

# Table of Contents



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## AN EVOLUTION OF RITUALS

One of the most widespread form of religious behavior, among primal societies was expressed through rituals which, even today, are the basis of most belief systems, whether religious or laic. A ritual is defined as *an organized and sequential set of actions performed mainly for their symbolic value*. The study of primal society has been approached from various perspectives.

Since the seventeenth century scientists have been investigating the origin of human culture using empirical data collected from the religious practices of the non-European cultures in Africa, Australia, the New World etc... "Religion thus became one of the areas of study that shaped current ideas about the origins of human consciousness and institutions. Religion, both as a human experience and as an expression of that experience, was viewed as a primitive model of human consciousness, most clearly seen in primitive cultures". (Charles H. Long, [\\*\\*\\_http://www.believe/beliefra.html](http://www.believe/beliefra.html)<http://www.mb-soft.com/believe/beliefra.html>\*\*) )

There is thus the implicit recognition that it is spirituality or as we will see (the lack of it ) which is the basis of our modern state of consciousness and in all likelihood the mode of organization of our society . In this paper we will try and examine the anatomy of the most ancient expression of spirituality, rituals, and look at their evolution, construction and modes of expression in the different stages of the development of today's main states of consciousness - the Atlantean and the Aryan.

**Note:** Spirituality is defined as "an ultimate or immaterial [\\_reality\\_](#); <sup>[1]</sup> an [\\_inner path\\_](#) enabling a person to discover the essence of their being; or the "deepest values and meanings by which people live". However in this essay the term "spirituality" will sometimes refer to a broader meaning, taking into account that some people can worship the tangible aspect of reality (at least in their mind) such as the expression of success, money, a medal, honor, etc... This sign "\*" will be added whenever spirituality has to be understood in this sense.

## THE PURPOSE OF RITUALS

All rituals seek to link a smaller part to a bigger one as one is reminded by Monique Desroche's (**Musiques, Rituels et Construction du Savoir 2004**).

"For there is one central point to all of them that goes beyond seasonality, commemoration, or speaking to the human subconscious. It is quite simply this: all religions teach that there are invisible as well as visible aspects of the universe, and that it is part of the job of the human race not only to be aware of these different dimensions but to help to connect to them."

The very term "religion" is derived from a Latin word meaning "to bind or link again".

Indeed, a healing ritual is, for instance, seeking the cooperation of supernatural agents to make a body whole again; a wedding ritual will most usually unify two people and formalize their entry into a different aspect of the wider society; an individual wearing a particular suit on a particular day or occasion is most likely attempting to make a statement that will identify him with similarly minded people. Getting up at sunrise is another way that our ancestors, who must have worshiped the sun and its supernatural precision, connected themselves with universal rhythms.

Beyond our individual life the ritualistic aspect of life is expressed today through various means. Buses go at specific times; some people watch the same sitcom or the evening news at the same time every day. Within a country or a community it is admitted that there are certain times when one eats. Many people all over the world celebrate the new year. Muslims, after Ramadan, engage in a mass prayer. The examples of the integration of ritual into the every-day life of man are many.

## THE MECHANIC OF RITUALS

To fulfill their purpose the construction of rituals is dependent on the interaction of several foundational elements. Moore and Myerhoff, cit. Cruces,1999:5152) identify six **formal** characteristics of rituals.

1. repetition (of occasion, content, and form).
2. actuation (in the theatrical sense of playing a role).
3. stylization (or extraordinary character of the behaviour).
4. order, sequence.
5. presentational and evocative style (provoking a certain mental state).
6. the group dimension.

Various authors depending on the type of rituals they consider or their affiliation (religious or not) choose to highlight different structural element. In this paper I have selected three elements which seem to me the most important: speech, gesture and symbols.

## SYMBOLS

We will approach symbols in their simplest form, that is as *condensed representations* of whatever we choose to express: reality, a dream, illusion, etc. However since symbols express a portion of reality, we could say, non-arguably, that our life itself is a symbol and, in fact most of what we know are really symbols in the sense that we can always relate these items of knowledge to a greater whole.

