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D. ONTOGENY OF RITUALIZATION

Ontogeny of ritualization in man

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In this zoological setting, I may consider it a sign of hospitality that the ontogeny of ritualization in man is to be discussed before that in animals. This permits me to give full consideration to man's complexity, and to dispense with the attempt to *derive* the human kind of ritualization from what has come to be called ritualization in animals. Rather, I will try to show what in human life may be the *equivalent* of the ethologist's ritualization, and to present a developmental schedule for its ontogeny.* To do so, I must first set aside a number of now dominant connotations of the term. The oldest of these is the *anthropological* one which ties it to rites and rituals conducted by communities of adults (and sometimes witnessed by children or participated in by youths) for the purpose of marking such recurring events as the phases of the year or the stages of life. I will attempt to trace some of the ontogenetic roots of all ritual-making but I will not deal explicitly with ritual as such. A more recent connotation of 'ritualization' is the *clinical* one. Here the term 'private ritual' is used to conceptualize obsessional behaviour consisting of repetitive solitary acts with highly idiosyncratic meanings. Such behaviour is vaguely analogous to the aimless behaviour of caged animals, and thus seems to provide a 'natural' link with a possible phylogenetic origin of ritualization in its more stereotyped and driven forms. But it seems important to set aside this clinical connotation in order to take account of newer insights both in ethology and in psychoanalysis. There is now a trend in the ethological literature (recently summarized in Konrad Lorenz's *Das Sogenannte Boese* (Lorenz 1964)) which follows the original suggestion of Sir Julian Huxley to use the word ritualization (and this explicitly without quotation marks) for certain phylogenetically preformed ceremonial acts in the so-called social animals. The study of these acts clearly points away from pathology, in that it reveals the bond created by a reciprocal message of supreme adaptive importance. We should, therefore, begin by postulating that behaviour to be called ritualization in man must consist of an agreed-upon interplay between at least two persons who repeat it at meaningful intervals and in recurring contexts; and that this interplay should have adaptive value for both participants. And, I would submit, these conditions are already fully met by the way in which a human mother and her baby greet each other in the morning.

Beginnings, however, are apt to be both dim in contour and lasting in consequences. Ritualization in man seems to be grounded in the pre-verbal experience of infants while reaching its full elaboration in grand public ceremonies. No one field could encompass such a range of phenomena with solid observation. Rather, the theme of ritualization (as

* For a conception of the human life cycle underlying this attempt, see E. H. Erikson (1950, 1964).

I have found in preparing this paper) can help us to see new connexions between seemingly distant phenomena, such as human infancy and man's institutions, individual adaptation and the function of ritual. Here, I will not be able to avoid extensive speculation.

I. INFANCY AND THE NUMINOUS

Let me begin with the 'greeting ceremonial' marking the beginning of an infant's day: for ritualization is to be treated here first as a special form of everyday behaviour. In such matters it is best not to think at first of our own homes but of those of some neighbours, or of a tribe studied or a faraway country visited, while comparing it all—how could some of us do otherwise—with analogous phenomena among our favourite birds.

The awakening infant conveys to his mother the fact that he is awake and (as if with the signal of an alarm clock) awakens in her a whole repertoire of emotive, verbal, and manipulative behaviour. She approaches him with smiling or worried concern, brightly or anxiously rendering a name, and goes into action: looking, feeling, sniffing, she ascertains possible sources of discomfort and initiates services to be rendered by rearranging the infant's condition, by picking him up, etc. If observed for several days it becomes clear that this daily event is highly ritualized, in that the mother seems to feel obliged, and not a little pleased, to repeat a performance which arouses in the infant predictable responses, encouraging her, in turn, to proceed. Such ritualization, however, is hard to describe. It is at the same time highly *individual* ('typical for the mother' and also tuned to the particular infant) and yet also *stereotyped* along traditional lines. The whole procedure is superimposed on the periodicity of physical needs close to the requirements of survival; but it is an *emotional* as well as a *practical* necessity for both mother and infant. And, as we will see, this enhanced routine can be properly evaluated only as a small but tough link in the whole formidable sequence of generations.

