

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - *Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough*

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

PREFACE Pp. v-vi

CHAPTER I.—MAGIC Pp. 1-67

Magic may be divided into Homoeopathic or Imitative and Contagious Magic. A belief in magic has greatly affected the lives of primitive people, leading to economic stagnation as well as to tragic loss of life.

A familiar example of homoeopathic or imitative magic consists in making and injuring a magical image of an enemy. Imitative magic is also employed to facilitate childbirth, as in the Malay States, to relieve pain, as in Celebes, India, and Wales, and to cause sickness or death, as in New Guinea.

Many acts are forbidden in primitive society lest they might, on the principles of homoeopathic magic, entail undesirable effects. Certain foods are also forbidden for the same reason.

A magical sympathy is often supposed to exist between people at a distance, such that the actions of the one directly affect the other. Thus rules of conduct are often imposed upon wives during their husbands' absence in hunting, fishing, or fighting. Infidelity to an absent spouse is particularly dreaded and avoided.

Homoeopathic magic is often employed at sowing and planting to promote the growth and quality of the crops.

A fruitful branch of magic consists in the employment of the relics of the dead. By sympathetic magic birth and death are often associated with the flow and ebb of the tides.

Contagious magic is founded on the belief that things once conjoined remain, even after being disjoined, in sympathetic relation. Contagious magic is supposed to exist between a man and his bodily relics, especially his hair, nails, navel-string, and afterbirth. This has led to many observances throughout the world. Clothing and bodily impressions are often employed in contagious magic.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

viii

CONTENTS

CHAPTER II.—THE MAGICAL CONTROL OF
THE WEATHER Pp. 68-100

An important function of magic is to control the weather, and weather-makers sometimes rise to positions of power and influence. Magicians attempt to cause rain to fall or to cease, sometimes by imitative magic and sometimes by methods that are partly magical, partly religious. Primitive man also sometimes attempts to control the course of the sun, and to cause the wind to blow or be still at his bidding. A common practice is “whistling for a wind.”

CHAPTER III.—MAGICIANS AS KINGS. Pp. 101-113

Gerontocracy—a state of society in which authority is held by the old men of the tribe—prevalent among Australian aborigines and found elsewhere.

In Africa the political influence of the magician is great, but the rainmaker who fails to bring rain is often punished.

In England sovereigns have been regarded as a sort of divinity. A relic of this belief persisted in England and France in the notion that they could, by their touch, cure scrofula, hence called “The King’s Evil.”

CHAPTER IV.—INCARNATE HUMAN GODS. Pp. 114-123

Chiefs regarded as incarnate human gods abounded among the Polynesians of the Pacific Islands. Possession by divine spirit was not always permanent, but was often temporary. In Africa also chiefs and kings have often claimed to be deities, and Christian England has not lacked pretenders to divinity.

CHAPTER V.—DEPARTMENTAL KINGS OF
NATURE Pp. 124-125

Sometimes the magician claims to control only a particular department of nature, of which he proclaims himself king, such as the King-of-the-Water in Nigeria.

CHAPTER VI.—THE WORSHIP OF TREES . Pp. 126-149

The worship of trees is widespread in Sudan, and is also found in Nigeria, India, and Celebes. The belief that trees are inhabited by spirits has led to ceremonies of propitiation at felling trees in Africa, Burma, Indo-China, and Indonesia. Again, many primitive communities have sacred groves which they respect, especially in Africa. The tree-spirits are often believed to possess powers of fecundity, and are accordingly entreated for offspring.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

ix

CHAPTER VII.—RELICS OF TREE-WORSHIP

IN EUROPE Pp. 150-152

Relics of the worship of trees have survived in the popular observances of Europe, for example in the May Day customs of Wales.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE INFLUENCE OF THE

SEXES ON VEGETATION Pp. 153-156

The intercourse of the human sexes is believed to have a potent influence in stimulating vegetation, and for this reason many restrictions are often imposed at the time of sowing and planting. Twins and parents of twins are sometimes credited with a power of fertilizing at such times. Sexual offences, especially incest, are believed to blight the crops.

CHAPTER IX.—THE SACRED MARRIAGE Pp. 157-165

The mimic marriage of the king and queen of May was probably intended originally to promote the growth of plant-life in spring by the dramatic representation of a bridal: examples from Morocco, the Punjab, and Bengal.

In Africa women were often wedded to spirits or deities. Stories like that of Andromeda, in which the heroine is exposed to a sea-monster, may reflect an earlier custom of sacrificing virgins to water-spirits to be their wives: examples from Africa and China.

Water-spirits are often thought to bestow offspring on childless women, especially in Africa.