If we observe babies we will notice that while growing up they constantly use symbols to experiment and understand whatever constitutes their reality. Their actions take place within highly ritualized and stylized activities some of which are often called "games". For instance, babies will use a stone or a more sophisticated toy symbolically, imagining them to be a real truck. Human beings, on their path to spirituality, use rituals and symbols through which they can, if not understand, at least bond with a greater reality. Money is an interesting symbol; its utilization (at least in the numismatic form) is also highly formalized. (It will be interesting to analyze how the electronic form of money is affecting the ritual of exchange that takes place through traditional use of money). Regardless of its form, what is interesting is that the value of money (virtual or not) is founded on the almost religious faith we place in the belief that a printed paper or a steel coin is worth whatever we are taught it is worth. And the faith is even deeper with virtual money (people have paid very dearly for this blind faith lately). One can posit the relationship between the depth of faith required and "the intangibility of our currency system". In the Tibetan's Meditation on Money for Hierarchical Purposes, the words of St. Paul have special relevance: "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Indeed, the credibility of most symbols in all rituals rests on a variable quantity of faith: for instance, we can mention the Christian belief that wine and bread are often understood literally as the blood and body of the Christ. Faith seems to be the catalyst for the potency of symbols so that they can act as a beacon for our spiritual energy. Faith triggers the invocative power of symbols. The faith we have that the various elements of the Vedic Fire Rituals, (pot, fire, gee, etc.) constitute the etheric body of the element of fire is foundational in the successful invocation of the Lord Agni.

## GESTURE

Besides telepathy which predates the modern account of world history (to which we have mostly confined

ourselves in this essay – necessarily bearing in mind that, according to the Ageless Wisdom, our history is far richer and ancient than we are traditionally led to imagine), gesture is probably the first human form of language. A brain research paper published by the Academy of Science in 2009 demonstrated that hand-gesture stimulates the same area of the brain as does language. Gesture, considered as verbal language is, hence, a vehicle for thought and, within the context of a ritual, bodily gestures are aimed at unifying the individual(s) with the purpose of that ritual.

Thought is a formidable way to convey and focalize energy including spiritual energy. When we think, we have the ability to create a mental field or a vibration which can, and often does, assume the form of an image...It is called a thought form. “Every thought gives birth to a series of vibrations which act on the matter of the mental body [A thought form] “is a living entity, of an intense activity, forged by the idea which gave it birth...If it is made up of the most subtle matter, it will be powerful as much as energetic and will be able to, under the direction of a strong and calm will, play a role of the utmost importance” (A. Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, *Thought Forms*, p. 10 )

Lara Owen relates in “The Sabbath of Women” that in Jewish Culture (I understand that it is a vast area and she does not mention in the extract I read the part of Jewish Culture in which this ritual is practiced) that when a teenage girl starts menstruating for the first time, her mother slaps her in the face so as to mark her entry into womanhood. She explains that this gesture is aimed at eliminating all feeling of pride that accompanies the biological growth of a baby. I suppose it does speak for the place women have held in society for a long time. It is interesting that, in this case, the gesture is the proxy for a thought that is aimed at sublimating an emotion in the “victim” (the term “victim” is used from the twenty-first century perspective and not with the aim of judging the foundation of this most ancient custom).

In the ‘culture’ of the animal kingdom, we find some interesting rituals of submission, where a younger male will signal with its tail, ears or head its submission to the dominant male so that it can integrate into the adult group.

We find similar gesture in the human kingdom. In Japanese culture it seems that the stylish art of bowing takes into account the length and depth of the bow. “Generally speaking an inferior bows longer, more deeply and more frequently” than a superior (Wikipedia) Also among human beings, shaking hands was essentially a way to show that the hand held no weapon. An open hand symbolized an open mind. While shaking hands is considered a gesture of peace, if not of bonding, some subtleties as to the push or pull of the arm, its position upward or downward, etc, the pressure of the hand, the length of the contact give significant connotations to this otherwise simple ritual. I was very surprised when first meeting English people to realize that they did not shake hands spontaneously. And then I met a Japanese later who, I am sure, purposefully put his finger in his nose after I automatically straightened my arm to salute him. My preference now is for a quick nod of the head with eye contact and a huge smile however it is seldom possible.