Let us take the fact that the mother called the infant by a name. This may have been carefully selected and perhaps certified in some name-giving ritual, held to be indispensable by the parents and the community. Yet, whatever procedures have given meaning to the name, that meaning now exerts a certain effect on the way in which the name is repeated during the morning procedure—together with other emphases of caring attention which have a very special meaning for the mother and eventually for the child. Daily observations (confirmed by the special aura of Madonna-and-Child images) suggest that this mutual assignment of very special meaning is the ontogenetic source of one pervasive element in human ritualization, which is based on a *mutuality of recognition*.

There is much to suggest that man is born with the need for such regular and mutual affirmation and certification: we know, at any rate, that its absence can harm an infant radically, by diminishing or extinguishing his search for impressions which will verify his senses. But, once aroused, this need will reassert itself in every stage of life as a hunger for ever new, ever more formalized and more widely shared ritualizations and rituals which repeat such face-to-face 'recognition' of the hoped-for. Such ritualizations range from the regular exchange of greetings affirming a strong emotional bond, to singular encounters of mutual fusion in love or inspiration, or in a leader's 'charisma'. I would suggest, therefore, that this first and dimmest affirmation, this sense of a *hallowed presence*, contributes to man's

ritual-making a pervasive element which we will call the 'Numinous'. This designation betrays my intention to follow the earliest into the last: and, indeed, we vaguely recognize the numinous as an indispensable aspect of periodical *religious observances*, where the believer, by appropriate gestures, confesses his dependence and his childlike faith and seeks, by appropriate offerings, to secure a sense of being lifted up to the very bosom of the supernatural which in the visible form of an image may graciously respond, with the faint smile of an inclined face. The result is a sense of *separateness transcended*, and yet also of *distinctiveness confirmed*.

I have now offered two sets of phenomena, namely, ritualization in the nursery (as an enhancement by playful formalization of the routine procedures which assure mere survival) and religious rituals (which provide a periodical reaffirmation for a multitude of men) as the first examples of an affinity of themes, which seem to 'belong' to entirely different 'fields' but are necessarily brought together as subject-matter for this symposium. By suggesting such a far-reaching connexion, however, I do not mean to reduce formalized ritual to infantile elements; rather, I intend to sketch, for a number of such elements of ritualization, an ontogenetic beginning and a reintegration on ever higher levels of development. In adult ritual, to be sure, these infantile elements are both emotively and symbolically re-evoked; but both infantile ritualization and adult ritual are parts of a functional whole, namely, of a cultural version of human existence.

I will now try to list those elements of ritualization which we can already recognize in the first, the numinous instance—emphasizing throughout the opposites which appear to be reconciled. Its mutuality is based on the *reciprocal needs* of two quite *unequal* organisms and minds. We have spoken of the *periodicity of developing needs* to which ritualization gives a *symbolic actuality*. We have recognized it as a highly *personal* matter, and yet as *group-bound*, providing a sense both of *oneness* and of *distinctiveness*. It is *playful*, and yet *formalized*, and this in *details* as well as in the *whole* procedure. Becoming *familiar* through repetition, it yet brings the *surprise* of recognition. And while the ethologists will tell us that ritualizations in the animal world must, above all, be *un-ambiguous* as sets of signals, we suspect that in man the *overcoming of ambivalence* as well as of ambiguity is one of the prime functions of ritualization. For as we love our children, we also find them unbearably demanding, even as they will soon find us arbitrary and possessive. What we love or admire is also threatening, awe becomes awfulness, and benevolence seems in danger of being consumed by wrath. Therefore, ritualized affirmation, once instituted, becomes *indispensable* as a periodical experience and must find new forms in the context of new developmental actualities.

This is a large order with which to burden an infant's daily awakening, and, indeed only the whole sequence of stages of ritualization can make this list of opposites plausible. Yet, even at the beginning, psychopathology confirms this burdening. Of all psychological disturbances which we have learnt to connect ontogenetically with the early stages of life, the deepest and most devastating are those in which the light of mutual recognition and of hope are forfeited in psychotic withdrawal and regression, and this, as Spitz and Bowlby have shown, can develop at the very beginning of life. For, the earliest affirmation is already re-affirmation in the face of the fact that the very experiences by which man derives a measure of security also expose him to a *series of estrangements* which we must try

to specify as we deal with each developmental stage. In the first stage, I submit, it is a sense of *separation by abandonment* which must be prevented by the persistent, periodical reassurance of familiarity and mutuality. Such reassurance remains the function of the numinous and thus primarily of the religious ritual or of the numinous element in any ritual. Its perversion or absence, on the other hand, leaves a sense of dread, estrangement, or impoverishment.

