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## THE LEGEND OF CYBELE'S ARRIVAL IN ROME

JAN BREMMER

(Utrecht)

In 204 B.C. the Romans festively introduced into their city the Anatolian goddess Cybele,<sup>1</sup> whose stone had arrived by ship from the Troad.<sup>2</sup> Her sea-journey was completely immemorable but from the last stage of her journey, from Ostia to Rome, a legend<sup>3</sup> arose from which we will discuss some details. Our main source is Ovid who gives the following account:

"She had arrived at Ostia, where the Tiber divides to join the sea and flows with ampler sweep. All the knights and the grave senators, mixed up with the common folk, came to meet her at the mouth of the Tuscan river. With them walked mothers and daughters and brides, and the virgins who tended the sacred hearths. The men wearied their arms by tugging lustily at the rope; hardly did the foreign ship make head against the stream. A drought had long prevailed; the grass was parched and burnt; the loaded bark sank in the muddy shallows. Every man who lent a hand toiled beyond his strength and cheered on the workers by his cries. Yet the ship stuck fast, like an island firmly fixed in the middle of the sea. Astonished at the portent, the men did stand and quake. Claudia Quinta traced her descent from Clausus of old, and her beauty matched her nobility. Chaste was she, though not reputed so. Rumour unkind had wronged her, and a false charge had been trumped up against her: it told against her that she dressed sprucely, that she walked abroad with her hair dressed in varied fashion, that she had a ready tongue for gruff

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank F. Graf and Th. Korteweg for their comments on this paper.

<sup>2</sup> On Cybele, see H. Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle* (Paris 1912); W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart 1977), 276-278; M. J. Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis* (London 1977); idem, *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque* (CCCA), EPRO 50, vols 1-9 (Leiden 1977ff.). On the name of the goddess, Cybele/Kubaba, see E. Laroche, *Koubaba, déesse anatolienne, et le problème des origines de Cybèle*, in *Éléments orientaux dans la religion grecque ancienne* (Paris 1960); E. J. Furnée, *Die wichtigsten konsonantischen Erscheinungen des vorgriechischen* (The Hague/Paris 1972), 215 n. 66.

<sup>3</sup> For all sources, see E. Schmidt, *Kultübertragungen*, RGVV VIII, 2 (Giessen 1910), 1-30.

old men. Conscious of innocence, she laughed at fame's untruths; but we of the multitude are prone to think the worst. When she had stepped forth from the procession of the chaste matrons, and taken up the pure water of the river in her hands, she thrice let it drip on her head, and thrice lifted her palms to heaven (all who looked on her thought that she was out of her mind), and bending the knee she fixed her eyes on the image of the goddess, and with dishevelled hair uttered these words: 'Thou fruitful Mother of the Gods, graciously accept thy suppliant's prayers on one condition. They say I am not chaste. If thou dost condemn me, I will confess my guilt; convicted by the verdict of a goddess, I will pay the penalty with my life. But if I am free of crime, give by thine act a proof of my innocency, and, chaste as thou art, do thou yield to my chaste hands'. She spoke, and drew the rope with a slight effort. My story is a strange one, but it is attested by the stage.<sup>4</sup>

Ovid's version, as he himself (326) indicates, was evidently influenced by the fact that this tale of Claudia was acted out on stage. The most likely occasion for such a performance of Claudia's feat was the Megalesia, the yearly festival of the Magna Mater, during which, since 194, plays had been performed.<sup>5</sup> One can hardly doubt that a play concerning a noble lady whose behaviour was not beyond suspicion must have been highly attractive for a public confronted with the attempts of August to improve the morals of precisely the class to which Claudia belonged.<sup>6</sup>

Cybele, however, was not the only one who stranded on arrival. The same fate happened to Heracles, as appears from the following local legend from Erythrae:

But the statue (of Heracles) at Erythrai is not like the statues they call Aiginetan or the most ancient Athenian statues, but sheer Egyptian if ever a statue was. There was a wooden raft the god sailed on from Phoenician Tyre, though why this should happen even the Erythraians are unable to say: but when the raft reached the Ionian sea they say it

<sup>4</sup> Ov. F. IV.291-328 in the translation by J. G. Frazer, *Ovid's Fasti* (London/New York 1931), 211-213. For a general commentary on the passage, see F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso. Die Fasten II* (Heidelberg 1958), 234-236; for the iconography, see CCCA 3, no. 218f. and index s.v. Cybele. For her conditional confession (320f.), cp. R. Pettazoni, *La confessione dei peccati III* (Bologna 1936), 123; for the form of her prayer, see A. Henrichs, HSCP 80 (1976), 275f.

