

VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE

A STUDY ON THE SERVICE OF CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

BY G. VAN DER LEEUW.

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.
Favete linguis; carmina non prius
Audita Musarum sacerdos
Virginibus puerisque canto.

In this celebrated Ode Horace does not speak as a mere poet, but as a seer, as a prophet and a priest. If the conception, formulated by Altheim¹⁾, that the poets of the Augustan Restoration spoke and felt not only as poets laureate or patriotic romantics, but as *vates* in the old sense of that word, is at all right, it certainly is so here. The scene is that of a sacred act of worship; the *profani* are repudiated, the unpropitious word is prohibited; the priest commences his *carmina*, i.e. the sacred formulae used in ritual. But at the same time the prophet speaks, the preacher, urging a new unheard-of doctrine: that of returning to the simple life of the primitive Roman community²⁾. And this *carmen* of a novel kind in a very ancient and venerable form is sung with the cooperation of maidens and youths^{2a)}.

The magnificent lines of Horace point to an interesting feature of Roman and Greek ritual, i.e. to the employment of children

¹⁾ F. Altheim, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* III, 1933, 84 sqq.

²⁾ Cf. G. van der Leeuw and P. J. Enk, *Horatius in dezen tijd*, 1935.

^{2a)} It is possible to translate: „to an audience of maidens and youths”, and „by maidens and youths”, but the latter translation is much more appropriate.

in worship: in investigating this feature, however, we will find an underlying conception of a much broader scope, viz. that of the special aptitude of children for getting into contact with the Powers sought for or avoided by rites.

It may be supposed to be well-known that the aptitude for the performing of or the participating in rites varies according to the "disposition" of different kinds of people. That there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and still another of the stars, is also true of ritual. It is not the same thing to approach the Powers being a man or being a woman, being a child, or being an adult, being young or being old. There is a disposition, an aptitude that is given and may be either a drawback or an advantage in ritual. We all know that the sexes are not equal in their relation to the Powers and we do not even need to visit a Synagogue to see it confirmed: we do not see any women at the altar nor even, in most churches, in the pulpit³⁾. In Roman ritual strangers, slaves, women and girls are sometimes excluded: "hostis, vinctus, mulier, virgo exesto"⁴⁾. In constituting the relations of man to the Powers the power of him who seeks to establish a contact, must be taken in account. The disposition of power in a man or woman may be adverse to establishing that contact, or on the other hand it may be favorable. For that reason in some cults women are excluded, in others men; in most communal worships strangers are regarded as bearers of a strange, unaccountable, dangerous power and for that reason excluded.

In the following remarks we deal with the special "disposition", the Power proper to children.

PATRIMI MATRIMI.

That power is apparent in a quite remarkable manner in the

³⁾ Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, 1933, 189 sq.

⁴⁾ Festus, p. 82.

ancient Roman institution of the *Patrimi* and *Matrimi*. A *puer patrimus et matrimus* was, according to Festus, a free-born boy, who ministered to the wants of the *flamen dialis* when sacrificing; he was also called *camillus*⁵⁾. The designation *patrimus matrimus* means that both parents of the boy were still living⁶⁾.

Servius in his commentary on the *Aeneid* tells us that the boys should be of tender age (*impuberes*), of patrician descent and *investes*, i. e. not yet ripe for wearing the *toga virilis*. In his notes on the *Georgica* he adds that they should be born from a marriage concluded after the ancient sacred manner, i. e. a *confarreatio*⁷⁾. The Flaminica was served by girls, *camillae*, in the same way as the Flamen by the boys. The patrician descent was obligatory only as long as it was so for the priesthood itself, i. e. until the promulgation of the *Lex Ogulnia* (300)⁸⁾. In another passage of Festus the children are called *flaminus* and *flaminia*, and the ministering girl is designated as *sacerdotula*⁹⁾.

The Greek counterpart to the *patrimi et matrimi* are the *παῖδες ἀμφιθαλεῖς*. *Ἀμφιθαλής* according to Pollux, is one

⁵⁾ Festus, p. 93: *puer dicebatur ingenuus patrimus et matrimus, qui flameni diali ad sacrificia praeministrabat: antiqui enim ministros camillos dicebant.*

⁶⁾ Festus, p. 126: *Matrimus ac patrimus dicuntur quibus matres et patres adhuc vivunt.*

⁷⁾ Servius ad *Aen.* XI, 543: *Romani quoque pueros et puellas nobiles et investes camillos et camillas appellabant flaminicarum et flaminum praeministros (the same text in Macrobius, Sat. 3, 8, 7); 588: ministros enim et ministras impuberes camillos et camillas in sacris vocabant. Ad Georg. I, 31: unde confarreatio appellabatur, ex quibus nuptiis patrimi et matrimi nascebantur.*

⁸⁾ Cf. Samter, in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Camillus*. In the *Ritus Graecus* also the children of emancipated slaves are admitted as *camilli*. Cf. Daremberg et Saglio, s.v.

⁹⁾ Festus, p. 93. Cf. Aug. Roszbach, *Untersuchungen über die römische Ehe*, 1853, 138 sqq.

whose parents are both living¹⁰). In Andromache's complaint in the Iliad she evokes the moving scene of their child, Astyanax, after his father's death, being teased, beaten and driven away at meals by the other boys who are ἀμφιθαλῆς: the orphan has no right among them:

οὐδὲ σὸς γὰρ πατὴρ μεταδίδνται ἡμῖν¹¹)

THEIR FUNCTION.

The chief function of these children was to assist in sacrifice. They are often mentioned together with the flute-player and are also called *ministri*¹²). In the acts of the Fratres Arvales they are described as ministering with incense and wine and bringing them to the altar¹³). They were clad in a short tunic, the legs bare, and they carry the *acerra*, i.e. the vessel containing the incense, and the *praefericulum*, the sacrificial jug. They generally wear long hair and a wreath of laurel. A statue of the Vatican shows the ideal type¹⁴). The *rica* or *ricinium*, a small cloak covering the shoulders often completed the dress. In Greece, especially in mystery cult.

¹⁰) Pollux, *Onomast.* III, 25: ὅτε δ' οἱ γονεῖς ἀμφότεροι περιέειδον, οὕτως ἀμφιθαλῆς ὀνομάζεται.

¹¹) *Iliad*, XXII, 496.

¹²) Suetonius, *Tib.* 44; *Galba* 8; Ovidius, *Fasti* II, 650. Livius 37, 3, 6: decem ingenui, decem virgines, patrimi omnes matrimique ad id sacrificium adhibiti.

¹³) Henzen 12 sq., cf. VI sq. See also Athenaeus X, p. 425 a; Arnobius, *Adv. nat.* IV, 31.

¹⁴) Baumeister, *Denkm.* II, 1107 sq.; Habel, in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Acerra*; Samter, in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Camillus*. Cf. the scene of the sacrifice of the *Suovetaurilia* in the triumphal arch of Constantine, showing Marcus Aurelius, with *tibicen* etc. and a *camillus* holding the *acerra* (repr. in Joh. Quasten, *Musik und Gesang in den Kulturen der heidnischen Antike und christl. Frühzeit*, 1930, 12. Pl. 5).

the ἄμφιθαλεῖς seem to have been wholly or nearly naked. But of this there is no trace at Rome, as far as I can see¹⁵⁾.

But not only service in sacrificial cult proper was the task of *camilli* and *camillae* at Rome, of the ἄμφιθαλεῖς in Greece. All sorts of preparations for ritual and service in ritual were expected of them. So we hear that the *rica*, worn by the *flaminica*, was manufactured by *virgines ingenuae, patrimae, matrimae*¹⁶⁾. The *camilli* also served at meals¹⁷⁾. In Greece the ἄμφιθαλεῖς were employed to cut branches from the sacred trees, the laurel and the olive¹⁸⁾. They have an important function in festivals and processions, among them the marriage ceremonies. In the *πομπαῖ*, held on different occasions, they play an important part. In the wedding procession they carry the wedding torch, in that of the *Salii* they are at the head of the train (*Salii* as well as *Vestals* should be chosen from among the *patrimi et matrimi* exclusively¹⁹⁾. At Magnesia nine boys and nine girls, ἄμφιθαλεῖς, were in the cult and probably also in the procession of Zeus Sosipolis²⁰⁾. It is a *παῖς ἄμφιθαλής* who is the bearer of the *Eiresione* and places it at the doors of Apollo's temple at the festival of the *Pyanepsia*²¹⁾.

At the Roman wedding ceremony the *camillus* carries the *cumerum*, the nuptial vessel, filled with corn. According to

¹⁵⁾ Festus p. 288; A. Oepke, *Ἀμφιθαλεῖς im griechischen und hell. Kult* (Archiv für Rel. wiss. 31, 1934), 53.

¹⁶⁾ Festus, p. 288.

¹⁷⁾ Henzen, VI sq.

¹⁸⁾ *Schol. Pindarus, Pyth. II, 4, 14* (p. 298 B). Cf. Stengel, *Kultusaltertümer*, 36; Marquardt, *Röm. Staatsverwaltung*, III, 227 sqq.

¹⁹⁾ Dionysius Halic., *Ant. Rom.* II, 71; Rossbach, *Unters.*, 138 sqq. See also A. W. Cramer, *Kleine Schriften*, 1837, 92 sqq.

²⁰⁾ O. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, III, 1938, 176 sqq.

²¹⁾ Eustathius, *Comm. in Iliad.* XXII, 495 (p. 1283). Cf. Stengel in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Ἀμφιθαλεῖς*; Mercklin, *Patrimi matrimi, Ἀμφιθαλεῖς* (Zeitschr. f. d. Altertumswiss. 12, 1854, Heft 2).

Festus this vessel was also called *camillum* after the bearer ²²). A special function he had also in games; Cicero states that "ludi non sunt rite facti, when a dancer stands still or a flute player suddenly stops or puer ille patrimus et matrimus lets go the processional carriage or drops his whip, or when an aedilis makes an error in the words (he has to recite) or in the (manipulating of) the sacrificial vessel" ²³).