In another context (Erikson 1964) I have suggested that the most basic quality of human life, *hope*, is the inner strength which emerges unbroken from early familiarity and mutuality and which provides for man a sense (or a promise) of a personal and universal continuum. It is grounded and fortified in the first stage of life, and subsequently nourished, as it were, by all those ritualizations and rituals which combat a sense of abandonment and hopelessness and promise instead a mutuality of recognition, face to face, all through life—until ‘we shall know even as also we are known’.

II. THE PSEUDO-SPECIES

In order to deal with the total setting which seems to give meaning to and to receive meaning from human ritualization, I must introduce three theoretical considerations of an incomplete and controversial nature.

Since ritualization in animals is for the most part an intra-specific phenomenon, it must be emphasized throughout that man has evolved (by whatever kind of evolution and for whatever adaptive reasons) in *pseudo-species*, i.e. tribes, clans, etc., which behave as if they were separate species created at the beginning of time by supernatural will, and each superimposing on the geographic and economic facts of its existence a cosmogeny, as well as a theocracy and an image of man, all its own. Thus each develops a *distinct sense of identity*, held to be *the* human identity and fortified against other pseudo-species by prejudices which mark them as extra-specific and, in fact, inimical to the only ‘genuine’ human endeavour. Paradoxically, however, newly born man can fit into any number of such pseudo-species and must, therefore, become specialized during a prolonged childhood—certainly a basic fact in the ontogeny of *familiarization by ritualization*.

To speak of pseudo-species may be controversial enough. But I must now face a second conceptual dilemma in the form of Sigmund Freud’s instinct theory. Whenever the noun ‘instinct’ appears in psychoanalytic formulations it is helpful to ask whether the corresponding adjective would be ‘instinctive’ or ‘instinctual’, i.e. whether the emphasis is on an *instinctive pattern* of behaviour, or an *instinctual drive or energy* more or less indifferent and divorced from prepared patterns of adaptiveness.* It will appear, then, that psychoanalysts usually mean instinctual drives, and this with the connotation of a quantitative excess devoid of instinctive quality in the sense of specific patterns of ‘fittedness.’ (Hartmann 1938). The evolutionary rationale for this free-floating quantity of instinctual energy lies, of course, in the very fact that man is, in Ernst Mayr’s words, the ‘generalist animal’, born to invest relatively non-specific drives in such learning experiences and such social encounters as will assure, during a long childhood, a strengthening and widening of

* As Freud put it in his *New Introductory Lectures*: ‘From the Pleasure Principle to the instinct of self-preservation is a long way; and the two tendencies are far from coinciding from the first.’

mutuality, competence, and identity—all, as I am endeavouring to show, supported most affirmatively by appropriate ritualizations.

I say ‘most affirmatively’ because man’s *moral prohibitions* and *inner inhibitions* are apt to be as excessive and maladaptive as the drives which they are meant to contain: in psychoanalysis we therefore speak of a ‘return of the repressed’. Could it be, then, that true ritualization represents, in fact, a *creative formalization* which avoids both impulsive excess and overly compulsive self-restriction, both social anomie and moralistic coercion? If so, we could see at least three vital functions served by the simplest ritualization worthy of that designation:

(1) It binds instinctual energy into a pattern of mutuality, which bestows convincing simplicity on dangerously complex matters. As mother and infant meet in the first ritualization described so far, the infant brings to the constellation his vital needs, among them, oral, sensory, and tactile drives (subsumed as ‘orality’ in Freud’s libido theory) and the necessity to have disparate experiences made coherent by mothering. The mother in her post-partum state is also needful in a complex manner: for whatever instinctive mothering she may be endowed with, and whatever instinctual gratification she may seek in being a mother, she needs to be a *mother of a special kind* and *in a special way*. This she becomes by no means without an anxious avoidance (sometimes outright phobic, often deeply superstitious) of ‘other’ kinds and ways typical for persons or groups whom she (sometimes unconsciously) dislikes, or despises, hates, or fears as godless or evil, unhygienic or immoral.

(2) In permitting the mother to ‘be herself’ and to be at the same time an obedient representative of a group ethos, ritualization protects her against the danger of instinctual excess and arbitrariness and against the burden of having to systematize a thousand small decisions.

