

AFTERWORD: TIME AND RITUALS

Since its beginnings, anthropology has always reflected on ritual, producing an overwhelming quantity of excellent quality writing on the subject. This special issue adds to this by offering a combination of original case studies, touching upon important theoretical points.

What can an afterword add to all this?

As a genre, an afterword is an unusual piece of writing, which must neither present new ethnographic material, nor demonstrate theory, and even less attempt a synthesis. In my opinion, its sole contribution is to stretch the normal course of time so as to say, *'Encore!'* *'More!'* Here, I use this ex-temporal quality to take a stroll among the particular timelines that certain rituals open.

Anthropology has often, in one way or another, associated rituals with temporality. Following our informants' insights, we have frequently argued that rituals conform to a strict repetitive pattern, have strong links to religion and its everlasting (or ever-returning) time, are heavily dependent on the benevolence of perennial gods or ancestors, create, beyond society, an autonomous time and space, are associated with enduring values, and finally, sometimes, open access to forms of eternity.

Rituals are, however, very different from one society to the other and even within a specific culture. Therefore, the temporal aspects that I listed above are probably never to be found all together in any particular place. Anthropologists only encounter each of them in isolation or combined with a few others. Nonetheless, what appears ubiquitous is that rituals always affect some form of time.

Here, by presenting some temporal dimensions rarely accounted for by anthropology, I hope to highlight the time-oriented proclivity of Melanesian rituals. The ethnographic cases with which I deal are principally drawn from Papua New Guinea (PNG), or to be more anthropological, from societies that Mauss considered as characterized by the gift as a 'total social fact'.

My argument strives to link together two different levels of ethnographic data. I begin by presenting the ways in which certain rituals extend time both in the past and in the future. When the ritual performing this task is highly valued, like an initiation ritual, the time produced protracts at once social and individual life. Thereafter, I describe the relation between these rituals and the famous circulating cults,¹ parts of which the former gradually integrate into their own practice. In the Melanesian view, this modification of the rituals, instead of being seen as a changeover time, establishes these rituals as the very source of time. I therefore conclude by highlighting the unusual relation that links time to certain Melanesian rituals.

RITUALS AND ANCESTORS

When they talk about rituals, Melanesians (and maybe other people) consistently insist on two ideas.

The first one is that today's rituals were formerly performed by forefathers now deceased. Therefore, when staging them, the Melanesians scrupulously attempt to repeat what others have done before them.² This is all the more so given that many ritual organizers often admit

that they ignore, in all or in detail, the hidden significations of what they are staging. In view of this knowledge erosion, meticulous repetition is for them the safest way to go.

The second idea, closely associated to this assertion, is that the ancestors (or some of them) who formerly performed these rituals are present during their current staging. In certain cultures, these ancestors are clearly identified; in others, they just form a sort of anonymous crowd. Often, too, masked characters impersonate them or other sorts of spirits during the performance. The danger that lurks in wait for the novices, and even sometimes the initiation masters, is regularly said to evolve from the presence of these supernatural beings.

These ideas are very common, not only in Melanesia, but all around the world. They pose a twofold question: considering that it puts everyone in peril, why is the presence of supernatural beings required during rituals, and why is it so important that today's rituals closely resemble those that were earlier performed? Is it possible that both questions have a common answer?

At his point, I must specify that the first idea is not present everywhere in Melanesia. Strict repetition is mostly required in societies that stage initiation rituals, and is only loosely mentioned, if not absent, in the others. Furthermore, even in the first group of societies, strict repetition is only mandatory in initiation and not in most other rituals.³

To solve this riddle, one must first inquire into the nature of Melanesian ancestors. In many cultures, after death people remain partially similar to what they were before. In Melanesia, this is particularly true with respect to the way in which the person, dead or alive is conceived. In the last twenty years, innumerable Pacific studies have argued that the living Melanesian person is not defined by some inherent characteristic, but

by its relations with others. After Tambiah and Wagner, Marilyn Strathern (1988) has baptized this form of a person 'dividual'. In Melanesia, the dividual person's relations are often ordered in three steps. The closest are with the people whom one sees every day and with whom one collaborates in organizing rituals. One step removed, relations are more hazily defined: one may marry the people with whom one has such relations and invite them as guests to one's rituals. Those with whom one bears almost no relation, or no relation at all, are situated yet one step further away. Typically, they are enemies to be feared.

