to the point, the Roman soldiers create by its means an improvised crown of starry rays, such as Hellenistic rulers wore them as embodiments of a deified celestial body. Cf. K. M. Coleman, «Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Reenactments», in: *Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 130, 1990, p. 45.

⁴⁴³ As Aztec rituals also reenact cosmic catastrophes - above all through the great cosmic ball games - they are familiar with players masquerading as celestial bodies in ways perfectly analogous to those known in Mesopotamia (cf. Ill. 6, 8 und 9).

⁴⁴⁴ *Revelation of John* 22: 16, my emphasis.

⁴⁴⁵ *Revelation of John* 19: 15.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. in detail on this subject P. M. Warren, *Minoan Religion as Ritual Action*, Göteborg: Göteborg University, 1988.

⁴⁴⁷ See E. Vermeule, *Greece in the Bronze Age*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972, p. 291.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. in detail with B. J. Peiser, *Das Dunkle Zeitalter Olympias: Kritische Untersuchungen der historischen, archäologischen und naturgeschichtlichen Probleme der griechischen Achsenzeit am Beispiel der antiken Olympischen Spiele*, Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang, 1993.

sporadically in the Minoan⁴⁴⁹ as well as in the Mycenaean⁴⁵⁰ spheres. For the Bronze Age, we find more often sacred poles and columns.⁴⁵¹ A famous Mycenaean ring (see Ill. 23) might give a clue about their function. It shows elevated animal heads which have always been considered incomprehensible. In the present study, we see them as the elevated heads of victims, possibly as fresh statues. In some temple-palace complexes of the Aegean Bronze Age, peculiar columnar chapels have been excavated. In one them (Phylakopi/Milos) there is to be found a fresco of a disguise ritual,⁴⁵² a scene therefore in which a human impersonator is changed into a living statue of a deity.

Again and again religious historians have been perplexed by the fact that victim and god seemed to be identical.”The God and his animal victim are put on the same plane: Zeus himself becomes the bull.”⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁹ The earliest cult figures in a scattering of sanctuaries go back to the end phase of Bronze-Age-Minoan Crete and resemble the iron age pieces from Boeotia: “In many sanctuaries no cult-images were found, only cultic implements;” cf. B. Rutkowski, *The Cult Places of the Aegean*, New Haven und London: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 145.

⁴⁵⁰ See illustrations in O. Dickinson, *The Aegean Bronze Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 290 (ill. 8.13, 3 a. 7).

⁴⁵¹ Cf. p. ex. A. J. Evans, «The Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult and its Mediterranean Relations», *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. 21,1901, p. 99-204.

⁴⁵² Cf. C. Renfrew, *The Archaeology of Cult: The Sanctuary at Phylakopi*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1985, p. 375 ff.

⁴⁵³ W. Burkert, *Homo Necans: Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin und New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972, p. 90.



Ill. 27: Artemis Orthia, stylized into a column with grooved fetters, from Sparta (archaic period - bone sculpture; scanned).⁴⁵⁴ In this piece, the transformation of a victim which having played a celestial object was affixed after his/her death to a tree in order to become the recipient of reconciliatory ritual, and then became an artificial god-statue, is easily understandable. The more one moves away from real blood sacrifice, the more important becomes the idol fashioned by the artist, thanks to which the holy-healing action becomes transportable. The parallel to the Christian god-icone is again evident.

In the Egyptian ritual we are astounded by “the spearing of enemies in the shape of

⁴⁵⁴ Photograph after K. Meuli, «Die gefesselten Götter» (1964), in: Idem, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by T. Geizer, vol. II, Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1975, panel 47 left.

gods such as crocodiles, hippopotami, and turtles.”⁴⁵⁵ In old-Arabic writings one puzzles that: “He who can kill a god and marries a goddess can himself - within the magic religion - become a god.”⁴⁵⁶ Ancient-Israelitic Jacob⁴⁵⁷ too, who as a celestial halt,⁴⁵⁸ becomes involved with “the terror of Isaac, the god of his father,”⁴⁵⁹ proves himself as a “god-fighter” I. e. “fighter against God” (=“Israel”⁴⁶⁰). Therefore, were the gods sacrificed to - as is stated in the dominant views - or were those sacrificed originally the impersonators of something which we designate today as gods? “The stressful quasi-identity of God and victim”⁴⁶¹ is said to be historically incomprehensible. “One bull and seven sheep are pushed alive in a pit: they *are* the god Kingu and his seven sons. Someone throws a dove into the air and cuts it in two parts with his sword: the dove is Tiamat, who was sundered off from Marduk.”⁴⁶² Herakles is burned at the stake and then becomes a star-deity.⁴⁶³

