

GOD AND GODS

By

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Jack Mendelsohn's recent book God, Allah and Ju-Ju - although it is not always accurate, and despite its unfortunate title - is deeply perceptive of what is going on in the minds of many thoughtful Africans - of men who have undergone what Mendelsohn calls 'the scarifying experience of relations with the West'. They have felt that they had to choose between the Christianity which had reared them but which - as, rightly or wrongly, they saw it - was irrevocably committed to the indignities of colonialism; and a nationalism which was deeply concerned for the dignity of man. (His description of why Kenneth Kaunda cannot be an orthodox Christian should be read, and re-read, by all who are concerned for the future of Christianity in Africa). Alongside this dilemma is the question whether the GOD, whom the missionaries preach, is any more than the god of the Europeans - so that African Christians must be regarded, however sincere they are, whatever the quality of their lives, as no more than stooges of the imperialists. Is there, then, a god - or gods - more suited to the needs of Africa? Can 'religion' be made to express the African Personality?

There have been attempts - in some independent churches in South Africa - to preach a black Christ. But, in the end, this is only foreign to the whole claim of Christianity to be universal precisely because it comes from a particular Jew born 1964 years ago. It is still bound to ideas which are foreign to Africa. So, at the other end of the scale, is the possibility of recalling the old gods. There was the dedication of Kenyatta's Facing Mount Kenya :

for perpetuation of communion with ancestral spirits through the fight for African freedom, and in the firm faith that the dead, the living and the unborn will unite to rebuild the destroyed shrines'.

There was the substitution, in the hymns of some of the independent Kikuyu churches, of the names of Gikuyu and Mumbi for that of Christ. There were the Ab'ensi in Buganda in 1953, who declared, "The new god has betrayed us; only the old gods can restore the Kaabaka' - with the reappearance of shrines officially banned by the Kabaka's Government itself. There was Kigaanira, who in 1955 claimed to be possessed by the war-god Kibuuka and incited the murder of one of the Kabaka's police - an act still interpreted by some Baganda as a human sacrifice, a necessary condition of the Kabaka's return. During the campaign for the Buganda Lukiiko elections in 1962 there was the prayer - widely used at political meetings and attributed to a prominent Roman Catholic ex-seminarian - which, after calling in turn on each of the old gods, 'Have Mercy upon us', ended:

'O, all ye blessed ones who fled because you feared the
atrocities of the European, Arise and join with us that
we may restore our land and establish it as it used to be.
For ever and ever. Amen'.

Of course, the same sort of thing happened in Hitler's Germany, when the old Nordic gods were recalled to restore a land worn out by twenty years of imposed peace; and it is difficult to think that the educated Agikuyu and Baganda, who write such religious tit-bits, have any more faith in the old gods than in the Christ whom they are called to oust. But there is a popular faith responding to this essentially political appeal. In 1962 eight women, in the Maswa district of Tanganyika, were beaten to death on the accusation of witchcraft. Some county chiefs in Buganda - successors of the men who, seventy years ago, led the Christian revolution and sent their sons for education overseas - regularly consult the traditional diviners; and there are deeply convinced Christians, of the older, educated generation, who admit with regret that the old gods are still active and present a threat to Christ.

To write of 'gods' is to indicate that, if it makes any sense at all to speak of 'the god of the Europeans', it is not the GOD of the Bible of whom we then speak. Certainly, there are Europeans who reduce him to these proportions - the proportions of a tribal god. There was the English bishop, during 'Hitler's war', who stated that 'God plays centre-forward for the allied side. It is well known - in India as well as Africa - that English and

