

Why ritual can be considered to be effective



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What does ritual carry through, and how does it make so? Pick an ethnographic history of a specific ritual and analyze it in visible radiation of this semester ' s readings to understand how and why participants might see it to be effectual.

Ritual is a societal action ; its public presentation requires the organized cooperation of a group of persons, frequently under the leading of person in a higher societal standing. There are regulations which must be followed in order to carry through a shared end, such as delighting a divinity or taging a male child ' s entryway into manhood. Harmonizing to Bowen (2005) , rites are shaped and motivated by emotions and seek a specific terminal, which is realised by conforming to the certain regulations and ordinances. New Guinea provides us with many illustrations of luxuriant yet complex rites, which express a battalion of beliefs and values. For illustration, the latmul, Gebusi[1], and the Sambia have really similar male induction rites, as seen in patterns such as the unwritten insemination of immature male childs. These tribes define and polarise maleness and muliebrity as a cultural, spiritual and societal jussive mood, and these impressions are expressed rather vividly and explicitly in their ritual patterns.

The primary focal point of my essay will be on Gilbert Herdt ' s ethnographic histories of the Sambia induction rites (1981, 1987 and 2006) . The Sambia ' s induction ritual transforms immature, soft male childs into work forces capable of aggressive behavior, slaying and courage: qualities seen as necessary in warfare. Such a effort is accomplished through a procedure of extreme yet indispensable resocialization which changes the immature male child ' s cultural orientations and guides him into the scope of warriorhood.

The Sambias see this ritual as a critical portion of society and is made effectual for the participants through a stiff construction, separation from all female figures and public presentations of ritualised masculinization which thereby transform the immature male children into work forces who exhibit qualities of assertiveness, strength and independency.

What does the Sambias induction ritual accomplish? / What does ritual carry through?

Many New Guinean folk pattern rites that initiate their work forces into society.

First and foremost, the Sambias induction ritual accomplishes a cardinal alteration in the manner work forces feel and think about themselves, their society, and their function within society. It is intended to accomplish and develop maleness in the male children, because harmonizing to Sambian civilization, they are born with feminine qualities of passiveness, failing and dependance. They must relearn these qualities, and go ferocious, warrior-like work forces. The rite is besides intended to carry through a sense of repugnance towards adult females. The rites of transition are indispensable to the support of thoughts environing gender and societal construction. Men associate blood and menses as pollutants that they must distance themselves from ; and the ritual instructions cultivate a fright and malaise of adult females and their dross. In Sambian civilization, adult females are inferior, and parts of the male induction rites, such as nose-bleeding, map to reenforce male high quality. They are taught to believe and experience otherwise in respects to society ' s societal and gender functions.

Separation from adult females

The Sambia rite is made effectual for its participants by dividing the novices from all female influence. This is because Sambian civilization holds the strong belief that the female organic structure is polluted and toxicant to males. From birth until induction, male children are dependent on their female parents for nutrient, shelter and attention. Hence, the ritual procedure is stiffly structured with the design of strictly instilling the male child with manfulness and this is done by dividing them from their female nurturers. The first phase is to take the immature male children, normally between the ages of six and ten from general society and put them in a cult-house, non-dissimilar to " phallic cult " (Herdt, 1987: p. 101) , where they are placed under the duty of the older initiated work forces.

The separation, though it seems barbarous and heartless to us, is viewed as an important phase in transforming the immature male children into work forces. It stresses the different societal functions work forces and adult females are expected to play in society and connects to wider discourses about muliebrity and maleness. Furthermore, it is an effectual agency of guaranteeing the ritual is carried out decently and that the immature male children are capable merely to male influence from now on as they must now learn to reject qualities of empathy, dependence, and passiveness, which are associated with muliebrity. Wholly dividing the male children from female influence is perceived as the nucleus and most effectual agency of accomplishing masculinization. Therefore, this portion of the ritual is effectual because it literally and physically illustrates the thought that work forces and adult females exist otherwise and individually in the universe.

Extremist resocialisation

In the 'cult-house', they will easily and forcefully be taught the secret ways [2] and strong beliefs of the Sambia work forces thereby breeding a dramatic alteration in the pre-initiates cultural orientation and their individuality as male. They unlearn and lose their infantile gaiety and learn to conform to stiff functions, which pertain to traditional thoughts of maleness. Herdt (1987) footings this procedure "extremist resocialisation" (p. 102). During this procedure, the novices are forced to consume seeds, which the Sambia believe replaces the chest milk they ingested as babes. The intent of this ritual action is to to the full sever any dependence on or connexion to females and do them conversant with qualities of male virility and aggression. Therefore the rite is successful in directing the male childs towards the culturally standardised male gender function and individuality.