We have evidence that the *pueri patrimi et matrimi* were employed in mystery cults also. The great dionysiac inscription of Torre Nova counts among a great many titles of dignitaries also two ἀμφιθαλείς ²⁴), and the magnificent mural paintings of the Villa Igem show us the picture of a naked boy occupied in learning to read from a scroll, who might well be such a dionysiac juvenile minister ²⁵).

A very important function the *camilli* had at the celebration of the *Ludi saeculares*. The great inscription commenting upon the ritual of these games as instituted and renewed by Augustus, requires "pueros virginesque patrimos matrimosque ad carmen canendum chorosque habendos frequentes ut adsint itemque ad ea sacrificia atque ad eos ludos parandos diligenter meminerint", it tells us further that "sacrificio perfecto pueri XXVII quibus denuntiatum erat patrimi et matrimi et puellae totidem carmen cecinerunt" and finally that this song was composed by Q. Horatius Flaccus ²⁶).

²²) Festus, p. 63; cf. Olck in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Cumerum*; Rossbach, *Unters.* 317 sqq. Prof. Wagenvoort draws my attention to Apuleius, *Apol.* 44, where it is said that a child evidently meant to act as a *camillus* should be consecrated by the imposition of hands („cuius caput contingat"), cf. Quasten, *Musik u. Gesang*, 48.

²³) Cicero, *De har. resp.* II, 23; nearly the same text in Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.* IV, 31.

²⁴) M. P. Nilsson, En marge de la grande inscription bacchique du Metropolitan Museum (Studi e Materiali di Storia delle religioni, X, 1934, 1 sqq.); see also Kern, *Rel. der Gr.* III, 199 sq.

²⁵) Cf. Oepke, l.l. 53.

²⁶) CIL VI, 32323; cf. Zosimus, 2, 5, 6.

THEIR SONG.

The *Carmen saeculare* is sung by our *pueri* and *puellae*:

Tempore sacro,
Quo Sibyllini monuere versus
Virgines lectas puerosque castos
Dis quibus septem placuere colles
Dicere carmen.

A dance is joined to the sacred song ²⁷⁾. In Greek this *carmen* is called *ῥυμος* ²⁸⁾, as Cassius Dio informs us. Now we know that a *carmen* is a "charm" which is sung, an incantation, as we still say, and that a *hymnus* is a song in presence of the deity. Both designations point in the direction not only of a religious song, a "hymn" as we say, but of an effective rite, as Zosimus still knows who says that the *Carmen saeculare* was sung in Greek and Roman and speaks of "hymns and paeans *δι' ὧν αἱ ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίωνς σώζονται πόλεις* ²⁹⁾. Sacred song is a direct way of getting into contact with the powers. But it is more. It establishes the presence of the deity. It is an invocation, i.e. it is a call to the Power invoked. The oldest form is the so-called *Hymnos kletikos* of which Plutarch gives us a classical instance in the Hymn of the women of Elis sung to ascertain the epiphany of Dionysus ³⁰⁾. When the name of a god is called in song, i.e. to the compelling strains of the *carmen*, he appears to the community. Thus it is of the utmost importance to whom the recital of such a hymn shall be confided.

At Rome and in Greece the boys and girls both of whose parents were still living were selected for this holy office. They

²⁷⁾ In the inscription: "chorosque habendos".

²⁸⁾ Cassius Dio 59, 7, 1: *Καὶ οἱ τε εὐγενέστατοι παῖδες, ὅσοι γὰρ καὶ ἀμφιθαλεῖς ἦσαν, μετὰ παρθένων ὁμοίων τὸν ῥυμον ᾄσαν.*

²⁹⁾ Zosimus, 2, 5, 6, cf. 2, 6 sq.

³⁰⁾ Plutarchus, *Quaest. graec.* 36.

"pronuntiant carmen" ³¹⁾, as Macrobius puts it, and Suetonius tells us that boys and girls of noble birth "carmine modulato" sing the "laudes" of Caligula on the Capitol ³²⁾. "Laudes" like *hymnus* and *carmen* has a special liturgical meaning: *laudes dicere* is the singing of hymns in praesentia dei. We think of the last stanza of Horace's poem:

Haec Iovem sentire deosque cunctos
Spem bonam certamque domum reporto,
Doctus et Phoebi chorus et Dianae
Dicere laudes ³³⁾.

But we also think of the liturgical sense of *laudes* and *laudes dicere* in the Church and of the *Laude* by Jacopone da Todi.

In a wider sense also the *camilli* were the songsters. They are mentioned as the singers of liturgical phrases at sacrifice ³⁴⁾, but also on other occasions. The Trojan horse was led into the besieged town by "pueri innuptaeque puellae", who "sacra canunt" ³⁵⁾. The song of the Eiresione is sung by the *παῖδες ἐμφιεσταίης* ³⁶⁾. To Venus boys and girls sing "laudes" to a dance, as again Horace tells us:

Illic bis pueri die
Numen cum teneris virginibus tuum
Laudantes pede candido
In morem Salium ter quatient humum ³⁷⁾.

³¹⁾ Macrobius, *Sat.* I, 6, 14.

³²⁾ Suetonius, *Caligula* 16. — The connection between *camillus* and *carmen* is so important that already the Ancients derived one from the other: *camillus* from **casmen*, *carmen*, cf. the *Camenae*, the Songstresses. We shall see that this etymology is not very probable. Cf. Mercklin, l.l.

³³⁾ See H. Wagenvoort, *De Horatii Carm. saec. compositione* (Mnemosyne 3, S. IV, 1936, 148 sq.).

³⁴⁾ Athen, X, p. 425 a.

³⁵⁾ Vergil, *Aeneis*, II, 237 sqq.

³⁶⁾ Eustathius in *Iliad.* XXII, 495, p. 1283.

³⁷⁾ Horatius, *Odes* IV, 1.

In the Letters of the same poet the "casti pueri" sing prayers together with the virgins, taught by the *vates*³⁸). The holy rite of gaining a sacred object by song must be performed by chaste ministers, by boys and girls: sacrifice becomes effective, prayer efficient and the praise of the Powers is solidly established by their innocent treble voices. It is Catullus who summarizes this office of the children in a few beautiful lines:

Dianae sumus in fide
Puellae et pueri integri:
Dianam pueri integri
Puellaeque canamus³⁹).

PUTTI.

It is certainly possible that the stress laid on the part of children in worship by the poets of the Augustan and post-Augustan age was enhanced by the romanticism of those days. Wagenvoort has given us a very vivid description of the romantic love for children, the doting on all things childish that characterized the age of Augustus⁴⁰). Alexandria was the source whence this rather artificial love for children sprang: the *deliciae alexandrinae* were petted in an incredible fashion, but more like animals or toys than human beings. They were bought by the rich, who let them play naked in their palaces. Cleopatra when she came to meet Antony in a ship was surrounded by a bevy of Erotes, naked little children. They are the models for those innumerable *putti* who have since graced the art of Europe

³⁸) Horatius, *Epist.* II, 1, 132 sq. See also Vopiscus (*Script. Hist. Aug.*), *Aurelianus*, 19: *patrinis matrimisque pueris carmen indicite*.

³⁹) Catullus, 34, 1 sqq.; cf. A. Rutgers van der Loeff, in *Hermeneus*, 11, 1930, 148 sqq.

⁴⁰) H. Wagenvoort, *Varia vita*, 1927, 42 sq.

from the Roman fresci to Tiziano's Sacrifice to Venus. But if this is possible, it is quite certain that the function of children in worship in Greek and Roman Antiquity is rooted in beliefs and conceptions of much older date and reaching into the very depth of human nature

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE HOUSE.

The *camilli* were appointed for some years. But the *Annales Fratrum arvalium* in telling us this add that they were at the service of the Arvales not "ut *camilli*, sed *filiorum instar*: ex more vetusto" ⁴¹). The truth is that the *camilli* and *camillae* were originally no others than the sons and daughters of the house. Dionysius Halicarnassensis knows this, as he tells us that at the origin of Rome Romulus gave to every one a function in ritual according to his "disposition": for there are some functions specially male and others specially female. There are also functions which can only be discharged by children, viz. by *παῖδες ἀμφιθαλεῖς*; so the wives of the priests ought to collaborate with their husbands and their children should render the sacred services allotted to them. However if a priest has no family he may choose children from other families, *κοῦρον καὶ κόρην*. The boys remain a *ὑπηρέτης τοῖς ἱεροῖς* until they are of age, the girls as long as they are virgins. It is thus that the institution of the Vestals was created ⁴²).

There are however indications that the ministering children were not only the sons and daughters of priests, but of anyone. And this is the more probable as in ancient Rome every father of a family was a priest in his own domestic cult. A very ancient line is quoted by different authors, a sort of counsel given by a father who is a farmer to his young son:

⁴¹) Henzen, l.l.

⁴²) Dion. Halic., *Ant. Rom.* II, 22.

Hiberna pulvere verno luto grandia farra,
 camille, metes;
 Winter dust and spring slime make that you
 will harvest big grains of spelt, *camillus* ⁴³).

In this "rusticum canticum" the father calls his son *camillus*. Festus says that the ancients called all boys *camillos* ⁴⁴).

The conclusion drawn already by Rossbach is obvious: the *camillus* was the son of the house and became an acolyte only in course of time ⁴⁵). To understand fully what this means we must try to visualize the ancient Roman farm. Its sacred centre is the hearth, its priest the *pater familias* (as it is still in the descriptions Cato gives of rural life), its priestess the farmer's wife, and the children, boys and girls serve them in the performing of the rites. This service appertained to the guarding of the holy fire and the fetching of water in the first place, and both these offices are counted among the tasks of the Vestales, who are no other than the successors of the girls of the house, the *camillae*. Another task of both boys and girls was the fetching provisions from the *penus*, i.e. that curious institution so difficult to understand to a modern mind which is a compound of a sacrarium, the seat of the power and the holy strength of the house, and a larder. Columella stresses the necessity that those who are going to touch the sacred stores on which life depends must be chaste; therefore they must wash "priusquam penora contingant. Propter quod his necessarium esse pueri vel virginis ministerium, per quos promantur, quae usus postulaverit" ⁴⁶). The original conditions are still extant in the function of the wives of the Rex sacrorum and the Flamen

⁴³) Servius ad *Georg.* I, 101; Macrobi., *Sat.* 5, 20, 18.