Scots who, in their home environment would enter a church only for baptism, marriage and burial, flock regularly to those centres of tribal culture to be found in the Anglican and Presbyterian churches. But to speak in these terms is to indicate at once the difference between GOD and gods. There is ample evidence, in the earlier parts of the Old Testament, of the worship of gods. It has been argued that the achievement of Abraham and, later, again of Moses was the rediscovery of an original monotheism. But to the ordinary reader it appears that, when GOD spoke to Abraham (Genesis 12:1), telling him to leave the security of his home and country, to start on a desert journey of unknown length, to find an unknown country of infinite desire - even then, he was the one god whom Abraham knew he must obey; he was not, for Abraham, the only GOD. When GOD spoke to Moses, commanding another desert journey (Exodus 3), he was the one god who had anything to offer to the Jews; but each other tribe had its own god, different from Yahweh, in competition with him. When the Jews came to Canaan, most of them knew no doubt that they had to come to terms with the baalim, the gods who were already in the land before them, who knew - as Yahweh of the desert could not be expected to know - the ins-and-outs of their new life as agriculturalists. Even when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:17 - end), he tried no more than to prove that Yahweh was God in Israel. And, although he killed the prophets of Baal, he did not shake the faith of Jezebel. 'So may the gods do to me, and more also', she threatened him, 'if I do not kill you also by this time tomorrow' (19:2). If the worship of gods was banned in Israel, it was not because they did not exist, but because Israel had entered into an agreement to serve Yahweh alone. This was the argument used by Hosea in the eight century B.C., when he compared Israel with a faithless wife who had committed adultery with other gods (4:12).

At about the same time, Amos was saying that Yahweh was the god not only of the Jews, but of Ethiopians, Philistines and Syrians alike (9:7); and he began to emerge as the one GOD, the Creator of all things (5:8). But it was not till two hundred years later - after the Jews had discovered in the bitterness of Babylonian exile that Yahweh was with them there also - that the prophet, who wrote chapters 40-55 of Isaiah, declared that there is no god but GOD. 'I am the first and I am the last. Besides me there is no god..Behold, they are all a delusion; their works are nothing; their molten images are empty wind' (44:6; 41:29).

There is a close similarity between the rise of the Hebrew prophets in the eight to sixth centuries B.C. and that extraordinary association of puritans and experimental scientists in the seventeenth century A.D. in England, which represented, at the same time, that radical re-assessment of man's relationship to God, which is known as Protestantism, and the Scientific Revolution with its entirely new attitude to man's natural environment. Both were to lead to a new evaluation of man himself. Prophets and puritan-scientists emerged from a background in which there was both social injustice and (like tribal Africa) a high degree of belief in arbitrary personal wills - baalim and witches, demons and magic and the curses of old men - external to man, vastly more powerful than he, requiring propitiation through prescribed ritual. Outside a narrow circle of traditional behaviour, man had little responsibility, little hope of action towards the making of his own destiny. Social injustice could always be attributed to the ordinances of God. Experience was exteriorised; responsibility belonged not to man, but to a mysterious outer world which he could do no more than dramatize, for his soul's ease, in myth and cult. It was in the interiorisation of experience, and the increase of personal responsibility which goes with it, that the prophets and puritan-scientists had parallel roles to play in history. With increase in responsibility goes a recognition of GOD himself as personal; and perhaps the major task of the prophets was the insistence that human life is an affair not of ritual relationship with arbitrary - and therefore less than personal - gods but of personal response to a GOD who is fully personal and therefore wholly reliable.

The prophets insisted that sacrifices and holy days had no merit unless they were a positive expression of an active intention to establish social justice (Amos 5:21-24). In modern terms, they rejected magic - the belief that certain rituals have, in themselves, power to change the world, without regard to their objectively-observed relations to other events. In the same way, the puritan-scientists rejected not only secular magic, but the belief that Christian sacraments and ministers had any powers apart from their dramatic intensity and moral authority. In Jung's terms, it was an insistence that 'things' have no psychic content of their own but stimulate the psychic energies of men.