CHAPTER X.—THE KING'S FIRE Pp. 166-168

With the Vestals of Ancient Rome, who maintained the fire on the royal hearth, may be compared the African Vestals of Uganda, who maintain perpetual fires in the temple.

CHAPTER XI.—THE FIRE-DRILL Pp. 169-173

The making of fire by the fire-drill, that is, by revolving a pointed stick in a grooved stick, seems to be the most widely diffused method among primitive savages: it is found almost universally. Many savages see in the working of the fire-drill an analogy to the intercourse of the sexes.

CHAPTER XII.—FATHER JOVE AND MOTHER

VESTA Pp. 174-176

Ancestral spirits are supposed to haunt their old domestic hearths, and for this reason a fire has sometimes to be continually maintained for the comfort of the family ghosts.

In the kindling of new fire by the fire-drill both sexes sometimes assist. In Assam the ceremony is performed by unmarried boys. In Germany a widespread belief connects a person's chastity with his ability to blow up a dying flame.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE ORIGIN OF PERPETUAL FIRES Pp. 177-181

The custom of maintaining perpetual fires may have originated in the difficulty of kindling new fire by the laborious early method. The custom is prevalent in Africa. The Banyoro of Africa extinguish all fires on the death of a king, and the Birhors of India after a funeral.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE SUCCESSION TO THE KINGDOM IN ANCIENT LATIUM Pp. 182-185

In the old Latin kingship the crown seems to have descended to the man who married one of the king's daughters, kinship being traced in the female line. The same rule of descent is found elsewhere, as in Burma and Assam. Instances occur in Africa of the hereditary and elective principles being combined.

CHAPTER XV.—ST. GEORGE AND THE PARILIA Pp. 186-187

In Hungary cattle are first driven out to pasture, with special observances, on St. George's Day, April 23, a date that nearly coincides with the ancient Parilia, April 21.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE OAK Pp. 188-191

Prehistoric flint weapons are often regarded as thunderbolts in Europe, Africa, and India.

CHAPTER XVII.—DIANUS AND DIANA Pp. 192-193

The names Jupiter and Juno and Janus and Diana are etymologically identical.

CHAPTER XVIII.—ROYAL AND PRIESTLY TABOOS Pp. 194-201

Royal and priestly personages have commonly to observe many prohibitions or taboos in all parts of the world: examples from Africa and Assam.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER XIX.—THE PERILS OF THE SOUL Pp. 202-226

The soul is commonly identified with a person's likeness : hence it is feared that a person may be injured through his reflection or shadow. Sometimes a sick person is bound, to prevent his soul from leaving him, and again magicians often undertake to recover and restore the soul of a sick person when it is believed to have already left him. Examples from Indonesia, Burma, Assam, China, Africa, and North America.

Primitive people have often been in the habit of laying the foundations of buildings on the bodies of human victims, that their souls may guard or strengthen the foundations.

CHAPTER XX.—TABOOED ACTS . . . Pp. 227-228

Savages commonly fear the spirits of any unknown country they enter, and observe ceremonies on crossing the boundary : so with the Maoris of New Zealand. Savages also fear to be injured by magic through relics of their food : examples of such belief in Australia and New Guinea.

CHAPTER XXI.—TABOOED PERSONS . . . Pp. 229-256

Kings and chiefs in primitive society are subject to many taboos. Mourners, menstruous and pregnant women, and women after childbirth, warriors in time of war, warriors who have slain a foe, and hunters and fishers are subject to many taboos in different parts of the world.

CHAPTER XXII.—TABOOED THINGS . . . Pp. 257-270

Things as well as persons are subject to the mysterious influence of taboo. Thus iron is widely avoided, and sharp-edged weapons, and blood. The human head is often regarded as particularly tabooed or sacred, and the hair, as part of the head. The disposal of cut hair and nails is often an anxious matter to primitive man, since these may be used in magic to his hurt. So, too, with the saliva. Knots are widely regarded as magically potent, and are therefore sometimes tabooed. A knot on the garment of a woman in childbed is believed to retard delivery, hence these should be untied. Knots may be turned to good account, to oppose the inroad of disease.

CHAPTER XXIII.—TABOOED WORDS . . . Pp. 271-289

Words, especially names, are commonly tabooed, and many primitive people are unwilling to utter their own names. In some tribes parents are named after their children. This common avoidance of one's name seems to be based on a fear that evil might be worked on a person by a sorcerer

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

xii

CONTENTS

through his name. Similarly primitive people are often forbidden to mention or address their relatives by marriage by name. The names of the dead are also frequently forbidden to the living.

