



“Whoever Did Not See the Rejoicing of the House of Drawing, Never Saw Rejoicing in His Life”

(mSukkah 5:1): *The Role of High-Arousal Memories
in Post-Destruction Judaism*

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May 25, 2018, Groningen, Netherlands
Emotions in Rabbinic Literature: Methods and Approaches

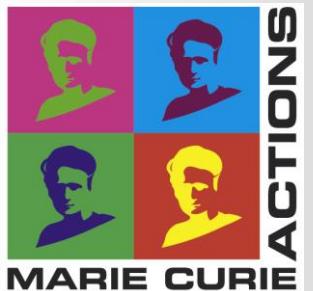


Overview

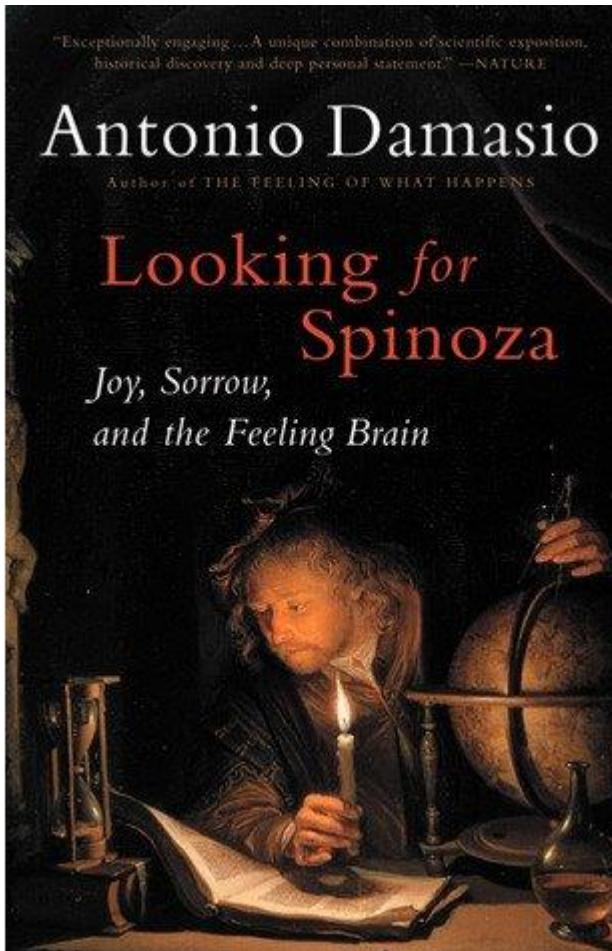
1. What are emotion? *(Antonio Damasio)*
2. Emotions as a dimension for the analysis of rituals *(CSR)*
3. Emotions as a component of a complex system
4. How to use this perspective to read Jewish texts?
5. Joint discussion (*in lieu of* a summary)

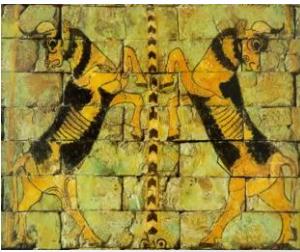
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Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (2003)





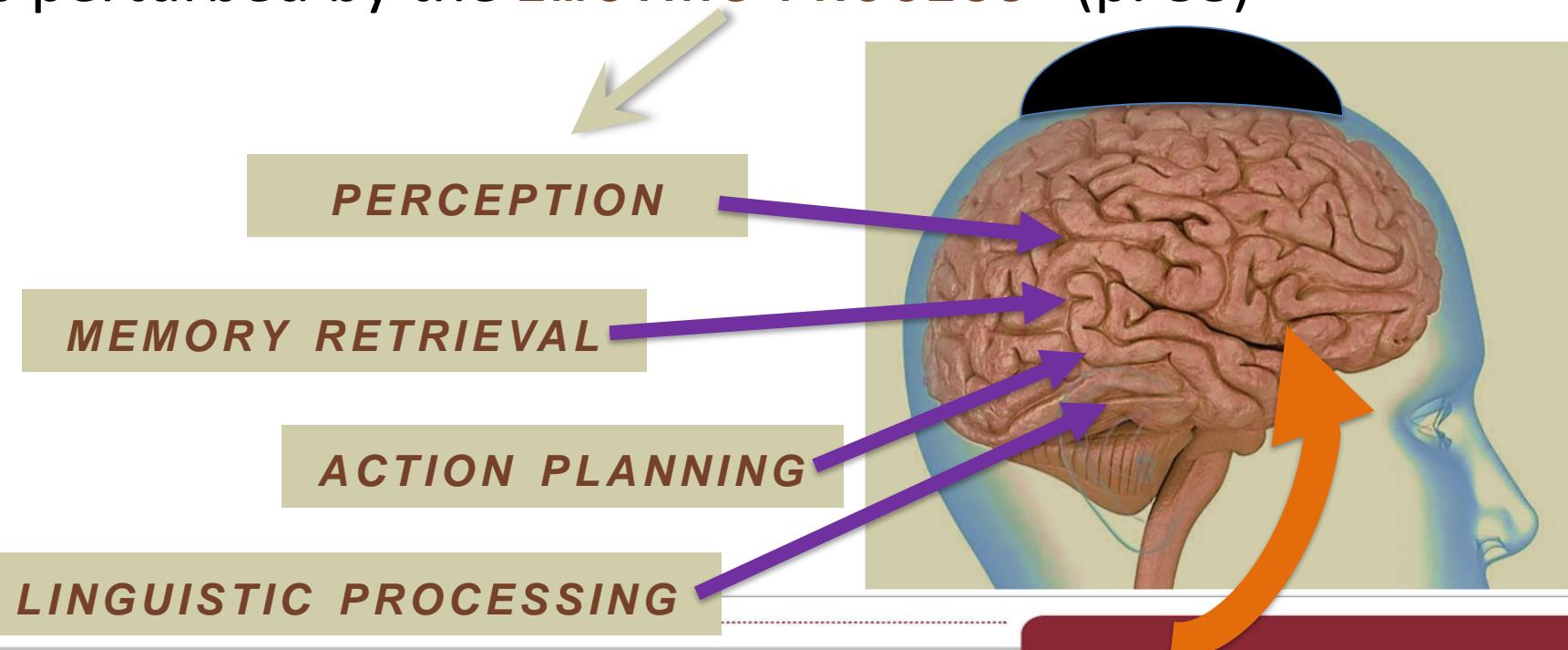
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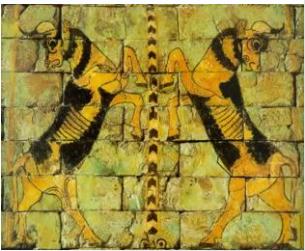
1. “Feelings of pain or pleasure or some quality in between are the bedrock of our mind.” (p. 3)
2. “a feeling is the perception of a certain state of the body along with the perception of a certain mode of thinking and of thoughts with certain themes” (p. 86)
3. “because [the feelings’] essence consists of the thoughts that represent the body involved in a reactive process.” (p. 86)



Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (2003)

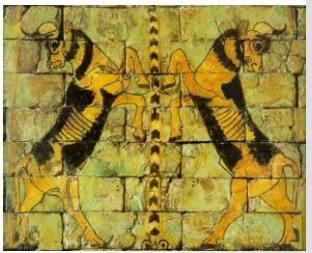
1. “[a] feeling of emotion is an idea of the body when it is perturbed by the **EMOTING PROCESS**” (p. 88)





Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (2003)

1. “the most advanced variety of the phenomenon... encompasses the following: the body states that are the essence of the feeling and give it a distinctive content; the altered mode of thinking that accompanies the perception of that essential body state; and the sort of thoughts that agree, in terms of theme, with the kind of emotion being felt” (p. 89)
2. “there is a rich interplay between the object of desire and a wealth of personal memories pertinent to the object – past occasions of desire, past aspirations, and past pleasures, real or imagined” (p. 95)



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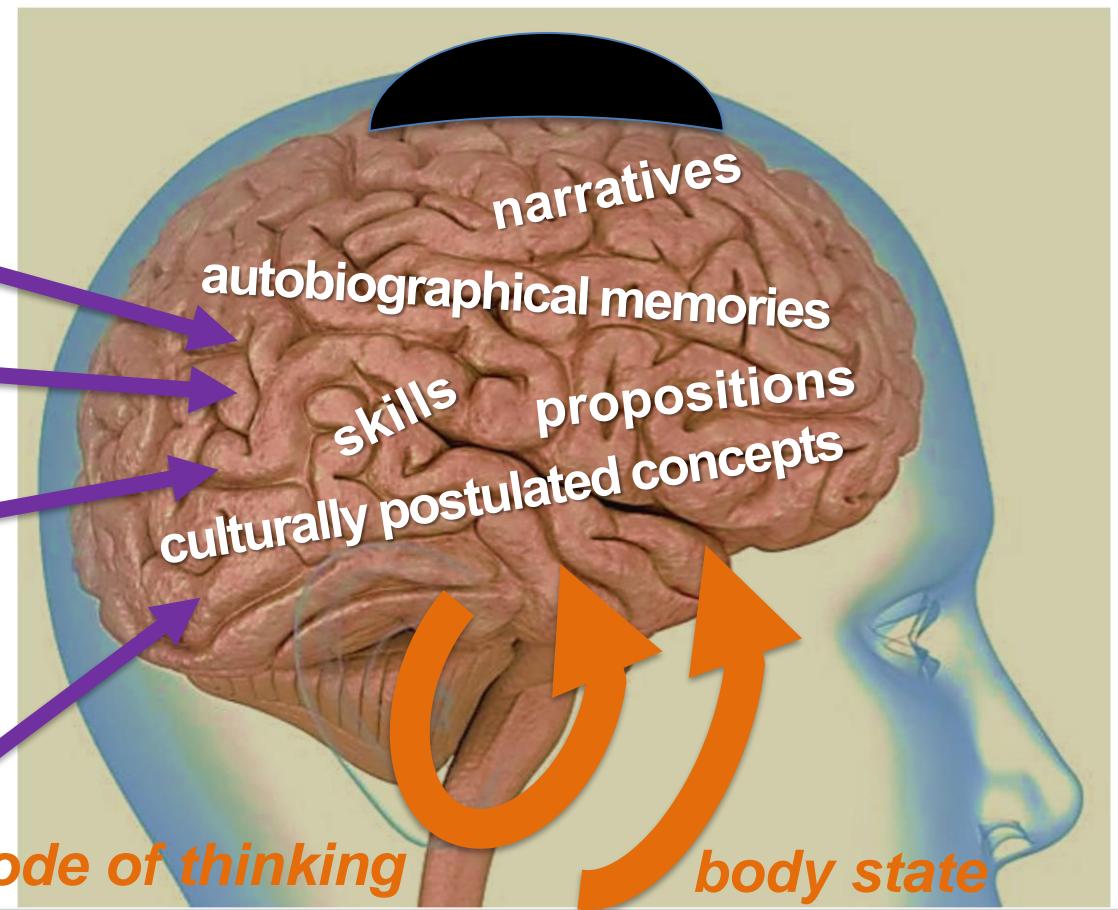
EMOTING PROCESSES:

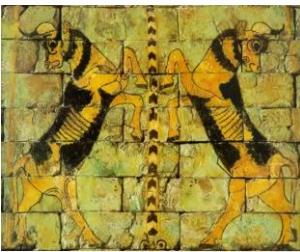
PERCEPTION

MEMORY RETRIEVAL

ACTION PLANNING

LINGUISTIC PROCESSING





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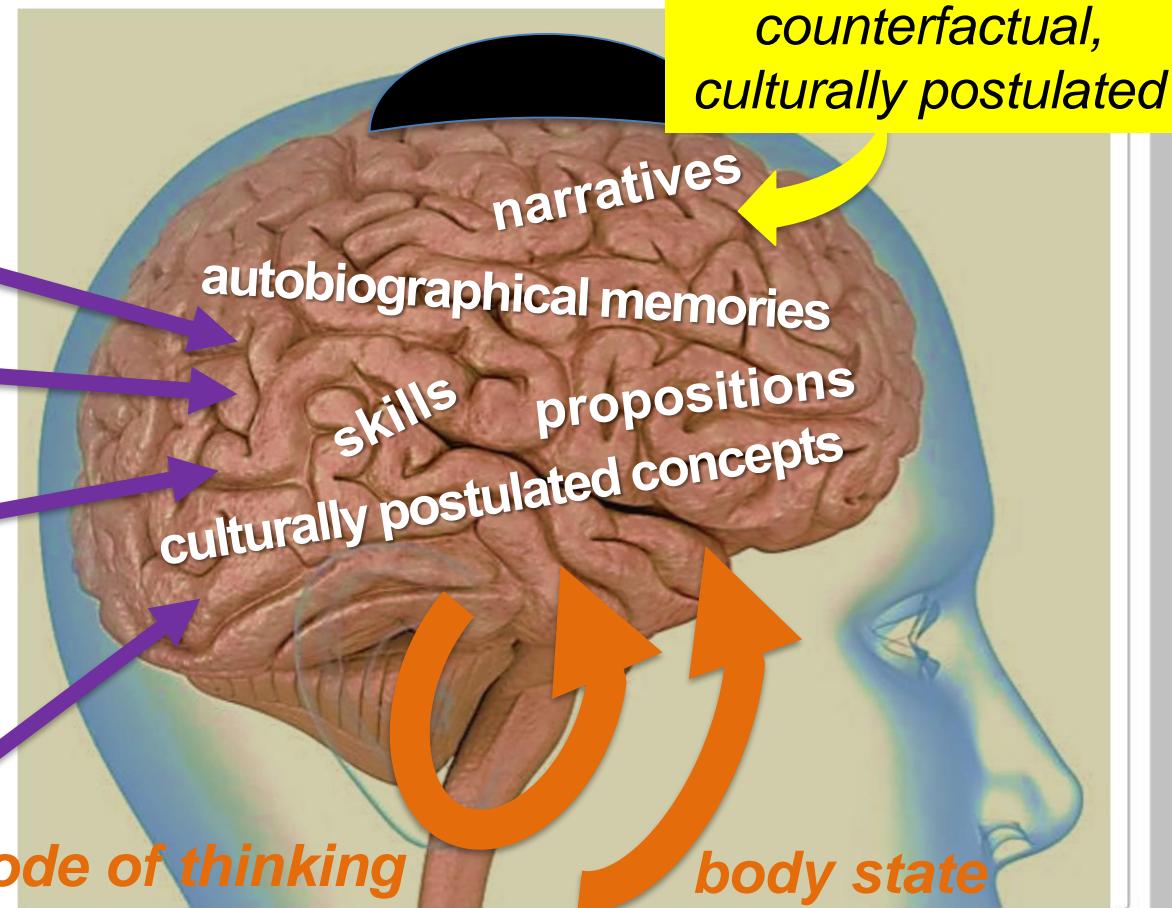
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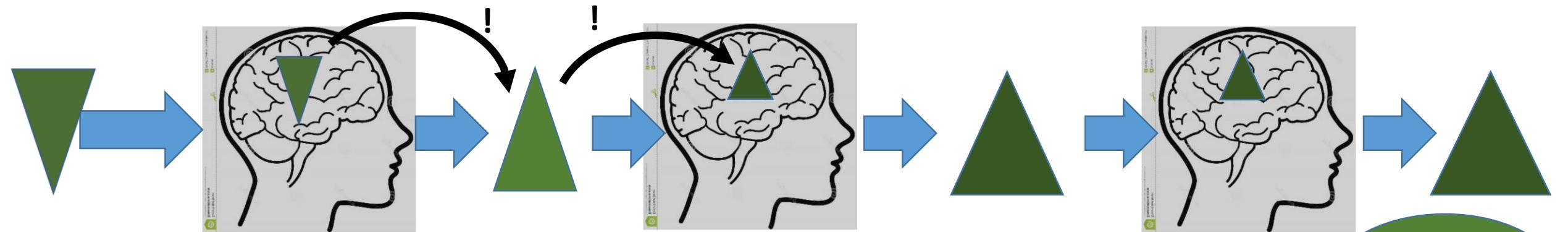
“Let us now turn to the delicate issue of “locating” the spiritual in the human organism. I do not believe that there is a brain center for spirituality in the good old phrenological tradition. But we can provide an account of how the process of arriving at a spiritual state may be carried out neurobiologically. Since the spiritual is a particular kind of feeling state, I see it as depending, neurally speaking, on the structures and operations (...) especially on the network of somatosensing brain regions. The spiritual is a particular state of the *organism*, a delicate combination of certain body configurations and certain mental configurations. Sustaining such states depends on a wealth of thoughts about the condition of the self and the condition of other selves, about past and future, about both concrete and abstract conceptions of our nature.” (p. 286)

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Recall and transmission

- Input representation (proposition, concept, narrative, rite,...) *external representation*
- Saving to one's brain: **learning**. *internal representation*
- Output representation (proposition, concept, narrative, rite,...) *external representation*



- Do we reproduce it? Do we reproduce it faithfully, or alter it?
- Cultural epidemiology (Dan Sperber), memes (Richard Dawkins).