Gods and victims are by no means identical. The gods-to be begin as merely misfortune-bringing anorganic forces of nature, which has always been recognized by scholars, even if they thought foremost about familiar apparitions such as lightning, tsunami, hurricane, volcano, the beginning of winter etc.⁴⁶⁴ The fully-formed deity itself

⁴⁵⁵ E. Graefe, «Die Deutung der sogenannten ‘Opfergaben’», in: J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference Organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to 20th of April 1991*, Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters & Department Orientalistik Leuven, 1993, p. 153.

⁴⁵⁶ W. Daum, *Ursemitische Religion*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1985, p. 47.

⁴⁵⁷ On the subject of astral-mythical motives in the Jacob material cf. p. ex. A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*, 4. fully revised edition, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1930, p. 354ff. a. 364ff.

⁴⁵⁸ 1. Moses 32: 32.

⁴⁵⁹ 1. Moses 31: 54.

⁴⁶⁰ 1. Moses 32: 29.

⁴⁶¹ W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1977, p. 47.

⁴⁶² J. Fontenrose, *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins* (1959), Berkeley et al.: University of California Press, 1980, p. 443, my emphasis.

⁴⁶³ Hesiod, *Ehoiae - catalogue of women*, Fragments 25 MW, 27-28.

⁴⁶⁴ T. H. Gaster, *Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East* (1950, 1961); New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966, p. 61 ff.; J. Fontenrose, *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins* (1959), Berkeley et al.: University of California Press, 1980, p. 446; H. H. Scullard, *Römische Feste: Kalender und Kult* (1981), Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1985, p. 102.

is - as we have said - “a late apparition in the history of religion.”⁴⁶⁵ Occasionally, someone recognizes “that the power of a force of nature was rendered present through imitation or representation in the ritual through a human actor”⁴⁶⁶ or - in the reverse - that the “deity itself must have its origins in sacrifice.”⁴⁶⁷ About ancient Egypt, it is considered undisputable that “the most important duty” of the Pharaoh was that through clubbing, stabbing and burning “he annihilate humans, animals or objects appearing in the shapes of the Threat.”⁴⁶⁸ For Bronze Age Minoan Crete we know that in so-called epiphany- (=apparition-) rituals⁴⁶⁹ men played the gods, dressing in special clothes, and so became living statues.

All these highly enlightening finds are gathered together in an impressive effort by the researchers. Yet they do not go any further. Even the goat sacrifices, whose language is over-evident, for instance those executed in Sparta before battle for the sake of victory and which comprise all the elements necessary to understand our problematic, cannot be made to yield a theory. After a victory of the Spartans, there follows a “restoration” of a sacrificed goat, which belongs to the Venus deity Artemis/Athene: “A pole of oak is erected, on which they hang a helmet from the loot, with shield and spear... The Tropaion (trophy?) is then covered with the skin of a goat that had been slaughtered before the battle... so that the image of the Goddess Athena is now standing there, complete with helmet, shield, spear and aegis, the ‘virgin’ is arisen from the battle, just as in the precursor sacrifice a symbolic replacement of that same virgin had been killed off.”⁴⁷⁰ All this is nicely described, but the development line going from the daunting celestial power, over its ceremonially murdered impersonator to the deification of his/her disguised corpse by the guilt-ridden community does not reach the consciousness. Yet it can be said that the texts themselves could barely invite misunderstanding. From the ancient Cappadocic (Hittite) area for instance, holy poles are described, onto which a ram’s skin is affixed which is then replaced in the

⁴⁶⁵ G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1933, p. 87.

⁴⁶⁶ T. Jacobaea, *Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976, p. 18; cf. similarly already S. A. Pallis, *The Babylonian Akitu Festival*, Copenhagen: Host, 1926.

⁴⁶⁷ H. Hubert, M. Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function* (1898), mit einem Vorwort von E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964, p. 77.

⁴⁶⁸ S. Schoske, «Vernichtungsrituale», in: *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band VI, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986, Sp. 1009.