A common taboo prohibits the telling of fairy stories at certain times and seasons, particularly during the day.

Sometimes the names of sacred chiefs and gods are tabooed. The same interdiction is frequently laid on the names of common objects of daily life, especially the names of objects for which men are searching, or of animals for which they are hunting. Thus in Malay, Assam, and Africa.

A common taboo in Africa forbids people to step over things or persons lying on the ground, from a fear that this will affect the thing or person stepped over.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE KILLING OF THE

DIVINE KING Pp. 290-317

The custom of killing a divine king upon any serious failure of his powers is very common in Africa: it was practised by the Jukun of Nigeria, the Fung of the Upper Nile, the Mbum of the Cameroons, and many other tribes. These examples suggest an explanation of the priesthood at Nemi. Primitive peoples often entertain superstitions about meteors, and connect their occurrence with certain events, such as a death.

The great games of ancient Greece were, according to tradition, originally funeral games. Such funeral games occur in Samoa and among the Indians of Alaska.

In ancient Babylon the king's tenure of office seems to have been limited to a single year, at the end of which he was put to death. The Banyoro of Uganda and Ibibio of Nigeria retain traces of a similar custom.

CHAPTER XXV.—THE FAIRY WIFE Pp. 318-323

Stories of a fairy wife or husband, of the type known as the Swan Maiden, or Beauty and the Beast, or Cupid and Psyche, are widely diffused: examples from Malay, New Hebrides, New Zealand, New Guinea, and Assam.

CHAPTER XXVI.—TEMPORARY KINGS Pp. 324-330

The custom has existed among some people of appointing a temporary or mock king, either annually or at the beginning of the real king's reign. Examples from Uganda, Sudan, Nigeria in Africa, and Bastar in India.

CHAPTER XXVII.—SACRIFICE OF THE KING'S

SON Pp. 331-333

An African chief is reported to have sacrificed his first-born son to bring about his own recovery. More recently animals have been substituted for men

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xiii

in such sacrifices. The custom of killing or sacrificing first-born children has been practised in Australia, the Solomon Islands, in Indo-China, in India, and in Africa.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—KILLING THE TREE-
SPIRIT Pp. 334-335

Images are used as substitutes for human sacrifices in Bombay.

In Siberia, as in Europe, the transition from winter to summer is celebrated by a dramatic contest.

CHAPTER XXIX.—SWINGING AS A MAGICAL
RITE Pp. 336-337

Swinging is practised as a magical rite as a cure for serious sicknesses by the Milanos of Sarawak in Borneo.

CHAPTER XXX.—THE MYTH OF ADONIS . Pp. 338-339

The primitive mind is untrammelled by logic: thus the African native and the Chinese peasant are able to believe both of two contradictory statements.

CHAPTER XXXI.—CONSECRATION BY ANOINT-
ING Pp. 340-341

The custom of consecrating by anointing is observed in various parts of Polynesia and in Bombay.

CHAPTER XXXII.—REINCARNATION OF THE
DEAD Pp. 342-346

Sacred women who are regarded as wives of a god in Nigeria and fakirs in India are believed to have miraculous powers of gaining favours from heaven.

The belief that the human dead come to life in the form of snakes is particularly common in Africa. So, too, is a belief that dead infants may enter once more into the wombs of their mothers and be born again. Hence infants are buried at places to which their mothers often go.

Among the Australian aborigines conception is often attributed to the entrance into the woman of an ancestral spirit, and is regarded as independent of sexual intercourse. A precisely similar belief has been discovered among the Trobriand Islanders, and in the Merinas of Madagascar.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—VOLCANIC RELIGION . Pp. 347-349

Worship is paid to inflammable gases in India and Celebes, to earthquakes in Africa, and to a volcano in the Friendly Islands.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE GARDENS OF ADONIS Pp. 350-352

The ancient gardens of Adonis have their analogy in many tribes of modern India.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE RITUAL OF ATTIS Pp. 353-354

The self-mutilation of male worshippers at the vernal festival of Cybele and Attis finds an analogy in modern Nigeria.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—ATTIS AS THE FATHER

GOD P. 355

The Manggerai of West Flores, in the Indian Archipelago, personify the Sky and Earth as husband and wife.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—ON HEAD-HUNTING . Pp. 356-357

Among the motives alleged by head-hunters for the practice of taking heads is a belief that they thereby promote the fertility of the earth and the growth of the crops. Thus in Assam, Formosa, Nigeria, and South America.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THE TEARS OF ISIS Pp. 358-359

In modern Egypt a night about midsummer is called the Night of the Drop, because at that time a certain marvellous drop is believed to initiate the swelling of the Nile.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE STAR OF ISIS . P. 360

The Bafeoti of Loango, like the ancient Egyptians, employ the star Sirius to correct their calendar of twelve lunar months.