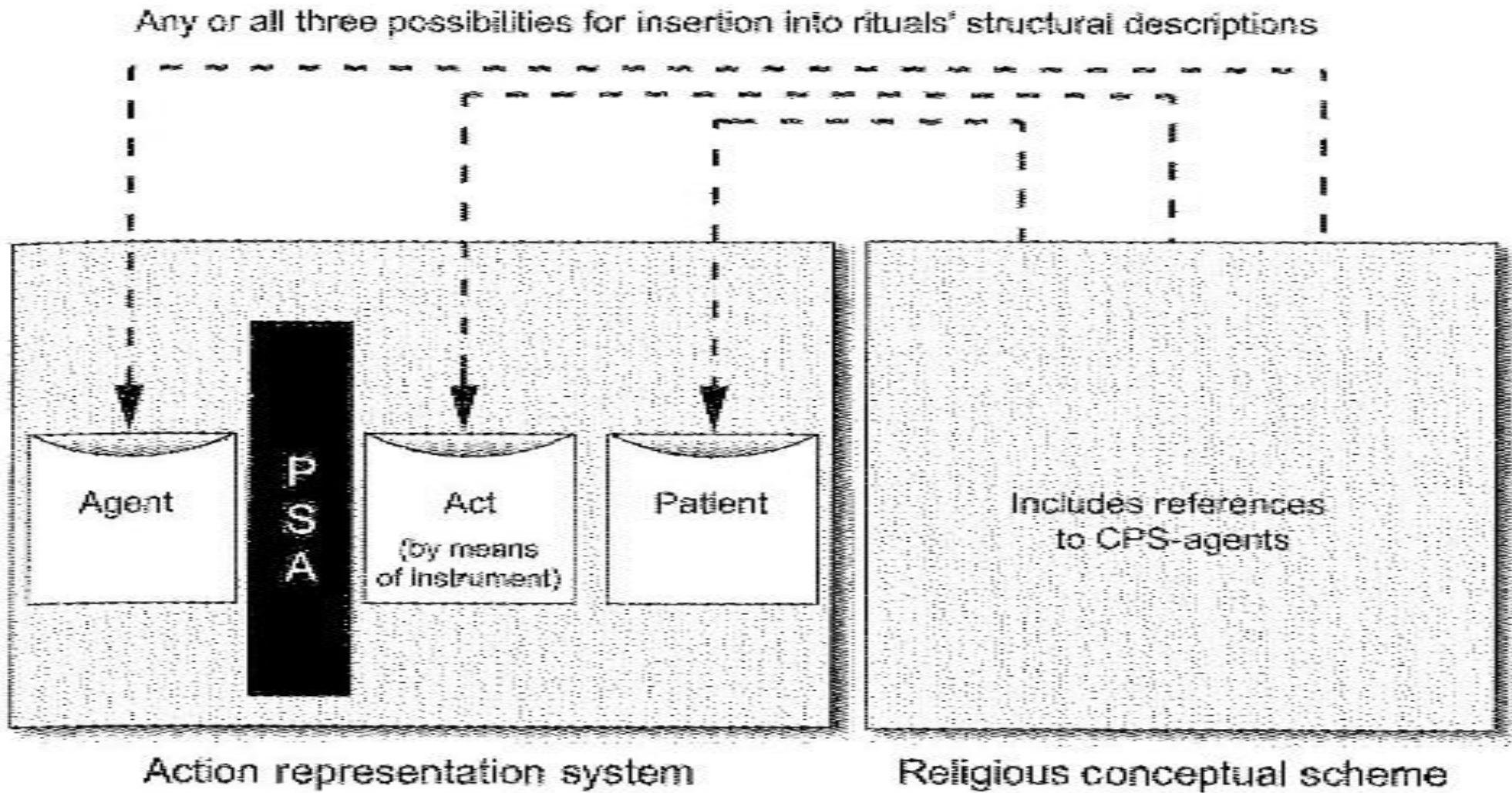
*optimali-
sation?*

Cognitive Science of Religion (CSR):

the “founding fathers” (relevant to our discussion) include

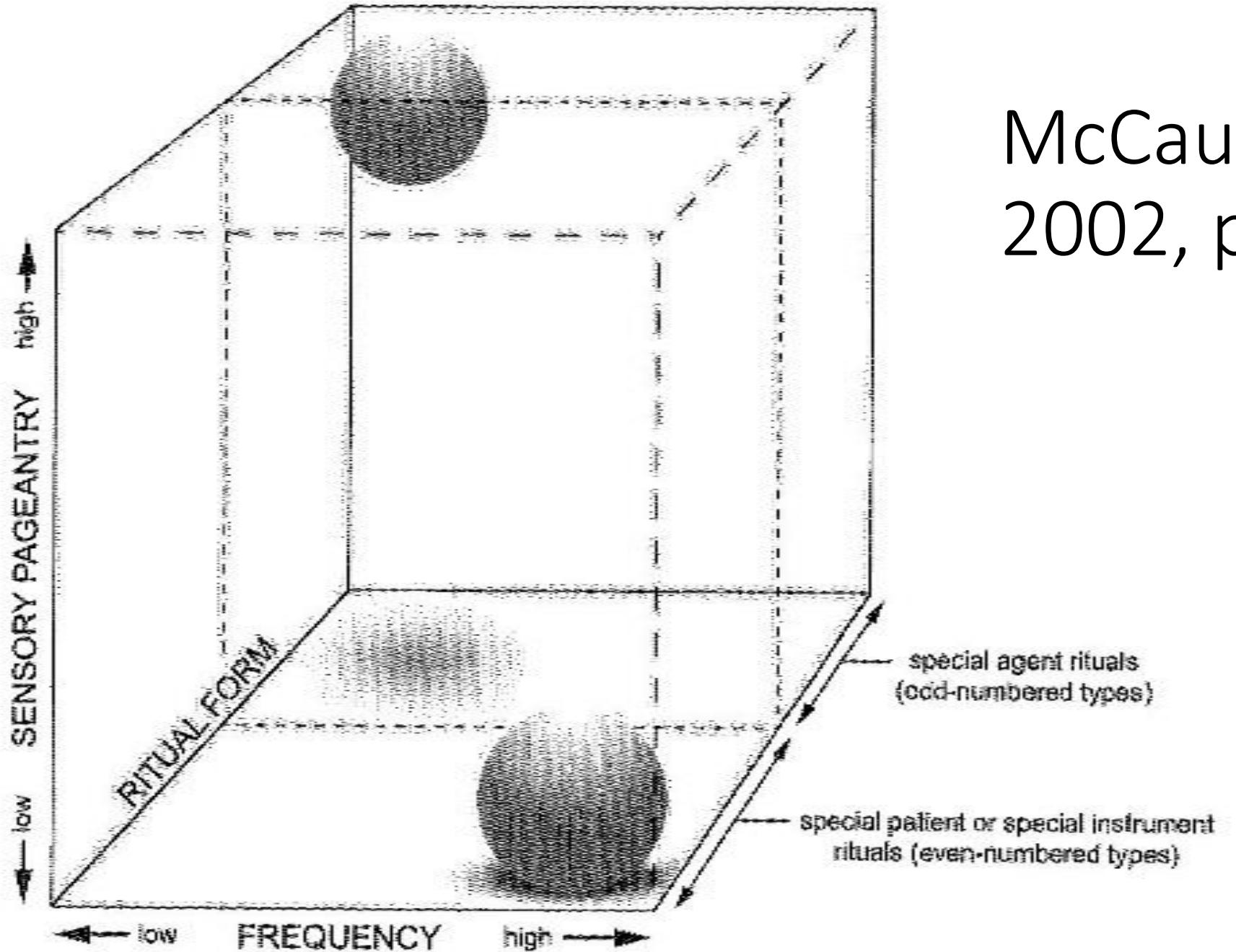


- E. Thomas Lawson (*right*)
- Robert N. McCauley (*left*)
- L&McC 1990: Rethinking Religion
- McC&L 2002: Bringing Ritual to Mind
- Harvey Whitehouse
- HW 1995: Inside the Cult
- HW 2004: Modes of Religiosity



Action role most directly connected with CPS-agent

Number of enabling rituals (structural depth)	Special agent rituals		Special patient and special instrument rituals	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Level 1				
Level 2				
Level 3				
Level 4				
Etc.	Further odd-numbered types		Further even-numbered types	



McCauley és Lawson
2002, p. 203.

