

## The fire

### THE CHILDREN OF FIRE, THE CHILDREN OF THE FURNACES.

The talk began by commenting on some of Mircea Eliade's writings, which start from metallurgy, that is, from metals and their handling.

*In reality the history of man should start from the times of conservation of fire.*

Initially, fire was produced in nature spontaneously; combustions spontaneous in the forests, (to this day a branch that breaks and produces a spark touching another); volcanic eruptions and lavas, lightning burning, etc.

The initial concern of the man was how to conserve this fire that they carried to the caverns. A whole technology was then initially developed that was directly related to **the conservation of fire**. From this technology arises the kiln. Some stones that are heated in the fire, then a receptacle is made in the earth surrounded by stones that are covered and allow to maintain the fire, thus the first furnaces. Therefore, we realize that the oven was invented before it was discovered how to produce fire by the hand of man. Is really extraordinary this discovery prior to **the production of fire** and it has not been sized in history correctly.

The first fires were made by striking stones against each other, of the obsidian type. The topic of ambient temperature was also critical. In warmer areas there was more management on the production of fire. In other areas they limited themselves to conserving the fire and applying technology from this conservation, without entering the stage of its production.

The writer we are concerned with in question, Mircea Eliade, starts from the metallurgy in his studio, not of the production of glass, not of ceramics, not of the ovens. It starts from metals. From there you miss certain lines that do not explain some later developments in the story. The subject of the fallen irons of the heavens powerfully draws attention to man. It is seen in different parts of the world, in different cultures, was cast iron and was not extracted from the bowels of the Earth. Different peoples worked this iron with the same techniques with which they worked the stones, with knives, with farming instruments. In the same way in which they worked the woods and stones, now they begin to laminate and make instruments and weapons with this celestial iron.

Much later than this work appears the production of ceramics, glass and work with soft metals. It is with other metals the initial work not with iron, since the initial temperatures of the furnaces were not high enough to melt the iron.

It is interesting to note that the word "**iron and steel**", later used and that it relates to the steel factories and all that comes from the Greek word "sideros", which means heaven, has to do with that "sacred" space from which they came these celestial irons. In some cultures, the celestial sphere was solid, made of rock and these meteorites were a gift resulting from the rockfall ("as fallen of the sky") of that sphere. Already in some cultures 4,000 years ago these sacred spaces built by man, of lapis lazuli (lapiz = stone, lazuli = blue) that they were true celestial spheres.

In any case, the iron was there millions of years before and there were other conditions which allowed it to be extracted from the earth and worked on, at a much later stage. Between one stage (that of celestial irons) and another, the production of ceramics was emerging, glass, alloys such as bronze until reaching the steel industry. Let's remember that we know they require 1500 degrees to melt iron. For silver and gold 900-1000 were required degrees. The jump from 1000 to 1500 degrees was tremendous. This period is quite late in history. Take the Chinese for example, who by using certain woods, resinous plants and kilns in series, in stages, connected to each other like a "cascade", took the outlet of one furnace and connected it to another and so on with 6 ovens until these required temperatures are reached.

Frankly, it is quite a subject that deserves attention and goes back in time. The conservation of fire and its technology that was during a long period of human history.

In the Greeks there is a myth, that of Prometheus, who takes fire from the Gods and this Titan takes it to the men. Men and Gods are not producing fire; they pass it on to humans. Prometheus is a cultural hero and these heroes always teach things. From there the arts and sciences emerge.

There is historical antecedent that there was always an antagonism between the potters and glassmakers. Each one defended and admired their production and degraded the other. Both are the children of the furnaces, those who work with fire. This antagonism also occurred between blacksmiths of different cultures: those blacksmiths who achieved higher temperatures in their furnaces and were kidnapped by other tribes, it was to seize iron and have "the power of greyskol."

Later, over time, they continued this theme of keeping production techniques of glass and its painting hidden. He made mention of the last judicial process of which there is evidence in 1750, with the Doges of Venice. Two glassblowing technicians from the island of Murano took off for Austria and began to teach the technique and the Doges hired two hitmen to dispatch the traitors who were revealing the secrets of the trade. We can also rescue glass from certain cathedrals in the 1200s with a technique of dyeing with rust, not painted, a technique that remains unknown to this day.