The prophets suppressed the witches and diviners of Israel to such an extent that

we can find, from the Old Testament, almost no evidence at all of the witchcraft beliefs of Israel. We know that they existed because they were suppressed; and that is all. It is at least probable that they did the same with the ancestor cult. In the same way, although the puritan-scientists may not themselves have been responsible, the new world of thought, which was invading the England of the seventeenth century, provoked vicious persecution of supposed witches, belief in whom challenged its basic assumptions.

'I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son', said Amos (7:14); and Jeremiah (Eps.. 23:25-28) was equally anxious to dissociate himself from the traditional prophets of his day. Between those of whom it was said, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' (1 Samuel 10:12) and the 'writing prophets', at least from Hosea to the 'second Isaiah', there is a distinct break - a break well illustrated by the contrast between the prophets of Baal and Elijah (1 Kings 18). The former 'cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances...and raved on': the latter quietly confident of the effect of prayer alone. Elijah himself may well have stood at the watershed of the change; and Field, in his book Search for Security using him as one example, has well described the hysterical disassociation techniques of the traditional prophet, whether in Hebrew or in African society. But she does not distinguish between the earlier prophetic tradition - in which abnormal phenomena were interpreted in exteriorising terms as 'spirit possession' - and that of the later prophets who (although they themselves may have had traditional experiences) insisted on the primacy of verbalisation - an insistence which is necessary before any genuinely rational system of mental action can be established. God's revelation was by his word to the alert and fully-conscious mind, not by the dreams of sleep. It is difficult to find an exact parallel with the puritan-scientists. But it is important that the puritans (in practice if not in theory) rated the Word above the sacraments; and that rationality, as well as empiricism, was essential to the scientific movement. Modern psychiatry has returned to the importance of dreams - but to dreams interpreted by full conscious and responsible thought.

The Prophets called the Jews away from their conviction, that all was well with the Chosen People, to the objective evidence of history which told a very different story. They saw the majesty of GOD in natural phenomena. The puritans returned, from a largely man-centred view of redemption, to a new insistence on the majesty of GOD in nature.

The scientists (in the words of William James) insisted that every theory must be forged in the face of irreducible and stubborn fact.

The 'Second Isaiah' rejected the idea that there could be baalim - that there could be any gods but GOD. For him, to worship other gods was no longer disloyalty to Yahweh. It was plain nonsense. The puritan-scientists insisted on the majesty of GOD: as Christians they proclaimed that between GOD and man there could be no mediator but Christ; as scientists they declared the uniformity of nature, that the universe is a single interlocking system of cause and effect - unchangeable except by wills which are not themselves arbitrary, but part of the same system.

Both movements were away from 'tradition-direction' towards 'inner-direction' - from accepting without question the customs of our ancestors, to acting in terms of a personal ideal of goodness or greatness or truth. This is clearly connected with the distinction between 'extrapunitive' and 'intropunitive' - the first blaming their failures on others, the second on their own deficiencies - which has been found, statistically, to distinguish Catholics from Protestants. It is notorious that, within the catholic sacramental system, men are able to project their feelings of guilt onto a priest or an external object so that - as in earlier forms of animal sacrifice - they are 'taken away'. Protestants, on the other hand, are liable to be consumed by their guilt-feelings until, on 'conversion', they introject a wholly new ideal of conduct identified with Christ and feel themselves to be new men. It is easy to understand how the former system can be the basis of a conservative attitude towards life, with little ambition either to change its conditions or to conquer the world. Insofar as hyperactivity is an attempt to compensate for feelings of guilt, protestants tend to be both rebels and colonisers.