If no action is taken, all relations degrade with the passage of time, as close kin become distant acquaintances and, later, may even transform into enemies. In recent cannibalistic times, those who were called 'my pig', killed, and eaten belonged to this most distant category of people with whom relations were absent.

In this respect, the ancestors' fate is similar to that of the living. Right after passing, ancestors remain closely attached to the living by virtue of the numerous relations they had with them. This is why their close kin can appeal to them for help in hunting, growing vegetables, protecting individually owned trees, and much more. However, as time goes by, these relations loosen and the ancestors gradually transform into would-be enemies, rather than helpful kin. This is why, if someone is attacked at night in the bush, it is impossible to know whether the aggressor is an enemy or an estranged ancestor.

To counteract this relational depletion, ancestors, like the living, are invited to partake in rituals and are regularly offered food and betel nut. These social interactions, it is hoped, will prevent them from forgetting who they were. Conversely, if the living do not request them to sit at their ritual performances or feed them, they gradually grow into potential enemies.

In sum, rituals are closely associated with the ancestors because, through their performance, the living strive to preserve familiarity with them.

In this respect, initiation goes much further than any other ritual. While the dead naturally preserve for a while the memory of those they have known throughout their life, they cannot remember the children born after they died 'whose face they have never seen'. Because they do not know them, ancestors represent a constant threat to all infants. This is why, for example, children are supposed to remain in the care of adults while crossing the bush. To put an end to this peril, novices are presented to the deceased during the initiation ritual. Through initiation, relations between the living and the ancestors are prolonged by one further generation, just as this special issue is extended by the present afterward.

However, ritual matters are never so simple. When ancestors are invited to an initiation, they may turn against their host, just as any very distant guest may do. In both cases, this means that the ties that link them to the organizers are very weak or even absent altogether. This is why, among the Orokaiva, for example, the initiation organizers, and especially the child's parents, fear the ceremony in which they will have to confront masked characters impersonating the ancestors (Iteanu 1983). Everyone recalls cases where children were killed, houses burned, pigs butchered and eaten, and coconut palms torn to the ground.

Serious protective procedures are therefore established both against enemies who would take advantage of the masked sequence of the ritual to assault their host and against the estranged ancestors whom their kin would be unable to control.⁴ As soon as the ceremony preparation starts, small children are locked up in the houses, no one is allowed to speak aloud or laugh, no one

can scratch her or his head and the participants must rub their bodies with numerous protective plants. Yet the most important security against ancestral rage is a ritual performance perfectly identical to the one that these ancestors once staged in the presence of their children, nieces or nephews. An impeccably reproduced ritual is difficult to forge, very much like a signature. Each ceremonial detail then triggers the estranged ancestors' memory and compels them to remember that they once had a close relation with their hosts, even if they identify their faces no longer. In Melanesia, exact ritual repetition should therefore not be interpreted as a mere religious obligation compelled in order to yield performative efficacy, but as an efficient shield against the oblivion that gradually blurs the ancestors' memory. Because then ancestors will again remember, the duration of the relations they have with the living is once again extended.

However, this is not enough. To conclude the ritual, and create a relation with them 'children must then offer food to their ancestors for the first time'. The food then given is not any food, but all through Melanesia, it is pork (or cassowary), yam, or taro, the gifts that typically increase relations.⁵ So, in what way do such food offerings solidify relatedness?

I will only deal here with pigs (or cassowary meat) and leave aside the vegetables, which are nonetheless essential for the completion of any ritual. Firstly, let us note that in Melanesia there is no equivalent to pork (or cassowary) as a ritual gift. Many other objects like shell jewels, salt bars, and more recently, rice bags, canned food, and money may be given ritually as well, but they can never totally replace pork. A ritual in which the guests did not eat meat is hardly conceivable in most societies. This is so because giving pork is not only a mark of respect and of recognition of both the giver's and the receiver's status, but meat also conveys

much information that penetrates the ‘interior’ (*jo*, in Orokaiva) of anyone who eats it. Contrary to what Mauss (2015 [1924]) claimed, here, the food itself constitutes the ‘spirit’ of the gift, which inescapably turns the consumer into a witness of the reality that the ritual asserts, that someone is married, or that a child has been initiated, or, again in the case of ancestors, that this particular child is a granddaughter or a grandson. A bar of salt can be passed from hand to hand, but only the food that one has ingested reaches a dead end in the people’s body where some of it remains for a while. This is why Melanesians sometime preserve their freedom of thought and action by refusing to ingest meat presented to them or by passing on entire pigs that they received. This also happens, more commonly, when a husband refuses to eat his wife’s food after they had a fight. Among the Orokaiva, the father, mother, and brother of a bride systematically refrain from eating any of the bride-price meat. They say that if their daughter is later ill-treated by her husband or his family, they can just go and take her back. They are not bound by the ingestion of pork.