I mention how these sacred places or spaces, where meteorites fall, are later a reason for pilgrimage. This is the case of Santiago de Compostela (Campo di Stella - Field of the stars), an area heavily impacted by meteorites, was a pre-pilgrimage Christian. The path that was taken to get to this place, Finis Terra (The end of the world), is the path of the Via Lactea (Milky Way - which is in heaven). Later that pilgrimage is the same psychological idea from which the crusades are mounted.

We see that this phenomenon is repeated in Mecca with the Cabba stone, originally meteoric, also pre-Islamic pilgrimage site. (Let's not forget that it is Muhammad's uncle the one who cares for this holy place, who educates Muhammad and from where Islam originates).

It is interesting to rescue these places as "sacred" or "holy" that attract and are a reason for pilgrimage once a year. These pilgrimages had connection with the holy places that in turn had a direct connection to the heavens. The "pilgrim", in this case, Saint Yago, (later Santiago) has certain attributes: some shells of oysters, a stick, a holy book. The most relevant is the oyster shell. But it is that this contains a pearl, sometimes black, like the aerolites. It was also called in the West the "pearl of the Tao".

Many pilgrimages became later large bazaars where trade and exchanged products. Tolls were even charged to enter these places (in the case of Troy, seven Troys were destroyed, they were actually toll plazas!). At the time of the Renaissance, true patrons and defenders of the humanism: Pope Borja, Cesar Borja and the anecdote of the swing in which he swung kindly an enemy and giving him flight he was expelled into the void !!!!!. Silo commented on the "Virtu" of the Renaissance, he said they were blinded and very crazy.

It is people who emerge from the Middle Ages and do not tolerate what is imposed by the papacy, until the Borja himself rebelled. It was a dangerous life ("I will live pericolly", a phrase that later coined Mussolini. The case of Leonardo who pushed aside a worm to not step on it and manufactured high-tech war machines for the Sforzas, their protectors and patrons. As an anecdote there was a certain Girolamo Savonarola, priest who accused Leonardo of being heretic and the Medici and the Sforzas defended Leonardo, and they managed to excommunicate the priest and send him to the stake.

It also occurs, returning to the theme of sacred places, strong attractions with mountains: Mount Fujiyama for Shintoists and Buddhists for example, a 3500 meter volcano, but a tremendous reference.

The same thing happens with certain rivers that come from sacred places, others that do not necessarily originate from those places. Like the Nile, which does not come from mountains and "itself" was a sacred place. The Tigris and the Euphrates, from where the Babylonian cosmology, where Eden comes from, all pre-biblical and later handcuffed.

#### Other notes

One can transfer to the universal roots myths, study how the molds were and it can be understood how a certain Egyptian god produced women and men in a particular way, with a goat's head or other forms. One wonders how would the potter's wheel of Ptah or the bellows used by the craftsman be built with a skin, with a sheep's bladder.

It started in the beginning with an oven under the ground, lined with stones placed a certain way, not just any, and with a tube that was tied at one end this sheepskin with a pair of tabs on the tube to let in air and then blow it into the oven and *fan* the fire.

It is from the myths of the different peoples from which we rescue the advance that led a civilization on the issue of conservation and production of fire and the use of ovens to reach certain temperatures. Let's take the case of Jehovah who gave life and breathed man out of the clay. On the other hand, the Egyptians already worked glass and metals.

The work that was done with the hands was also done with the head. And all that work was dragged down to the present day and you can see remains or vestiges of an Egyptian glazier, his production and mental form in a production or an object in a corner store for example. It is the "mentis form" (mental form) that creeps into history. And it is in those cultural molds where one is formed.

The intention will be to start the work for once from the beginning: maintain and produce the fire, start the work of collecting the primordial mud and experiment with it, produce with our hands the first ovens, like blowing air into them to give them temperature as they used to do with a lamb's bladder (from which the bagpipes derives) or with a wrinkled bellows (from where the accordion derives). So we will go making a passage of the materials cold to fire. We will go on to work with the muds, (the primary cause - *causa finalis*) and in that step of adding fire is when a real transformation occurs. We will learn that it is a different matter to keep the temperature, produce it, direct it and elevate it. We will see how the initial temperature is better preserved, whether it is by dispersing or concentrating it and we will learn to maintain it: is it concentrated or spread? We will continue with glazed ceramics and glasses that require other temperatures and finally we will reach the melting of the metals.

These are the personal notes of various people in conversations with El Negro.  
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