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. p. ex. R. Hägg, «Epiphany in Minoan Ritual», in: *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, Bd. 30, 1983, p. 184f.

⁴⁷⁰ W. Burkert, *Homo Necans: Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin und New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972, p. 78 f.

following year - after the next sacrifice - with a new skin.⁴⁷¹ The slaughter-fresh, early form of the god-statue can barely be evoked more clearly.

Under what circumstances can a familiar animal like a goat become the celestial goddess Athena, yet nevertheless be slaughtered and then additionally mutate into a new god-image? Superhuman powers are perceived as human or animal, then enter in animal- or human roles into the healing plays. In a twisted manner, this is already reported by Hesiod: "When gods and humans separated from each other /sacrifice was created."⁴⁷² When cosmic powers were reenacted in sacrifice, the gods were created, that's how it should be put. And this is exactly what we get to hear from the Indian Creator-god Prajapati: "Thereupon he calls up an image of himself, which is the sacrificial victim."⁴⁷³

The animal and human victims are often equipped with additional attributes - scale-dresses, crowns of stars, gilded horns etc. - which remind humans of the destructive celestial apparitions. Where the animal figures are played by humans, mixed beings may be created. In the cosmic drama, now reenacted in the sacred precinct, those of the players of celestial objects who were seen as the 'losers' in the battle of gods were slaughtered. But after the bewailings and reconciliation gestures have been performed in front of the elevated corpses, these god-images acquire a dynamic of their own. The slaughtered team-mate is being beseeched for forgiveness as a human being who in the same time stands in for a deity. Thus the prayer *of address* is created. It is the celestial function of the victim-actor in whom terrestrial beings and cosmic natural forces amalgamate into god-images.

The correspondence between corpses who are attached to trees and the earliest statues of the Queen of Heaven Artemis was probably first suspected by Karl Meuli.⁴⁷⁴ But he could not figure out how a corpse hanging from a tree or column could be meaningfully associated with a cosmic power, despite the fact that literature on the subject⁴⁷⁵ had long been available and that the corresponding Hebrew material had also been long known.⁴⁷⁶ Much in need, he then let the queen of heaven double-up as a

⁴⁷¹ See T. H. Gaster, *Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient Near East* (1950,1961); New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966, p. 99.

⁴⁷² Hesiod, *Theogony*: 535.

⁴⁷³ P. Gerlitz, «Opfer: I. Religionsgeschichte», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. XXV, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, 1995, p. 254.

⁴⁷⁴ K. Meuli, «Die Baumbestattung und die Ursprünge der griechischen Göttin Artemis», in: *Idem, Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by T. Geizer, Bd. II, Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1975, p. 1083 ff.

⁴⁷⁵ Cf. p. ex. J. M. Robertson, *Die Evangelienmythen*, Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1910, p. 132 ff.

⁴⁷⁶ There it befalls to the monotheists to bring down and burn the columns of the celestial body deity Ashera (=Artemis) Cf. a. o. The work W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process* (1946²), Garden City/NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957, p. 310, which was widely available in Meuli's time.

lesser tree-goddess and also evoked a tree-burial of Artemis. But how she came to die and additionally to be beheaded remains obscure. The sacralization of trees, poles and planks which occurs only after the attachment of victims becomes in Meuli by sleight of hand one of the primary religious qualities of these “columns.”

It is also Meuli who recognized in early god-images the representation of graven or chiseled fetters which needed to be explained. Pausanias already reports that in Sparta “the cult image of Ligodesma [a variant of Artemis] was wrapped in willow branches. Thus was the goddess fettered. The statue was dangerous and fear-inspiring: when Astrabakos and Alopekos found the image of the goddess, they became mad.”⁴⁷⁷

In the end, Meuli’s beautiful discovery doesn’t add up. Instead, he calls into being, with the “fettered gods,” a new category in the Pantheon which turns out to be all in all identical with the familiar gods of antiquity. He sees much into this: “Often the representation of the renewal of the world finds its expression in legends and ceremonies of the Floods. It is therefore understandable that in tales of fettered gods it is sometimes question of the Flood.”⁴⁷⁸ Once more, for an evolutionistically educated scholar even of exceptional rank, the Flood can find access into his thinking only as a legendary matter, not in the guise of an event of nature. The victims lying dead after the catastrophic rituals, which are elevated and bound for the sake of lamentation and reconciliation, must perforce remain outside the reach of such an outstandingly serious and richly conducted theorizing. For Meuli has recognized that “Where ceremonies of atonement take place, the sacrificial slaughter of a god has preceded.”⁴⁷⁹