However, this is only part of what the pork meat does. It is well known that Melanesians may not eat their own pigs, which they treat in many ways as children, calling them by people’s names, or by kinship terms like son, daughter, brother or sister (Rosman and Rubel 1978). However, before Christianity settled in, they could in many societies eat people that they did not know and whom they treated in many ways as pigs, often actually calling them such. In sum, many societies did not then primarily distinguish humans from animals, but, rather, those with whom one had relations (pigs and humans) from those with whom one had no relations at all and that one could eat (pigs and humans). While cannibalism has disappeared today, the distinction between those with whom

one has relations and the others still maintains a strong hold on Melanesian societies.

Many Melanesian initiation ceremonies involve human, pig, or cassowary hunting, thus highlighting a distinction between the a-relational game and the novices. Among the Orokaiva, which unconventionally initiate both girls and boys at once, there is no hunt, but a similar distinction is created through another procedure. Every time a child is born, her or his parents adopt a piglet to raise. Thereafter, the child and the piglet will constitute a sort of twin pair. If everything goes right and both survive to be initiated, the child outlives the ceremony, but the pig is killed and distributed in her or his name. Exceptionally, if the child dies prior to initiation or is killed during the ritual, the pig is never put to death. It will die of old age and be buried like a human being.

By distinguishing pigs from children, the initiation ritual both raises the children to the status of gift givers while it transforms the pigs into objects of exchange. Sometimes this distinction may be short-lived. This is so if later a child is killed and eaten by some enemy, thus switching to being an object of exchange.⁶

On the other hand, the transformation of the pig into an object of exchange creates a sort of unique currency that all other gift givers will thereafter use to attend to their relations. Therefore, initiation figures as a sort of an Orokaiva Central bank emitting a currency by distinguishing between two closely related sorts of beings.

This ritual separation between gift givers and gift objects also suspends a recurrent frightening Melanesian mythological theme concerning people, animals, or plants that are improperly distinguished. Coconuts, breadfruit, taro, or yams turn into children. Men transform into pigs, cassowaries, birds, or snakes, and vice versa, to trick enemies or seduce women. The

latter give birth to birds, snakes, or transform into fish and so forth (Iteanu and Schwimmer 1996). Initiation puts a provisional end to all this: people remain people and animals keep their shape, most of the time, at least when they are alive. Therefore, initiation makes relations steadier because it stabilizes the distinctions between people, animals, and plants over their lifetime.⁷

Through promoting pigs as a currency and stabilizing the distinctions between objects and subjects of exchange, the initiation ritual firstly transforms amorphous time into a world of reasonably durable relations. Then, it extends relations in space with living neighbors and, in genealogical time, between dead ancestors and young children. The time involved in this ritual cannot be considered either linear or recursive; rather, it expands from a central point in all directions. It swells at once towards the past and the future, very much like kinship in which generations only exist through reciprocity: grandparents only exist because there are grandchildren.

WHAT IS STABILITY IN TIME

So far I have attempted to present what the Melanesians mean when they say that they scrupulously repeat rituals that previous generations have done. From this point of view, rituals extend relations in time and space, but they, themselves, never seem to change.

However, from an alternate point of view, the same people tell a different and contradictory story. Here, on the contrary, rituals change constantly in varied ways. The best-known cases are those in which rituals are simply imported from a different social group. This is for example what the famous mountain Arapesh, described by Margret Mead (1938), do when they obtain new ritual performances from their neighbors,

the sea-shore dwellers, who keep inventing them. In other cases, that I will now investigate, rituals integrate new elements from circulating cults that regularly appear and then vanish.