Closely connected with this conservative/radical dilemma is the social function of ancestral spirits in discouraging departure from accepted custom and tradition. Nobody seriously doubts that - whatever the long term consequence of Mau Mau - it was in itself an atavistic movement back to Kikuyu tribalism, rather than forward to the Kenya nationalism which was the political need of the day. The recent increase of ancestor shrines among the Baluyia of western Kenya seems to be related to their desire to assert

themselves, on the eve (and essentially against the threat) of political independence, as a semi-independent unit in the Kenya of the future. While the early Christian chiefs of Buganda chose as their motto, Simudda nnyuma, 'There's no turning back', the threat to secede on January 1st 1961, from the rest of Uganda was inspired by Sitakange, 'What I have I hold'; and the old gods have been recalled in the expectation that they will guarantee the integrity of Buganda not so much against British over-rule as against the threat of absorption into an independent Uganda. The prophets were concerned with the building of a righteous nation - with the reintegration of Judah and Israel into the instrument of God's dynamic purpose. The baalim - in so far as, like the gods of Jezebel, they were foreign importations - necessarily conflicted with the national purpose. Insofar as they were native spirits of localities, both they and the ancestors serving kinship groups would be forces of conservatism and of sectionalism. They had to be suppressed because only the one God was adequate for a nation which must be both progressive and united.

The Reformation in England - as elsewhere - corresponded with the growth of a new national consciousness, which found its first fruits in the cultural and economic expansion of the reign of Elizabeth I. It suffered a setback in the internal dissensions of the Civil War - the struggle between, on the one hand, the exteriorised world of authoritarian bishops and the divine right of kings and, on the other, the puritans with their assertion of individual responsibility before God and their feeling after a responsible democracy. The foundation of the Royal Society in 1660 was, in a sense, a retreat from a world grown tired of religious and political strife. But Protestantism was to provide the dynamic, and science the means, of that tremendous British expansion - economic, technological and political - which found its climax in the nineteenth century. If social justice was not so much to the fore as the prophets might have wished, it was the evangelicals of that century who were in the forefront of social reform: and the Labour Party - with its roots in Protestant nonconformity - which extended reform into the political field.

The religion-political struggles in England were resolved by those curious compromises of a church which claims to be both Catholic and Protestant, and a monarchy which, in due course, became genuinely constitutional. The one, in its 'high' and 'low' wings, provides ample opportunity for introvert and extravert alike - and, among its 'modern churchmen', for those who question every doctrine which cannot be

demonstrated by experiment. Onto the latter can be projected the ideals of its subjects, so that the monarch stands for the loved and respected parent of all his people and unifies them by the common emotion which he elicits. On the other hand, the monarchy is sufficiently unobtrusive not to offend the majority of those who are primarily extravert and republican in attitude. But this tension with regard to the monarchy, as a political institution, is implicit in the movements represented by the prophets and the puritan-scientists. Although David came, even for the prophets, to symbolise the greatness of Israel under God, Samuel's attitude to Saul was clearly ambivalent; and there were suggestions (Hosea 8:4) that kings were in the same category as idols. A king might, by unifying the nation, and by the power of his example, direct the service of all his people to the one God. Such a one was Josiah (2 Kings 23). But he might, like Josiah's father and grandfather before him (2 Kings 22), introduce vast numbers of gods simply for his own amusement and glorification. There is ample evidence that the puritan wing of the Reformation (Luther, like Anglicanism, retained many traditional introverted features) was anti-monarchical, as well as anti-episcopal. Sociologically, it was an attempt to find a religion which, while remaining Christian, would express the new urban culture of the merchant class. Traditional social structure was hierarchical - the family dependent on the village, village on feudal lord and he, in turn, on the king. Life was subject to arbitrary interference not only by the forces of nature but by the agents of secular authority. It was perhaps natural to accept an ecclesiastical structure which led, hierarchically, through the bishop to God, to explain events in terms of God's 'vertical' interference in the world of nature, and to allow ample room for the arbitrary impositions of devils and witches. Merchant society, on the other hand, was increasingly dependent on 'horizontal' relations with peers not only in other cities but in other lands, constantly transgressing the feudal and national boundaries. It was dependent, for its success, on unremitting effort and the rationalisation of economic behaviour. It is not surprising if it came to think of kings as an imposition, to demand government by a meritocracy, to try to rationalise the apparently arbitrary events of nature and seek explanations in terms of 'horizontal' relations - to think in terms of proximate, rather than ultimate, causes. In such an atmosphere, both protestantism and science would be at home.