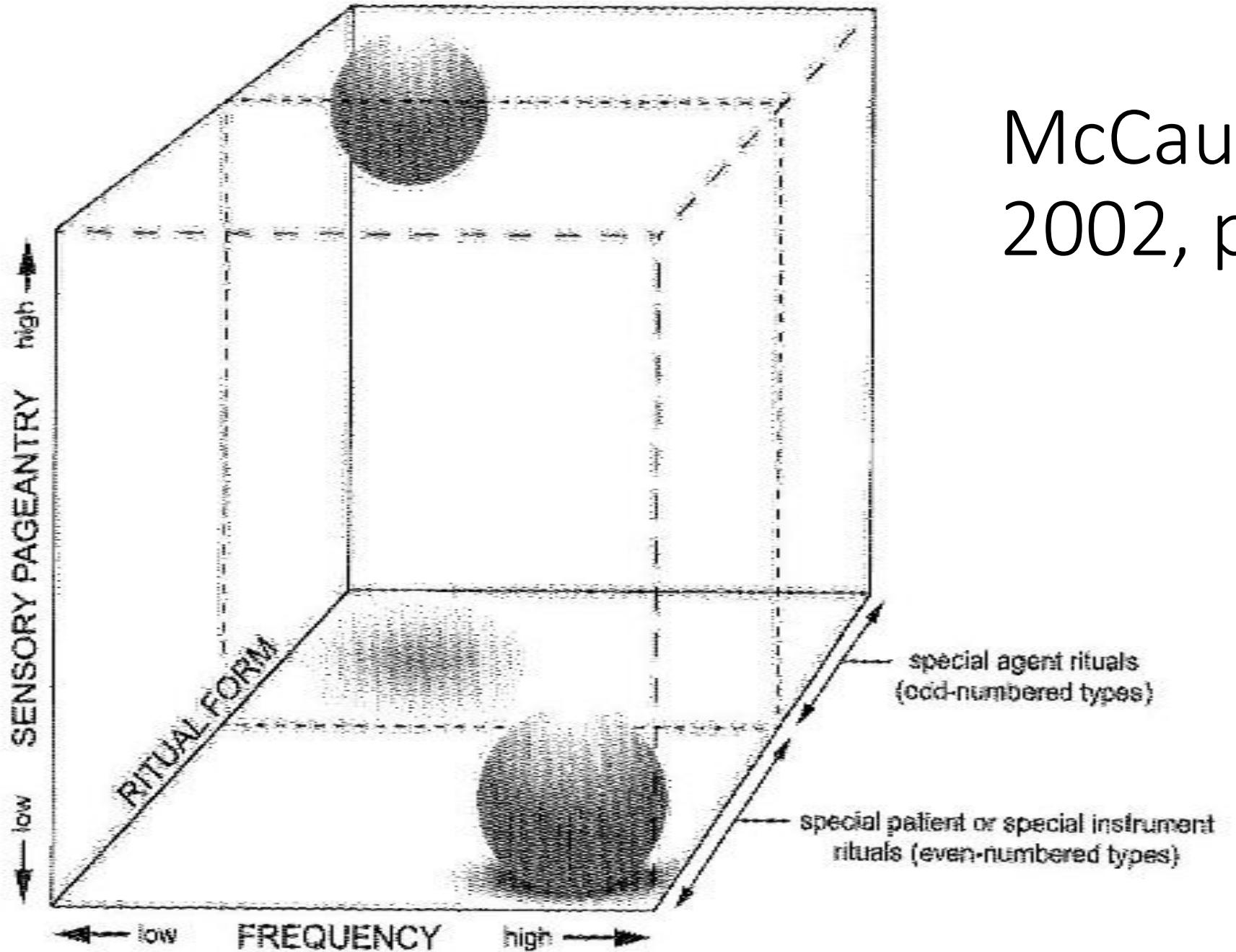
Fieldwork by Dimitris Xygalatas on high arousal rituals



<http://cdn-imgs-mag.aeon.co/images/2014/09/00040246.jpg>

<http://today.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Piercing1.jpg>

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/InstituteofCognitionCulture/Image5,285314,en.jpg>



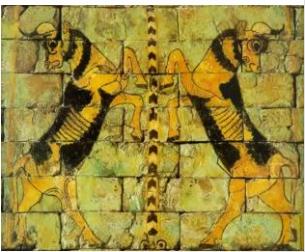
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Harvey Whitehouse: Doctrinal and imagistic modes of religiosity

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Doctrinal</i>	<i>Imagistic</i>
Psychological Features		
1. Transmissive frequency	High	Low
2. Level of arousal	Low	High
3. Principal memory system	Semantic schemas and implicit scripts	Episodic/flashbulb memory
4. Ritual meaning	Learned/acquired	Internally generated
5. Techniques of revelation	Rhetoric, logical integration, narrative	Iconicity, multivocality, and multivalence
Sociopolitical Features		
6. Social cohesion	Diffuse	Intense
7. Leadership	Dynamic	Passive/absent
8. Inclusivity/exclusivity	Inclusive	Exclusive
9. Spread	Rapid, efficient	Slow, inefficient
10. Scale	Large scale	Small scale
11. Degree of uniformity	High	Low
12. Structure	Centralized	Noncentralized

Overview

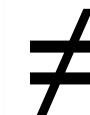
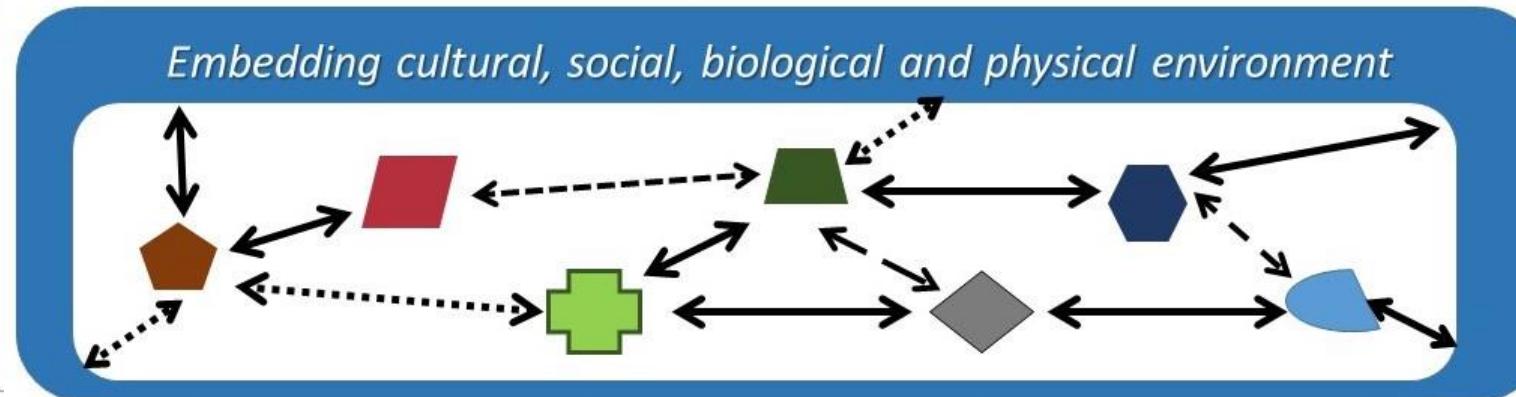
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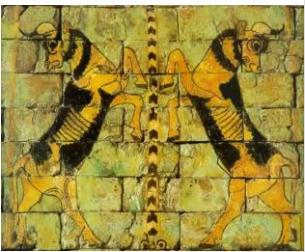
Religion as a dynamic, complex system

3. Religion as a complex system: *mental representations of...*

- Concepts, narratives, rituals, precepts and prohibitions, artefacts, sacred places and times, institutions, texts etc....
- interacting with each other, as well as with the immediate and distant social and physical environment,
- result in a **dynamical system**:



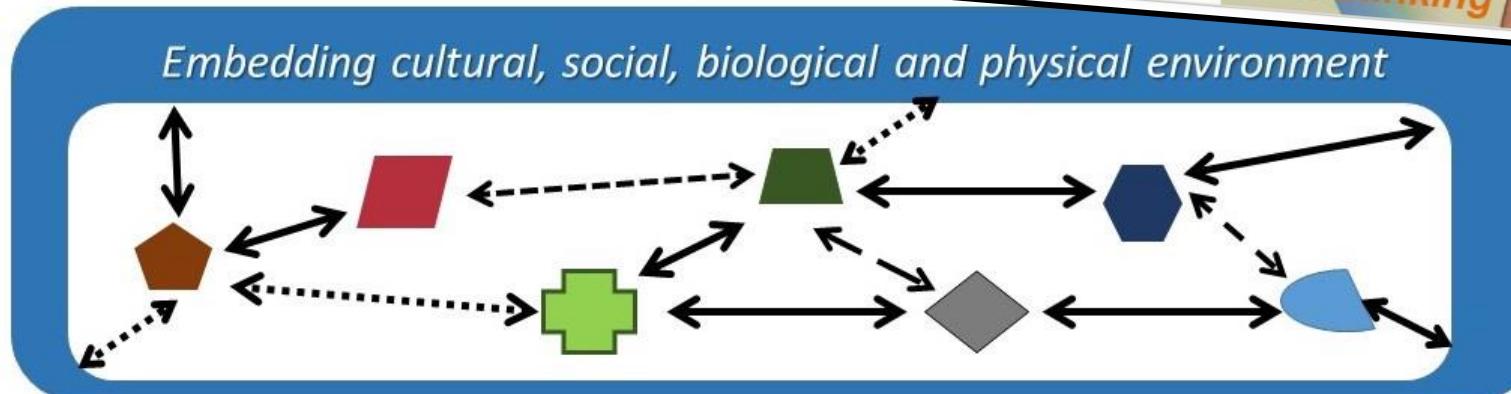
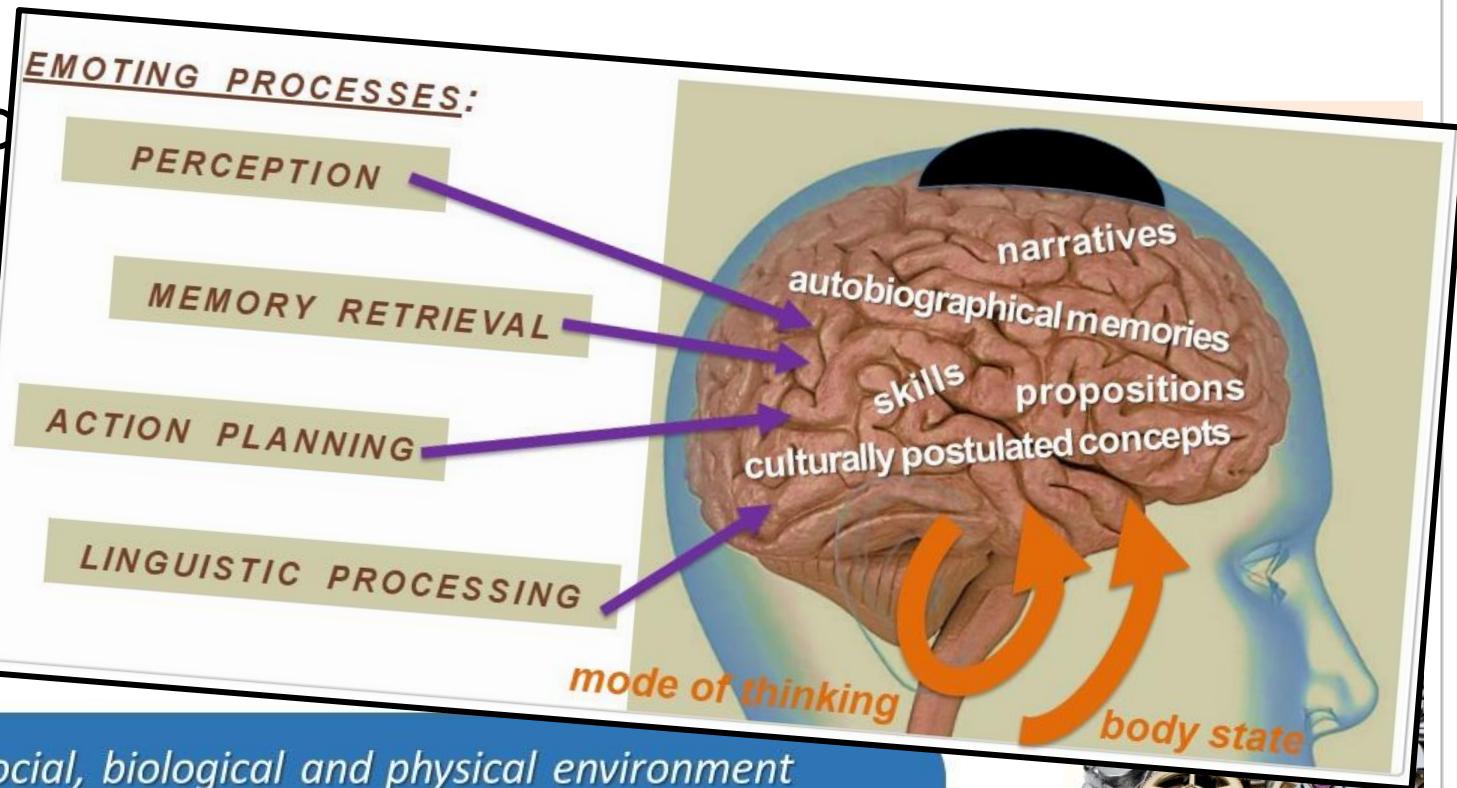
János Kertész



Religion as a dynamic, complex system

3. Religion as a complex system

- Concepts, narratives, artefacts, sacred spaces
- interacting with local and distant systems
- result in a dynamic system