CULTS THAT COME AND GO

When the colonizers first settled in PNG, they witnessed the appearance of a number of prophetic cults sweeping through some of the few regions with which they were in contact. In what is now the Gulf, the Central Province, the Oro Province (Williams 1928), and some of the outer islands (New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville), for the best-known cults, the villagers would participate in meetings led by prophets who preached the observance of all kinds of strange rituals and prohibitions. Because many of their prophecies included troubling allusions to the colonizers and to Christian missionaries, the Whites construed them, in F.E. Williams' words, as 'all in some manner the result of a clash between high civilization and low, in which the latter has had its head a little turned' (Williams 1928: 5), and identified them as a corrupted form of what they thought was 'true' Melanesian religion. All this led them to suspect that the locals had invented these cults to organize resistance against their penetration. In consequence, they repeatedly used force to suppress them.

After WWII, the appearance and disappearance of cults continued, but now some of them displayed new themes. The most famous of these was directly linked to what the Melanesians had experienced during the conflict. In 1942, American, Australian, and Japanese soldiers established bases and waged war against each other in several parts of Melanesia. The local people helped them greatly. So, when the war ended, the victors presented them with everything they had

left and promised to send back more gifts from home. Some locals took this oath more literally than others. In certain seashore areas, for example, the villagers collectively destroyed their houses, killed and ate their pigs, stopped planting gardens, and settled on the beach, waiting for their gifts to be delivered by ship. In other places, they constructed home-made landing strips and air-control towers, to host the planes that were to bring the goods. These post-war cults were later named ‘Cargo cults’, in view of their most spectacular forms (Trompf 1991: 188–210). Once again, these cults were interpreted as reactions to the presence of the white soldiers and administrators to whom they supposedly manifested either ‘religious’ deference, or violent resistance (Burridge 1960; Lawrence 1964; Worsley 1968).

Later, however, when more ethnographic material became available, some scholars, including the first Papua New Guinean anthropologist, John Waiko (Waiko 1984; Trompf 1977), drew attention to the fact that although the specific contents and aspects of these Cargo cults were obviously original, their structure closely resembled that of the older circulating cults, which traversed entire regions before the arrival of the Whites. Their interpretation was that Cargo cults were in fact the form that the circulating cults had taken in post WWII times. Indeed, both old circulating cults and Cargo cults share many operating rules in spite of their apparent diversity. To start with, as Williams explained, every Melanesian society that had such cults considered them to be of foreign origin. However, the practices and ideas they carried did not remain alien for long, because over time, bits and pieces were integrated into local ritual practice (initiation, marriage, funerals, magic, etc.) and oral history. Then, a vast majority of these cults were built around some sort of prophecy, in a broad sense

of the term. Their prophet was a woman or a man who had been struck by a vision that granted her or him the power to produce what Christians would call miracles: unusually abundant crop growth, spectacular hunts, curing of the sick, revival of the dead, or wealth multiplication. She or he subsequently imparted these powers to disciples who thereby acquired equivalent skills. Expanding in the form of a tree structure, these cults developed rapidly and widely.

To mobilize the prophet’s powers, the cultists adopted specific dress codes and bodily attitudes that constituted the cult’s trademark. For example, some of the participants to the famous Orokaiva Baigona cult (from about 1925 to 1955) entered, during séances, a sort of trance manifested by intense body shaking.⁸ Participation in these events did not demand faith in any supernatural beings. Only belief in the miraculous nature of what was achieved kept them alive. When it wore out, they disappeared.

To obtain the expected results, the followers had to offer contributions (of food or valuables) to the prophet and/or to the disciples, and partake in gift giving feasts where food was exchanged and consumed. Over time, these gatherings produced a reconfiguration and an intensification of relations between neighbours and kin, and new networks of exchange were created that reached beyond the usual circle of local solidarity maintained by marriage and life stages rituals.

Cults usually developed a new vocabulary, if not a new language, including expressions that had not existed previously. The meanings of these new words or sentences were either revealed to the prophet, for example in dreams, or deemed to pertain to a foreign language. Their meaning often remained obscure or unknown.

Their particular temporality was a crucial feature of these cults. Williams notes that they transformed rapidly as new disciples joined

and, after acquiring cult knowledge, added their personal vision to it. The original prophet's visions were thus massively challenged by those of their disciples. Conversely, through the members' action, salient features of the cult soon started to be included in stages of life or magic rituals over large regions. The cult's original features were thus rapidly trivialized, and the cult itself then withered away. Because cults probably circulated regularly in certain regions, Melanesians were familiar with their unique form of temporality: the cults appeared, then reached a peak when their activity was most intense, their followers most numerous, and their expansion regional, and then they disappeared.⁹ In the meantime, these cults nurtured the societies they encountered with new ideas and practices, some of which were integrated into local rituals.