There is no reason to suppose that the interiorising attitude of the prophets was any

more generally accepted than that of the puritan-scientists. (The last witchcraft act was repealed in England in 1951; and allegations of its practice are still to be met in that country). It was rather that the editors of the Old Testament, reflecting the prophetic attitude, avoided reference to cults which no doubt continued. In illustration, not only have colonial legislation and Christian education wholly failed to eliminate witchcraft beliefs throughout Africa. In Buganda, the cult of the old gods was actively discouraged by the early Christian chiefs; and recourse to a diviner is still punishable, in a sub-county court, with five years imprisonment. But in the last ten years the cult has revived; divining and the sale of magic 'horns' have become profitable trades; and young men fear to work in Buganda Government offices for fear of witchcraft by their supposedly jealous seniors. The New Testament contains evidence of an unmistakeable popular exteriorising culture. There is no reason to suppose that Jesus did not accept, in theory as well as in therapeutic practice, the activity of evil spirits; and Saint Paul wrote of 'principalities and powers, world rulers of this present darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places' (Ephesians 6:12 etc.). Moreover, the belief in the certain destiny of the Chosen People, and the magical efficacy of sacrifice and ritual, were matters of protest by both Jesus and the New Testament writers (Matthew 3:9, Mark 2:23 - 3:6, Hebrews 8 etc.) in the name of an inner-directed idea of holiness. But the culture, against which the second Isaiah protested, was polytheistic. The gods were independent of God. The New Testament insists that they know their place as his creatures. 'What is this?', said the Jews of Jesus (Mark 1:27). 'With authority he commands the unclean spirits and they obey him'. In Christ, wrote Saint Paul (Colossians 1:16), 'all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him'.

They may, or may not, exist. This is a point on which, as scientific man I prefer to be agnostic. (Rationalist man may deny the possibility of their existence. But science is empirical as well as rational; and the empirical work simply has not been done). But, if in fact they exist, they must be subject - as all other created things - to scientific investigation and control. As a Christian man I can go further and say that, if they exist, they are the creatures of God and therefore wholly subject to his control. God himself is subject to no control but that of his own humility and service to the universe which he has made.

Whether as Christian or as scientist (if there is, indeed, any contradiction in these terms) I am committed to this belief in a unified universe. I cannot go into the laboratory if I think that the results of yesterday's experiment will be today reversed by some arbitrary force wholly outside my capacity to understand and to control. Either nature is uniform or the whole scientific adventure is an illusion. Nor can I have any confidence in the achievement of Christ, if at any time his work may be undone by gods or devils who are not, in the end, wholly subservient to him. The history of Christianity is full of the need which has been felt to eradicate - all too often by the force of the State - the cult of non-existent gods; and the whole philosophic effort, which produced the doctrine of the Trinity, was directed to assert that Christians believe not in three gods but in one God. Whether or not there are inferior spirits, whether or not the ancestors are active in human affairs, whether or not witchcraft is an actual force in the world, Christians are committed to the conviction that they are all subordinate to the one God; that he alone has any ultimate right to the service of men, or can be adequate to their needs. To speak of 'the European god' or 'the god(s) of Africa' - as though they were in any sense in competition - is not only blasphemy but arrant nonsense.