Only with the post catastrophic restriction, or even the overcoming, of the great blood sacrifices do we have a rapid increase in artificial statues. That the performing of anointments belongs to their ministrations⁴⁸⁰ as is done with a human dead to whom the “last ointment” is given, stresses once more the origins of the god-image in the corpse of an actor of celestial forces. In Egypt, it is verifiably the cosmetic salves with perfumed components which are used to anoint statues in rituals.⁴⁸¹

Once the concept of the statue is established, it goes without saying that sculptures can be fashioned also for powers or representations which never played a role in blood rituals, but were merely mentioned in myths. The portable god-amulet as a

⁴⁷⁷ K. Meuli, «Die gefesselten Götter» (1964), in: Idem, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by T. Geizer, vol. II, Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1975, p. 1044.

⁴⁷⁸ K. Meuli, «Die gefesselten Götter» (1964), in: Idem, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by T. Geizer, vol. II, Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1975, p. 1044, Geizers Rekonstruktion der Meulischen Notizen.

⁴⁷⁹ K. Meuli, «Biographisches Nachwort» (1964), in: Idem, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by T. Geizer, vol. II, Basel: Schwabe & Co., 1975, p. 1204.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. G. Lanczkowski, «Bilder I», in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Berlin und New York: de Gruyter, vol. VI, 1980, p. 516.

⁴⁸¹ Cf. R. Germer, «Salbe», in: *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harras-sowitz, vol. V, 1984, Sp. 361.

miniaturization of the statue is evident.

In its use, the amulet reminds one of the older fetish (from the Portuguese *feitico*=artificial) which is fashioned without reference to natural forces and which must transmit the energy of its especially eminent creator. Fetishes are not spurned by highly religious amulet demanders: "On the missions-fair in Nice in 1925 many fetishes could be seen. Many visitors wished to buy these for good gold and as this was understandably refused, the direction of the fair was forced to have the objects tightly guarded, as attempts were made to steal them."⁴⁸²

Before these sculptures, ceremonies for the evacuation of guilt and the pleading for help and grace could now be performed by men who did not want to give up the traditional evacuation of excitement. On occasion - with the occurrence of wars, bad crops, but also heavy storms - sacrificial slaughters were performed in front of the statues. These relapses into real slaughters do not make the analysis any lighter. The bloody acts *in front of* the god-images are held to be the main component of religions. The sacrifice occurs *for* to the gods. This is how one sees it. But this behavior doesn't contribute anything to the understanding of the rituals, in which gods themselves are slaughtered. Is sacrifice performed *in front of - to -* the gods or are the gods *themselves* being sacrificed? Such are the forever helpless questions to be heard. Are the gods persecuted by men or do men feel threatened by the gods? "We continue to hate our victims, if one dare say so, but we no longer worship them. The disappearance of this transformation of sacrifice as transmitted in myths certainly contributes to the fact that we are able to recognize persecution relatively clearly in our contemporary world, while the myth remains *stricto sensu* incomprehensible to us. We understand persecution, because it is objectively easier. And yet, our understanding founders in front of the myth despite the fact that - or precisely *because* it ultimately deals with nothing else than a change of form of the persecuted victim brought to an extreme."⁴⁸³

It is because, in a sacrifice in front of a god-image, a doubling of fresh and petrified statues take place, that the perception of the primary ritual act becomes so difficult. The new sacrifice of supplication - or of gratitude - springs also forth from fear or worry. Dangers for a woman giving birth, expectation of a bad harvest, the approach of an enemy are worrisome enough. The old sacrifice too was born of a distress of the mind. But this distress was owing to a danger the overwhelming dimensions of which now no longer accrued, and this only deepened the mystery of the old petrification. The cosmic attackers were now inactive, if one can put it that way, they were "dead," so that their fixation into statues must appear as thoroughly ambivalent.

⁴⁸² G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (1956²), Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1970, p. 27 f.

⁴⁸³ R. Girard, Gespräch in *Diacritics*, März, 1978, p. 46.