⁴⁴) Alii dicunt omnes pueros ab antiquis *camillos* appellatos, sicut habetur in antiquo carmine etc. Festus, p. 93.

⁴⁵) Rossbach, *Unters. üb. die röm. Ehe*, 317 sqq., cf. 138 sqq.

⁴⁶) Columella, XII, 4.

dialis who are as such priestesses⁴⁷⁾. The primitive situation as it was in the cult community of the Roman house is evoked in a few masterly lines of Tacitus, when describing the ceremonies at the restoration of the Capitol by Vespasian: "dein virgines Vestales, cum pueris puellisque patrimis matrimisque aqua e fontibus amnibusque hausta perluere"⁴⁸⁾. We have already mentioned that the Vestal must be chosen from among the *patrimae et matrimae*⁴⁹⁾.

In this connection the reason why the children serving in worship should possess both their parents is clear. Farnell supposes that if they were orphans or semi-orphans, the stain of death would render them impure. On the other hand the *patrimi et matrimi* were sure to be full of life. I cannot see the validity of this argument. We cannot suppose that orphans in the opinion of Antiquity were impure during life. The solution seems much simpler: if the *patrimi et matrimi* originally were the sons and daughters of the house, it is obvious that they should be in possession of both their parents, for if they are not, the primitive community is not complete. They cannot be ministers in domestic worship when they are not children in the full sense of the word. The claim that they shall be *patrimi et matrimi* is nothing but the consequence of their status as children of the house. The orphan who has no right, as we saw in Homer, cannot be a servant in the domestic ritual on which all rights of the family are based.

This is confirmed in a curious way by a story told by Pausanias. In Messenia it was the custom that a priestess of Hera, who lost a child, resigned⁵⁰⁾. The inference is clear: just as a child cannot serve in worship without a mother or a father, a

⁴⁷⁾ Cf. G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*², 1912, 496.

⁴⁸⁾ Tacitus, *Hist.* 4, 53.

⁴⁹⁾ A. W. Cramer, l.l.; Gellius, *Noctes atticae* I, 12. Cf. Marquardt, l.l.; Oepke, l.l.

⁵⁰⁾ Pausanias IV, 12, 4.

mother cannot be priestess without a child. At Rome the difficulty was met by the admittance of *patrimi et matrimi* from other parents. The more primitive Messenian sentiment refuses all subterfuge and disqualifies a priestess without a child.

THE TOGA PRAETEXTA.

The *patrimi et matrimi* wore the *toga praetexta*⁵¹). Warde Fowler has devoted to this dress as worn by children one of his most penetrating essays⁵²). Its purport comes tho this: Roman children of free birth, both boys and girls, from the moment they could walk to the age of puberty wore the *toga praetexta*, the well known robe with purple border. They shared this costume with the so-called curule magistrates, i.e. those magistrates whose authority descended from that of the Rex. They alone originally possessed the right to offer sacrifice in behalf of the community though in course of time there were extensions of the privilege. Next to the magistrates the priests of the ancient orders wore the *toga praetexta* during sacrifice, also the *Fratres aruales*, and the person who devotes himself during battle together with the enemy to the Powers of death: prototype of the *simul hostia ac sacrificator*. The Vestals did not wear the toga, but they and also the *flaminica* wore a headdress with a purple border⁵³). The most important of the ancient priesthood, the *flamen dialis*, wore the *praetexta* always and everywhere. Fowler concludes that it was a holy garment worn by those who sacrifice.

In this capacity, according to Fowler, it is also the dress of the *camilli* and *camillae*; they are *investes*, i.e. not yet ripe for the *toga virilis*; they "were holy and wore the holy garment",

⁵¹) Henzen, 12 sq., cf. Macrob., *Sat.* 1, 6, 14; W. Warde Fowler, *The religious experience of the Roman people*, 1922, 177 sq.

⁵²) W. Warde Fowler, *The toga praetexta of Roman children*, in *Roman Essays and Interpretations*, 1920, 42 sqq.

⁵³) Festus, p. 288.

and they wore it always like the *flamen dialis*, because they were very precious and must be guarded against evil influences. But this is not the only reason. Fowler enumerates three: 1. The children were ministrants at sacrifice, 2. they must be guarded, 3. they were "unspotted from the world". A fourth reason is of secondary importance: the *praetexta* came to be a sign of free birth, as only *ingenui* could wear it. But the original meaning of the dress, according to Fowler, is protection against evil influences. He quotes Horace describing the prayer of the boy who is victim of the sorcery of Canidia:

per hoc inane purpurae decus precor ⁵⁴),

— the purple of the *praetexta* is a real protection and makes the boy sacred, — and Persius: "when first the guardianship of the purple ceased to awe me, and the boss of boyhood was hung up as an offering to the Lares" ⁵⁵). Here the magical significance of the purple border is still apparent: it is a *custos*, and both the mark of free birth and the symbol of ethical purity are secondary, whereas the service in worship is only a consequence of the being guarded: those approaching sacred things and Powers in all religions must be guarded in some way.

It was *nefas* for *praetextati* to utter obscene words, i.e. words of ill omen, and when the three boys who conducted the bride after the wedding wanted to say something of this kind they first took off their *praetexta* ⁵⁶). The most illuminating passage quoted by Fowler is by Quintilianus who speaks of "sacrum praetextarum, quo sacerdotes velantur, quo magistratus, quo

⁵⁴) Horatius, Ep. 5, 7.

⁵⁵) Persius, *Sat.* 5, 30 sq.:

Cum primum pavido custos mihi purpura cessit
Bullaque succinctis laribus donata pepandit.

This *bulla* is itself also a protection; it is worn round the neck and contains the *fascinans*, the symbol of fertile life.

⁵⁶) Festus, p. 244.

infirmi⁵⁷ tatem pueritiae sacram facimus ac venerabilem". And indeed, the situation is expressed here with a clearness that could not be bettered by modern science of religion: the infirmity of childhood is made sacred and to be worshipped by the purple. Apparent weakness is converted into power. This power is summed up by Pliny, speaking of the purple as effecting the *majestas pueretiae*⁵⁸). Fowler concludes by pointing out that Ascanius in the Aeneid is the ideal of a Roman boy and *camillus* and that his character helps us to understand what Juvenal meant in his famous words: „maxima debetur puero reverentia”.

We have followed Fowler throughout his argument. We have reached the conclusion that children possess a special infirmity which may be converted into a special force and which enables them to face the Powers in worship. This power is effected or guarded by the purple of the *toga praetexta*; it is called *majestas* and it is something to be worshipped. This *majestas* must of course have a great deal to do with the possession of two living parents. I recall the line of Catullus:

Puellae et pueri integri.

What is this integrity that can be called majesty? To answer this question we must revert to etymology.

KADMIEL.

It is very probable that the Roman institution of the service of children in worship was either of Greek origin or at least a common inheritance of Greece and Rome. The very close parallels between the *pueri patrimi et matrimi* and the *παῖδες ἀμφιθαλεῖς* and the information given by the authors, among

⁵⁷) Quintilianus, *Decl.* 340.

⁵⁸) C. Plinius Sec., *Nat. Hist.* IX, 127 (60); cf. Festus, p. 368, who speaks of a "vesticeps puer, qui jam vestitus est pubertate" as contrasted with the "investis, qui necdum pubertate vestitus est".

them Dionysius Halicarnassensis, that this service is a Greek rite, render the probability nearly a certainty⁵⁹). But neither Greece nor Rome were the native country of the *camilli*.

The ancient authors nearly all know that an older form of *camillus* is **casmillus*, Greek *κίσμιλος*⁶⁰). The warlike virgin Camilla in the Aeneid of whom we will speak presently is called after her mother Casmilla; Metabus

matrisque vocavit
nomine Casmillae mutata parte Camillam⁶¹).

Servius in his commentary accounts for this change in the name of the virgin in a way which is very important for our subject as a whole. He says: "When speaking about the name Casmilla Statius Tullianus says in his work *De Vocabulis* in the first book that Callimachus asserted that Mercurius with the Tuscans was called Camillus, and that this word signifies *deorum prae-ministrum*; hence Vergil says well that Metabus called his daughter Camilla, i.e. a servant of Diana. For Pacuvius also when speaking about Medea in his work of that name says: *caelitum camilla exspectata advenis, salve hospita*". And further on: "For *camilla* is a sort of servant (*ministra*), as I have explained above: they called the *ministros et ministras* not yet adult *camillos et camillas* in ritual; hence also Mercurius in the Etruscan language is called Camillus, that is to say a minister to the gods"⁶²).

The whole purport of this passage will presently become clearer, but already at this stage of our argument we can say that Servius (and Varro) know that *casmillus* is the true form of *camillus* and that this means a servant of the gods. Now Berger in an essay dating back as far as 1889 has proposed to

⁵⁹) Dion. Halic., *Ant. Rom.* II, 22, cf. Ph. Berger, *Camillus* (Mem. de la Soc. de Linguistique, VI, 1889, 140 sqq.).

⁶⁰) Festus, p. 63.

⁶¹) Vergil, *Aen.* XI, 542; cf. Macrobius, *Sat.* 3, 8, 5.