There is a further distinction to be repeated at this point. God is subject to no control but his own. Tribal gods (at least as they are normally presented - although the whole question needs to be raised again in terms of modern studies) are regarded as subject to man's control, if only the right ritual can be found. They are functional to human society, existing to serve the needs of man - while, for the prophets and the New Testament, men are functional to God; they exist in order to serve him. One of the most fascinating examples of this attitude to the gods is that of Kabaka Mutesa I of Buganda, who before the coming of the Christian missionaries, was already playing off against one another the priests of the old gods, as he was playing off each section of Kiganda society in pursuit of his policy of 'divide and rule'. For him, Allah of the Arabs and God of the English and French (Anglican and Roman Catholic) missionaries were three more gods who could be introduced, to his advantage, into the game. The fundamental witness of the Uganda Martyrs in a faith which led them without mercy to mutilation and the stake - was to a God whose demands not even an absolute monarch could defy. But the difference is to be

found in Micaiah (1 Kings 22): "Behold, the words of the prophets with one accord are favourable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favourably". But Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord says to me, that I will speak": and in Amos's reply to Amaziah (7: 16f): 'you say,"Do not prophesy against Israel"....Therefore thus says the Lord, "Your wife shall be a harlot in the city...and Israel shall surely go into exile in a strange land". It is a fundamental difference, which is too often obscured: partly by the fact that Yahweh of the earlier part of the Old Testament was regarded as no more than a tribal god in just this sense; partly because Christians - whether in calling on God to assist purely national or sectional interests, or in their daily prayers - too often give the impression (and, indeed, often actually believe) that they have inherited a ritual no less magical, if rather more effective, than that of the pagans. It has to be insisted that, whether the men concerned are black or white, whether they live in Europe or in Africa, and whether or not they use the name of Christ, religion of this sort is no more than a tribal religion: and the god on whom they call is a travesty of 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

There is an increasing movement on the part of modern students of African religions to argue that, although these tribes certainly have many gods, their fundamental belief is in one God, of whom the many are not independent, but rather different parts of the divine spectrum refracted in the many aspects of human experience. Whether they call him Kwoth or Nhialac or Olodumare, they recognise that he is the same God whom other people call by other names, and that he favours no people more than any other. He is not, in the last resort, subject to man's control (indeed, there may be very little, if any, ritual involved in man's relationship with him); and, although he allows practices which Christians would regard as immoral, he nevertheless makes absolute and deeply moral demands on all men. It is possible to argue that this new look is a result of assimilation, on the part of the old gods of the tribe, to the God of Islam and Christianity: or that the African Personality wishes to assert that its gods are every bit as good as the God of the Jews. Certainly, in the present state of my own understanding, this is my interpretation of the assertion, by some Buganda, that their many gods have never been more than satellites of Katonda; similar criticisms have been made of Idowu's statement of Yoruba belief; and Okot p'Bitek studying his own people, concludes that the Acholi have no one

Creator-Jok (indeed, no creation myth at all) but only many jogit. But it is very difficult indeed to be so suspicious of the Dinka and Nuer - among whom the influence of both Christianity and Islam has been minimal - or of the skilled anthropologists who have studied them. It would be wholly outside the evidence to say that all African tribes originally believed in one God - to say, even, that they believed in any ultra-human beings more elevated than their ancestors. Indeed, such evidence as exists suggests a very wide range of belief from the almost pure monotheism, with no ancestor cult, of the Maasai and Boran, through the monotheism expressed in many inferior spirits of Dinka and Nuer, to the frank polytheism and ancestor cults of Acholi and Baganda; and a great deal of work has still to be done to determine the social structures - if these are, indeed, the controlling factors - which support beliefs of so diverse a nature. But it is necessary to say that some African tribes did in fact believe in one God, who was the creator and ruler of all men, even if he was assisted by inferior spirits - by baalim, by angels, principalities and powers - who were also his creatures. It was a belief, in some ways at least, superior to that of the earlier Jewish assessment of Yahweh as a purely tribal god.