In another of his ethnographic histories, "Guardians of the Flute", Herdt (1981) cites a Sambia senior, foregrounding the importance of ritual fellatio, "a male child must be initiated and inseminated, otherwise the miss betrothed to him will outgrow him and run off to another adult male... If a male child does n't "eat" seeds, he remains little and weak." (p. 1). This simple yet redolent statement illustrates the manner in which the Sambia gestate the act of unwritten insemination as a manifestation of the aggressively different yet parallel ways work forces and adult females exist in relation to the societal universe. Hence, the ritual procedure of doing male childs into work forces is of extreme importance in a universe where work forces and adult females are polarised to the extreme. The ritual fellatio combined with avoiding adult females until puberty aids redesign the male

childs ' societal and titillating individualities and transforms them into heterosexual work forces. The Sambia are convinced of their deficiency of seeds and of the demand for ritual fellatio to obtain it, therefore ritualised fellatio is perceived as an effectual and concrete agencies of achieving maleness and the power of jerungdu (which is instilled in the seeds) .

Among both the Sambia and Gebusi, " sexual pleasance was received in direct and immediate reciprocity for the undertaking of ' growing ' a immature adult male into maturity " (Knauft, 2002: p. 14) , that is, through unwritten insemination. However, the Gebusi focal point chiefly on high degrees of aggression as a manner of accomplishing maleness (Knauft, 2002) ; while the Sambia focal point preponderantly on looks of gender... .. This is interesting because while both the Gebusi and Sambia induction rites are rather similar, they manner they are experient is really different for the persons.

Here, we see Geertz ' s (1973) definition of faith and rite in drama. That is, the Sambia fuse theoretical accounts of maleness (the jerungdu/male strength nowadays in seeds) and theoretical accounts for (the manner the ritual fellatio is carried out and the instructions that surround it) in a manner that is effectual for the participants, because these theoretical accounts are entwined with the " tempers and motives " of Sambia civilization. Namely, the accent of qualities such as strength, virility, bravery that are expected in all Sambian work forces. And interestingly, this rite of transition is carried out in the community ; it is a societal action, therefore doing it effectual for the male childs because they portion similar emotions and passions as they make their manner through each phase of induction. They realise that they

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can non and will non be considered ' real ' work forces in society without the induction.

Jerungdu: the kernel of maleness

The intent of the induction rite in both Gebusi and Sambia civilization is to cultivate maleness in the male child. In the secret society, the male child is instilled with the power of ' jerungdu ' through unwritten insemination. Jerungdu is non a charming symbol, but instead seen as a physical entity which empowers male child with maleness (Herdt, 1987: p. 56) . It is as though the thoughts about maleness and all that it entails are present in the physical signifier of jerungdu or seeds, and because the participants are physically and really consuming this power, they excessively will be infused with its masculinity. Because maleness is non considered natural or innate in Sambia society (Herdt, 2006: p. 23) , and in Gebusi society, excessively, (Knauff, 2002: P...) it must be achieved through devouring jerungdu, which will excite the growing of masculine qualities ; in footings of both biological science and personality.

This portion of the ritual is highly indispensable to guaranteeing the ritual is carried out decently and works. It seems to be effectual for the participants because it makes the construct of maleness touchable and corporeal. It is non something symbolic, but something stuff which is passed on to the novitiates. Therefore, because the lone manner jerungdu can be genuinely attained is through seeds, unwritten insemination is perceived as a critical portion of the ritual procedure. Afterall, a male child can merely go a adult male if he has jerungdu, the kernel of maleness, actively working inside him.

Following this, in some ways, the cognition of the secret and mystical powers of manhood ensures that the male child right follow the regulations and duties of the ritual. Therefore, the ritual procedures are effectual because they promise that the male child's authorization and maleness will be confirmed as legitimate in the eyes of society.

Structure and community

Initiation rites frequently centre on a peculiar point of life and are structured harmonizing to three phases: foremost, the person is shifted out of their normal societal function ; secondly, moved into a liminal[3]phase ; and eventually reintroduced into society with a new position (Bowen, 2005: p. 43) . The first three phases of the Sambia ritual procedure are a corporate experience and this is the separation phase Bowen identifies. The concluding three phases comprise the passage from adolescence to maturity and are an single experience. In fact, these last three phases are held “ betwixt and between ” (Herdt, 1987: p. 117) , the normal small town and the wood. This is a actual representation of the liminal universe of which the novices are a portion. This is a powerful and momentous experience for the novices because they are between societal functions. Harmonizing to Herdt, they must now get down to reflect on their individualities, gain things about their sexed organic structures and their future societal places. Once they have successfully completed all parts of the ritual, they will non be the same male child as they one time were, they are transformed – both in their societal functions within society and in their ain nature.