<sup>5</sup> Graillot, *o.c.*, 84-86.

<sup>6</sup> Cp. P. Csillag, *Das Eherecht des Augusteischen Zeitalters*, *Klio* 50 (1968), 111-138; R. I. Frank, *Augustus' Legislation on Marriage and Children*, *CSCA* 8 (1975), 41-52.

anchored at the Middle cape, which is a mainland cape, the midmost that you pass sailing out of harbour at Erythrai to the island of Chios. When the raft came to the cape, the Erythraians took great trouble and the Chians showed no less enthusiasm each to bring the statue to their own city. Now there was an Erythraian who lived by fishing out at sea and had lost his eyesight from a disease; in the end this fisherman (who was called Phormion) saw in a dream that the women of Erythrai had to cut off their hair and the men must plait the women's hair into a cable and pull home the statue with it. The city women utterly refused to obey the dream, but those Thracian women who were enslaved or living in freedom in Erythrai allowed their hair to be cut off, and so the Erythraians hauled in the raft. The Thracians are the only women allowed into the Herakleion, and the people there still preserve the rope of hair even in my time; and in fact they say the fisherman's eyes were open and he could see for the rest of his life.<sup>7</sup>

To these two legends a third has to be added. Similar motifs as are encountered in the classical legends can also be found in the medieval 'Anschwemmungslegenden'. From these legends we will adduce the following one of the Wimpassinger Kreuz, a thirteenth-century crucifix — more than seven meters high and four meters wide — which perished in 1945 in the fire of the Viennese Stephansdom: Around 1350 a great cross with the image of the crucified saviour painted on it floated down the Donau and was stranded near Rossau where it proved to be impossible to remove the cross from this place. The following day a procession of the clergy with the population arrived and a simple Franciscan pulled the statue out of the river with his girdle without any difficulty.<sup>8</sup>

When we compare these three legends, we notice the following similarities: 1. There is a rather unusual statue. 2. It arrives from a distant place. 3. Near its place of destination it runs aground. 4. The statue is moved by or through mediation of persons who are outside or at the margin of society or the ruling social class. It is

<sup>7</sup> Paus. 7.5.5-8 in the translation by P. Levi, *Pausanias. Guide to Greece I* (Harmondsworth 1971), 242f. For the cult of Heracles in Erythrae, see F. Graf, *Nord-Ionische Kulte*, forthcoming.

<sup>8</sup> Cp. L. Schmidt, *Die Volkserzählung* (Berlin 1963), 265-276 ("Das Wimpassinger Kreuz"). Schmidt gives a critical evaluation of the "Anschwemmungslegenden". See also L. Röhrich, *Sage und Märchen* (Freiburg 1976), 50 Abb. 6 for a picture of a similar crucifix which was reputed to have arrived via the river.

the aim of our contribution to discuss the last two motifs. Why is the solution brought about by an 'outsider' and why did these statues run aground before arriving at their place of destination?

We will approach these problems by taking as our point of departure the second motif: the statues are coming from a distant place. They are therefore — it is immaterial for our purpose if this is in reality or according to the legend — strangers who are incorporated into a new society. This means that our problems have to be situated in the context of the rites of passage.

It is now nearly seventy years ago that Arnold van Gennep<sup>9</sup> published his classic study on the rites of passage. Van Gennep showed that a fixed scheme could be discovered not only in the important passages in life — such as birth, maturity, marriage, and death — but also in the territorial passage and the passage from peace to war and from Old to New Year. The scheme is as follows. At first there is the separation from the old situation, the 'rite de séparation', next the period of transition, the 'rite de marge', and finally the passage to a new situation, the 'rite d'aggrégation'. These rites receive more or less attention depending on the importance of the passage.