(3) In establishing mutuality in the immediacy of early needs, ritualization also does the groundwork for lasting mutual identifications between adult and child from generation to generation. For the mother is reaffirmed in her identification with those who mothered her well; while her own motherhood is reaffirmed as benevolent by the increasing responsiveness of the infant. The infant, in turn, develops a benevolent self-image (a certified narcissism, we may say) grounded in the recognition of an all-powerful and mostly benevolent (if sometimes strangely malevolent) ‘Other’.

(4) Thus ritualization also provides the psychosocial foundation for that inner equilibrium which in psychoanalysis is attributed to a ‘strong ego’; and thus also a first step for the gradual development (to be sealed only in adolescence) of an independent identity (Erikson 1965) which—guided by various rituals of ‘confirmation’ representing a ‘second birth’—will integrate all childhood identifications, while subordinating those wishes and images which have become undesirable and evil.

III. EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE JUDICIOUS

Any ontological discourse suffers from the fact that it must begin to enumerate its guiding principles at the beginning, while only an account of their progression and differentiation as a whole can reveal their plausibility. The dimensions of ritualization suggested so far must now reappear on higher levels: mutuality between the child and that

increasing number of adults with whom he is ready to interact, physically, mentally and socially; the affirmation of such new mutuality by ritualization and this in the face of a new kind of estrangement; and the emergence of a new element of ritual.

A second basic element in human ritualization is one for which the best term would seem to be *judicial*, because it combines *jus* and *dicere*, 'the law' and 'the word'. At any rate, the term should encompass methods by which the *discrimination* between right and wrong is ontologically established. Eventually, this becomes an important aspect in all human ritual; for there is no ritual which does not imply a discrimination between the sanctioned and the out-of-bounds—up to the Last Judgement.

The ontological source of this second element is the second stage of life, that is, early childhood, which is characterized by a growing psychosocial autonomy and by rapid advances in development. As *locomotion* serves increased autonomy, it also leads to the boundaries of the permissible; as *discrimination* sharpens, it also serves the perception of conduct which 'looks right' or 'does not look right' in the eye of others; while *language development* (obviously one of the strongest bonds of a pseudo-species) distinguishes with finite emphasis what is conceptually integrated in the verbalized world, and what remains outside, nameless, unmeaningful, strange, *wrong*. All of this is given strong connotations by what Freud called 'anality'. It brings with it a new sense of estrangement: standing upright, the child realizes that he can lose face and suffer shame; giving himself away by blushing, he feels furiously isolated, not knowing whether to *doubt himself* or *his judges*. His elders, in turn, feel compelled to utilize and thus to aggravate this trend; and yet, is it not again in the ritualization of approval and disapproval (in recurring situations of high symbolic meaning) that the adult speaks as a mouthpiece of a supra-individual righteousness, damning the deed but not necessarily the doer?

I will never forget an experience which I am sure I share with all anthropologists (professional and amateur): I mean the astonishment with which we 'in the field' encounter for the first time old people who will describe what is appropriate in their culture with a sense of moral and aesthetic rightness unquestionably sanctioned by the universe. Here is an example of what I was told among the Yurok Indians in Northern California, who depended on the salmon and its elusive ways (long hidden to science) of propagating and migrating.

'Once upon a time, a Yurok meal was a veritable ceremony of self-restraint. A strict order of placement was maintained and the child was taught to eat in prescribed ways; for example, to put only a little food on the spoon, to take the spoon up to his mouth slowly, to put the spoon down while chewing the food—and above all, to think of becoming rich during the whole process. There was silence during meals, so that everybody could keep his thoughts concentrated on money and salmon. This ritualization served to lift to the level of a kind of hallucination nostalgic oral needs which may have been evoked by very early weaning from the breast (quite extraordinary among American Indians). Later, in the "sweat house" the boy would learn the dual feat of thinking of money and *not* thinking of women; and the adult Yurok could make himself see money hanging from trees and salmon swimming in the river during the off season in the belief that this self-induced 'hallucinatory' thought would bring action from the Providers'.

This ceremonial style which undoubtedly impressed the small child and had precursors in less formal daily occasions invested similar ritualizations along the whole course of life, for cultures (so we may remind ourselves in passing) attempt to give *coherence* and *continuity* to the whole schedule of minute ritualizations.