But there is development in religious belief; and it is the God of the prophets and of Jesus who is offered to Africa by Christians and (in their own way) by Muslims. This is the God who might be rejected in favour of the gods of Africa. It may be that there are sociological factors affecting the idea of God. Riesman thinks that the change from tradition-direction to inner-direction is associated with rapid increase in population. Supposing that similar factors encouraged the development of the prophetic outlook, purely social changes might, if there had never been any invasion by the West, have produced a prophetic development in ideas of Kwoth and Nhialac. But it is difficult to find, in current accounts of them, the essential prophetic view of God as the dynamic of history, every moving on to a more glorious goal; the demand on men to accept responsibility for their own destiny; the compulsion to be directed by an inner ideal of goodness or greatness; the call to be 'a light to lighten the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 49:6). Whatever the mistakes of missionaries, whatever the selfishnesses of colonialism, it is this dynamic ideal which has been brought to Africa by the whole impact of the West: and, in a new form, has been incorporated in pan-Africanism with its determination to establish Africa as a world force, and the belief that

the African Personality has a positive contribution to make to the spiritual culture of all men. In the Old Testament, the creative symbol of human life is the desert. It is to the unknown desert journey that God calls Abraham; in the desert and to the desert that he again calls Moses - to a land which holds infinite promise and blessing, but not to be known till it is reached, not to be reached except by unremitting effort and endless danger. So it is not by the assertion of life that Jesus offers us life, but through the frightful loneliness, the utter desertion (Matthew 27:46) of the Cross; and the writer to the Hebrews tells us to seek him not in the well-known, familiar places but 'outside the camp, bearing abuse for him' (13:13). It is surely in this essentially biblical spirit that African nationalism has been born and must continue if it is to bear fruit.

In contrast, tribal religion - whether it believes in one god or many gods, whether it is concerned with inventing a romantic African past or preserving islands of white civilisation - is surely a static affair, guaranteeing custom and tradition, the continuing cycles of day and night, of sun and rain, of birth and marriage and death: not looking responsibly to God's future, but seeking only to preserve the strictly limited obligations of life as it has always been. From this point of view, an anthropological study of the religion of white minorities in Africa might make an important contribution to an understanding of the relation between religion and social structure. Insofar as they are politically conservative, trying to preserve an impossible past, it would not be surprising if their religion was, to a large extent, exteriorised: just as in contrast the Jewish minorities of Europe and America show, in almost every social character which has been studied, a more radical, interiorised attitude than Protestants. For it is at least arguable that both social progress and science, which is the modern means of progress, demand an extraverted culture, an interiorised religion; and, if the end result of extraversion is the inability to believe in God, it might be that the material future of Africa lies neither with the god of the Europeans nor with the gods of Africa, but in a thorough-going atheism.

The puritan-scientific movement of the seventeenth century divided into two main streams. The protestantism of the Bible, and the interpretation as 'possession by the attribution of mystical quality to the printed words of the Bible' and the interpretation as 'possession by the Holy Spirit' of religious emotion and disassociation phenomena. On

the other hand, scientists - rightly pursuing 'horizontal' proximate causes and denuding the external world of all psychic content - have found it increasingly difficult to believe even in one God. This has found its most effective theoretical statement in the works of the clinical psychologists. Jung - despite his high regard for Catholicism as a system of vast psychological worth to those who could still accept it - believed that God is a psychological complex of supreme value. Insofar as he placed this complex in the 'collective unconscious', objectively part of the inheritance of all men, God remains independent of the subjective consciousness of men. But true freedom is found only in the recognition that the belief in God's existence external to man is no more than a projection, onto inert matter, of inner psychic content. Freud, far more sceptical of the value of religion, saw God as the projection, from the unconscious of the individual, of infantile memories of an authoritarian father. He looked forward with confidence to a future which would be liberated from this 'illusion'.