⁶²) Servius ad *Aen.* XI, 543, 558; cf. Varro, de l.l. 7, 34

derive this word *κάσμιλος - * *casmillus* from the semitic קדמיאל meaning he who is "ante deum", i.e. a minister of God ⁶³). Gesenius had already spoken about this possibility but had himself preferred to connect *camillus* with קמיל, i.e. an oracle of God. Berger points out that the word *camillus* is a "mot bien romain, devenu nom propre de bonne heure", as is apparent from the well known instances of Camilla, the sister of the Horatii, M. Furius Camillus, the conqueror in the war with the Gauls etc., but that the Romans themselves knew about its foreign origin. The oldest passage is in Varro who derives the word from a samothracian origin: *casmilos*, meaning *ministra* ⁶⁴). It was used in the cult of the Kabeiroi and this cult was of semitic origin. "Casmillos est un des noms en même temps qu'une des formes multiples que prend Mercure chez les peuples sémitiques de l'Asie occidentale". Berger then recalls some passages where Kasmilos is mentioned, among them a Scholion of Lycophron's Cassandra: Κάσμιλος ὁ Ἑρμῆς Βοιωτικῶς ⁶⁵). Boeotia is the country of Kadmos, which is another name for Hermes ⁶⁶). — The gist of the etymological argument is that *camillus*, *κάσμιλος, is originally *κάδμιλος, in the same manner as ὀδμή = ὄσμή, ἴδμεν = ἴσμεν.

Berger's derivation of *camillus* was accepted by Keller who added that already Dionysius Halicarnassensis connected *camillus* and Κάδμιλος. He accepted also Berger's theory that the semitic Kadmiel originally was the name of a deity called Hermes by the Greeks and asserted that the children serving in worship were called after their god, viz. "he who goes before

⁶³) Ph. Berger, *Camillus* (Mém. de la Soc. de Linguistique VI, 1889, 140 sqq.).

⁶⁴) Varro, de l.l. 7, 34.

⁶⁵) Ook wel: Κάσμιλος λέγεται ὁ Ἑρμῆς παρὰ τοῖς Τυρσηνοῖς. Lycophron, *Cassandra*, 162 c. Schol.

⁶⁶) *Etymol. Gud.* s.v. Κάδμος λέγεται ὁ Ἑρμῆς παρὰ τοῖς Τυρσηνοῖς. — Another etymology is given by Max Mayer, *Mythistorica* (Hermes, 27, 1892), 510 spp.

God", i.e. "servant of God", — a process that is common in ancient religion. The original form **camilus* was changed to *camillus* through conformation to the ending of the diminutive, as it referred to children. Name and institution passed into Rome through the medium of Etruria ⁶⁷). Samter in relating these arguments asserts that the etymology as proposed by Berger and Keller is impossible, because the name *camillus* refers to every free born boy. But as we have seen this is no valid objection because every free born boy was indeed a minister in the worship of the primitive Roman family ⁶⁸).

Walde as well as Ernoust and Meillet, in their etymological dictionaries, are content to leave the matter doubtful ⁶⁹), relating the argument of Berger, but leaving open a genuinely Roman derivation, in connection with the mythical songstresses, the Camenae.

The name קָרְמִיאל is found in the Old Testament as that of a Levite ⁷⁰). It can indeed be rendered "qui ante Deum est", he who serves God, though the translation: God is before, God is the First, seems also possible. The rendering of Berger possesses the greatest probability, as the verb קָרַם in Hiphil means "to render service to someone".

The name Kadmiel as found in the books of Esra and Nehemiah ⁷¹) may be a patronymic, not designating an individual, but a clan. At all events it is a very proper name for a Levite.

⁶⁷) Otto Keller, *Lateinische Volksetymologie und Verwandtes*, 1891, 241 sqq.

⁶⁸) Samter in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Camillus*.

⁶⁹) H. Walde, *Lat. Etym. Wörterbuch*, 1906, s.v. *Camillus*; H. Ernoust—A. Meillet, *Dict. étym. de la langue latine*, 1932, s.v. *Camillus*.

⁷⁰) Gesenius—Buhl, s.v.; cf. M. A. Levy, *Phönizisches Wörterbuch*, 1864, s.v. קָרַם.

⁷¹) *Esra* 2 : 40, 3 : 9; *Neh.* 7 : 43, 9 : 4 sq., 10 : 9, 12 : 8, 24.

THE KABEIROI.

Etymological questions are seldom solved in a wholly satisfactory way. And anyhow I am far from assuming the authority to attempt such a solution ⁷²). It is evident that in this case — and perhaps in most other cases also — etymological difficulties must be explained by having recourse to historical argument. There certainly is in this case a fair probability that the hypothesis of the semitic origin of the *camillus* is right. Now we must ask: is there any information obtainable from other sources?

The etymological argument has carried us from Rome to Tuscany and Samothrace. It has moreover suggested some connection between the *camillus* and the god Hermes. Macrobius told us *camillus* was a Tuscan name for Mercurius ⁷³), and Servius said the same: "Mercurius Etrusca lingua Camillus dicitur, quasi minister deorum" ⁷⁴). But the text of Varro already mentioned tells us a great deal more ⁷⁵). *Camilla* signifies *ministra*. Thus the *camillus* is a servant at marriage. For that reason also the divine Servant of the Great Gods in the mysteries of Samothrace is called Casmillus.

⁷²) The theory of Olck (in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Cumerum*) that *camillus* should be derived from the *camillum* (supra p. 5) or *cumerum* be wears, which he explains as equivalent to Lat. *camur*, Greek *καμάρα*, Middle Germ. *hame*, Germ. *hemde*, should at least be mentioned.

⁷³) Macrobius, *Sat.* 3, 8, 5.

⁷⁴) Servius ad *Aen.* XI, 558, cf. 543.

⁷⁵) Varro de l.l. 7, 34: "Caelitum camilla, expectata advenis: salve, hospita". Camillam qui glossemata interpretati dixerunt ministram; addi oportet, in his quae occultiora itaque dicitur nuptiis (s)camillus qui cum(m)erum fert, in quo quid sit, in ministerio plerique extrinsecus nesciunt. Hinc Casmil(l)us nominatur Samothracis mysteris diis quidam amminister diis magnis. Verbum esse graecum arbitror, quod apud Callimachum in poematibus eius inveni. — Cf. also F. Chapouthier, *Les Dioscures au service d'une déesse*,

Now we know the gods in Samothrace to have been four in number: Axieros, Axiokersa, Axiokersos and Kadmilos; these are the Kabeiroi, gods of eastern origin, identified by the Greeks with Demeter, Persephone, Hades and Hermes⁷⁶). Hence of course the mentioning of Kadmilos as being Hermes in other texts. The semitic origin of these gods is undeniable. Their name is a semitic one meaning "the powerful Ones" and even the source of their cult-names as enumerated is semitic: a certain Mnaseas, i.e. Manasse. The place of the fourth Kabiros is a special one: the Kabeiroi or *Megaloi Theoi* proper are only three⁷⁷). The fourth, Kadmilos, is their servant or minister. Of the three Kabeiroi *par excellence* two are female, one male. Kadmilos is of course also male and a vase from the Theban Kabeiron shows him as the *ΠΑΙΣ* of the *ΚΑΒΙΡΟΣ* who reclines on a couch after the fashion of Dionysus. The boy is obviously the cup-bearer, and thus a *camillus* full blown⁷⁸). He certainly was a child and toys were offered him in worship⁷⁹). We can understand his identification with Hermes, who was also a servant and was often represented in myths and on vases as a youth.

1935; M. P. Nilsson, in: *Gnomon* 1936, 43 sqq. — An inscription shows two snakes, one on each side of a caduceus. The caduceus seems to stand for Hermes, the snakes symbolize the *δαίμονες κάβειροι*: J. H. Oliver, *Latin Inscription from Samothrace* (Amer. Journ. of Archaeol. 43, 3, July-Sept. 1939), 464 sqq.

⁷⁶) Schol. Apoll. Rhod., *Argonaut.* I, 917. See Otto Keller, l.l. It should be stated that the identity of *Camillus* and Kadmilos in connection with the text of Varro was seen already by Rossbach, l.l. Cf. what Plutarch says, *Numa* 7: *Καὶ τὸν ἐπηρετοῦντα τῷ ἱερεὶ τοῦ Διὸς ἀμφιθαλῇ παῖδα λέγεσθαι κάμιλλον, ὥς καὶ τὸν Ἑρμῆν οὕτως ἔνιοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων κάμιλλον ἀπὸ τῆς διακονίας προσηγόρευον.*

⁷⁷) Cf. Strabo, X, 21 (C 472). The etymology from an indogerm. name *Kubera*, as proposed by J. Wackernagel (*Zeitschr. f. vergl. Sprachforsch.* 41, 1907, 314 sqq.) has been generally rejected.

⁷⁸) A reproduction in Roscher, *Lex.*, s.v. *Megaloi Theoi* (Bloch).

⁷⁹) Preller, *Gr. Mythologie* I⁴, 847 sqq.

Now what is very important is that the mystae of the Kabeiroi at Samothrace wore a purple cord round their bodies ⁸⁰). This leads us again to the part purple plays in the history of the *camilli*, a part we found already in their being dressed in the *praetexta*. To get at the basis of this however we must also bear in mind the connection between Kadmilos and Kadmos, the Theban hero, whom Nonnus calls downright *Κάδμηλος* ⁸¹).

KADMOS.

We all know the legend of Kadmos, the Eponymus of the Kadmeia at whose nuptials with Harmonia the κοῦραι Διός, the Muses, sung a beautiful ancient hymn:

Μοῦσαι καὶ Χάριτες, κοῦραι Διός, αἵ ποτε Κάδμον
 ἐς γάμον ἐλθοῦσαι καλὸν ἀείσαι' ἔπος·
 ὅττι καλόν, φίλον ἐστί· τὸ δ' οὐ καλὸν οὐ φίλον ἐστίν.
 τοῦτ' ἔπος ἀθανάτων ἦλθε διὰ στομάτων ⁸²).