As mentioned earlier, these circulating cults generated regional systems of relations (Iteanu 2015), of which many other forms are known in Melanesia, including the Kula (Malinowski 1922), the Moka (A. Strathern 1971), the regional systems delineated by circulating rituals (Schneider 2011), the dance exchange complex among the Arapesh (Mead 1938), the head-hunting systems between Mono and Alu (Monnerie 1996), the grade societies on Ambrym, and many others. Unlike several of these forms that supported permanent regional systems, like the Kula Ring, circulating cults created only transient systems of relations that had to be rebuilt each time a new cult reappeared.

CHRISTIANITY AS A CIRCULATING CULT

When in 1874 a handful of missionaries of various denominations settled in different locations along the coasts of their island,¹⁰

Papua New Guineans naturally came to wonder what kind of circulating cult these white people intended to promote. Back then, there were no roads leading inland, so the missionaries did not travel much. When they wanted to go upcountry they carried out most of their explorations by boat along the major rivers. In turn, most of the Melanesians who lived inland never ventured out to visit them. Thus, the Orokaiva for example had to wait until the late 1940s (or 50s in certain areas) to be visited by missionaries for the first time.

However, everyone in Papua New Guinea, regardless of how far inside the bush she or he dwelled, was constantly kept informed by kin or neighbours from adjacent or distant villages of what the white people who lived in the mission stations did and said, long before (sometimes up to eighty years) they actually saw a minister or a white person with their own eyes. Thus, for decades, the majority of Papua New Guineans relentlessly debated the information they obtained from other Melanesians concerning the missionaries' activities, attempting to understand who these strange newcomers were.¹¹

Since those from whom they got their information were friends or kin that seldom, if ever, possessed first-hand knowledge, the news they circulated had travelled to them across the country, retold again and again and several times translated into different languages.¹² One can imagine that the reports one heard in a small village away from the coast had little to do with what the eyewitness who first told the story had actually seen, sometimes years before. As a result, the structure and form of these narratives resembled the rest of the oral literature produced by the Melanesians. They therefore felt familiar to those who heard them and in line with what they already knew, despite the fact that what they described might have been unheard of before.

Having been exposed for years to intense gossip about the missionaries and more widely about the Whites, those who embraced the Anglican faith when the first missionaries arrived did not do it naively, but enacted a conclusion they had slowly matured: Christianity was but a circulating cult. In consequence, although they at once became enthusiastic Christians, they continued, as they formerly did when joining a cult, to perform their local rituals.¹³

This perceived continuity between cults and Christianity has been also instrumental in the rapid conversion that occurred in the vast majority of cases. In Melanesia, Christianity was adopted everywhere so fully that, in contrast to Africa or South America, where Christianization is much older, there are no 'pagans' left whatsoever. Total conversion also shows that, despite the individualistic appearance of Melanesian societies and notwithstanding the strongly individualistic leanings of Christianity, decisions about conversion were not made individually, but collectively according to the customary division of social groups, thus further reinforcing the idea of a continuity between Christianity and cult practices.¹⁴

Therefore, also in line with the way in which these older cults worked, following an enthusiastic conversion and a success peak, a period of disappointment began, during which Christian elements¹⁵ were gradually incorporated into tradition. Finally, only a few years later, the Churches that brought Christianity to PNG in the first place were more or less abandoned in favour of new charismatic denominations.¹⁶

In sum, in my view, the adoption of Christianity did not result in parts of Papua New Guinea from the pressure exerted by a powerful universal religion over small local cultures. Rather, it was the product of the recognition by Melanesians that Christianity was a further

time-bound circulating cult, the best elements of which they hoped to incorporate into their own customary life, before it disappeared. This dynamic understanding of cults permitted, and still permits, each group 'clan' or village to continue assimilating new ideas, practices, objects, and people, without losing the distinctiveness that characterizes their social organisation from time immemorial.