This construction of the rites of transition serves to make and underscore age-graded and ritual-ranked position places in Sambian society. At each of the six phases of induction, the novices learn more and more about what it is to be a adult male in Sambian civilization. And easy, the secrets of the cult-house are revealed to them as they move farther off from their female opposite numbers. There is a repeat of traditional behavior in these ritual procedures of insemination, and sexual insinuation that resides in the induction ceremonials. The induction begins before the male child turns ten and will last anyplace between 15 to 20 old ages (Herdt, 1987: p. 107) . There are six induction phases which lead to full manhood. These six phases are utterly indispensable in the masculinization procedure as strength and bravery are required in every facet of the male being: they need these qualities in war, in runing and adult females expect it (Herdt, 1987: p. 101) . The manner the rite is organized serves as an emblem of tradition, and this is effectual because the construction must be followed in order to accomplish higher degrees of maleness, and wholly travel off from the female universe. The events, rites and secrets shared are unknown to adult females and foreigners. In order for the ritual to be successful, the Sambia work forces must deviate the immature male childs ' attractive forces and sexual desires towards other males before they grow any bigger. The first three induction procedures are corporate, and serve to make bonding between the immature novitiates.

Transporting out the rite in a corporate, societal mode is effectual because there is a general acknowledgment amongst the novices of a correct and morally right form that must be followed (La Fontaine, 1985: p. 2) . In fact,

it seems that the construction of the induction rites operates as a mechanism which “ converts the obligatory into the desirable ” (Bell, 1992: p. 172) and maintains societal control and coherence. Bell farther underpins the impression that the norms and values of society ; in this instance, of the Sambia, become saturated with emotions and are farther intensified through the contact with constructions that pertain to tradition. This culminates in an experience of the ritual which is both touchable, immediate and highly effectual for the person concerned. Therefore, moving as a community is effectual because the emotions that are generated by the actions of the ritual are a shared experience, they are something everyone feels and can associate to. It is a symbolic codification which becomes touchable in a shared experience of emotion and action.

In both their ethnographic histories of the Gebusi, and the Sambia, Knauff and Herdt claim surprise and amazement at the manner these two communities celebrate the attainment of their maleness. There are ritual banquets, passage of spirit-world beliefs, and ritual homosexuality is actively and publically practiced. It is an elaborate and about flowery matter ; and is an highly exciting clip for those involved. There is a “ bacchic air about the night-time activities... some flirting, titillating jokes, and arousal occur ” (Herdt, 1981: p. 234) . Similarly, the Naven Rite, practiced by the Iatmul, involves gaudy and titillating behavior (...)

The first three phases of induction

The first three phases accomplish a sense of solidarity and commonalty between the male childs and wholly splinter them from female influence.

Overall, the ritual communicates to the male child's thoughts about how work forces should act and why they must exhibit qualities of strength and ferocity. Each phase is a marker of societal significance and celebrates the motion from outside the community into a new universe, where maleness is prized. New accomplishments and cognition are learnt, letting the male child to develop a deeper cognition of his civilization and its strong beliefs.

Overall, the ritual accomplishes a sense and wisdom of maleness in the immature work forces.

The first phase inducts the male child into the work force's cult, lasts for one hebdomad and include 18 ritual patterns. This is when they learn about fellatio and the importance of jerungdu, as I have already mentioned antecedently. Harmonizing to Herdt (1987) , portion of this phase is to nose-bleed the male child, which, to me, seems like an effectual societal control that compels the male child to get down to place with their maleness. They must now get down the necessary way to learning masculine behaviors and reject feminine behavior. If the male child fails to learn these qualities and stray, even a small, from the way to maleness, they will be teased and regarded as lesser. The 2nd phase is fundamentally a continuance of the first and is organised around the aggregation, ceremonial parading and eventually, the ingestion of ruddy pandanus fruits.

By the 3rd phase of induction, the male child is on the brink of coming into pubescence. This portion of the induction involves long hikes, dance, and nutrient want. Now, the male child is no longer a fellator, but now receives fellatio from the first and 2nd phase novices. They are considered unmarried men now, the rites of fellatio have worked their power, and the male child

are going biological work forces. Interestingly, the Sambia attribute the biological alterations in the male child to the success of the ritual, thereby breeding a sense that the ritual is indispensable and effectual in obtaining maleness, although it is pure happenstance. The first three phases are successful in developing lasting societal bonds between the male child and making a sense of " corporate effervescence " (Durkheim***source) . Furthermore, this sense of corporate effervescence in coupled with structured sequences and repeat operates as an reverberation of past tradition, which in bend evokes emotions and passions within the male child. All these things make the ritual effectual for its participants.