In the beginning Van Gennep's study did not receive the attention it deserved. As regards the French, this will have been due to the dominating influence on French academic life of Durkheim and his school who hardly took Van Gennep seriously.<sup>10</sup> Outside France the obscurity of the author and the language will have been responsible for the lack of response. Yet even in this period two important works have been published in which Van Gennep's insights were applied with success. The first is the classic study of the Tsonga by

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<sup>9</sup> A. van Gennep, *Les rites de passage* (Paris 1909). In the recent reprint (Paris 1969) the notes in Van Gennep's own copy have been added. On Van Gennep, see K. van Gennep, *Bibliographie des œuvres d'Arnold van Gennep* (Paris 1964), 4-12; N. Belmont, *Arnold van Gennep* (Paris 1974); H. A. Senn, *Arnold van Gennep: Structuralist and Apologist for the Study of Folklore in France*, *Folklore* 85 (1974), 229-243.

<sup>10</sup> Cp. G. Davy *apud* S. Lukes, *Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work*, 1973<sup>1</sup> (Harmondsworth 1975), 524 n. 35.



Henri Junod.<sup>11</sup> Junod knew Van Gennep personally. In 1912 he had been appointed to the then recently established chair for Swiss folklore at the university of Neuchâtel but resigned in favour of Van Gennep — it would prove to be Van Gennep's only academic post — who, however, was unable to stay long in Switzerland. Already in 1915 he was expelled by the Swiss government because he had published proof in the *Dépêche de Toulouse* that pro-German Swiss had violated the neutrality of Switzerland.<sup>12</sup> Junod was evidently deeply impressed by Van Gennep and in his own study he analysed the life of the Tsonga as a series of passages from an old into a new situation.<sup>13</sup> The second work is Wagenvoort's study of Roman dynamism<sup>14</sup> where he especially applied Van Gennep's ideas in his analysis of the *contagio* 'pollution'.

It is only since 1960 that Van Gennep has received the attention he deserves.<sup>15</sup> This favourable development can hardly be separated from the growing influence of structuralism and — what has probably been even more important — the fact that his work was translated into English.<sup>16</sup>

From a theoretical point of view little progress has been made since Van Gennep in the analysis of the rites of passage. This is the reason that we have to be rather brief as regards our first problem since a study on the person who brings about a passage

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<sup>11</sup> H. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, 2 Vols. (London 1927<sup>2</sup>); on Junod, see H. P. Junod, *Henri A. Junod: Missionaire et Savant* (Lausanne 1934).

<sup>12</sup> Cp. K. van Gennep, *o.c.*; Belmont, *o.c.*, 17.

<sup>13</sup> Cp. Gluckman, in Gluckman (n. 15), 8f.

<sup>14</sup> H. Wagenvoort, *Roman Dynamism*, 1947<sup>1</sup> (Westport 1976<sup>2</sup>). On Wagenvoort, see J. H. Waszink, *Hendrik Wagenvoort (23 augustus 1886 – 15 januari 1976)*, Jaarboek Koninklijke Ak.Wetens. 1976, 1-7.

<sup>15</sup> Cp., e.g., M. Gluckman (ed.), *Essays on the ritual of social relations* (Manchester 1962); R. Horton, *Ritual Man in Africa*, *Africa* 34 (1964), 85-104; E. R. Leach, *KIMIL: A Category of Andamese Thought*, in P./E. Maranda, *Structural Analysis of Oral Tradition* (Philadelphia 1971), 22-48; Van Baal (n. 25); M. Vizedom, *Rites and Relationships: Rites of Passage and Contemporary Anthropology*. Sage Research Papers in the Social Sciences (Cross-cultural Studies Series), Vol. 4, series no. 90-027 (Beverly Hills/London 1976); Turner (n. 26) and Honko (n. 24).

<sup>16</sup> A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, translated by M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee (London 1960).

does not seem to exist.<sup>17</sup> Yet, as regards this person there seems to be a recurring pattern. Claudia is suspected of unchastity and does not behave like a proper *matrona*. The statue of Heracles is brought in on advice of a *blind* man after a sacrifice of *Thracian* women, that means to say non-Greek women. Here we even have a double opposition to normality: women<sup>18</sup> and aliens.<sup>19</sup> The Wam-pinger Kreuz is landed by a mendiant friar, the lowest class of monks.<sup>20</sup> These examples are not unique. Prometheus,<sup>21</sup> who brought about the passage from chaos to civilisation by his rapture of fire (cp. *infra*), was a Titan, a being in between gods and men. The culture-hero is indeed often a smith or someone else who is at the margin of society.<sup>22</sup> Even if he is a god he is generally characterised as a trickster, the rogue who moves about outside the social order.<sup>23</sup> In all these cases the transition is effected by someone who is at the margin or outside the human or divine society. Evidently order cannot be established by a person who already is or is to become a part of that order.