In sum, by making it impermanent, Melanesians have produced a surprising perversion of the notion of religion. Their view emerges from a deeply rooted Melanesian ideological disposition that erects time rather than space to the status of a primary concern. As a consequence, while we anthropologists construct our opposition between religion and culture on the contrast between generality (or universality) and particularity, Melanesians match theirs with the opposition between stability over time (*kastom*) and perishability (any cult, or religion, in our terms). If this shift is taken seriously, one can then reasonably conclude that many Melanesians judge their life cycle rituals to be universal, while considering Christianity and all other cults as particular.

ENCORE (MORE)

Numerous rituals around the world celebrate calendric dates associated with cosmic or mythical events. However, this is not generally the case in Melanesia. To make sense of this specificity, I proposed here that most Melanesian rituals do not seek temporal reference outside of themselves, but claim to establish their own.

To substantiate this claim, this paper firstly argues that certain Papua New Guinean rituals, especially initiations, that are reputed to repeat previous similar performances exactly, expand relational time towards the past and the future at once, thus creating a sort of time envelope in

which life can expand. Then, by promulgating pigs as a currency circulating within this envelope, they ensure that past gifts will be later returned. Ritual self-referential repetition thus creates a sort of time scale that all other events can use. For after all, what is the time if not a repetition of exactly identical moments? And what is reciprocity if not a degraded form of repetition which only matches two of these moments? This is why, although in the Melanesian view nothing lasts forever, ritual repetition can always conjure up some more time.

Then I attempted to show that in the Melanesian view, circulating rituals and Christianity, here considered impermanent, come and go while life time rituals remain temporarily stable when feeding on pieces detached from these cults. The Melanesian view of time thus possesses a relativistic lean: rituals appear as unchanged because, while they do not rely on an outside frame of reference, they transform more slowly and less radically than circulating cults. In relation to the former, cults, and, as a matter of fact, everything else, come and go. Or to put it more precisely, they change in time because life time rituals do not change. Or from a different angle, circulating cults construe customary rituals as everlasting.

This conclusion, however, may seem fragile as it is based on two contradictory statements: one in which Melanesians assert that their rituals regularly incorporate new elements and the other in which they say that they never change. So, what makes them see as acceptable the coexistence of two ideas that we judge inconsistent? To answer this comparative question, I attempted to establish here that while we, Euro-Americans, are mostly concerned with space extension—like cosmological events and bounded social groups on which time is

only secondarily predicated and computed—Melanesian societies put their stress on rituals as time-producing events on which all other dimensions and especially space (groups and events) are predicated. To play this role, the time which rituals elicit can neither pass nor change, but only says '*Encore!*' More!

NOTES

- 1 Cargo cults, for example, but are not the only ones.
- 2 I do not mean, of course, that each ritual perfectly repeats former such rituals, but this is what those who organize rituals often assert.
- 3 This insistence on the idea that the actions performed in initiation must be precisely transmitted enticed colonizers and earlier anthropologists into thinking that initiation was meant to teach the children esoteric or social knowledge.
- 4 Is there really a difference between these two sorts of enemies? The Orokaiva do not make one.
- 5 Except where pigs did not exist, like in New Caledonia.
- 6 *Mo, nau o ra.*
- 7 This feature of Melanesian imitation raises fascinating comparative questions. If we apply the same logic to Euro-America, can we say that central banks, by emitting currency, participate in the creation of the notion of individuals?
- 8 This can be found in several other places in Melanesia, either in cults or in rituals like initiation or divination.
- 9 I mean, extending beyond a village or a cluster of villages.
- 10 Christianity was introduced at least fifty years earlier in the outer islands that now belong to PNG. However, I have no clue whether the news then spread in mainland PNG. A wealth of information on the Anglican Church in Melanesia can be found in the Canterbury Project, <http://www.anglicanhistory.org/>, and bibliographical references and information on religion in Melanesia in Trompf 1991 and 2006.
- 11 This of course does not apply to much smaller islands where everyone had a chance to see the missionaries as soon as they settled.
- 12 PNG is known to have more than 800 hundred different languages.

- 13 This is not the case of the Urapmin (Robbins 2004).
- 14 In certain cases, the treatment of Christianity as a cult may fail. This was the case among the Urapmin (Robbins 2004), who immersed themselves in the most radical form of Christianity, rejecting almost all previously practiced cults and customs.
- 15 Like ritual commensality.
- 16 I will not deal here with these consequent conversions.

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