In Buddhist meditation, the Dhyana Mudra is accomplished through a hand position where the right hand is placed in the left hand, thumb join forming a triangle. The interpretation of these signs differ but it seems as though the right hand symbolizes the mind and the left hand the body so that one is said to reach mind and body union. The triangle formed by the gesture represents fire – supposedly the fire of the mind.

Again we cannot escape the fact that, beyond their obvious purposes, as stated above, gestures do have profound symbolic meaning.

## **SPEECH**

There is a wide variety of speech used during rituals. Speech can serve to focalize the attention of the participants or, again, to direct invocative energies. Its importance seems to lie more in its ability to generate a specific rhythm. This is why speech is often, but not necessarily, under a mantric form (mantra being an assemblage of sounds, words, phrases which, by the use of rhythm and vibration, achieve the desired, often magical, result).

In addition, music is sometimes used to increase the rhythmic effect of speech. I suppose that the less rhythmic the speech (which includes the absence of speech) the more likely that the role of music will be important. “While human and non-human ritual share basic structural components of formality, pattern, sequence, and repetition, human religious ritual further amplifies and intensifies these elements through the incorporation of “rhythmic drivers”. (***Ritual, Emotion, and Sacred Symbols: The Evolution of Religion as an Adaptive Complex***, Candace S. Alcorta, Richard Sosis)

The importance of rhythm is explicated by Scherer and Zentner: “Music has important neurophysiological effects. As a “rhythmic driver”, it impacts autonomic functions and synchronizes “internal bio-physiological oscillators to external auditory rhythms” (Scherer and Zentner 2001:372). The coupling of respiration and other body rhythms to these drivers affects a wide array of physiological processes, including brain wave patterns, pulse rate, and diastolic blood pressure (Gellhorn and Kiely 1972; Lex 1979; Mandel 1980; Neher 1962; Walter and Walter 1949).”

The various types of rhythm in a ritual will be aimed at achieving different types of correspondences. From the biological effect, a specific ritual may seek to affect the spiritual correspondence to the organs affected, while another may aim at achieving synchronicity between the participant of the rituals and the rhythm (here understood as vibration, hence, energy) of the entity invoked; others will attempt to generate specific emotions and more mundane results.

Mantrams are indeed another element of speech very much present in many rituals. Rhythm is important in the enunciation of mantrams for some of the above reasons. It seems almost obvious when considering mantrams to think of the occult mantrams (of which Master DK has communicated to us quite a few) Among these are the OM, certain Words of Power and various mantric phrases. These have importance in the field of spirituality, but there are other kinds of mantrams. The industrialized stage of our present world civilization has seen the birth of many mantrams, a great number of which are commercial and often used by the advertising industry. Such mantrams rely upon an elaborate structure so that they can elicit desired response.

In France for instance, during the highly ritualized campaign of the now-president Nicolas Sarkozy, its official campaign mantram was “to work more to earn more” – a bold statement in a country leaning towards socialism. Yet the leitmotiv proved very effective, even though savvy members of the electorate could well question whether there was really anything extraordinary (as he seemed to imply) about the fact that if one works more he should earn more.

## **A PERSPECTIVE ON SOME OF THE MODERN EXPRESSION OF RITUALS**

We have examined the grammar common to most rituals bearing in mind that some ritual orient themselves very differently. While rituals are usually thought of supporting a spiritual activity, we have seen through the few examples above that it is not necessarily the case. It is quite logical though if we think of rituals as the expression of a state of consciousness which is opening to the comprehension of new perspectives. In our modern society we have seen the birth of many non-spiritual rituals termed “laic” rituals. In the rest of this essay, laic/profane rituals will be designated somewhat arbitrarily as those which are not spiritual, i.e., which reflect the divorce of human consciousness from spirituality. Furthermore, we note that the appreciation of what is spiritual or not can be subjective. Rewarding a particularly brilliant employee during a ceremony is a laic ritual, but perspective on the intensity of the spiritual content of this event will vary from person to person. All along in this essay, I am attempting to choose examples which, in my view, do not lead to confusion but the reality is not so easy to characterize.

The evolution of rituals from their purest religious/spiritual origin to the predominance of laic or profane rituals today, is obviously to be traced within the framework of our evolution and maybe (to me at least) and more surprisingly as far back as the Lemurian race.