This is the extreme - or almost the extreme - extraverted position; and the choice between theism and atheism is likely to lie not in logic or in metaphysics but in the experimental adjustment of each man's place on the extravert-introvert axis till he comes fully to terms both with himself and with the external world. But, insofar as it is used as a starting point for arguments against the existence of God, it is insufficiently radical. If belief in God is interpreted as 'no more than' a projection, the same interpretation must be given to the belief that other men are conscious, reasoning, feeling subjects like the observer. There is no objective evidence which could possibly be accepted by a thorough-going empiricist. The whole issue is a matter not of logic but of personal adjustment to the problem of living; and there is a perfectly good logic which, starting from the introverted position, leads to other conclusions. Science, like liberal capitalism and protestantism, is the product of a middle class culture. It requires what Jung calls both the 'reasoning' and the 'sensation' (the rational and the empirical) functions of the extraverted mind. There is the probability that the proletarian society of the twentieth-century West is emphasising technology rather than science. It is interested in empirical results (in 'sensation') rather than their rational understanding. And there is ample evidence that the repressed 'introverted feeling' function of man is taking its revenge. Ancestor cults - in the form of spiritualism - flourish in London suburbs. The spirits of natural objects are recalled

to the astrological columns of Sunday newspapers. Cargo cults of Melanesia find their parallel in flying saucer cults of America. Intellectuals flock to psychiatric clinics for diagnoses no less mystical - though framed in extraverted terms - than the rituals of tribal mediums.

There can, indeed, be no merely theoretical solution to the problem of Africa's religion. Certainly, whether religion is revealed from above, or wells up from the unconscious mind, it cannot be invented by deliberate, conscious act on the part of man. No doubt, in the long run, God will have his own way. But, in the meantime, it appears that introversion, an exteriorised religion, encourage social stagnation; while extraversion, interiorisation, though they start in a social dynamic, may go too far and lead, through to atheism, to loss of purpose and the depersonalisation of man. The Christianity of the New Testament is extraverted, if only because it refuses to divide man into two separate substances of 'body' and 'soul' - declares not the immortality of the soul but the resurrection of the body. It is extraverted also in its insistence on personal relationship as the stuff of life. But, in its extreme extraverted, puritan form, it has failed because - in its insistence on verbalisation, over against the more concrete symbols of image and music and dance - it has encouraged a rationalisation of experience which allows scant opportunity to the 'feeling' and 'intuitive' functions which are an essential part of human nature. At the same time the traditional symbols - whether of African traditional religions or of catholicism - no longer have universal validity, even within the societies which gave rise to them. There can be no nostalgic return to a romantic past.

My own conviction is that the process of extraversion - whether through science or through the 'demythologisation' which is the latest fruit of Protestantism - must run its course. Intellectuals, at least, must continue to question the propriety of symbols - whether visual, musical or verbal - which claim to be universal, unchangeable channels of the divine. They must question also the latest exteriorisations of technological culture, and any pretensions to divine rights on the part of kings or presidents. The result may be, perhaps for many years, an atheistic existentialism, such as that of Sartre which, because it is unable to feel God, must, in all intellectual honesty, question his existence. But the advantage of the extraverted attitude - provided it remains empirical and not merely

rational in its application - is that it can recognise man's need not only to exercise his feeling and intuitive functions in proper balance with the rest: but to find symbols in the external world, onto which they can be projected and find their fulfilment. If the intuition, that the man Jesus holds the clue to the meaning of the universe; the feeling, which is inspired by his life and death - if these can once again find effective external expression not in symbols claiming permanent or universal significance but in drama and song and dance which - like all true folk-culture - change their form with the changing shape of society, it may be that a religion will again emerge which expresses for men of many different cultures the universal validity of their relationship in Christ with God. Perhaps some of the independent African churches are already moving towards this end.

This essay has given all too little attention to Islam and the religions of Asia which, because they share with Christianity - as with science - a conviction of the Unity of Ultimate Being and the irrelevance, to a world society which politically and technologically is already one, of any gods but the one God, can claim in any sense to be universal. Against the religions of Asia, Christianity and Islam insist on the ultimate importance of history. Against Islam, Christianity believes in God who washed his disciples' feet and allowed himself to be crucified. It is difficult to believe that the Africa of the future will have any use for gods, whether European or African. It remains to be seen under what guise she will image the one God; and on her choice, perhaps, depends her contribution to mankind.