

# Paleolithic religion

Religion



The concepts of animism and numinous is a contrast between spirituality and human experience. The concepts are relative to the concept of spirituality with no definitive distinction between sacred and secular in the Paleolithic culture.

The difference between animism and numinous is that animism is the spiritual belief that there is a soul in everything. Numinous belief is more of a feeling through experience. The two terms are used independently to help explain the artifacts and myths in the Paleolithic culture.

Paleolithic shows no distinction between religious and non religious beliefs. There are rituals in place in which everything is identified with a spiritual act. In comparison to modern humans, the artifacts and myths play an important role explaining human history against modern culture. In the myth of Heracles, he was commanded to perform labors to gain immortality. One of these labors was to kill a sacred deer. A deer with golden horns that was sacred was destined to be killed not for food but for fulfillment of a quest.

Heracles did not kill the deer but exhausted him because in Paleolithic culture one did not kill for sport but only for hunger or self-defense. Heracles shows humanity through this act of following his cultural beliefs and not killing the deer because it is sacred. The deer symbolized life, and in Paleolithic culture life is considered sacred. The golden horns of the deer in this myth honor show sacredness, and it is this myth that explains humanity portrayed in Paleolithic culture.

The myth of Adonis is another Paleolithic myth in which the goddess Venus fell in love with a man named Adonis. Adonis was warned not to harm the

animals, but instead attacked a boar that resulted in taking his life. The animals in this story also show importance because they are not to be hunted if they do not cause any danger.

They are again seen as sacred in this myth and not to be harmed. After the passing of Adonis, Venus made a memorial for her lover in which his blood was turned into a flower that symbolized the mourning of his death. In modern culture this artifact can be compared to the passing of humans and flowers being left on graves or during the funeral, a symbol of life and death.

Lastly is the myth of Sedna, in which a woman is married off by her father. Sedna is married to a sea bird that lies about his wealth and uses Sedna to be his slave. When her father came to take her home, sea birds surrounded the boat they were on and Sedna was cast overboard by her father as a symbol of sacrifice for his own life.

Her father went as far as dismembering her hands to ensure she would not survive. As a result she became queen of Adlivum "land of the dead". Shamans were to visit her in order to relieve her of pain and misery in return for her sending animals to be hunted for food. In this Paleolithic myth Sedna symbolized life and death, for without her happiness, there would be no food for the hunters and without food they would die.

The artifact and myths play a big role in showing how life and death is practiced in Paleolithic culture in comparison to modern society. Burials are considered symbolic by nature and show similarities through graves and flowers. Although it has changed over the years, life and death are considered sacred in human existence.