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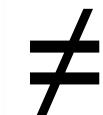
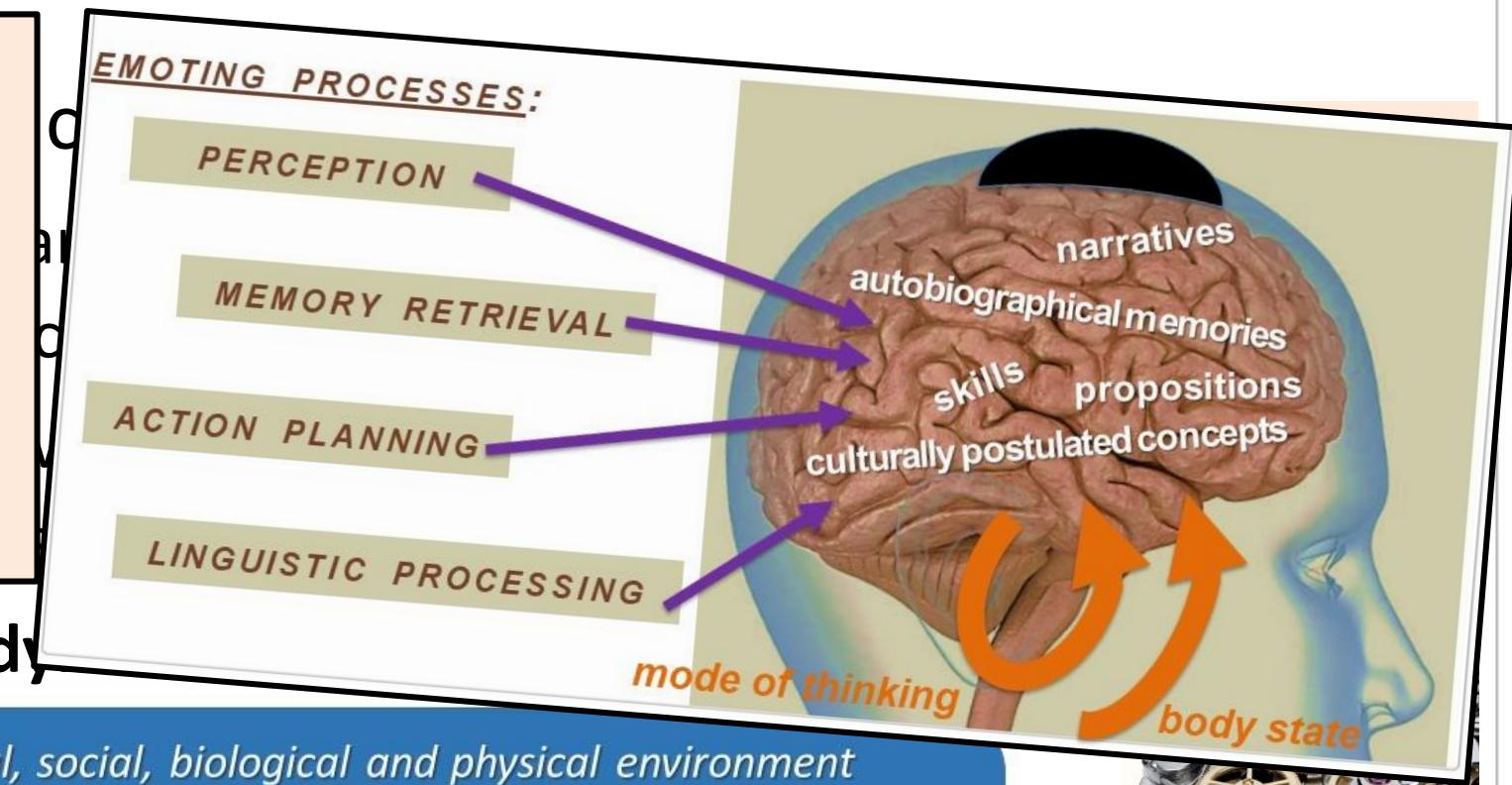
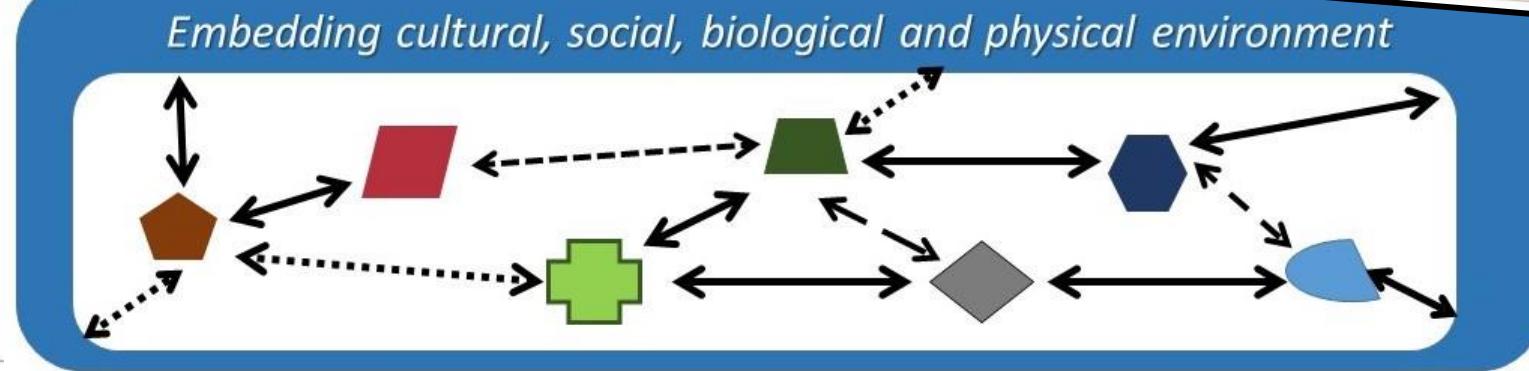
Religion as a dynamic, complex system

Question:

how can Judaism be a stable system if it lacks special-agent rituals?



- result in a d



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Mishnah Sukkah 5:1

הַחֶלְיל הַמִּשָּׁה וַיְשַׁשָּׁה. זֶהוּ הַחֶלְיל שֶׁל בֵּית הַשׂוֹאָבָה, שֶׁאִינָה
דוֹצָה לֹא אֶת הַשְׁבָּת וְלֹא אֶת יוֹם טוֹב. אָמָרוּ, כִּל מֵי שֶׁלֹּא
רָאָה שְׂמִחָת בֵּית הַשׂוֹאָבָה, לֹא רָאָה שְׂמִחָה מִימָיו:

The flute [was played sometimes on] five [days], and [sometimes on] six. This was the flute of the place of [water] drawing, which does overrides neither Shabbat nor holidays. They [the Sages] said: **Anyone who has never seen the rejoicing at the place of [water] drawing, has never seen rejoicing in all his days.**