Concerning our second problem, we are in a more comfortable situation. Although the position of the person who brings about a transition has not yet been sufficiently analysed, progress has been made with other aspects of the rites of passage. The problem of the

<sup>17</sup> But see now E. Leach, *Culture and Communication* (Cambridge 1976), 82.

<sup>18</sup> For women as marginals in the polis, see P. Vidal-Naquet, *Esclavage et gynécocratie dans la tradition, le mythe, l'utopie*, in C. Nicolet (ed.), *Recherches sur les structures sociales dans l'antiquité classique* (Paris 1972), 63-80.

<sup>19</sup> For Thrace as the foreign country *par excellence*, see I. Chirassi-Colombo, *The Role of Thrace in Greek Religion*, in *Primus congressus studiorum Thracicorum. Thracia II* (Serdicae 1974), 71-79.

<sup>20</sup> Cp. G. Widengren, *Orientalia Suecana* 2 (1953), 78-85.

<sup>21</sup> On Prometheus, see L. Séchan, *Le mythe de Prométhée* (Paris 1951); J. Duchemin, *Prométhée* (Paris 1974) and, especially, J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs II* (Paris 1971<sup>4</sup>), 5-15; idem, *Mythe et société en grèce ancienne* (Paris 1974), 177-194.

<sup>22</sup> Cp. H. Tegnæus, *Le héros civilisateur* (Uppsala 1950).

<sup>23</sup> Cp. P. Radin (with K. Kerényi and C. G. Jung), *Der göttliche Schelm* (Zürich 1954); idem, *The trickster, a study in American Indian mythology* (London 1956); M. Luscott-Ricketts, *The North American Trickster*, HR 5 (1965/66), 327-350; L. Makarius, *Le mythe du "Trickster"*, RHR 175 (1969), 17-46; B. Babcock-Abrahams, "A Tolerated Margin of Mess", *The Trickster and His Tales Reconsidered*, J. Folklore Institute 11 (1975), 147-186.

classification of these rites has been studied by Lauri Honko<sup>24</sup> and J. van Baal.<sup>25</sup> The latter has pointed out that Van Gennep's weak point is the absence of an analysis of the most varied part of the rites, the proper rite of transition. This absence has now recently been remedied by Victor Turner<sup>26</sup> who has shown that this liminal period, as he calls the period of transition, is characterised by reversals and confusion of status and a series of oppositions with normal life such as different clothes, behaviour and place of habitation.

Also, however, as regards the rites of separation and incorporation progress had been made. In 1916 the American anthropologist Elsie Clew Parsons<sup>27</sup> had already demonstrated on the basis of some rites of passage — initiation, wedding, funeral and mourning rites — that the element of delay and resistance is an important factor in these rites. Society and/or the individual has, or pretends to have, great difficulty in changing status or position. There is often resistance against this change but — and this has been mainly overlooked by the scholars of the nineteenth-century — this resistance is never carried through to the very end.

The examples Parsons gives are very interesting and can often be paralleled in ancient Greece. We begin with the initiation for which we will offer some instances not mentioned by Parsons. Among some of the North-American Nootkan tribes "the affair was initiated by the kidnapping of the principal novice by (men dressed up as) Wolves who pounced on him without warning and carried him off. Of course, this was all staged: the novice had to be in the right place at the right time".<sup>28</sup> Among the Nawdeba of Togo future novices

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<sup>24</sup> L. Honko, *Zur Klassifikation der Riten*, *Temenos* 11 (1975), 61-77; idem, *Theories concerning the ritual process: an orientation*, in L. Honko (ed.), *Studies in the methodology of the science of religion* = *Religion and Reason* 13 (The Hague/Paris/New York 1978), 526-554.

<sup>25</sup> J. van Baal, *Symbols for Communication* (Assen 1971), 133-139.

<sup>26</sup> V. W. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* (London 1967), 93-111; idem, *The Ritual Process* (Harmondsworth 1974<sup>2</sup>); idem, *Process, System and Symbol: New Anthropological Synthesis*, *Daedalus* 1977, 3, 61-80.

<sup>27</sup> E. C. Parsons, *Holding back in crisis ceremonialism*, *Am. Anthropol.* 18 (1916), 41-52.