The concluding three phases of induction

The concluding three phases of induction are centred more on single experience than the chumminess of the male child. La Fontaine (1985) highlights the point that rites which involve a hierarchal order, as in the instance of the Sambia and the Gebusi, are effectual for participants because they see themselves as non merely being transformed, but besides deriving position. And, in most societies, the attainment of position seems to be of built-in value. Thus, doing the ritual effectual for each person. Because it links with wider societal discourses, you can non travel higher in society unless you are married and have kids. Therefore, the rite is effectual because it serves to construction society. Furthermore, these last phases are aimed at making subjective feelings of involvement and an designation among the immature work forces with maleness and all that it embodies. While it is impossible to state precisely how the male child would experience during the clip of the induction, it could be said that they

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experience strong emotions, sexual desires and experience a deep connexion and demand to turn into suitably gendered masculine figures in society.

Symbolism

Harmonizing to Bell (1992) , symbolism in ritual aids make the patterns effectual for the participants by breeding a sense of materiality in the idea associated with that symbol and the actions that surround it. Symbols voice cultural beliefs and values, and do these touchable for the ritual participants. There is much symbolism in each phase of the Sambia induction procedure, such as the usage of flutes and trees, but as both of these convey similar significances, I will concentrate on the symbols of the pandanus trees.

Harmonizing to Herdt (1981) , the Sambia parallel their generative abilities and rhythm with that of the pandanus tree Furthermore, tree sap is seen to keep the power of jerungdu, and is therefore imbibe it to refill their seeds as portion of the ritual procedure (p. 97-98) . In this case, the symbol of the pandanus tree and its sap service as permutations for seeds, but hold an equal sum of tangibleness and tangibility for the Sambia. In my sentiment, this seems to do the ritual effectual for the immature work forces because they attach emotion and feeling to these trees, and compare their sap to seeds, which comprises jerungdu, the kernel of manhood. And to them, this symbolic permutation is a manifestation of their beliefs about how seeds is created and how maleness is obtained. As Geertz high spots, they are “ concrete incarnations of thoughts, attitudes, opinions, yearnings, or beliefs ” (p.. 91) . Therefore, the symbolism of the pandanus tree sap acts as a agency to clarify and do existent the values of society.

A Calendrical rhythm

Initiation occurs when the crop season Begins, when nature ' s birthrate is at its extremum. Harmonizing to Herdt, the Sambia attribute the Sun with an abundant crop, because the Sun is another power in nature which has jerungdu. This widely held belief in Sambian civilization ties into Frazer ' s impression of " sympathetic thaumaturgy " whereby one thing produces something similar or something representative of its cause. In respects to this, charming beliefs about the Sun and its ability to spur on birthrate are interwoven into thoughts of crop rites and induction. Yet, the experience of the Sun in the induction rite is non simply a symbolic one ; it is besides experienced sultrily and the power of the jerungdu is felt to enfold the male being in brotherhood with nature. Therefore, the manner in which the Sambia draw jerungdu from the Sun and position it as a manifestation of masculine forces, serves to farther impel the immature male childs into a province of appropriate maleness. The male childs must seek to as if by magic absorb the Sun ' s power, which is a touchable experience, and non simply symbolic. Keeping the inductions during the harvest season allows the immature work forces to tie in their growing as males, with nature ' s growing. And, is an effectual agencies of guaranting that the male childs understand the importance of developing into fierce, warrior-like work forces.

Decision

In decision, New Guinea male rites of transition bend immature, sexually immature and weak male childs into strong, virile and ferocious warriors that embody the cultural outlooks of manhood. The primary illustration examined

in this essay was the Sambia rite, where immature work forces were taught to go masculine through ritualised fellatio and absolute separation from toxicant female influence. Such a effort is accomplished and made effectual through the usage of symbols which embody cultural norms and beliefs, a knowledge-based system of graded phases, popular discourse about maleness and beliefs about work forces ' s biological restrictions (that is, they ca n't bring forth seeds without finishing parts of the ritual) . The necessity of this ritual procedure is motivated by emotions, the fright of adult females, and the belief in the high quality of work forces who foremost founded the constructs of maleness and muliebrity. However, while it is hard to determine precisely how and why rites are effectual for their participants, it is interesting to analyze them in visible radiation of how we perceive their ritual behavior.

Stretching rites

Egestive rites

Ingestive rites or tabu

Insertive rites or turning away tabu

Confirmatory rites

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