The legend of Kadmos was handed down to us in widely diverging versions. He was the son of Agenor together with Europa and Phoinix. But according to another version Phoinix was the father who after the rape of Europa by Zeus sent his sons, Kadmos among them, to find his daughter. In the first version it is of course Agenor who sends both Kadmos and Phoinix. In the course of his wanderings Kadmos founds Thebes. That he is a Phoenician is very clear in nearly all tradition and apparent from his connection with Phoinix either as his brother or his father. As there are also elements in his legend pointing to his being autochthonous in Boeotia (the sowing of the teeth of the serpent among them), it is of course possible that Kadmos the Archegetes of Theban colonies in Asia was only afterwards made into a Phoenician. At all events

⁸⁰) O. Kern, *Die griechischen Mysterien der klassischen Zeit*, 1927, 30, cf. Roscher, 2531.

⁸¹) Nonnus, *Dion.* 4, 85, 89, cf. Berger, l.l.

⁸²) Theognis, 15 sqq.

his connection with Phoenicia is undeniable. And it is this connection that is our concern here ⁸³⁾.

Now Kadmos was identified with the Kabeiros Kadmilos and it is just possible that his name is an abbreviation of the phoenician original. It is written also **ΚΑΣΣΜΟΣ**, on a vase, where he is depicted on the bridal char with Harmonia. And moreover he is identified with Hermes, that is to say of course the Kabeiros Hermes ⁸⁴⁾.

All these circumstances point to Phoenicia as did the name Kadmilos. A coin from Tyros depicts Kadmos and Harmonia, between them a purple ⁸⁵⁾. Phoenicia was the native country of the purple. And in the purple and the dyeing matter that was made of it we have a special interest since our discussion of the *praetexta* and the purple border of the mystae in Samothrace. The sacred legend of the Kabeiroi told about two brothers who killed a third and buried him at the foot of mount Olympus. They covered the head of the murdered man with a red cloth ⁸⁶⁾. He is the bloody, the red Kabeiros, who is worshipped at Thessalonike. The Greek word *φοῖρός* or *φοῖριος* means blood-red and has been connected (though hardly in good reason) with *φόρος*, murder, and with *φοῖνιξ* ⁸⁷⁾.

⁸³⁾ See for the chief facts Preller, *Gr. Myth.* II, 1⁴, 100 sqq.

⁸⁴⁾ Nonnus tells us that "wingless Hermes" was the spouse of Harmonia; he was called Kadmèlos, and not for nothing, for though assuming a heavenly shape, he really was Kadmos himself, *Dion.* 4, 85 sqq. Cf. Berger, l.l. Berger's theory that Camillus was a "declined god", at first a god and then only a child serving the god, must be looked upon as a consequence of contemporary theories that have lost their significance long since.

⁸⁵⁾ O. Crusius s.v. *Kadmos* in Roscher.

⁸⁶⁾ Kern, *Gr. Myst.*, 30; *Orph. Hymn.* XXXIX; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore prof. Rel.* c. 11; Preller, *Gr. Myth.* I⁴, 861.

⁸⁷⁾ See Boisacq, s.v. *φοῖνιξ*, who says that the group *φοῖνιξ* etc. „paraît procéder d'une contamination de *φοῖρός*, *φοῖριος* par un emprunt oriental, du reste mal défini”.

The purple dye that came from Phoenicia was the colour of blood and bloodshed ⁸⁸⁾).

SOME CONCLUSIONS.

We started this discussion by inquiring into the status of Roman children in worship. We found the *camilli*, *patrimi* et *matrimi* employed in service at sacrifice and lifting up their voices in the hymnus, the sacred song. We stated that *camillus* originally was a designation of every free-born boy, who of course assisted in the domestic cult, over which his father presided and in which his mother had her task as well as his sisters, the *camillae*. We remarked on the protection of the *majestas* of these children by the purple of the *praetexta*. The purple as well as the name *camillus* then drew us irresistibly towards the East, where we found the Greek equivalent *κάδμιλος*, its phoenician prototype *לכדמילק*, Kadmos and the cult of the Kabeiroi in close connection with purple.

It must rest with the Semitists to inquire more closely into the possible origins of a Phoenician Kadmiel, minister to the gods and himself a god, like Hermes, with whom he was identified by the Greeks. The protection of the purple dye is clear to all who have read the illuminating article of Friedrich von Duhn: Rot und tot ⁸⁹⁾. *ἔχει γὰρ τινὰ τὸ πορφυροῦν χρώμα*

⁸⁸⁾ The Kabeiroi were identified with Kouretes and Corybantes. Also with the Idaean Daktyloi, the smiths and magicians of the Great Mother. They are worshipped in Samothrace. They pass for the guardians of the child Zeus, just as Corybantes and Kouretes. Of course these combinations have but little historical value, but on the other hand there can be little doubt that there is a strong resemblance between these deities and that its prominent feature is their relation to a child.

⁸⁹⁾ *Archiv für Religionswiss.* 9, 1906, 1 sqq. On the history of purple-dying see: K. Faymonville, *Die Purperfärberei der versch. Kulturvölker des klass. Alt. u. d. frühchristl. Zeit.* Inaug. Diss. Heidelberg, 1900, and the enormous work of Alex. Dedekind, *Ein Beitrag zur Purpurkunde*, I, 1898; II, 1906; III, 1908; IV, 1911.

συμπάθειαν πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, von Duhn quotes from Artemidorus. Indeed the purple hue is the colour of death. Von Duhn has collected a large number of instances in which red or purple is employed in funerary rites, ranging from prehistory and primitive cultures to European folklore. Red is the hue of death, but also of life. It is not a modern symbol to attest grief, it is an effective instrument to recall or to guard life. For it is the colour of the blood, pre-eminent among "soul-stuff"⁹⁰). The Kabeiroi were not the only ones to bury their murdered brother under a purple cloth; the ashes of Hector, the bones of Rhesos, the dead body of Misenus on the pile were all decked with purple. And Varro still knows that the blood-red hue of the shroud is a substitute for real bloodshed in funerary rites, either by self-laceration of the mourners or by human sacrifice⁹¹). Bloodshed looses the power of life. The hue of blood guarantees fullness of life. Therefore red is also the colour of the gods. At Rome Juno wore a purple cloak, and the face of Jupiter Capitolinus was treated all-yearly with *minium*. The *triumphator* in whose person the epiphany of the god was realised must submit to the same treatment. The *majestas* of the children which was guarded by the purple was the *majestas* of life itself, guarded by the *majestas* of death.

COMPARISONS.

The question we asked ourselves what this *majestas* is remains still unanswered however. We began by pointing out that

⁹⁰) It was the Tyrian shade of purple that was blood-red, Faymonville, 14. It was the costliest and most valued and was monopolised afterwards for the use of the Emperors.

⁹¹) Servius ad *Aen.* III, 67: Varro dicit, mulieres in exsequiis ideo solitas ora lacerare, ut sanguine ostenso inferis satisfaciunt. Quare etiam institutum est, ut apud sepulchra et victimae caedantur. Apud veteres etiam homines interficiebantur... sed quoniam sumptuosum erat et crudele victimas vel homines interficere, sanguinei coloris coepta est vestis mortuis inici. Cf. Ovidius, *Met.* IV, 158 sqq.

different people have a different "disposition" towards the region of the sacred: their aptitude for ritual is not the same. This disposition in so far as the Greek and Roman children are concerned seems to consist even in this *majestas*. Therefore we must seek to reach a somewhat clearer notion of what this means.

The place of children in worship is obvious when the cult is a domestic one. Cumont thinks this is the reason that children were admitted to the mystery-cult of Eleusis, which was originally domestic in character. Later on this admission which held good also of all other mystery-cults was a mean to safeguard the children from the fate of the *ἄωροι*, those who died before their time⁹²). And that they played not merely a passive part is evident from the painting of the Villa Igem already mentioned, where a small naked boy is instructed in reading (or singing) from a scroll⁹³), "un piccolo ministro del culto", as Maiuri remarks.

In an article on youthful priests and priestesses in the cult of Athena and Artemis Pestalozza refers to the well-known rite of Naxos where a young boy sleeps with the virgin who is to be married. He explains this rite of the so-called Tobit-night by asserting that the boy is the representative of the deity. The same idea we find in the cults of Athena Alea and Athena Kranaia: "il sacerdote impubere...è il *Κοῦρος, ἄρσεν παῖς ἀμφιθαλής* del frammento callimacheo (in this fragment the Tobit rite is described), che, nella economia delle cerimonie

⁹²) F. Cumont, *After life in Roman Paganism* 1922, 138.

⁹³) A. Maiuri, *La villa dei misteri*, 1931. *Text* 132. Maiuri also quotes Aeschines assisting his mother in reciting the ritual in the mysteries (Demosthenes, *De corona* 259) and the Campan priestess Annia who initiated her own little sons into the mysteries of Dionysus (Livius 39, 13), *Text* 134. Cf. A. D. Nock, *Conversion*, 1933, 31. — Lucian, *Alex.* 41, tells how the false prophet commanded the cities of Pontus and Paphlagonia to send choir-boys for three years' service, „to sing hymns to the god in his household”.

costituenti la celebrazione delle nozze divine, esercita la stessa funzione che in quella dei matrimonii umani" ⁹⁴). It is possible that in the cults of female and especially virgin deities of the category of Athena and Artemis the employ of male children may have had this significance. It is however impossible that this could have been so in all cases in which ἀμφιθαλείς were employed. On the whole they do not represent the bridegroom but the offspring of the marriage and our samothracian evidence does not point to the children representing a male deity, but rather a child divinity, like Hermes, Zeus or Dionysus.