<sup>28</sup> Ph. Drucker, *The Northern and Central Nootkan Tribes* = Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin* 144 (Washington 1951), 392ff. At some places there was a mass kidnapping, cp. Drucker, 399.



were surprised in their house and, although they tried to escape, were carried by force to a place where they were tattooed on their shoulders and on their face: the sign that initiation had started.<sup>29</sup> Among the Wagenia of Zaïre, during their most recent initiation, only the very first novices (but in the light of other parallels this seems to be a later development) were forcefully captured during a game of football(!), a trap designed by the novices of the previous initiation.<sup>30</sup>

A similar capture for which the Greeks explicitly used the word *harpagē* 'robbery, capture, seizure', we also encounter in an initiatory context in Greece, namely on Crete.<sup>31</sup> Here, at the end of the initiation the novices, provided that they had famous ancestors or were a captivating beauty,<sup>32</sup> were captured by an adult for a homosexual relationship, a well-known part of many initiations.<sup>33</sup> During this capture it was necessary that the boy ran away to be pursued by his prospective lover and his own friends until he was taken to his lover's *andreion* 'men's house'. The ritual character of the novice's resistance against his capture appears from the fact that this 'kid-napping' was really a *must* since it was considered a disgrace not to have had one, if at least one came from the proper class. It is therefore completely understandable that Plutarch calls the practice "the so-called capture".<sup>34</sup>

A similar capture was a part of many wedding ceremonies. It is superfluous to adduce here examples since the rite has been extensively described by the Victorian scholars such as McLennan,<sup>35</sup> Dargun,<sup>36</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Cp. D. Paulme (ed.), *Classes et associations d'âge en Afrique de l'Ouest* (Paris 1971), 41-52.

<sup>30</sup> A. Drogers, *De gevaarlijke reis. Jongensinitiatie bij de Wagenia van Kisangani [Zaïre]* (Diss. Amsterdam 1974), 71.

<sup>31</sup> Cp. Strabo 10.4.21 = Ephoros FGH 70 F149.

<sup>32</sup> This seems to be a later development since the proper initiation is clearly restricted to the upper classes, see the examples collected by J. Bremmer, *Heroes, Rituals and the Trojan War*, SSR 2 (1978), 18.

<sup>33</sup> Cp. A. Brelich, *Paides e parthenoi* (Roma 1969), 35; A. Dundes, *Man 11* (1976), 233f; neglected by K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (London 1978), 189f.

<sup>34</sup> Plut. *M.11 F* τὸν ἐν Κρήτῃ καλούμενον ἄρπαγμόν.

<sup>35</sup> J. F. McLennan, *Primitive Marriage, An Enquiry into the Origins of the Form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies* (Edinburgh 1865). The recent reprint (Chicago/London 1970) contains a valuable bio- and bibliography of McLennan by Peter Rivière.

Robertson Smith,<sup>37</sup> Spencer<sup>38</sup> and Westermarck,<sup>39</sup> who were fascinated by this ritual and generally considered it a survival of the (desirable) times that the women were really captured.<sup>40</sup>

Much less attention was given to the fact that the bridegroom too in some cases had to be forced to marry. Among the Caucasian Abschases the bridegroom ran away on his wedding-day and hid himself, and, finally, had to be forced to come back.<sup>41</sup> A similar custom existed among some Indian Garo tribes as we learn from an account of Playfair,<sup>42</sup> a former deputy commissioner of Easter Bengal and Assam: "... it is the custom for a man to refuse at first to marry the girl who has sought his hand, and to run away and hide himself. A party of friends seek for him, and bring him back by force — and apparently very unwilling — to the village, whence he usually escapes. He is captured a second time, but should he run away a third time, it is taken for granted that he really does not wish to marry the girl, and he is allowed to go free". The custom could cause certain complications since Playfair continues: "I have known this custom to form the subject of judicial proceedings, for

<sup>36</sup> L. Dargun, *Mutterrecht und Raubehe und ihre Reste im germanischen Recht und Leben* (Breslau 1883). On Lothar von Dargun (1853-1893), see the *Polski Słownik biograficzny* IV (Warsaw 1938), 436f.

<sup>37</sup> W. Robertson Smith, *Kingship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, 1885<sup>1</sup> (Cambridge 1903<sup>2</sup>), 89-99. On Smith, see T. O. Beidelman, *W. Robertson Smith and the Sociological Study of Religion* (Chicago/London 1974).