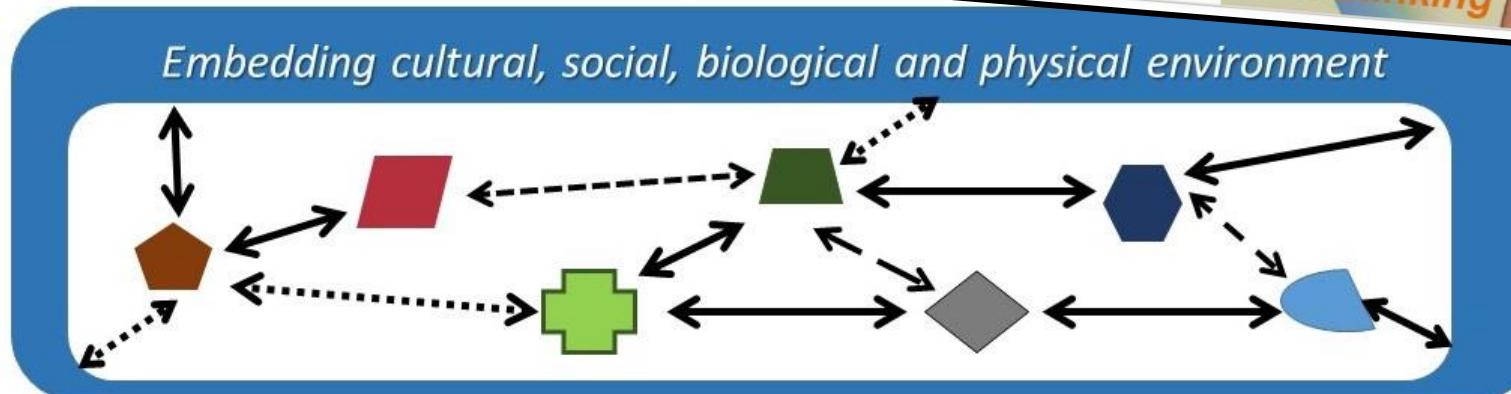
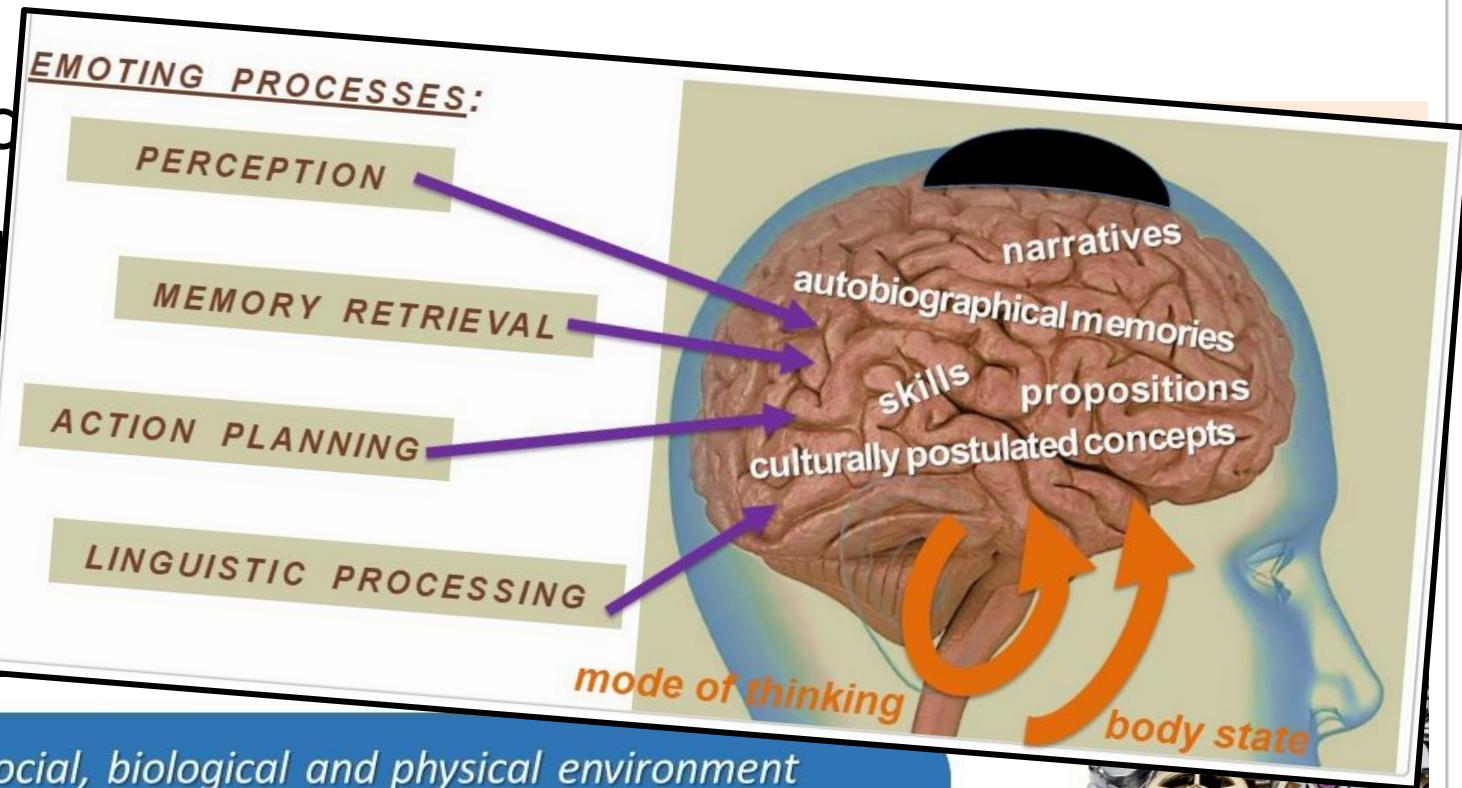
(Sefaria.org)



Religion as a dynamic, complex system

3. Religion as a complex system

- Concepts, narratives, artefacts, sacred spaces
- interacting with local and distant systems
- result in a dynamic system



János Kertész

Sukkot and emotions



1. וְשָׁמַחַת בִּמְגֹה... וְקִיַּת אֶחָד שָׁמָמָה (Deut. 16:14-15)

2. בַּסְכָּת תֵּשְׁבוּ שְׁבֻעַת יְמִים כֹּל־הָאָזְרָח בִּישראל יֵשְׁבוּ בַּסְכָּת:

לְמַעַן יִדְעֻוּ דֶּרֶתְיכֶם כִּי בַּסְכָּות הַוְשָׁבָתִי אֲתִ־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהַזְּמִינָה

אוֹתָם מְאָרֶץ מְאָגָרִים אָנָּי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: (Lev. 23:42-43)



Mishnah Sukkah 5:1

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(Sefaria.org)



How to increase the emotional load of some ritual?

- Suggested working hypotheses:
 - The human mind requires a given amount of impulses / emotions.
 - Balanced ritual systems require a give amount of arousal.
- What can add emotions to a ritual (and so to the entire system)?
 - Special-agent rituals
 - Personal memories
 - Culturally learnt techniques
 - ... *what else?*

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*Supported by a **Marie Curie FP7 Integration Grant** (PCIG13-GA-2013 631599).*