Pestalozza's argument however is important in so far as it stresses the virginity of the children as the essence of their function in worship. And "worship" means in this connection not only the official cult of the state or the congregational worship of the mysteries, but also those popular customs and rites, in which children and virgin boys and girls play so prominent a part. Albrecht Dieterich and Eugen Fehrle have at length discussed this side of the subject so that we may here pass it over in silence. The vivid description by Dieterich of the procession of children at Ostia has become a classical example of the treatment of a popular custom in the history of religion; and from the use described by him opens a very large vista of countless processions in which children sing and ask for boons (*Heischegänge*) ⁹⁵). The thesis of Fehrle was the prototype of that of Pestalozza: chastity is imperative for those persons for whom the cult of the god means sexual intercourse with the god ⁹⁶). But his argument is not limited to this thesis; he stresses also the necessity of chastity for the acquiring of Power in general.

⁹⁴) U. Pestalozza, *Sacerdoti e sacerdotesse impuberi nei culti di Athena e di Artemide* (Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni 9, 1933, 173 sqq.).

⁹⁵) A. Dieterich, *Sommertag*, in *Kleine Schriften*, 1911, 324 sqq.

⁹⁶) E. Fehrle, *Kultische Keuschheit im Altertum*, 1910.

Children do not appear in Greek and Roman cults only. Frazer enumerates quite a number of rites in which children participate, among them such a characteristic one as that of some Somali tribes, where on the morning after a wedding the female relatives of the bride present the pair with milk. With them comes a young male child who must be in possession of both his father and mother; he drinks from the milk before the others. After him the bridegroom, "if his parents are living"; if that is not so the bride is first to drink after the child. Only if this rite is observed will the young husband live at the birth of his first child ⁹⁷). The analogy with the rite of Naxos is obvious: an important action connected with some danger must be perpetrated by a child. For only a child is able to resist the evil powers that possibly will attack him. The young man in the Somali case is only able to do this when he is in possession of his parents, i.e. when he is a child. Only a child possesses the *majestas* necessary to encounter the Powers. A parallel somewhat less close but nevertheless striking is furnished by Kruyt: when a family moves into a new house at Leboni and Bada' (W. Toradja) two boys and two girls provided with "beautiful names" must lodge in the house during three days before it can be definitely occupied ⁹⁸). The children, though not in this case ἐμψυχοεπίτις, must stand in the breach.

One other employment of children in worship we must at least point out; it is the sacrifice of children. This is of course a subject asking for separate treatment: the offering of children,

⁹⁷) J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* IV, *Adonis Attis Osiris* II ³, 1914, 246.

⁹⁸) A. C. Kruyt, *De West-Toradjas op Midden-Celebes* (Verh. Kon. Ned. Ak. v. Wet., Afd. Lett. XL), II, 1938, 27. — Very instructive is the medieval custom of ordeal by drawing lots, as described in the *Lex Frisionum*, Titulus XIV (ed. K. von Richthofen, Leeuwarden, 1866): the presbyter, „si adfuerit, vel si presbyter deest *puer quilibet innocens*” is invited to take up the lots from the altar.

even and by preference one's own children is well known to have prevailed in many religions. At Rome we find it in connection with the Bacchic mysteries and the orgies of Heliogabalus: in the latter case it is mentioned that the children were ἀμφιθαλεῖς⁹⁹).

VIRGINITY.

There can be little doubt that the special *majestas* of the children is their virginity, their integrity:

Dianae sumus in fide
Puellae et pueri integri.

But we should take care lest we understand this chastity in a modern way. The *majestas* is Power, and integrity is untouched, untrammelled power. Of course the attraction of innocence and the charm of childhood are included in the antique conception, though even here we must take care. The attraction of childhood and the charm of innocence are by no means among the common treasures of all mankind. Nor should we understand chastity in the sense of purity in a moral sense: the idea that sexual intercourse is sinful as such, is neither Greek nor Roman nor generally speaking antique. "Purity", "power" and "fullness of life" (through which Fowler and Frazer tried to explain the function of the *camilli*) are all in the conception of *majestas*, but not in any ethical sense. More elementary notions are at the bottom of the veneration of children. Sexual intercourse and even sexual

⁹⁹) Kern, *Rel. der Gr.* III, 200; Frazer, *Ad. Attis Osiris*, l.l. — Prof. Duyvendak directs my attention to the curious custom prevalent in ancient China of the representation of the dead ancestor in domestic cult by his grandson. The latter in whom the departed one is incarnate represents his grandfather and thus his own father (son of the departed) who performs the rites, is obliged to bow low before his own son and to worship him as a superior being. Cf. M. Granet, *La civilisation chinoise*, 1929, 397 sq.

maturity means a loss of vital power, an efflux of "mana". The child is strong over against the Powers from without whom he encounters in worship, because his vital power is undiminished. He is not only "full of life", but also untouched, pure.

Children officiating in worship belong among the category of the "Consecrated", those who have restricted the wielding of their full force in order to become still stronger. Power is won by containing power¹⁰⁰). The children who are not yet able to wield their full force are specially apt to guarantee a full measure of power; their continency is not dependent on their will.

A comparison with those whose continency depends wholly on their free decision may be useful though. At Rome these are the Vestals whom we saw already to be chosen from the *patri-mae et matrimae*¹⁰¹). The Vestals are really no other than the *camillae*, the daughters of the house. They see to the preserving and rekindling of the fire of the hearth of the state just as the daughters of the farmer saw to their own sacred fire. And they fetched water from the holy wells, just as the girls of the house did. They have their *penus*, the sacred larder, just like every house-community¹⁰²). But whereas an ordinary *camilla* marries and passes into another *patria potestas*, the Vestal remains at home. She conserves her "purity", her "majesty" and wears throughout life the bridal headdress worn by other women only the day of their wedding. She is the eternal bride, the virgin who gains great power by renouncing the wielding thereof in sexual intercourse and childbirth. She stoops to conquer. And in the ritual of the Roman state, in the guarding of the *pax deorum* she plays a very important part.

¹⁰⁰) Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, 1933, 212 sqq.

¹⁰¹) Gellius, *Noctes att.* 1, 12; Cramer, *Kl. Schr.*, 92 sqq.

¹⁰²) Ovidius, *Fasti* 3, 11 sqq.; See also R. Cagnat, *Les Vestales et leur convent*, in: *Conférences faites au Musée Guimet (Annales du Musée Guimet 19)*, 1906, 61 sqq.

She is of course chaste. But her chastity is not that of the nun. It rest in different presuppositions. The nun takes a vow because she wishes to attain to a higher degree of purity, to live according to the strictest rule. If she should be unchaste she breaks her vow. Not so the Vestal. She has taken no vow. She is chaste i.e. she is *integra* like the child and she remains throughout life in that childlike condition. Should she be unchaste she would not break any vow, but simply lessen her power. This the state whose servant she is cannot suffer. But she is not punished, as Wissowa has very clearly demonstrated: the damage done and the contagion spread by her lessening of the State Power are simply put away. There is no personal guilt, but merely the defiling of the sacred fire, and this pollution is not the consequence of the forfeit, but it is revealed by it. The Vestal is buried alive, like Antigone, not to punish her in a barbarous way, but to put away the contagion¹⁰³).

The "chastity" of the Vestals is of course a form of her relation to God. The symbolism of the Vestal rite is of a sexual nature. Her power is her virginity. But her virginity is also her power and it has nothing to do with virginity of the Christian stamp proceeding from the disapproval of the *concupiscentia*. On the contrary it is designed to further fertility and procreation. There is an ancient proof of the chastity of the Vestals obliging them to present food to a dragon at Lanuvium¹⁰⁴). If they are chaste they return safely to the bosom of their parents,

Clamantque agricolae: fertilis annus erit¹⁰⁵).

The chastity of the virgins is the cause of the fertility of the land. The power of the Vestals is manifest also in their prayer

¹⁰³) G. Wissowa, *Vestalinnefrevet* (Arch. f. Rel. wiss. 22, 1923—1924, 201 sqq.).

¹⁰⁴) J. Toutain, *Note sur une épreuve peu connue imposée aux vestales romaines* (Revue de l'histoire des religions 89, 1924, 183 sqq.).

¹⁰⁵) Propertius, *El.* IV, 8, 3 sqq.

(*carmen*) on which the salvation of Rome depends but which also prevents a fugitive slave from leaving the town. A sick Vestal however is brought out of the temple. A criminal who meets a Vestal and her *lictors* with the *fascēs* saves his life. But he who passes under the palanquin of a Vestal forfeits his life. This last case is extremely instructive because it shows how the virginity of the Vestal is not an ascetic quality, but the sexual force in its fulness.

The virginity of the Vestals is preserved sexual power, unused like that of our *patrimi*. It is of course also possible to ascertain virginity in an artificial way. Eunuchs possess also a special aptitude for worship. Nock, in an article on "*Eunuchs in ancient religion*"¹⁰⁶) has pointed out that some cults in antiquity could be performed only by continent persons. Therefore virgins or children were employed. Thus far his argument coincides entirely with our own. But then he passes to the ritual aptitude of eunuchs who make themselves *ἄγροι, casti*. We think also of the chastitude of the eleusinian hierophant¹⁰⁷).

To understand the character of this ritual virginity we must take into account that it is only the reverse of that other ritual attitude which consists in reckless dispersing of sexual power. There is a very close analogy between the seeming contrasts of the Vestalis and the hierodule. In both cases Power is attained to serve the community; but in the first case it is enhanced by being retained, in the second case it is enforced by lavish use. A late Christian author has understood this, though he uses his understanding to calumniate the Vestals in a mean way, "*quae aut prostituto corpore peccare coguntur aut in virginitate perseverantes perdunt honestam gloriosi nominis dignitatem*"¹⁰⁸). We know this contrary type of power through sexual

¹⁰⁶) A. D. Nock, in: *Archiv f. Rel. Wiss.* 23, 1925.

¹⁰⁷) And perhaps of that curious passage in *Matthew* 19, 12, about the "eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven".