<sup>38</sup> H. Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology* I (London 1876), 652-657; idem, *The Fortnightly Review*, N.S. 21 (1877), 895-902 (a polemic against McLennan). Spencer explained the resistance of the bride as being due to real or pretended sexual coyness — an explanation typical for the Victorian bachelor that Spencer was. On Spencer, see J. D. Y. Peel, *Herbert Spencer, The Evolution of a Sociologist* (London 1971).

<sup>39</sup> E. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* I (London 1891), 383-402 and *The History of Human Marriage* II (London 1921<sup>5</sup>), 240-277. Westermarck 1921, 260f. also considers the custom of barring the wedding procession as a survival of the capturing of the bride but this holding-up is just another example of delay and resistance in the rites of passage as is shown, in an exemplary investigation, by D. Dünninger, *Wegsperre und Lösung* (Berlin 1967). On Westermarck, see R. Lagerborg, *Om Edward Westermarck* (Helsinki/Copenhagen 1951).

<sup>40</sup> For modern anthropological views, see E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Position of Women in Primitive Society* (London 1965), 14; R. Firth, *Symbols, Public and Private* (London 1973), 110; J. Goody, *Production and Reproduction* (Cambridge 1976), 2.

<sup>41</sup> N. V. Seidlitz, *Globus* 66 (1894), 40.

<sup>42</sup> A. Playfair, *The Garos* (London 1909), 67.

a man appeared in court one day, at Tura, and filed a petition in which he claimed compensation from the father of a girl having failed to give him his daughter in marriage. The complainant explained that he had been chosen by the girl but, according to custom, he had refused to marry her and had run away. To his disgust, nobody came to seek for him, and the girl chose and married another man who was less strict in his ideas of Garo etiquette”.

The ritual character of this kind of resistance has been seen for the first time in the classic study on the funerary rites by Robert Hertz<sup>43</sup> who explained the capture as a resistance against the transition from one group to another. Shortly after he was followed by Van Gennep<sup>44</sup> who, probably independently, had arrived at the same conclusion.

Such a capture — the same word *harpage* is used — could also be found among the Spartans where it preceded the wedding ceremony. Our source, Plutarch (*Lyc.* 15.4), is unfortunately rather short but McLennan<sup>45</sup> noted already that from this report it appears “that the seizure was made by friendly concert between the parties”.

The third example mentioned by Parsons is the complex of funeral and mourning rites, and the belief that the soul of the deceased lingers on for some time in the vicinity of its former residence. For the first part of this example parallels do not exist, to my knowledge at least, but the belief that the soul does not go immediately to the Underworld could be found among the Greeks in the Archaic Age since they believed that the soul only settled in the Beyond when the funeral rites had been concluded which was a process of some days.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> R. Hertz, *Contribution à une étude sur la représentation collective de la mort*, *Année Sociol.* 10 (1907), 48-137 = idem, *Mélanges de sociologie religieuse et folklore* (Paris 1928), 1-83 = idem (translated by R. and C. Needham), *Death and the Right Hand* (London 1960), 27-86. On Hertz, see E. Durkheim, *Notice sur Robert Hertz*, *L'annuaire des anciens élèves de l'École Normale Supérieure*, 1916, 116-120; Evans-Pritchard *apud* Hertz 1960, 9-24.

<sup>44</sup> Van Gennep 1960 (n. 16), 124.

<sup>45</sup> McLennan, *o.c.*, 13. J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et pensée* I, 140 still supports the idea of a real capture.

<sup>46</sup> See my *The Early Greek Conception of the Soul*, forthcoming.

Although it should now be clear that the elements of resistance and delay in the rites of passage could also be encountered among the Greeks, we will adduce one more example. It is reported that every year the inhabitants of Locris sent two girls to Ilion who were obliged to remain there for a year. It is not necessary to discuss this rite — which is derived from an ancient initiation ritual — in detail since this has recently been done in a very fine way by Fritz Graf,<sup>47</sup> but there is one part of the rite which is of interest for our argument. Aeneas Tacticus (31.24) relates that the inhabitants of Ilion were unable to prevent the girls from entering the city even though they did their utmost to stop them. It is clear that here too we have a case of a ritual, not real, resistance since it is unthinkable that such a small city as Ilion<sup>48</sup> would have been unable to prevent the maidens from entering.