CHAPTER XL.—FEASTS OF ALL SOULS . Pp. 361-364

The custom of holding an annual feast to welcome the returning souls of the dead is observed in the Trobriand Islands, in China, in Tibet, and in Piedmont.

CHAPTER XLI.—MOTHER-KIN AND MOTHER

GODDESSES P. 365

A system of pure gynocracy, in which men are ruled by women, is reported to exist among the Valovale of South Africa.

CONTENTS

xv

CHAPTER XLII.—MARRIAGE OF BROTHERS
 WITH SISTERS Pp. 366-367

The ancient Egyptian custom of marrying brothers with sisters has been practised in the royal family of the Banyoro in Uganda.

CHAPTER XLIII.—CHILDREN OF LIVING
 PARENTS IN RITUAL Pp. 368-370

Children whose parents are both alive are commonly used in ritual, probably from a belief that such children have a larger share of vitality than usual.

CHAPTER XLIV.—BLIND VICTIMS IN SACRI-
 FICE Pp. 371-372

Blind victims are often used in sacrifice for the purpose of blinding, by sympathetic magic, the eyes of enemies. On the same principle in performing a magical rite a person will sometimes close his eyes to blind the animals or vermin against which his incantations are directed.

CHAPTER XLV.—MEN DRESSED AS WOMEN P. 373

The *Mawhoos* or *Mahoos* of Tahiti are men who dress and act as women.

CHAPTER XLVI.—CHILDREN IN WINNOWING-
 FANS P. 374

The custom of placing a child in a winnowing-fan is widespread.

CHAPTER XLVII.—MAGICAL SIGNIFICANCE
 OF GAMES IN PRIMITIVE AGRICULTURE Pp. 375-378

Games are often played by primitive peoples to promote the growth of their crops : thus in India and New Guinea. The game of cats' cradles is of very common occurrence for this purpose.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—WOMEN'S PART IN PRIMI-
 TIVE AGRICULTURE Pp. 379-384

Among primitive people who practise agriculture the men commonly clear the land, while the actual cultivation falls to the lot of the women : so in Africa, New Guinea, and New Britain.

CHAPTER XLIX.—PERSONIFICATION OF THE
 CORN-SPIRIT AT HARVEST Pp 385-390

The custom of “cutting the calacht” was observed at Antrim in 1913. The Oraons of India have a similar custom at the rice-harvest, and the “corn-baby” is a general institution among the Hindoos of India and the Palaungs of Burma.

The “Barley Bride” as practised by the Berbers of Morocco and the Malay ritual of the “rice-baby.”

CHAPTER L.—HUMAN SACRIFICES FOR THE
 CROPS P. 391

Men and women offered as sacrifices in Nigeria at planting and harvest.

CHAPTER LI.—THE CORN-SPIRIT AS AN
 ANIMAL P. 392

In the Orkney Islands the corn-spirit was regarded as a dog.

CHAPTER LII.—THE PLEIADES IN PRIMITIVE
 AGRICULTURE Pp. 393-397

The constellation of the Pleiades is regarded as important by many primitive races, especially for determining the beginning of the year and the seasons of planting and sowing. Examples from Polynesia, Indonesia, Africa, and South America.

CHAPTER LIII.—A PRIMITIVE FORM OF
 PURIFICATION P. 398

Cohabitation is sometimes required as a form of purification in time of mourning.

CHAPTER LIV.—THE MANIAE AT ARICIA P. 399

Cakes in human form are baked annually at Frascati, near Aricia.

CHAPTER LV.—ATTEMPTS TO DECEIVE
 DEMONS Pp. 400-401

The deception of demons is sometimes attempted by mock burials, as among the Shans of Burma and the Toradyas of Celebes.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - *Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough*

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xvii

CHAPTER LVI.—THE SACRIFICE OF FIRST-FRUITS Pp. 402-407

At harvest the first-fruits are commonly offered to the gods, the spirits of the dead, or kings and chiefs, before the people are allowed to eat of the new crop.

CHAPTER LVII.—HOMOEOPATHIC MAGIC OF A FLESH DIET Pp. 408-409

The savage commonly believes that by eating the flesh of a man or an animal he acquires the qualities and abilities of the animal or man.

CHAPTER LVIII.—THE PROPITIATION OF WILD ANIMALS BY HUNTERS Pp. 410-416

Believing that animals have souls like men, the savage commonly propitiates the animals and fish which he kills and eats, by prayer and sacrifice. The Berbers of Morocco resort to various magical and religious rites to protect their crops from the inroads of sparrows.