## **THE ORIGIN OF LAIC RITUALS**

We have seen, whether they seek to affirm one's identity (rites of passage from adolescence to adulthood) or unite (wedding rites) or heal (rituals of healing), or celebrate a significant circumstance (Martin Luther King Day), rituals all have in common the purpose of unifying a part with a greater whole.

The events of mental and sexual individualization in Lemurian times were probably a first step in this direction: "It is usually thought that for true sense of 'I-ness' to be comprehended the pairing into male and female had to take place and the animal-man through later mental individualization could become self conscious of his own identity and the identity of his polar opposite. This began the long struggle back home via the many pairs of opposites." (Jeremy Condick, *Unpublished Writings*).

Following these successive individualization primal people (both modern and ancient) must have sensed one of the core fundamentals of the Teaching : the unity of all life and must have expressed it in their everyday lives. Moreover, life in the absence of magical or more casual technology must have been strongly correlated with the rhythms of nature.

However as groups became larger, men must have sought to organize themselves so that the first signs of the division of labour occurred. In my view it must first have occurred along sexual lines in which women reared children while men had to go hunting, fishing or collecting roots etc. Hence, we must take note of a reinforcement of the sexual specialization which gave birth, with the development of glamour, to an increasingly complex class system with (at its inception) the prominence of the warrior and the guardian of the divine (the priest, shaman, etc.).

Primal rituals must have been slowly evolved out of core human activities and appropriated by a specific classes within the group which played the role of the intercessors between society and the gods. Technological progress which brought further specialization, reduced behavior modeled after the rhythm of nature, the frailty of a knowledge system which lay in the hands of only a few. There consequently arose the advent of mass religion. (It would be interesting to formally explicate the connection between the "de-ritualization" of our lives and the progress of popular religion) but their inability to meet fundamental requirement explained the progressive de-spiritualization of society until today we have a situation in which most of our everyday activities are disconnected from spirituality).

With the exoteric disappearance of many spiritual rituals (the inner knowledge of which is now a secret guarded by initiates), we have seen the development of many laic rituals, explaining the noticeable divorce of the sacred (Spirituality and spirituality\*) and the profane which is one trademark of modern society.

While we have mentioned that the purpose of all rituals is the fundamentally the same, the means are different. While spiritual rituals try to reunite the "pairs of opposites", body and soul, Spirit and matter, etc., in my view many of the laic rituals, not systematically but to a great extent, tend to accentuate one polarity to expense of the other. The objective will be different depending on the level of consciousness reached by the practitioners of the rituals. For instance much ritual in the Aryan Race tends to magnify pleasure or diminish the pain created by hoped for (or expected from) illusions, and we can say the same about glamour.

We will examine this issue in the remainder of this essay as we look at ritual reflecting astral (i.e., Atlantean) and mental (i.e., Aryan) levels of consciousness.

### **LAIC RITUAL IN THE ATLANTEAN CONSCIOUSNESS**

Before zeroing in on some of the elements of the ritual which express the state of the Atlantean consciousness today, we will examine some facts which explain the logic of "Atlantean rituals." Again these facts are to be found rooted in our own evolution during Atlantean times. The origin of our materialistic societies which have birthed the de-spiritualization of our life is often thought to be glamour, which first arose in Atlantean times (or rather at the end of the Lemurian era). The role of the Atlantean root race was to develop positive emotional response and master negative emotions. One of their leading characteristics seem to have been their

huge memory. The Atlanteans had an incredible memory. Because of that, experiences meant everything for them. The combination of experiences and the ability to recall them were the foundation for the intelligence in the Atlantean period. The Atlanteans did not think themselves; “they were only able to refer to what they had experienced, what they were able to remember and able to repeat.” (Karen Gritzka, *Unpublished Paper*)

I think that their huge memory was probably instrumental in fueling the origin of the the selfish society they seem to have developed. I reckon that if experience and memory are the only dimensions through which life can be experienced, it is obvious that emotions and some of their by products (among which are pleasure) must be repeated as often as possible and, if possible, magnified. It is almost logical to assume that the main source of glamour and pleasure in these times must have been derived from sex (and later, power as the offspring of the sexual response). The bulk of sexual glammers were developed in this root race and are obviously subsequent to our individualization. Is it not illogical to assume that glammers related to the oral sphere are rooted in the Atlantean consciousness as the Atlantean Root-race first developed the sense of taste. It is, **so I understand, through this frantic pursuit of selfish pleasure and domination that the Atlantean civilization fell.** Logically to support the glamorous search of pleasure, Atlanteans designed rituals centered around available senses and memory.