This second element of ritualization is differentiated from the first primarily by an emphasis on the *child's free will*. In the ritualizations of infancy avoidances were the mother's responsibility; now the child himself is trained to 'watch himself'. To this end parents and other elders compare him (to his face) with what he *might* become if he and they did not watch out. Here, then, is the ontogenetic source of the '*negative identity*' which is so essential for the maintenance of a pseudo-species for it embodies everything one is not supposed to be or show—and what one yet potentially is. The negative identity furnishes explicit images of pseudo-species which one must *not* resemble in order to have a chance of acceptance in one's own. Behind the dreaded traits are often images of what the parents themselves are trying not to be and therefore doubly fear the child might become, and are thus *potential* traits which he must learn to imagine in order to be able to avoid them. The self-doubt and the hidden shame attached to the necessity of 'eliminating' part of himself as well as the suppression of urges create in man a certain *righteous rage* which can turn parent against parent, parent against child—and the child against himself. I paint this matter darkly because here we meet the ontological origin of the divided species. Moral self-discrimination is sharpened by an indoctrination against evil others, on whom the small child can project what he must negate in himself, and against whom he can later turn that moralistic and sadistic prejudice which has become the greatest danger of the species man. His 'prejudice against himself', on the other hand, is at the bottom of man's proclivity for compulsive, obsessive, and depressive disorders; while irrational prejudice against others, if joined with mass prejudice and armed with modern weapons, may yet mark the premature end of a species just on the verge of becoming one (Erikson 1965). All of this, however, also underlines the importance of true ritualization as a supra-individual formalization transmitting rules of conduct in words and sounds which the child can comprehend, and in situations which he can manage.

In its full elaboration in a *judiciary ritual*, however, this judicious element is reaffirmed on a grand scale, making all-visible on the public stage what occurs in each individual as an inner process: the Law is untiringly watchful as is, alas, our conscience. It locates a suitable culprit who, once in the dock, serves as 'an example', on which a multitude can project their inner shame. The unceasing inner rumination with which we watch ourselves is matched by the conflicting evidence which parades past the parental judge, the fraternal jury, and the chorus of the public. Judgement, finally, is pronounced as based on sanctified agreement rather than on passing outrage or personal revenge; and where repentance does not accept punishment, the verdict will impose it.

Both the ritualized establishment of boundaries of good and bad in childhood and the judiciary ritual in the adult world fulfil the criteria for ritualized procedures as suggested earlier: meaningful regularity; ceremonial attention to detail and to the total procedure; a sense of symbolic actuality surpassing the reality of each participant and of the deed itself; a mutual activation of all concerned (including, or so it is hoped, the confessing culprit); and a sense of indispensability so absolute that the need for the ritualization in

question seems to be 'instinctive' with man. And, indeed, the judicial element has become an indispensable part of man's phylogenetic adaptation as well as his ontogenetic development.

In seeing the judicial element at work, however, in public and in private, we can also perceive where this form of ritualization fails in its adaptive function, and this means in the convincing transmission of boundaries from generation to generation. Failure is indicated where fearful compulsion to conform replaces free assent to what feels right; where thus the obsessively formalistic becomes dominant over the convincingly ceremonial or where considered judgement is swamped by instinctual excess and becomes moralistic sadism or sensational voyeurism. All of this increases the hopeless isolation of the culprit and aggravates an impotent rage which can only make him more 'shameless'. Thus, the decay or perversion of ritual does not create an indifferent emptiness, but a void with explosive possibilities—to which fact this Symposium should pay careful attention. For it explains why 'nice' people who have lost the gift of imparting values by meaningful ritualization can have children who become (or behave like) juvenile delinquents; and why nice 'church-going' nations can so act as to arouse the impression of harbouring pervasive murderous intent.

Here, again, the psychopathology attending individual malfunctioning and the social pathology characterizing the breakdown of institutions are closely related. They meet in the alternation of impulsivity and compulsivity, excess and self-restriction, anarchy and autocracy.