¹⁰⁸) Firmicus Maternus, *De errore prof. rel.*, c. 14.

life to have abounded in Greece (we think of the hierodules of Akrokorinth and their praise by Pindar) and in Asia. And everywhere where the type of the *kedesha* prevails, we find also its opposite: the virgin: Jephtha's daughter seems to have ended her days as a Vestal; chastity is demanded of the "daughter of Levi" ¹⁰⁹), and the Codex Hammurabi stipulates that a "sister of the god", i.e. a consecrated woman, who starts a tavern (euphemistic for brothel) or even visits such a place, shall be burned ¹¹⁰). There is a close affinity between the hierodule and the virgin: both are prohibited marriage, the sexual power of both is intended for the good of the state. Pindar expects the salvation of the state from the prayer of the hierodules as the Romans expected it from the prayer of the Vestals.

THE CHILDREN'S SONG AND DANCE.

We revert to the children. The power of their virginity is a mighty instrument in worship. But there is still another idea we have met in the course of our argument; they bear the name of a samothracian god. Are they really representatives of gods, are they divine themselves?

The idea is not unfamiliar to students of the history of religions and ethnology. In ritual the performers are very often the representatives of the gods; by their attitude, their costume, their masks they even incorporate the gods. We know this to be true about countless primitive ritual dances, but we have also traces of the same practice in Greece, where the girls enacting ritual dances are called She-bears or Bees. They form the *choros* of the deity who is herself a She-bear or a Bee. On the other hand the deities, especially in Greece, are often the suprahuman sublimation of human figures. So Artemis with her *choros* is the sublimation of the dance of the young village girls and so is the chorus of Aphrodite. There is a direct relation between mythical

¹⁰⁹) *Levit.* 21 : 9.

¹¹⁰) H. Winckler, *Die Gesetze Hammurapis* ⁴, 1906, 110.

representation and ritual act ¹¹¹). Man acting in ritual is no mere man; he is a representative, he acts a Power. So we do not require to believe any theories about "declined gods" to see that the borderline between man and god in worship is extremely vague. And the children, who in popular custom form a procession, an ἀγεργμός as the Greeks called it, are as much the seekers of new divine life as the distributors thereof. It is the new life itself that calls on men to open their doors, as in the Swallow-processional song of Rhodos:

Ἄνοιγ', ἄνοιγε τὰν θύραν χελιδόνι·
οὐ γὰρ γέροντες ἐσμέν, ἀλλὰ παῖδια ¹¹²).

And so we cannot wonder that the choruses of boys and girls gather by preference round those gods and goddesses we call fertility gods, who are either virgin or lascivious and who are the bearers of life power. At the Elean Heraea a race was held between virgins. Pausanias describes it as follows: "The virgins are not all of the same age; but the youngest run first, the next in age run next, and the eldest virgins run last of all. They run thus: their hair hangs down, they wear a shirt that reaches to a little above the knee, the right shoulder is bare to the breast — the winners receive crowns of olive and a share of the cow which is sacrificed to Hera" ¹¹³). The attitude and the dress of the virgins in this race are modelled on those of the virgin deities: Artemis and the others. Of course when we say that the attitude and dress of the goddesses are modelled on those of the virgins, this holds good too. All races in antiquity are races for life and often the penalty of the loss of a race is death. The virgins wage this race for the good of the community: their life power enables them to gain their object.

¹¹¹) Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *Goden en Menschen in Hellas*, 1927, 26 sqq.

¹¹²) Bergk-Crusius, *Anth. lyr.* ¹, 324 sq.

¹¹³) Pausanias 5, 16, 2 sq. (translation by Frazer).

A very instructive instance of these semi-divine or semi-human virgins is Vergil's Camilla of whom we have spoken already. She is the chaste daughter of Metabus of Privernum and his wife Casmilla. She is one of the many Artemisian figures of Greek and Italian myth; like Atalanta she is fleet-footed and, like the Amazons, she is warlike. At the head of the Volsci she comes to the aid of Turnus and receives a deadly wound in battle. It is not, I think, merely a coincidence that this pure, untouched maiden bears the name of the children serving in worship ¹¹⁴).

Another instance of the power of virginity is furnished by the popular ritual of Anna Perenna as related by Martial ¹¹⁵). At this rather wanton fertility feast each girl with her swain reclines on the grass and there is a great deal of drinking. The girls sing here also, but they sing obscene songs, lascivity furthers fertility. The apple orchard of Anna, who is a goddess of the fertile year, is splashed with the virgin blood and this also assures a good year. It has been reserved to a sinologist — Granet — to correct the corrections latinists had made in the text of Martialis:

Et quod virgineo cruore gaudet
 Annae poniferum nemus Perennae ¹¹⁶).

The correction of *cruore* to *pudore* or *rubore* may be a beautiful testimony to the *pudor* of philologists — it is certainly quite unnecessary. The ritual of Anna Perenna contrasts vividly

¹¹⁴) Vergil, *Aeneid* II, 498 sqq., 648 sqq.; 7, 803 sqq. A close parallel is that of the queen *Amata*, mother of Lavinia, who received this name in connection with the ancient Lavinian cult of Vesta. The Vestal who is „capta” by the Pontifex, is called *Amata*.

¹¹⁵) Martialis 4, 64, 16 sq.

¹¹⁶) Marcel Granet, *Fêtes et Chansons de la Chine*, 1919, 212. H. J. Rose had thought of the menstrual blood, used in rites, but it is obvious that the real ‘virgin blood’, drawn by the perforation of the hymen is meant.

with that of the Vestals described above. But the result is the same: new life is given, and the agency by which it is procured is the same too: virginity. Only in the case of the Vestals it works by continency, in that of the girls celebrating Anna Perenna by licentiousness.

Choruses of boys and girls dancing and singing are to be found in many parts of the world. The works of Granet and Nguyen van Huyen have furnished us with beautiful examples of these songs and dances from South-China and Further India ¹¹⁷). In Annam these songs and dances take the form of a contest between both sexes, who sing extempore. Originally the prize of the contest was the obtaining of the hand of a girl in marriage ¹¹⁸). This contest is a guarantee of the well-being of the community. We here get an insight into a community in which the Vestals are so to say still ordinary girls of the house. Nevertheless their ritual is calculated to save the commonwealth. And Granet is the first to remark on the resemblance of this ritual to the feast of Anna Perenna at Rome. The Chinese contests between the sexes which he describes lead to the same result: mating of men and beasts and flowering of all nature ¹¹⁹). Here is one of their songs, a very distant parallel to the *Carmen saeculare*:

La Tchen avec la Wei
Viennent à déborder!
Les gars avec les filles
Viennent aux orchidées!
Les filles les invitent:
— là bas si nous allions?
et les gars de répondre:

¹¹⁷) Granet, *Fêtes et Chansons*; Granet, *La Civilisation chinoise*, 1929; Nguyen van Huyen, *Les chants alternés des garçons et des filles en Annam*, 1933; cf. J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens*, 1938, 78 sqq.

¹¹⁸) Nguyen van Huyen, 205.

¹¹⁹) Granet, *Fêtes*, 212.

— déjà nous en venons?
 — Voire donc mais encore
 là bas si nous allions,
 car, la Wei traversée,
 s'étend un beau gazon!
 Lors les gars et les filles
 ensemble font leurs jeux;
 et puis elles reçoivent
 le gage d'une fleur!¹²⁰).

During these and suchlike feasts great sexual liberty is allowed: fertility and new life are sought not by continency, but by the reverse¹²¹).

CHILDREN IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

We return to the function of the *virgines puerique* in the cult proper. Fowler already pointed out the analogy between this function of the *patrimi et matrimi* and the ritual of the Roman Church: "This is one of the most beautiful features of the stately Roman ritual, and has been handed on to the Roman Church. It was, of course, derived from the worship of the household"¹²²). And indeed a link of ritual practice seems to exist between the oldest domestic cult of the Italian peasant and that of the Church of Rome.

¹²⁰) Granet, *Fêtes*, 105 sq.

¹²¹) Granet, *Civilisation*, 191 sqq. — It is, as I have already hinted at, just possible that the dress of the *camilli* and that of the virgins running races is a rudiment of original nakedness, as Oepke thinks. Virginity and nakedness are certainly closely linked. Among the Bush-Negroes of Surinam every grown girl is entitled to walk about entirely naked as long as she is a virgin. The *gi pangî*, the giving of the loin cloth, is a ceremony just before marriage or when marriage has come to seem definitely out of the question; private communication by W. F. van Lier, 1938.

¹²²) Fowler, *Rel. Exp.* 195.

The acolytes serving the priest at Mass are mentioned as far back as the 3d century at Rome, but they were not children, but clerks of the highest or fourth degree of the minor orders. Their task consisted in running errands, lighting lamps, fetching wine and water for the Eucharistic sacrifice, especially carrying of the *fermentum*, i.e. the consecrated particle of the Host. Their attributes were a small sack, a candelabrum and a jug ¹²³). In course of time these acolytes were replaced by laymen serving at the altar and, in spite of the injunctions of the council of Trent which demanded the service of clerical persons the *ministri altaris* are now generally boys. The Abbé Migne depicts the gradual lessening of the qualifications demanded for serving in worship: at first *ministri* should be deacons, then subdeacons, then it was only required that they should have taken the minor orders, then only that they should have received the tonsura. Finally the ministry was left to laymen who however in their capacity as *ministri* were called *clerici* ¹²⁴). Is the institution of the ministry of children in the Roman Church, in spite of a quite clearly established historical discontinuance, a revival of a very ancient custom and is it inspired by the realisation of the special "disposition" of virgin children for worship?

Perhaps the ancient notion of the special aptitude of children

¹²³) L. Eisenhofer, in: *Lex. für Theol. u. Kirche* ², s.v. *Akolythen*, cf. J. Braun, *Lit. Handlexikon* ², 1924, s.v.; *Dict. d'arch. chrét. et de lit.*, s.v.; L. Duchesne, *Les origines du culte chrétien* ⁴, 1908, 352, 373 sq.