It is impossible for me to find out what type of rituals have punctuated Atlantean times, but we can, through analysis, find out the structure of the rituals of people who express the Atlantean consciousness today. These rituals will, I believe, follow the same pattern of that of our ancestors

## IMPACT ON MODERN MAN

It is important to take note of the location of the center of pleasure and emotion so important to Atlanteans. Imagination and memory seem to be located in the same area (though not in precisely the same place) of the brain called the limbic system. It is one of the oldest areas of the brain and it is also called the “emotional brain”. This part of the brain must have been predominant in the Atlantean Race until a higher function came into play in the Aryan Race, however, it is likely that while its configuration may have changed, the geography of the brain could validate my claim that the fuel to sustain ritual, hence glamour, has been shifted from memory to the use (or rather misuse) of imagination – a quality of the manas at the astral level.

While today our memory is not as extensive as that of a typical Atlantean, modern man’s imagination is likely to be a lot wider, reinforced by a far richer sensory apparatus. His ability to access and repeat pleasure is certainly higher and **more democratized so that we are trapped in the same circle as our ancestors.** We do not create new emotions; we just find, through, what is, after all, compulsive behavior, endless ways to repeat the same emotions. We “imaginatively” clothe the same emotions differently so that they seem new or freshly produced. According to the hypothesis presented, rituals have been developed following a straight line on from memory to imagination. The connection between memory and imagination which are both by products of the mental fine tuned in the Atlantean root race.

It is quite logical that it is a perversion of the way leading to the maturation of *discrimination* that will be the origin of the interruption of the spiritual flow in our societies. Another leg that support the de-spiritualisation of our life (or the birth of laic rituals) and still connected to the Atlantean era, is that of taste (the lower correspondence of discrimination), developed during the Atlantean Root Race, thus, most likely strongly connected to the state of Atlantean consciousness. Indeed, today we do find many instances that seem to show that the basis of modern Atlantean rituals are based on imagination and taste.

Indeed, many of us are stucked in a phase of life where most pleasures are related to the oral stage, among which (highly ranked) are eating or drinking. In many religions, many rituals surround the stimulation of the organs of taste. For instance, feeding **in** the Christian faith people drink wine and eat bread thinking it is respectively the blood and body of the Christ; during the Ramadan, food holds a special importance for the Muslims; in most religions, people at home will try to sanctify the moment which surrounds feeding usually with a prayer ritual; in the United States eating a turkey is the keynote of the ritual of Thanksgiving.

Modern man has created many rituals combining both the use of the organs of taste and imagination in order to sustain and (one will suspect) develop this glamour sometimes for rather ungodly purposes.

- a) We can refer to the ritual of the New Year's celebration; to alcoholic binges after work on Friday nights during which opportunity is taken to drink and eat more than it is reasonable.
- b) More tellingly, the whole logic of the unhealthy industrial food industry is linked to a new dehumanizing way of living led by the highly ritualized work culture which is organized around materialistic values, the standardization and dehumanization of workers.

This is reflected by the high fat and grease content of thousands of regressive products creatively imagined to flatter the palate of modern men. These products (the preferred tool of regressive cooking) are traditionally aimed at children but today grown men and women are certainly targeted as well. An impressive array of such products tempts the palate of modern man because the fast food industry has learned how to manipulate the human appetite for food and drink, at great expense to the health of those who consume these products.

More generally, the taste, texture, and visual aspect of industrial food is today unusually enhanced. For instance, the 'legal' use of aspartame in many industrial items reinforces the taste, diminishes the need of sugar so that the teeth are not adversely affected, sends the wrong signal to the brain and produces a subtle addiction while 'joyfully' destroying brain cells (which is worrying when people at that the normal level of human consciousness have to use imagination properly to access higher brain functions such as those located in the neo-cortex to better integrate fully their whole brain apparatus - i.e., the primitive brain (for vital function), the limbic system (emotions) and the neo-cortex (reasoning).