IV. CHILDHOOD: THE DRAMATIC AND THE FORMAL

I have now attempted to isolate two elements in human rituals which seem clearly grounded in ontogenetic stages of development. In view of the 'originology' which is apt to replace defunct teleology, it seems important to reiterate that I am not suggesting a simple causal relationship between the infantile stage and the adult institution, in the sense that adult rituals above all serve persisting infantile needs in disguise. The image of the Ancestor or of the God sought on a more mature level is (as we shall see) by no means 'only' a replica of the mother's inclined face, nor the idea of Justice 'only' an externalization of a childish bad conscience. Rather, man's epigenetic development in separate and protracted childhood stages assures that each of the major elements which constitute human institutions is rooted in a distinct childhood stage, but, once evolved, must be progressively re-integrated on each higher level. Thus the numinous element reappears in the judicial ritualizations as the aura adhering to all 'authority' and later to a personified or highly abstract image of Justice, or to the concrete persons who as justices are invested with the symbolism and the power of that image. But this also means that neither the numinous nor the judicial elements, although they can dominate a particular stage or a particular institution, can 'make up' a ritual all by themselves: other elements must join them. Of these, I will discuss in the following, the elements of *dramatic elaboration*, of *competence of performance*, and of *ideological commitment*. (See table 1, p. 348.)

First, then, the *dramatic* element. This I believe, is grounded in the maturational advances of the *play age* which permits the child to create with available objects (and then in games with cooperative adults and peers) a *coherent plot with dramatic turns* and some form of *climactic conclusion*.

While the second, the 'judicial' stage was characterized by the internalization of the parental voice, this age offers the child a micro-reality in which he can escape adult ritualization and prepare his own, reliving, correcting and recreating past experiences, and anticipating future roles and events with the spontaneity and repetitiveness which characterizes all ritualization. His themes, however, are often dominated by usurpation and impersonation of adult roles; and I would nominate for the principal *inner estrangement* which finds expression, aggravation or resolution in play, the *sense of guilt*. One might think that this sense should be subsumed under the judicial sphere; yet, guilt is an inescapable sense of self-condemnation which does not even wait for the phantasied deed to be actually committed; or, if committed, to be known to others; or if known to others, to be punished by them.

This theme dominates the great tragedies, for the *Theatre* is adult man's 'play'. The play on the toy-stage and the plays acted out in official drama and magic ceremonial have certain themes in common which may, in fact, have helped to induce Freud to give to the dominant 'complex' of this stage the name of a tragic hero: Oedipus. That common theme is the conflict between hubris and guilt, between the usurpation of father-likeness and punishment, between freedom and sin. The appropriate institution for the awful expression of the dramatic is the stage, which, however, cannot do without the numinous and the judicial, even as they, in any given ritual, rite or ceremony, cannot dispense with the dramatic.

What is the form of psychopathology characterizing the play-age and the neurotic trends emanating from it? It is the weight of excessive guilt which leads to repression in thought and to inhibition in action. It is no coincidence that this pathology is most dramatically expressed in '*Hamlet*', the tragedy of the *actor* in every sense of the word, who tries to solve his inhibitive scruples by the invention of a *play within a play* and prepares his perdition in and by it. And yet, this perdition almost seems a salvation from something worse: that pervasive boredom in the midst of affluence and power, that malaise and inability to gain pleasure 'from either man or woman' which characterizes the absence of the dramatic and the denial of the tragic.

The *school-age* adds another element to ritualization: that of the *perfection of performance*. The elements mentioned so far would be without a binding discipline which holds them to a minute sequence and arrangement of performance. The mental and emotional capacity for such accuracy arises only in the school-age; or rather, because it *can* arise then, children are sent to 'schools'. There, with varying abruptness, play is transformed into work, game into cooperation, and the freedom of imagination into the duty to perform with full attention to all the minute details which are necessary to complete a task and do it 'right'. Ritualization becomes truly cooperative in the whole arrangement called 'school', that is, in the interplay between 'teacher', 'class' and individual child, and in the prescribed series of minute tasks which are structured according to the verbal, the mathematical and the physical nature of the cultural universe. This, I submit, is the ontogenetic source of that *formal aspect* of rituals, provided by an order in space and time which is convincing to the sense as it becomes *order perceived* and yet also *participated in*. Adding this sense of detail, seriously attended to within a meaningful context, to the

numinous, judicial and dramatic elements, we feel closer to an understanding of the dimensions of any true ritual. But we also perceive the danger of over-formalization, perfectionism, and empty ceremonialism, not to speak of the neurotic 'ritual' marked by total isolation (and all too often considered the model of ritualization by my psychiatric colleagues).