The interesting feature of this ritual is that the transition from Locris to Ilion, the proper rite of separation, was considered to be so radical that the rite is divided again in three parts, as a proper rite of passage. We know nothing concerning the parting in Locris but it is unthinkable that no kind of farewell took place. The journey over sea is then the transitional period and the secret entry into Ilion the rite of incorporation into a new level of existence.

The same elements of delay and resistance can also be found in mythology. The myths around the Trojan War provide two clear examples. When Ulysses is invited to join the war, he unsuccessfully simulates madness to escape participation.<sup>49</sup> Even clearer is the start of the war. When all the ships are ready, the expedition cannot start because the wind has abated.<sup>50</sup> The mythical tradition explained this calm in an aetiological way — Agamemnon would have killed a deer of Artemis — but we suggest that the origin of this motif lies in

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<sup>47</sup> F. Graf, *Die Lokrischen Mädchen*, SSR 2 (1978), 61-79. When I was preparing this article it appeared that Fritz Graf had approached this ritual detail in a way similar to my own, adducing the same Greek rituals. I may therefore refer the reader to his article in which he will find more anthropological parallels for the rites discussed here.

<sup>48</sup> For the small size of Ilion in Hellenistic times, see J. M. Cook, *The Troad* (Oxford 1973), 100.

<sup>49</sup> Apollod. *ep.* 3.7; Hyg. *fab.* 95; Servius *Aen.* 2.81; Schol. Lyc. 815.

<sup>50</sup> For the sources, see C. Robert, *Die Griechische Heldensage* III.2 (Berlin 1923), 1099f.



the inability of the Greek mind to accept that the greatest war in their history could start 'without ado': the beginning of this war had to be delayed just as participation in this war could not possibly have taken place without a certain resistance.

Compared with Greece our knowledge of Roman ritual is rather poor. Yet, from Rome too we can adduce two examples. In historical Rome initiation rituals are not testified but we have a 'capture-scene' in the Roman wedding ritual where the bride had to be pulled away from her mother's lap.<sup>51</sup>

The idea of delay can be found in Christian Rome. When the English bishop Augustine asked Pope Gregory the Great whether it was allowed for a man who had had intercourse with his wife to enter the church before he was washed, the pope answered that "it has always been the custom of the Romans *from ancient times*, after intercourse with one's wife, to seek purification by washing and reverently to abstain from entering the church *for a brief period*".<sup>52</sup> Even if purified, a man cannot enter straight into the church: the transition would have been too abrupt.

We have one example left, albeit from literature. When Aeneas has gone down the Underworld to pluck the golden bough, the plucking is described in the following way (Verg. *Aen.* 6.210f.):

corripit Aeneas extemplo, avidusque refringit,  
cunctantem, et vatis portat sub tecta Sibyllae.

"At once Aeneas takes hold of the bough and breaks it off avidly, although it resists, and carries it to the home of the prophetic Sibylla". Illustrious Vergilian scholars such as Norden,<sup>53</sup> Williams<sup>54</sup> and Austin,<sup>55</sup> all want to explain *cunctantem* only as a botanical detail: the tree is tough. It is true, the plucking of a bough normally meets with some resistance — a detail Vergil certainly would have cared

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<sup>51</sup> Cp. Festus 364 L *Rapi simulatur virgo ex gremio matris, aut, si ea non est, ex proxima necessitudine, cum ad virum traditur, quod videlicet ea res feliciter Romulo cessit*; see also Cat. 61.56ff., 62.33 and, perhaps, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.15.21.

<sup>52</sup> Bede *Hist. Ec.* 1.27 in the translation by B. Colgrave/R. A. B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford 1969), 95.

<sup>53</sup> E. Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro, Aeneis Buch VI* (Leipzig/Berlin 1926<sup>3</sup>), 193.

<sup>54</sup> R. D. Williams, *The Aeneid of Virgil, Books 1-6* (London 1972), 472.

<sup>55</sup> R. G. Austin, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos liber sextus* (Oxford 1977), 101.



for — but this does not explain the stress laid on the detail, a stress which is accentuated by the enjambment of *cunctantem*. No, here the delay dramatizes the plucking of this highly important bough. Certainly, Aeneas will receive the bough but he will not gain possession without resistance.