¹²⁴) Abbé Migne, *Encyclop. Handb. der kath. Liturgie*, 1850, 609 sqq. Remarkable is the positiveness with which Migne excludes women from the ministry. He thinks boys are not very apt, but women are impossible: "In keinem Falle darf eine weibliche Person den Celebranten beim Altare bedienen. Sie kann höchstens in Ermangelung eines Ministranten respondieren, muss aber dabei ausserhalb des Sanctuariums sich befinden, und darf nie in dasselbe treten, um auch nur den geringsten Dienst am Altar zu leisten". The "disposition" of women in relation to worship is not favorable.

serving in worship is more clearly apparent in another closely related function, that of singer in the choir. From the beginning children took part in Christian worship and their participation was of some importance because their tender age was esteemed to influence God and to stimulate his philanthropy, as Gregorius of Nazianze puts it ¹²⁵). Choirs of women, especially virgins, were found in worship in Asia; some of these female singers were a sort of Vestals who had taken the vow of lifelong virginity. The *Testamentum Domini nostri J. C.* (5th century) even speaks of virgins and boys just as in pagan antiquity: "ei, qui in ecclesia psallit, virgines et pueri respondeant psallentes" ¹²⁶). The singing of women seems to have been especially in vogue with heretics, like Paul of Samosata, and this is the reason — together with the gradual decline of the position of women in general in the church — that in the end the singing by female voices was entirely prohibited. The singing of boys however remained.

It is quite certain that it existed already in the Ancient Church. The pilgrim from Gaul, Aetheria, heard at Jerusalem the singing of boys. Other instances are enumerated by Quasten in his excellent treatise on music and song in early Christianity ¹²⁷). The institution of a special category of persons singing in Christian worship seems to have originated in the Lectorate. The *lector* was at first a layman who could read. About 150 in the West, 225 in the East the lectorate became an office and the person filling it was called ἀναγνώστης, the Reader. Already in the 4th century this Reader is a young boy; a decretale of Pope Siricius stipulates: "quicumque itaque se ecclesiae vovit obsequiis a sua infantia, ante pubertatis annos baptizari et lectorum debet ministerio sociari" ¹²⁸). *Scholae lectorum* were installed,

¹²⁵) Quasten, *Musik und Gesang*, 135.

¹²⁶) Quasten, 119.

¹²⁷) Quasten, 136 sqq.

¹²⁸) Quasten, 138 sq.

in which a *primicerius* directed the tuition of boys. From these *scholae lectorum* originated the *scholae cantorum*, hierarchically built up on the basis of the singing boys¹²⁹). The Schola cantorum at Rome consisted of seven singers who were clerks; one was *primicerius* or *prior scholae*, the other six were subdeacons. The *Quartus scholae* or *Archiparaphonista* directs the exercises of the boys who were chosen by preference from orphan homes — a curious reversion of the status of the ἀμφιθαλεῖς. — Throughout the Middle Ages choral singing was performed in churches with the cooperation of boys¹³⁰).

In the 16th century the sopranos of the papal choir were Spanish falsettos: a musical device comparable to the use of eunuchs in cult. An artificial purity replaced the natural "virginity" of the boys' voices¹³¹). For the singing in chorus of boys' voices is indeed immensely superior to that of grown women. The purity and serenity which characterizes them is the musical part of the *majestas pueri*. It is all unspent force, untouched power. There is nothing of pathos, nothing of craving or of satisfied sensuality in their untrammelled energy. They "glide over the surface of the frozen lake of music, without troubling about the depths slumbering below", as Spitta says when describing the singing of Bach's Cantatas by the boys of

¹²⁹) Otto Ursprung, *Die katholische Kirchenmusik* (in: E. Bücken, *Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*, 9 sq. The Gnostic Bardesanes had sung his ritual by boys. Generally the heretics were very musical and by their singing provoked the church either to prohibition (as is the case of female singers) or emulation (as in that of the boys); cf. Quasten, 140. See also G. van der Leeuw and K. Ph. Bernet Kempers, *Beknopte Geschiedenis van het Kerklied*, 1939, 44 sqq.

¹³⁰) R. Haas, *Aufführungspraxis der Musik* (in: E. Bücken, *Handb. der Musikwiss.*), 34.

¹³¹) Haas, *Aufführungspraxis*; already in ancient Egypt eunuchs were employed as hymn-modes, see F. Cumont, *L'Egypte des Astrologues*, 1937, 125 sq., 133.

the School of St. Thomas. The preference for the treble voices of boyhood is a link between christianity and paganism¹³²).

VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE.

I hope this paper answers better to its title than the book Robert Louis Stevenson wrote under the same aegis, and of which he was forced to declare: "a good part of the volume would answer to the long-projected title, but the shadows of the prison-house are on the rest"¹³³). If there is in this paper less of the prison-house of old age and more of true virginity, it is certainly not in consequence of any merit of the writer, but only of the circumstance that Stevenson possessed a very modern notion of youth, whilst we could limit our own notion to that of Antiquity. Stevenson would like to be an *advocatus juventutis* and sets up the ideal of life at twenty-five. He likes boyish innocence as appearing in "the inward resolution of the two pirates, that "so long as they remained in that business, their piracies should not again be sullied with the crime of stealing" "¹³⁴). It is not in the antique fashion to see childhood as a sort of paradise lost and virginity as childishness. Antiquity is a great deal nearer to the conception of virginity as possessing "virtue", *mana* in our modern scientific jargon:

Such secret virtue lies

In herbs applie'd by a virgin hand¹³⁵).

Now there is one great danger I must warn against in finishing this paper. It is that acknowledging the "primitiveness", the "solidity"¹³⁶) of the antique conception of vir-

¹³²) Quasten quotes (*Musik u. Ges.* 133) an eloquent passage from Lucian regarding the quality of boys' voices (*Imag.* 13).

¹³³) R. L. Stevenson, *The Works* (Skerryvore Ed.) XXII, *Virginibus puerisque*, VII.

¹³⁴) Stevenson, *Virg. puerisque*, 16.

¹³⁵) Beaumont & Fletcher, *The faithful shepherdess*, Act I, 1.

¹³⁶) Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *De primitieve mensch en de religie*, 1937 (a French translation is being prepared).

ginity as contrasted with the romantic modern conception of childlike innocence, and removing in our mind the image of the *camillus* as far as possible from "The age of Innocence", we should be tempted to regard the antique notion of virginity as something we cannot understand and have nothing to do with. At the root of the primitive conception of untouched childhood is the same attitude that rules our own sentiments. Only our modern romanticism is artificial to a degree like that of the Romans in Caesar's times. It is inspired by a longing for simplicity and naive happiness, it comes out of the shades of the prison-house as Stevenson said. The conception of the ancients on the other hand is realistic, not inspired by longings but by contact with the real Powers of Life and Death. The modern feeling is to leave the world for the paradise of childhood; the antique never to enter the world.

This intention may be carried out in twofold fashion: by continency and by licentiousness. Both ways are possible, because in both cases in and behind the world a divine being, "another world" is detected. The Vestal as well as the hierodule is the bride of God, the wife of the numen of the other world. Life is won by surrender to death. The vestal is *Amata*, the Beloved of the God, and her death by interment is the completing of her union with her subterranean Lover. — "Sexual power" — we should never forget — is only a clumsy modern expression for the divine Power encountered in religion and which means in all myths and rites: power from another world. Hence the central position all things sexual hold in ancient and primitive rites: The elementary powers of life were seen in their essential holiness¹³⁷).

For this is at the root of the notion of virginity that it saves man from losing himself in the world, that it prevents his powers being sucked up by contact with the world. A very direct and moving testimony to this conception of virginity is

¹³⁷) Cf. G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie* 173 sqq.

the passus from the great Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh, where Eabani, the virgin man of the wilds, is seduced by a harlot. The loss of his virginity makes him a stranger among the animals with whom he has lived and of whom he has been one; his cattle do not know him any more: the direct self-evident living in the world as a part of the world has been made impossible. Eabani has lost his power because he has known the world, because instead of simply living he has learned to make part of the world his object. He is no longer untouched: in getting hold of the world, the world has got hold of him. The child lives so to say without a world; he is his own self-contained world. The grown man has made himself a world and in trying to dominate it, lost it. The child is naked and his very nakedness is his power; man "sees that he is naked" and his paradise is lost.

The consciousness of nakedness is not consciousness of sin. It was reserved to Christian anthropology to teach the close connection between man's being born and growing into conscious manhood and the all-underlying fact of sin and to replace the ideal of *integritas* by that of holiness, that is forgiveness of sin. In the mysteries of the Hellenistic age there is some inkling of this conception of life. Cumont has pointed out that the custom of initiating children into the mysteries hangs together with the belief, prevalent in orphic and other conventicles that all humanity is guilty from the beginning¹³⁸). It was this belief that prevailed also in Christian thought about man and his destiny. On the other hand, even in Christendom, there is always a rest of the primitive conception of childhood; in Christian antiquity a child who has died is free from guilt, because he has not yet entered the world: "Eusebius, says an epitaph, quoted by Cumont, a child without sin because of his age, admitted to the abode of the saints, rests there in peace".

¹³⁸) Cumont, *After Life*, 138 sqq.

and deceased children are even asked for prayer: "pete pro nobis" ¹³⁹).

But the general trend of Christian thought was to look upon childlife as needing purification and forgiveness. Baptism was extended to children and the purity of life just born was exchanged for the sacramental purity of regeneration.

On the other hand it is significant that from the first beginnings children have their place in Christian worship, and even the fact itself of the extension of Baptism to children is evidence that children were regarded as fully able to take part in worship. The words of the Gospel of the Infants that "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven" are a token of an attitude towards children which is neither romantic nor forgetful of the need of a second birth, an attitude which is the consequence of the fundamental sentiment that human life is infirm in itself, but that its infirmity may be exchanged for majesty, when protected by the life and death of God, like the *majestas* of the Roman boys by the purple of the *praetexta*.

¹³⁹) Cumont, *After Life*, 141.