V. ADOLESCENCE AND BEYOND: THE IDEOLOGICAL AND THE GENERATIONAL

I have now concentrated on the ontogenetic and, as it were, unofficial sources of ritualizations in childhood. From here, one could continue in two directions: that is, one could discuss the always surprising and sometimes shocking spontaneous 'rites' by which adolescents ritualize their relations to each other and demarcate their generation as (slightly or decidedly) different both from the adult haves and the infantile have-nots; or one could now turn to formal rites and rituals, for it is in the formal rites of confirmation, induction, etc., that adolescent man is enjoined for the first time to become a full member of his pseudo-species, and often of a special *élite* within it. For all the elements developed in the ontogenetic sequence already discussed now become part of formal rites which tie the infantile inventory into an ideological world-image, provide a convincing coherence of ideas and ideals, and give youth the feeling of active participation in the preservation or renewal of society. Only now can man be said to be adult in the sense that he can devote himself to ritual purposes and can visualize a future in which he will become the everyday ritualizer in his children's lives.

Our ontogenetic sketch has to include this stage because the reciprocal mechanisms by which adult and young animals complete the interplay of their respective inborn patterns can be said to be paralleled in man by no less than the *whole period of childhood and youth*. To be fully grown in the human sense means the readiness to join not only the *technology* but also certain *irreversible commitments* to one's pseudo-species; which also means to *exclude* (by moral repudiation, fanatic rebellion, or warfare) inimical identities and outworn or foreign ideologies. Elsewhere (Erikson 1965) I have undertaken to delineate the identity crisis which precedes the emergence in youth of a sense of *psycho-social identity* and the readiness for the ideological style pervading the ritualizations of his culture. Only an integration of these two processes prepares youth for the alignment of its new strength with the technological and historical trends of the day. I have called the corresponding estrangement *identity-confusion*. Clinically (i.e. in those so pre-disposed), this expresses itself in withdrawal or in lone-wolf delinquency; while it is often a matter of psychiatric, political, and legal definition whether and where borderline psychosis, criminality, dangerous delinquency or unwholesome fanaticism may be said to exist. Much of youthful 'demonstration' in private is just that: a dramatization (sometimes mocking, sometimes riotous) of the estrangement of youth from the impersonality of mass-production, the vagueness of confessed values, and the intangibility of the prospects for either an individualized or truly communal existence; but, above all, by the necessity to find entirely new forms of ritualization in a technology changing so rapidly that change becomes one of its main attributes. There are historical identity vacua when the identity crisis is aggravated on a large scale and met only by an ideological renewal which 'catches up' with economic and technological changes (Erikson 1959).

We have also witnessed in our time totalitarian attempts at involving new generations ideologically in staged mass rituals combining the numinous and the judicial, the dramatic and the precise in performance on the largest scale, which provide for masses of young individuals an ideological commitment encompassing perpetual change and, in fact, making all traditional (in the sense of pre-revolutionary) values part of a decidedly negative identity.

I point to all this in the present context primarily because of problems concerning the ontogeny of ritualization. For what is in question is (1) the necessary coherence and continuity between early ritualization and overall technological and political trends, and (2) the role of youth in the rejuvenation of society and the integration of our humanist past with the technological age now emerging world-wide.

But before we come to the question of ritualization in the modern world we must mention a *dominant function of ritual in the life of the adult*. Parents are the earliest ritualizers in their children's lives; at the same time, they are participants of the instituted rituals in which the ritualizations of their childhoods find an echo and a reaffirmation. What, then, is the prime contribution of adult ritual to the ontogenesis of ritualization? I think ritual reaffirms the sanction needed by adults to be convincing ritualizers.

After the *rituals of graduation* from the apprenticeship of youth, *marriage ceremonies* provide for the young adult the 'licence' to enter those new associations which will transmit tradition to the coming generation. I am reminded here of a wedding ceremony which took place in a small town in the French Alps. The young Americans to be married faced the mayor; the tricolor was wound round his middle (which was soon to be regaled with ceremonial champagne). Above and behind him, *le Général* looked most distantly out of a framed picture into new greatness; and above him a bust of *l'Empereur* stared white and vacant into the future, the brow wrapped in laurel; while even higher up, the afternoon sun streamed through a window, all the way down to the book out of which the mayor read phrases from a Code, to which a young bride from America could have agreed only with some reservations, had she fully understood them. Yet we few, in a foreign land, felt well taken care of, for the Western world shares many ceremonial values and procedures; and the couple accepted from the mayor a little booklet which provided for the entry of the names of the next generation.