To these classical examples of delay and resistance we may add a few instances from other cultures. Among many peoples myths tell how the change from chaos to civilisation could only be brought about by the robbery of a vital element, usually fire.<sup>56</sup> The myths speak, however, not only of fire. The possession of all sorts of vital elements for the life of the community or group — such as water,<sup>57</sup> cereals,<sup>58</sup> 'Rauschtrank',<sup>59</sup> and *soma*<sup>60</sup> — are explained through a 'robbery-myth'. Although these myths have aroused the necessary scholarly discussion, attention never<sup>61</sup> seems to have been paid to the question as to why these elements had to be robbed in the first place. We suggest that it was necessary to the primitive mind that these robberies took place since in all these cases man is promoted to a higher level of existence and such a promotion could not possibly have been imagined to have occurred without a certain resistance from the side of the gods or whosoever was thought of as possessing the vital element.

Finally, we will adduce one example from the Old Testament: Saul's election as king. When it was clear that Saul would be the

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<sup>56</sup> Cp. A. Kuhn, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks* (Gütersloh 1886<sup>2</sup>); J. G. Frazer, *Myths of the Origin of Fire* (London 1930); S. Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature I* (Copenhagen 1956<sup>2</sup>), 224; C. Lévi-Strauss, *Le cru et le cuit* (Paris 1964), passim; M. Kuusi, *Beiträge zur Feuermythologie*, in *Miscellanea K. C. Peeters* (Antwerpen 1975), 384-389; H. Aufenanger, *Die Herkunft des Feuers im religiösen Denken schriftloser Völker*, in H. Janssen e.a., *Carl Laufer MSC, Missionar und Ethnologe auf Neu-Guinea* (Freiburg/Basel/Wien 1975), 244-257.

<sup>57</sup> A. Lang, *Myth, Ritual and Religion I* (London 1913<sup>2</sup>), 42-44; F. Boas, *Bella-Bella Tales* (New York 1932), 5; A. Krause, *The Tlingit Indians*, 1885<sup>1</sup> (Seattle 1956), 178; Thompson, *o.c.*, 194f. and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Zande Trickster* (Oxford 1967), 38f.

<sup>58</sup> Cp. T. Obayashi, *Das Körnerdiebstahl-Motiv in Ostasien*, in *Festschrift A. E. Jensen II* (München 1964), 433-459.

<sup>59</sup> Cp. R. Doht, *Der Rauschtrank im germanischen Mythos* (Wien 1974), 36-168.

<sup>60</sup> Cp. U. Schneider, *Der Somarraub des Manu. Mythos und Ritual* (Wiesbaden 1971).

<sup>61</sup> But see W. B. Kristensen, *Godsdiensten in de oude wereld* (Utrecht/Antwerpen 1966), 124f.

future king, the people went looking for him "and when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff. And they ran and fetched him thence...".<sup>62</sup> The example is unique in the Old Testament but when we compare similar hidings in other rites of passage, we can hardly escape the conclusion that the author of *Samuel* gives us here a valuable insight into the way the king's election must have happened in real life.<sup>63</sup>

It will by now be clear to the reader why, in our vision, the ship with Cybele ran aground and the raft with Heracles and the Wimpassinger Kreuz became stuck fast not far from their destination. The introduction of these objects of worship could not possibly have been imagined as having happened in a smooth way.

We possess even another striking parallel for this resistance during the introduction of a new god: the arrival of Dionysos. His arrival everywhere meets with resistance which the god *always* defeats. A discussion of the myths and rituals concerning this fascinating god (for the myths cannot be separated from their ritual background) will, however, have to be reserved for another occasion since the necessary length of such a discussion would exceed the limits of the present collection of studies and evoke an understandable resistance from the side of the editor!

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<sup>62</sup> 1 Samuel 10.21-23. For resistance as a recurrent feature of the prophetic call, see W. Richter, *Die sogenannten vorprophetischen Berufsberichte* (Göttingen 1970), 145f.

<sup>63</sup> It will hardly be chance that there existed a tradition concerning precisely the enthronisation of Saul, cp. H. Ringgren, *Israelitische Religion* (Stuttgart 1963), 201: "Als Saul um 1020 v. Chr. zum ersten König Israels gemacht wurde, war man sich offenbar dessen bewusst, dass *etwas Neues von aussen her* (my italics) in Israel eingeführt wurde".