CHAPTER LIX.—THE TRANSMIGRATION OF HUMAN SOULS INTO ANIMALS . . . Pp. 417-418

The savage often believes that the souls of his dead kinsfolk have passed into animals, which he accordingly treats with respect.

CHAPTER LX.—THE TRANSFERENCE OF EVIL Pp. 419-424

Primitive man often believes he can rid himself of all his troubles by magically transferring them to other persons, or even to inanimate objects. The belief has led to the sacrifice of animals and human victims as scape-goats.

CHAPTER LXI.—THE OMNIPRESENCE OF DEMONS Pp. 425-426

Savage man believes himself to be encompassed on every side by spiritual agencies, to which he attributes all the evils that befall him. Thus with the Birhors of India and the Kiwai of New Guinea, and the natives of Yap in the Pacific.

B

CHAPTER LXII.—THE PUBLIC EXPULSION
 OF EVILS Pp. 427-432

Sometimes primitive man attempts to rid the whole community of their troubles by a general and public expulsion of evils, either occasionally or periodically.

In this connection the annual appearance of a certain sea-slug in the Pacific is of interest.

CHAPTER LXIII.—PUBLIC SCAPEGOATS Pp. 433-439

Sometimes the evils publicly expelled are believed to be embodied in a material form, such as a door, an animal, or a human being. Sickness is often thought to be driven out in this way.

CHAPTER LXIV.—THE SATURNALIA AND
 KINDRED FESTIVALS Pp. 440-442

A festival similar to the Roman Saturnalia is observed by the Bagesu of Mount Kenya.

Intercalary periods are commonly regarded as unlucky.

Observation of the Buddhist Lent.

CHAPTER LXV.—NOT TO TOUCH THE EARTH Pp. 443-446

Certain sacred or tabooed persons and objects are not allowed to touch the ground, for example kings, chiefs, and holy men, brides and bridegrooms, new-born children, sacred books, and so on.

CHAPTER LXVI.—NOT TO SEE THE SUN P. 447

Certain sacred or tabooed persons, especially women after childbed, are not permitted to see the sun.

CHAPTER LXVII.—THE SECLUSION OF GIRLS
 AT PUBERTY Pp. 448-450

Girls are commonly secluded at puberty, a custom observed by the Bakongo of the Lower Congo, the Andaman Islanders, the Gilbert and Marshall Islanders of the Pacific, and the Kakadu tribe of Australia.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - *Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough*

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xix

CHAPTER LXVIII.—THE FIRE FESTIVALS

OF EUROPE Pp. 451-453

The ancient fire festivals of Europe, in modified forms, are observed in North Friesland, in Savoy, and among the mountain Jews of the Caucasus.

CHAPTER LXIX.—WERE-WOLVES Pp. 454-456

The belief in were-wolves is still prevalent in the Sudan and the Lower Congo.

CHAPTER LXX.—THE FIRE-WALK Pp. 457-458

The religious rite of walking through fire is still observed in India and Africa, and is reported in a Maori legend.

CHAPTER LXXI.—THE MAGIC FLOWERS OF

MIDSUMMER EVE P. 459

The belief in such magic flowers remains in Savoy, and finds a curious parallel in the Sudan.

CHAPTER LXXII.—THE EXTERNAL SOUL

IN FOLK-TALES Pp. 460-462

A popular Indian story tells of a magician who concealed his soul in a parrot.

CHAPTER LXXIII.—THE EXTERNAL SOUL

IN FOLK-CUSTOM Pp. 463-477

Such a story reflects a belief in the ability to deposit the soul externally, a custom commonly practised in Northern Rhodesia, in Nigeria, and elsewhere. The external objects with which human lives are believed to be bound up are often plants or trees.

A primitive custom exists of passing sick people through a cleft tree as a mode of cure. Again, some tribes pass through a cleft tree or stick or other narrow opening after a death, no doubt in order to evade the dead man's ghost.

Many primitive people believe that their lives are so bound up with those of animals that when the animal dies the man dies. This belief common in Africa.

According to some primitive people, every human being possesses several souls.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05750-9 - *Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough*

James George Frazer

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

xx

CONTENTS

CHAPTER LXXIV.—THE RITUAL OF DEATH

AND RESURRECTION Pp. 478-479

At certain initiations the candidate must undergo a rite of mimic death and resurrection, as in Nigeria.

CHAPTER LXXV.—THE MISTLETOE P. 480

The Gallas of East Africa say that the mistletoe is grafted on a tree as the soul is grafted on the body, and venerate it.

INDEX Pp. 481-494