Whether the ceremonies of the adult years call on personal ancestors in the beyond or on culture heroes, on spirits or gods, on kings or leaders, they sanction the adult; for his mature needs include the *need to be periodically reinforced in his role of ritualizer*, which means not more and not less than to be ready to become a numinous model in his children's minds, and to act as a judge and the transmitter of traditional ideals. This last element in the ontogenetic series I would call the *generational* which includes *parental* and *instructive, productive, creative* and *curative* endeavours.

VI. CONCLUSION

In the 'freer' adult of the Western world we often observe an oppressive sense of responsibility in isolation, and this under the impact of two parallel developments, namely, the decrease of ritual reassurance from the ceremonial resources of a passing age, and the

increase of a self-conscious awareness of the role of the individual, and especially of the parent and the teacher in the sequence of generations. Adults thus oppressed, however, are of little use to youth which prefers to gather around those who create new patterns of ritualization worthy (or seemingly worthy) of the energies of a new generation. The Symposium, having established the evolutionary significance of ritualization in man, may thus not be able to shirk the question whether or not fading rituals may not at this time be giving way to ritualizations of a new kind, dictated above all by new methods of communication and not always recognizable to the overtrained eye.

I hope, therefore, that this Symposium will come to discuss not only the question of the weakening of traditional ritual and of 'our' traditional sense of ritualization, but also the agencies which provide a reinforcement of ritualization in line with a new world-image.

TABLE I. ONTOGENY OF RITUALIZATION

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| infancy | mutuality of recognition | | | | | | |
| early childhood | | ↓ | discrimination of good and bad | | | | |
| play age | | ↓ | | ↓ | dramatic elaboration | | |
| school age | | ↓ | | ↓ | | rules of performance | |
| adolescence | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | | solidarity of conviction |
| elements in adult rituals | NUMINOUS | | JUDICIAL | DRAMATIC | FORMAL | IDEOLOGICAL | GENERATIONAL SANCTION |

This new cosmos is held together by the scientific ethos, the methods of mass-communication, and the replacement of 'ordained' authorities by an indefinite sequence of experts correcting and complementing each other. Pediatric advice, for example, offers knowledge and prudence as guides to parental conduct; modern technology attaches new ritualizations to technical necessities and opportunities in homes and at work; and world-wide communication creates new and more universal parliaments. We must review the accreditation of those who rush in to occupy places left vacant by vanishing ritualization, and who offer new 'rituals' of mechanistic or autocratic, self-conscious, totally thoughtless or all too intellectual kinds.

However, new sources of numinous and judicial affirmation as well as of dramatic and aesthetic representation can obviously come only from a new spirit embodying an identification of the whole human species with itself. The transition will compound our estrangements; for could it not be that much of the ritualization discussed here owes its inescapability to a period in mankind's evolution when the pseudo-species was dominant? Will a more inclusive human identity do away with the necessity of reinforcing the identities and the prejudices of many pseudo-species—even as a new and more universal ethics may

make old moralisms obsolete? If so, there seems to be a strong link between Sir Julian's Romanes lecture (Huxley 1943) and today's proceedings.

I am by no means certain that the elements of ritualization enumerated in this paper and charted with premature finality in table 1 represent a complete inventory. I have outlined what I was able to discern, and what I believe the principles of further inquiry to be. At any rate, there can be no prescription for ritualization, for, far from being merely repetitive or familiar in the sense of habituation, any true ritualization is ontogenetically grounded and yet pervaded with the spontaneity of surprise: it is an unexpected renewal of a recognizable order in potential chaos. Ritualization thus depends on that blending of surprise and recognition which is the soul of creativity, reborn out of the abyss of instinctual disorder, confusion of identity and social anomie.*

* One major example of creative ritualization in the modern era, namely Gandhi's technique of non-violent conflict (Satyagraha) has striking analogies to the pacific ritualization of animals as recently summarized by Lorenz (1964). For a preliminary report, see E. H. Erikson, 'Psycho-analysis and ongoing history: problems of identity, hatred and non-violence', *Amer. J. Psychiatry* **122**, 241-250, 1965.

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