If the length of the oral stage of satisfaction is persistently prolonged it will contribute to the proliferation of non-discriminative citizens among the populations of the world.

## **THE ARYAN RITUALS**

The main focus of the Aryan Race is the development of thought. This race is suppose to develop full capacity upon the mental plane. However, in the Aryan Race we observe strong conflict between the divine intention of using the mind as an engine to drive human evolution and the *actual focus* of the mind. So often the intellect is utilized only to serve selfish material goals. As the intellect is not servicing the soul, human beings become the victims of strong illusions that are sustained by the rituals which humanity has designed.

Here I will look at some prevalent illusions in the Aryan race and examine the rituals Aryan humanity has created to sustain them.

## **SEPARATIVENESS**

One of the most potent illusion now prevalent is the thought that one needs to be richer in order to be happier. Hence we have designed many rituals which either support this concept or diminish the discomfort of those who, having reached that goal, are still not happier.

One example that comes to my mind is the carefully crafted ceremony of plane travel. The heaviness of this ritual may now have diminished somewhat due to security concerns and may not be very conspicuous in countries where flight travel is rather casual (i.e., in countries where inland travel is extremely frequent). Usually, from the moment one presents the flight ticket to a ticketing agent, the ritualistic "ceremonies" are reflected by certain symbols (such as the color of the seat, the degree of comfort, the language, the gestures used, the fact that within the same space, there are several classes of passengers, hence several classes of citizen, etc.)

Where this division is organized around race, people will be out on the street. I find it personally appalling that the division appears to be more acceptable because the separating wall within Aryan Race is erected around wealth. (One argument would be that people in first class probably pay for the people in third class so that they can travel; however given that less than one percent of the people in the world probably own seventy percent of the wealth produced, I do not find this particular argument justified.)

When people have reached the level of wealth they have aspired to, they usually become members of groups, clubs, communities, each of these with specific codes. It is not the membership within these groups that is important; rather, it is the feeling of separation from the mass that strangely, sadly brings them egotistical reassurance. They are comforted and reinforced by the thought that not all can access what they seemingly have fought hard to obtain.

It is important to notice that most of the illusions of which we are victim result from our improper use of the mind so that we are separated from our natural soul impulse. This process reflects the de-spiritualization of society. I have cautiously hinted that the opposite is surely possible - the en - *spiritualization* of society.

## CONCLUSION

"The role of ritual behavior in religious belief systems has been a focus of much anthropological and sociological inquiry. Exclusive emphasis on ritual's religious usages has, however, tended to circumscribe and even discourage the study of ritual behavior elsewhere." (Dennis W. Rook (1984), "Ritual Behavior and Consumer Symbolism", in *Advances in Consumer Research* Volume 11, eds. Thomas C. Kinnear, Provo, UT : Association for Consumer Research, Pages: 279-284 .) This is a reason why I have tried in this essay to enlarge the reader's perspective on some ritualized aspects of our lives.

While I have (I realize) described mostly some negative aspects of laic rituals, I am sure it did not escape the reader that the terms "evil" or "bad" are mostly a matter of perspective. The new year can also be a wonderful moment to spend with loved ones. Money can be, and is, an efficient tool to do good, and the rituals which surround its nature and use help (when conceived in this sense) to further humanity's spiritual evolution -the evolution of individuals, of communities, of nations and of the planet.

The de-spiritualization of our life is skewing our approach to living. The same author adds, "the idea that ritual is aimed primarily at the occult tends unnecessarily to sever its connections to rationality and modernity." With the disappearance of spiritual rituals and their guarded secrets, we have seen the development of many vital, laic rituals, not only as a way to compensate for the resultant spiritual vacuum but also as a way of creating new patterns of human relationship which, at their best, have furthered the concept of mass equality and cooperation far more vigorously than would have been possible in the confinement of a small group or under the grip of a religious dictatorship. With the coming elevation of spiritual idealism, laic society will be vanquished; it is then likely that ritual will provide a fertile and propitious basis for the re spiritualization of society and the achievement of a quality of culture and civilization never before achieved. Hence we may witness, if my hypothesis is correct, a reconciliation of the sacred and the profane and a movement from duality to unity which could take the form of a transformational, laic spiritual/religious movement.